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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 22, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EARL L. CARTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. 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.

HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, which will be considered on the floor this afternoon.

I proudly championed this bill, because I truly believe that passing it

will be a win for the American worker and for American families.

Mr. Speaker, America is ready for a win.

First, I would like to thank the House Education and Workforce Committee Chairwoman VIRGINIA FOXX and Ranking Member BOBBY SCOTT for their support in bringing this bill to the floor. I want to thank the Democratic lead, Representative RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY; and my colleague and CTE Caucus co-chair, JIM LANGEVIN.

I also want to thank House leadership, including Conference Chairwoman CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY, Speaker PAUL RYAN, and Majority Whip STEVE SCALISE, who remains in all of our prayers for a full recovery.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation aims to restore rungs on the ladder of opportunity, because all Americans deserve a good-paying, family-sustaining job.

One of the biggest challenges facing career and technical education is the stigma, or the bias, associated with it.

Through the years, we have seen wrong-headed claims that students involved in the trades lacked ambition. These misplaced assumptions are slowly subsiding, but not soon enough. We have also seen students pushed down the college-for-all pathway that just doesn't work for some students.

CTE, or skills-based education, has established itself as a path that many high-achieving students choose in pursuit of industry certifications and hands-on skills they can use right out of high school in skills-based education programs or in college.

By modernizing the Federal investment in CTE programs, we will be able to connect more educators with industry stakeholders and close the skills gap that exists in this country. There are good jobs out there, but people need to be qualified and trained to be able to get them.

Mr. Speaker, we have all met young people who haven't been inspired in a

traditional classroom setting. We all know people who have lost jobs or are underemployed and are looking for good-paying, family-sustaining jobs. We all know people who are aspiring for a promotion, but keep falling short year after year. We all know people who are living in poverty. Maybe their families have been living in poverty for generations, for so long, they can't remember what put them there in the first place. This bill is for every one of these people.

We have heard the voices of those struggling to find the opportunities that they need to get ahead, the voices of those struggling to make ends meet. We have seen their frustration. Many are stuck in a job market that transformed quickly due to advancements in technology, and they have been left behind.

This bill will change that. It puts emphasis on advancing policies that promote good-paying jobs, and I look forward to the House passing it this afternoon. I urge my colleagues to support the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act so everyone from all walks of life can have the opportunity to succeed. It is the American way.

THE HYPE OF STATEHOOD FOR PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, so the ruling party in Puerto Rico staged an election, and they are very proud of the results. They say 97 percent of Puerto Ricans support statehood and that the United States should grant statehood right away because of it.

Yeah, they got 97 percent of the vote. That is pretty impressive; the kind of numbers that would make Putin jealous and Saddam Hussein green with envy if he weren't dead already.

□ 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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The reason why the statehooders got 97 percent of the vote was pretty much the same reason those two guys get 97 percent of the vote: only one political party participated.

All the other parties thought the election was so rigged and so predetermined for the outcome the sponsors wanted that they didn't even think it was worth participating.

The vast majority of Puerto Ricans agree. Only 23 percent of the people voted. Seventy-seven percent boycotted the election because they didn't think it was worth their time; and they were absolutely right, but I guess in the era of alternative facts and made-up statistics about how many people attend your inauguration, you can try to make a one-party vote of 23 percent of the people look like a mandate for statehood. But I am here to warn my fellow Democrats not to believe the hype for one second.

Those who are peddling the fantasy of statehood sometimes call themselves Democrats, but we should be aware of an elephant in donkey's clothing.

Let's look at leaders of the statehood party here in Washington. Our colleague, the Resident Commissioner who ran on the statehood ticket, is a Republican who caucuses with the Republicans here in the House. She is a proud supporter of Donald Trump and pals around with STEVE KING and other Members who we might say aren't too friendly to Latinos and Latino causes, much less the Democratic Party line.

The Governor's Washington, D.C., office is headed by a Republican, Carlos Mercader, who was appointed to the position by Governor Rossello after serving as executive director of the right-wing political organization called Latino Partnership for Conservative Principles, infamous for its constant bashing, yes, of President Obama.

That is who is pushing statehood in D.C., which makes me wonder why any Democrat would be embracing them, especially the chairman of the DNC, unless, of course, as the media reports, it is a payback for votes for DNC chairmanship.

And as for Governor Ricardo Rossello, leader of the statehood party, the "Democrat," his conservative record speaks for itself, even though he has only been in office for less than a year.

As a candidate, he sided with the bondholders and vulture capital funds and opposed any debt restructuring for Puerto Rico, saying that Puerto Rico should pay its debt in full to Wall Street speculators, in spite of massive cuts that that would entail for police, fire, health, pensions, roads, and schools.

He hosted, yes, a Democrat, the GOP Presidential candidate, Ben Carson; and the Governor opposes LGBT rights, including same-sex marriage, and opposes the teaching of gender equality in the schools.

Townhall, the uber conservative website, sees a kindred spirit in Gov-

ernor Rossello, the Democrat, praising him for his conservative approach to helping bondholders over schoolchildren. And the Governor has withheld his criticism of President Trump, which few Democrats are able to resist, and for Latino Democrats is darn near impossible unless you are just playing the Democratic role to get ahead.

When confronted with the obvious, that Trump has denigrated Mexicans as rapists and murderers, promised to build a wall to keep Latinos out, and sneered at Puerto Rico's desire for what Donald Trump called a bailout, Rossello responded, saying of the President: "My view is I don't know that he is anti-Latino. Obviously, I have heard some derogatory remarks, but I don't know him personally, and it doesn't deter me."

So instead of spending money to help children whose schools are closing, to fix roads that are falling apart, or to pay doctors enough to prevent them from leaving Puerto Rico and going to Florida, it seems the entire Puerto Rican government is now dedicated to pursuing the unlikely chance of statehood.

It is certainly useful as a distraction from what the Governor and his D.C. operatives are actually doing.

Mr. Speaker, I have said this before: I hope to be buried one day on that beautiful island of Puerto Rico. But when I am buried, I hope it happens in a free, sovereign nation that has thrown off the yoke of colonialism and dependence on an overseas master, just as this country did, the United States of America, the country in which I was born.

I look forward to celebrating the Fourth of July. In the meantime, I think it is important to warn my fellow Democrats that they should get no more in bed with the statehooders than with any other group of rightwing conservatives with an agenda.

THE HOUSE SHOULD DEBATE THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am again on the floor to talk about a waste of life, a waste of money in Afghanistan. We have been there 16 years, and nothing has changed. Many of my colleagues agree with me that it is time to debate our country's longest war.

In response, I, along with JOHN GARAMENDI from California, have introduced H.R. 1666 in hopes of forcing that discussion. I am not asking for Members or leadership to agree with the bill itself or even vote for it, but I am asking that we be able to bring to the floor of the House the bill for the purpose of a debate.

We have not debated our role in Afghanistan since 2001. Members can either vote for or against the bill; just give the House a debate after 16 years.

Afghanistan is a failed policy. I would like to share a few sentences of an email I received this week from a great American, my friend and unofficial adviser, the 31st Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, General Chuck Krulak, regarding his thoughts on Afghanistan:

"Sixteen years we have been involved in Afghanistan . . . 16 years fighting in a country that has really never seen peace. Sixteen years with fluctuating troop strength—100,000 to 5,000—with no definition to who we are fighting—al-Qaida, Taliban or ISIS . . . you pick 'em—with no strategy, no strong reason for entering the fray, no real measure of effectiveness, no use of the five elements of national power, no support from the people themselves, a weak government, and no exit strategy, and fighting a war that is unwinnable in any real sense of the word."

Mr. Speaker, it is disappointing when the President, the Commander in Chief, abdicates the responsibility of increasing the number of troops in Afghanistan to the Secretary of Defense, Secretary Mattis.

There is more reason today than ever before to have a debate on the future of Afghanistan. That is the reason why Speaker RYAN should instruct committees in the House to come forward with a new Authorization for Use of Military Force.

Where is the Congress? Don't we have a congressional responsibility to debate war if we are going to send a parent's young man or woman to die for this country?

I think we do have that responsibility.

In closing, I am going to share another quote from General Krulak, the former Commandant of the Marine Corps:

"I go back to what I have always said . . . back years ago. Afghanistan cannot be viewed through the lens of a true nation-state or as a true country. It is fragmented . . . tribal . . . controlled by war lords, economically a basket case, no real government outside of Kabul, and that is questionable, a poorly organized and led Army who will shoot at Americans as well as the 'enemy,' and no sense of what the country wants to be. No one has ever conquered Afghanistan . . . and many have tried. We will join the list of nations that have tried and failed. Afghanistan is the origin of 'whack a mole,' whether it is al-Qaida, ISIS, or the Taliban. You can't beat them in a geographic area . . . they will just pop up somewhere else."

Mr. Speaker, that is why many of us in this Congress, in both parties, feel that we have an obligation to our young men and women in uniform.

I have beside me a photo of a flag-draped coffin being taken off a plane at Dover. My question is this: How many more flag-draped coffins are we going to see when we increase the number of troops in Afghanistan without one word from Congress—not one word?

Mr. Speaker, we do owe it to the American people who pay their taxes, we do owe it to the parents whose young men and women will go and die for America. We do owe it to have a debate on the floor of the House. It has been 16 years since we have had a debate.

God help America and, please, God bless America.

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, like in anyone's office, the photos and trinkets on display in mine tell a little bit about who I am: a wedding photo, a picture of me and my family on our swearing-in day, a copy of the first bill I had signed into law, the moments that I am proud of, the pieces of me that I want to share with the world.

In this body, the people's House is no different. We have always been proud of our democracy and even prouder to display it for all the world to see. That is why we keep these cameras on whenever we are in session. It is why every single word that is uttered on this floor is documented and preserved long after the day we draw our last breath. It is why we walk beside Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs through the rotunda with the same awe of our Nation's history embodied in bronze statues and bold paintings. It is why every single night this building glows through the darkness; because the light of democracy not only lays bare our divisions and dissent, but it lights a path to our proudest moments.

In times of war and peace, fights over civil rights and equality, our debates in these halls have always been driven by a fierce conviction of our beliefs and a shared vision of a kinder, stronger country. Disagreements, yes, but enlightened by ideals, by vision, by a shared commitment to our American experiment.

And when you stand behind those principles and your policies, you welcome that spotlight; you engage in that debate; you are eager to answer questions; you are ready to be held accountable.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we should all be concerned by what has transpired in our Capitol over the course of the past few weeks. For if you are proud of your legislation, you don't lock it behind closed doors; you don't shield it from the very people that are going to be hurt most by it; you don't turn off the cameras and then call it mean; you don't sabotage a healthcare system and leave a wake of devastation and destruction to score political points.

Drafting TrumpCare under the cover of darkness is an admission that this bill cannot—cannot—withstand the sunlight of our neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, the America that I know would never turn its back on a

friend or a stranger in need. TrumpCare does.

The America that I know doesn't tell the sick, the elderly, or the frail that you are on your own. TrumpCare does.

The America that I know doesn't tell the young woman struggling through an opioid recovery that your next relapse, well, that one was one too many. TrumpCare does.

The America that I know understands that our greatness comes from our goodness; that we lean into challenges, you don't yield to them; that the frustration that we see in our streets and our communities is a cry for our government to be as good and as decent as the people we aim to serve. They, we, deserve nothing less. TrumpCare is not that cure.

IN MEMORY OF A.A. "GUS" KARLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the remarkable life of Mr. "Gus" Karle of Waycross, Georgia, who passed away on Sunday, May 7, 2017.

From a young age, Mr. Karle was deeply interested in trains and railways. In 1939, he skipped school to visit his local train station, where he landed his first job at the young age of 12, working as an assistant porter, responsible for loading and unloading train passengers.

After graduating from Wabash College in Indiana, he went on to start a career in railroad industry design and construction, working as an administrator for nearly 40 years.

Mr. Karle's career was extremely important to the economic development of the City of Waycross, Georgia, by way of his involvement in the design of Rice Yard, one of the busiest CSX rail crossroads in the Nation. Rice Yard serves as a daily transfer point for nearly 3,000 rail cars and remains one of the city's biggest employers, staffed by nearly 1,300 people from Ware and surrounding counties.

Mr. Karle retired from CSX Railroad in 2016. Last year, former CSX president, Clarence Gooden, whom Mr. Karle hired and trained in 1970, proclaimed every November 16 "A.A. 'Gus' Karle Day" in commemoration of Mr. Karle's hard work with the company.

Mr. Karle is a legend around Waycross. I want to thank him and his family for everything that he did to make Waycross and the First Congressional District of Georgia what it is today.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MRS. NAN THOMPSON MILLER

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mrs. Nan Thompson Miller, who passed away on Saturday, June 10, at the age of 89, and was laid to rest last week in Dublin, Georgia.

Mrs. Miller worked hard during her long life, selflessly serving others through a profession she loved.

At the age of 17, Mrs. Miller joined the United States Army Nurse Corps and attended the University of Georgia to study nursing, where she was a member of the last graduating class to receive their RN degrees.

Following the war, Mrs. Miller put her training to work with the Naval Hospital in Dublin, where she eventually rose to the position of head nurse before retiring in 1983.

As a young nurse, Mrs. Miller met the late George Anderson Miller, to whom she was married for 55 years. The Millers were active members of their community that helped form the Pine Forest United Methodist Church. Mrs. Miller was also a member of the Pilot Club of Dublin, the Order of the Blarney Stone, and the American Nurses Association.

Today, I have the pleasure of working with Mrs. Miller's granddaughter, Brooke. I can say from my own experience that Brooke's commitment to public service and dedication to our constituents is a wonderful testament to the legacy of her grandmother.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all Members will join me; my wife, Amy; and my staff in sending our thoughts and prayers to the Miller family as they remember the life and legacy of Mrs. Nan Thompson Miller.

GEORGIA PRESS ASSOCIATION AWARD RECIPIENT, KATHLEEN RUSSELL

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Kathleen Russell, from Darien, Georgia, who received the President's Award on behalf of the Georgia Press Association on Friday, June 2, 2017.

Ms. Russell's strong dedication to her role as longtime editor of The Darien News makes her worthy of such an honor. Each year, an individual who has exhibited outstanding leadership abilities and who serves as an innovator in Georgia's media industry is named a recipient of this prestigious award.

For generations, members of Ms. Russell's family have worked in the press, and it is only fitting that Ms. Russell would find herself working as a journalist.

Constituents remember Ms. Russell's beloved father, Mr. Charles Williamson, as a journalist who stood up to wrongdoers in McIntosh County, exposing corruption and theft by a multitude of former county officials.

As a child, Kathleen assisted her parents in the production of the weekly newspaper. During that time, her parents nurtured her love for the press.

After graduating from the University of Georgia in 1974, Ms. Russell began a career as an educator. She left education in pursuit of a career as a journalist and assumed the role of associate editor of The Darien News. In 2009, Ms. Russell was honored for her hard work when she was named publisher and editor of the newspaper.

Ms. Russell has remained an active member of McIntosh County, serving on several boards over the years, including the Division of Family and

Children Services, Darien Downtown Development Authority, and the College of Coastal Georgia Foundation.

Ms. Russell, I applaud your efforts to keep the citizens of Georgia's First Congressional District in tune with current events throughout our State and country.

TRIBUTE TO COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONER ROBERT STEELE

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

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on Monday of this week, I was saddened to know of the passing of Cook County Commissioner and President Pro Tem Robert Steele, whom I have known since his childhood days. As a matter of fact, I lived in the same neighborhood with the Steele family from the year that Commissioner Robert Steele was born.

I count myself as a Steele family friend and have worked with Bob's mother, Bobbie, since the late 1960s. His father, Robert, was a mentor to my son Stacey.

I had the pleasure of watching Commissioner Steele grow from a child into becoming an adult and an outstanding local and national leader.

Commissioner Steele was so much more than a man with a title. He was part of the glue which held his community together. He was a big brother to neighborhood boys whom he often took with him to events and activities. He was a mentor and an inspiration to those who came into contact with him. He was a great advocate for organ donation and transplantation. You see, he was a recipient from his sister, who gave him a kidney.

He was an Omega man, a great frat brother, and he was a leader of the West Side and countywide Black elected officials. He meant the world to his family and brought great pride and joy to his parents, Robert and former Cook County Board President Bobbie Steele.

Robert Steele was an absolute leader who provided leadership and guidance on a regular basis wherever he went. He was active in his church, in his community, in his neighborhood. He was intelligent, astute, and not afraid.

Of all the people that I have known who come from the West Side of Chicago as elected officials, none has brought more to the table than Bob, except, perhaps, his mother, Bobbie.

Our community will long remember the work of Cook County Commissioner Bobbie Steele. Perhaps the songwriter was correct when he said that "the good die young." Bob was indeed young, but he was a leader among leaders and a man among men.

I salute you, Commissioner Robert Steele, and long may your life, your work, and your legacy continue.

REMEMBERING FLOOD OF JUNE 23, 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago, on June 23, 2016, we experienced one of the darkest days in West Virginia's history.

Floodwaters raced through small towns without warning, washing away homes, washing away businesses, and, yes, washing away lives. Twenty-three souls were lost, while thousands were left without shelter and food.

Now as we approach the 1-year anniversary of this tragic event, we pause to remember those we lost and honor their lives. We reflect on how our communities changed over this past year. We pledge to continue rebuilding until our towns and our cities are better than they were before the rivers rose.

We have seen so many examples of strength, faith, and hope in this past year, examples that carry us forward and inspire us all. More work remains to be done. We still have churches, schools, libraries, and other community centers that need to be rebuilt, replaced, and restocked. Many are still in temporary and rental housing. The scars still remain.

But the message that we should carry forward is the one that carried us through this terrible event: the knowledge that West Virginians will always have each other's backs. We are stronger when we stand united than when we stand alone.

Through everything that lies ahead, we will stay strong. We will thank those who put their lives on the line to help rescue others. We will remember and honor those whom we lost, and we will continue to offer our support to those who are rebuilding their lives. That is what we do as neighbors. That is what we do as friends. That is what we do as West Virginians.

□ 1030

NEW HEALTHCARE BILL IS ONLY GOOD FOR THE WEALTHY

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

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, we watched President Donald Trump and Speaker PAUL RYAN ram their healthcare bill through the House of Representatives before it even had a cost analysis.

It didn't take long for us to learn why. It will strip over 20 million Americans of affordable healthcare. It will drive up premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for older Americans by as much as 25 percent. It will allow insurance companies to discriminate against pregnant women, children, and seniors. And this is all so Donald Trump can give a tax break to his wealthiest friends.

Mr. Speaker, this healthcare bill will literally be a death sentence to some

Americans. House Republicans had years—let me say that again—had years to come up with ways to make healthcare more affordable. But instead, they would rather pull the plug out from millions of families who put their healthcare in the hands of the insurance companies.

Since the Affordable Care Act was signed into law, nearly 40,000 of my constituents have enrolled in Covered California, and nearly 200,000 in San Bernardino County, our residents, have been added to Medi-Cal following the ACA expansion. TrumpCare will end Medicaid and leave millions of Americans without coverage.

Children will be stripped of their coverage because their parents will fall into an income bracket that doesn't satisfy our President. This legislation isn't just bad, it is detestable. According to Donald Trump, it is even mean. Though, apparently, it doesn't matter how mean it is for middle class families as long as it gives tax breaks to his wealthy friends.

And now, Senate Republicans have taken a page out of the House Republican playbook and are writing their healthcare bill in secret. This is not how we govern. This is not what the American people expect.

SUPPORT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my full support for H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

For more than 30 years, Federal funding, known as Perkins funding, has helped support career and technical education programs at the State and local level. This legislation reauthorizes that funding and makes needed improvements to ensure Perkins dollars are spent efficiently and effectively.

Mr. Speaker, I am a big believer in career tech programs for three simple reasons: They help prepare students for rewarding careers; they ensure American workers have the tools necessary for skilled trades that are foundational to our society; and they boost our economy by providing a quality workforce.

When it comes to higher education, we all know that there has been a silent stigma attached to not completing an academic degree at a 4-year university. For years, we were afraid to say that college isn't for everybody, when the truth is, career tech programs can actually lead many Americans to better quality of life.

Thankfully, I believe those days are over. Efforts like Mike Rowe's "Go Build Alabama" campaign has been tremendously successful in raising awareness and dispelling myths about the jobs that exist in skilled trades. This rising generation is showing signs of being more entrepreneurial, with a

willingness to work outside the box. Our programs have greatly improved over the years to offer training for careers our students are actually interested in.

Mr. Speaker, my State of Alabama is blessed with a strong network of community colleges offering a wide array of career training. Alabama Community College System has more than 79,000 students enrolled in CTE programs, and over 70 public high schools in Alabama are now offering CTE courses. They are working hand in glove with industry to make sure that the training matches the jobs that will be waiting for students when they complete their courses.

I visited one such program recently in Tallassee, a small town in central Alabama. Tallassee High School administrators have worked tirelessly to build a program that serves the growing needs of local students. The city and county are working together to improve facilities and make sure students have access to transportation.

Up until now, students in Tallassee have had to take a bus 30 minutes away to Wetumpka, or even an hour away to Montgomery to Trenholm State, to access these career tech courses. Now, thanks to the hard work of Tallassee's leaders and educators, students are beginning to access these programs right in their own hometown.

I visited another thriving career-type program a few months ago in Geneva, a small town in Alabama's Wiregrass region. Geneva High School has partnered with the Alabama National Guard, whose local armory serves as a training site for high-demand skills, such as automotive technology, welding, aviation maintenance, and health science. Students from city and county schools can get ahead on their college coursework via dual enrollment with Lurleen B. Wallace Community College or Enterprise State.

Geneva and Tallassee are not alone in their commitment to our students. Dothan's Wallace Community College offers training in 16 high-demand career fields. Wallace takes their programs to the next level by combining traditional study with hands-on experience. Their criminal justice program, for example, utilizes a virtual law enforcement training simulator, the only of its kind on an Alabama college campus.

These programs serve as a model, not only for the State of Alabama but for the Nation as a whole. Their successes demonstrate the potential career-type programs hold.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is so much more than just funding. It makes important improvements to our career tech policy, including: simplifying the application process that community and State leaders have to navigate in order to receive Federal funds; providing more flexibility to administrators so they can adjust to the needs of the students and the industry; improving accountability and transparency to

ensure that the programs that we are funding actually deliver results; and, lastly, ensuring a limited Federal role in education, just as we did in the new K-12 law.

Mr. Speaker, with the modern workplace changing at a rapid pace, it is imperative that educators and facilities keep up. With this bill, these programs can continue to successfully connect today's students with the careers of tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity to take the next step in career and technical education today. The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act will help equip our students with skills, knowledge, and experience they need to start their careers.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass this legislation and support our future workforce.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PHILANDO CASTILE

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a public servant taken from us too soon; an individual who, through his life and example, inspired others, especially children, to be respectful and kind; a man who lived his life in service to others, Philando Castile.

In recent days, his name has been back in the headlines, but I want to talk about the person behind the stories. I want to talk about a man failed by our creed of liberty and justice for all. Philando Castile was the beloved nutrition services supervisor at J.J. Hill Montessori Magnet School, who was so invested in the young people he served, that he memorized the names and food allergies of more than 500 students.

One of his coworkers said: Kids loved him. He was quiet, respectful, and kind. I knew him as warm and funny.

Another said: He was as much a teacher as any teacher in that building.

His life was an example of living honorably for your community, for your family, and for the more than 500 students who loved him. Even in his final moments, he showed respect and dignity in what must have been a terrifying experience.

Mr. Castile's loss is our loss. He lived life as we all should: loving and respecting those around him. When he was told by an officer to get his ID, he complied and respectfully informed the officer that he was lawfully carrying a concealed firearm; that he had a valid permit. When he went to get his ID, as ordered, he was shot—not once, but seven times—not because of non-compliance, not because he was violent, not because he was a menacing threat. What killed him was his Blackness, or, more precisely, fear of his Blackness killed him.

Tragically, his story is not unique. This happens every day to Black men and women in America. Philando's story only made headlines because it was live-streamed on Facebook and showed a 4-year-old girl sitting behind him as seven rounds were emptied into his chest. A 4-year-old girl, that even Philando's murderer said "was in my line of fire."

Mr. Speaker, this murder was so downright outrageous that it led *The Federalist*, a publication that previously published an article on how Black Lives Matter protests were destroying America, to call the not-guilty verdict an abomination.

Indeed, this is an abomination and a complete miscarriage of justice. *The Federalist* and I see eye to eye on this one thing. Groups in the center, on the right, on the left, have publicly and vocally condemned his murder, except for one: the National Rifle Association. The NRA's silence is sickening, deafening, and very hypocritical in this tragic American hour. For decades, the NRA has used fearmongering to claim that they are the sole organization fighting to protect the rights of every American to carry a firearm.

Where were they for Philando? Where is their outrage? Where is their stand for Philando's freedoms and rights? Where is their demand for better police training when dealing with citizens authorized to carry a firearm?

Shame, they have no outrage at this verdict. Shame for their double standard in supporting people with valid concealed-carry permits. They offer nothing but a tepid Facebook statement expressing concern.

Concern? The NRA has concern for Philando? Shame on the NRA. For them, it clearly isn't about rights for all. For NRA members who don't fit the right profile, they should give serious thought to even being members of the NRA.

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 41 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

Reverend Kevin Kitrell Ross, Unity of Sacramento, Sacramento, California, offered the following prayer:

May we turn within and look higher to the God of our understanding and pray.

Loving Presence, we invoke from the celestial balconies the witness of the

pioneers of our progress whose bloodied journeys marshaled unprecedented faith and birthed a new nation of radical inclusion.

Bless these sons and daughters of promise gathered in this, the people's House. Let them reach higher for crowns of conscience to exemplify compassion and bring from their districts to their desks sharp pencils that carve on their hearts the faces of freedom that they represent.

Let this House be an incubator for our best ideals, not a prison for our poorest politics.

Let these heroes and sheroes of the people's House summon the intellectual imagination and intuitive navigation to serve bolder together and break through the ideological gridlock that arrests the potential of our great Republic.

Let these innovators of cooperation and builders of the beloved community reunite these States of America and lead the way for a world that works for all.

This is enough. In the name of a love supreme we pray, and so it is.

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 Michigan (Mr. TROTT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TROTT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

WELCOMING REVEREND KEVIN KITRELL ROSS

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the House to our guest chaplain, Reverend Kevin Kitrell Ross, Senior Minister of Unity of Sacramento.

Kevin is regarded as a respected interfaith social justice leader, committed to building bridges of understanding and cooperation across race, culture, class, and religious lines.

Whether in his role leading one of the Nation's most diverse and integrated congregations, conducting diversity and implicit bias trainings, or being an outspoken activist for healing the crisis between law enforcement and communities of color, Kevin is dedicated to strengthening communities through

dialogue, direct encounter, and education.

A South Side of Chicago native, Kevin is a Morehouse College graduate, a senior fellow of the American Leadership Forum, a member of the Interfaith Council of Sacramento, and a three-time delegate to the Parliament of the World's Religions.

Kevin and his wife, Anita, have three children and reside in Elk Grove, California. Anita is the founder of Women for Equality. They are both committed to building a world that works for all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Reverend Kevin Ross and thank him for offering today's opening prayer in the U.S. House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING THE NORA SANDIGO CHILDREN FOUNDATION

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Nora Sandigo Children Foundation, a non-profit organization in my home city of Miami, working around the clock to serve kids in our community who have been separated from their parents by deportation.

I have known Nora, the founder of this organization, for many years, and I have seen firsthand her true passion for ensuring the well-being of these children. Through the support of donors and volunteers, this organization is able to provide assistance in the form of food, clothing, educational programs, legal advice, and many other vital services.

This week, Nora will be visiting our Nation's Capital, with a delegation of 50 children from Florida, to advocate for the restructuring of our immigration policies so that the kids for whom she cares, who are as American as you and I, don't have to grow up apart from their parents.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation must do right for these children, and I urge my colleagues in Congress and the administration to work together so that we can have an immigration system that reflects our Nation's compassion and provides a solution that is fair and just to everyone.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

CONGRESS MUST RESTORE THE FULL PROTECTIONS OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT NOW

(Mr. BROWN of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, last year's Presidential election was the first in 50 years without the full protections of the Voting Rights Act. What was the result?

Fourteen States had new voting restrictions, including strict voter ID, cuts to same-day registration and early voting, and fewer polling places. This suppressed the vote, particularly among voters of color and in poor communities, and had a major impact in close races in North Carolina, Virginia, and Florida, according to the Brennan Center for Justice.

The Voting Rights Act once enjoyed bipartisan support, and Congress should, once again, come together to modernize the law and respond to the Supreme Court's objections. Yet despite calls to pass legislation for the past 4 years, nothing has happened.

Voting is a right, not a privilege, and there is no debating that point.

The Founders in Philadelphia, women at Seneca Falls, and marchers in Selma all recognized the power of the vote. When we protect the rights of voters to make their choices, whatever they may be, we do our part to build a more perfect union.

We can't wait for the next election. Congress must restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act now.

TIME TO BAN TOURIST TRAVEL TO NORTH KOREA

(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, Otto Warmbier was a shining example of what American families hope for sons and daughters: intellectually curious, interested in the world, and bright. Sadly, Otto was murdered by the North Korean dictatorship. By imprisoning him under sham charges, the Communist totalitarian North Korean regime is clearly responsible for his death.

Otto's story highlights the brutality of the North Korean murderers, one that wrongfully imprisons American citizens and uses them as bargaining chips in an effort to gain attention on the world stage. It is past time we strongly restrict tourist travel to this Potemkin atrocity.

I am grateful to have introduced bipartisan legislation, with Congressman ADAM SCHIFF, that would enable the Treasury Department to regulate travel to North Korea through licenses, and no licenses would be able to be granted for tourist travel. Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman ED ROYCE has been instrumental for legislative success.

We will be most successful defeating brutality by denying the dictatorship any source of income and depriving it of the opportunity to use innocent Americans like UVA student Otto Warmbier as hostages.

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

WISHING LIEUTENANT JEFF NEVILLE A SPEEDY RECOVERY

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in my hometown of Flint, Michigan, there was a violent attack on a police officer at Flint Bishop International Airport. And like many in my community, I am shocked and horrified by this cowardly attack.

My thoughts are with injured officer, Lieutenant Jeff Neville, and his family; and I am relieved that he is in stable condition. He is expected to recover. I have known Jeff for decades, dating back to our service together in county government. He is a true public servant, and he is deeply committed to the community that he serves.

His actions to subdue the attacker, even while he was under attack, are truly heroic. He helped save others from potential harm.

I also want to thank those individuals who put themselves in harm's way to help Lieutenant Neville, including the Bishop chief of police, Chris Miller, and an airport maintenance worker who stepped in, Richard Cruell. Their actions saved lives.

I am thankful that the FBI, the Michigan State Police, the Flint Police, and other agencies are investigating this terrible attack as a potential incident of terror.

I just hope all my colleagues will join me in extending their prayers to Lieutenant Neville and his family in hopes for his speedy recovery.

IN MEMORY OF PATRICIA LUCILLE MCKENZIE

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

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Patricia Lucille McKenzie, of Garden City, Michigan. Patricia passed away on May 31, 2017, and is dearly missed by her many family and friends, including her husband of 55 years, Doug McKenzie, and her children, Pamela, Barbara, Phil, and Marcia, as well as her 12 grandchildren.

In her 78 years, Patricia was devoted to her loving family, her faith, and to her strong belief in the principles of American democracy. She is also remembered for her love of her dog, Patty Lou, and, of course, for her passion for the Montreal Canadiens.

Patricia's story is the story of countless Americans: a hardworking person, a patriotic citizen, a loving wife, and a devoted mother.

To Patricia's many family and friends, I hope that during this difficult time you will find comfort in the knowledge that she has been called

home in peace and harmony. Remember that Scripture tells us "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds."

Mr. Speaker, our friend, Patricia Lucille McKenzie, will be dearly missed, but we go on to remember and honor her legacy, just as she would want us to do.

REPUBLICAN HEALTHCARE BILL IS A REPULSIVE SCAM

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, the Senate bill that was unveiled this morning, much like the House Republican healthcare bill, is a repulsive scam perpetrated against the American people.

On page 30 of the bill, section 120, under Executive Compensation Tax Cut, UnitedHealthcare will get a tax cut, under this bill, representing \$15.5 million. If that is not egregious enough, the fact is that UnitedHealthcare is under investigation today by the United States Department of Justice for defrauding the Medicare program of billions of dollars over the last 7 years.

This should be rejected today and, decisively, by all decent Members of this Congress who believe there is a moral responsibility to ensure that the legislation passed here is fair and just.

CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION OF ROSE HISTORICAL CEMETERY IN TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA

(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, last weekend, I had the honor of attending the centennial commemoration of Rose Historical Cemetery in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

Rose is the oldest African-American cemetery in Pinellas County and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It was an especially meaningful ceremony because it was held on Juneteenth, the anniversary marking the end of slavery in the U.S.

Those who have been laid to rest at Rose represent a major part of Tarpon Springs history and culture. Civil rights pioneers, veterans, and many others, including friends I grew up with in Tarpon, are buried there.

I would like to especially thank Tarpon Springs Mayor Chris Alahouzos, Annie Dabbs, a member of the cemetery's board, and the dozens of volunteers who work tirelessly year-round to preserve the legacy of Rose Cemetery. Because of their dedication, Rose continues to be a beautiful, historical site for our community.

□ 1215

CONGRATULATING BABCOCK & WILCOX ON THEIR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of one of Charlotte's most exemplary businesses, Babcock & Wilcox, which today celebrates their 150th anniversary.

Boilers made by Babcock & Wilcox powered Thomas Edison's laboratories and New York's first subway.

During World War II, much of the U.S. Navy fleet was powered by Babcock & Wilcox boilers, and the company supplied components for the vital Manhattan Project. Later Babcock & Wilcox fabricated components for the USS *Nautilus*, the world's first nuclear-powered submarine.

More recently, Babcock & Wilcox has become a leading innovator in emissions control technologies, helping to protect our air, water, and land by controlling emissions from hundreds of power plants and industrial facilities around the world.

In 2010, Babcock & Wilcox moved to Charlotte and became a vital part of the Charlotte region's growing cluster of industry-leading energy firms.

Congratulations today to Babcock & Wilcox's 5,000 employees on this 150th anniversary.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE ADVOCATE JEANNIE CASTELLS

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the tireless dedication of one of New Jersey's greatest Alzheimer's awareness advocates, Jeannie Castells of Lambertville, Hunterdon County.

Jeannie has served as a congressional ambassador for the Alzheimer's Association since 2014, meeting with Members of Congress here on Capitol Hill, holding educational events in which I have participated in Congressional District Seven, and organizing fundraisers like the Walk to End Alzheimer's.

Unfortunately, Jeannie's advocacy does not come without tragedy because the disease has claimed the lives of both her mother and her husband.

And Jeannie's family is not alone, Mr. Speaker. Alzheimer's is the Nation's sixth leading cause of death. More than 5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's, and as many as 16 million Americans are estimated to have Alzheimer's by 2050.

That is why in June, Alzheimer's Awareness Month, I urge advocates around the country, like Jeannie, to continue to fight for Alzheimer's research funding. We are on the verge of a breakthrough, and with your help, we will certainly find one.

ROBERT MUELLER AS SPECIAL COUNSEL IS A CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, for 7½ years before coming to Congress, I was a judge in Tennessee trying felony criminal cases. I tried the attempted murder of James Earl Ray and many other high-profile cases.

Robert Mueller, with his close relationship with James Comey, should never have been appointed as special prosecutor in a case in which Mr. Comey is such a central player. Mr. Mueller should never have accepted such an appointment when offered. That would have been the honorable thing to do.

Then, to make matters much worse, he has hired several lawyers who are big contributors to and are active campaigners for Hillary Clinton and other Democrats.

Most people believe there are many conflicts of interest here. There are hundreds of thousands of lawyers who could have been hired who had not been involved in any way for either the President or Mrs. Clinton.

This investigation has been tainted, and any action now will look like a partisan witch hunt. Former Speaker Gingrich said what we now need is a special counsel to investigate the special counsel.

SUPPORT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, legislation set to pass today to reauthorize and improve upon the Carl Perkins—a Member of this House in the past—Career and Technical Education program.

As a former teacher, it is my firm belief that school is not just and cannot be one size fits all. The Carl Perkins funding has allowed school districts and school boards from across the country to develop innovative programs to educate our Nation's youth.

I have always supported alternative forms of education. Education not only trains the mind, but trains our Nation's youth with valuable skills to succeed outside the classroom and in the workforce.

Many students in my State and across the Nation rely on nontraditional opportunities to achieve success, and Carl Perkins grants have done the job of providing additional opportunities for our youth.

In my State, these programs have led the way to providing our workforce

with valuable certificates and credentials in Alaska's many industries. They include: qualification for Alaska's maritime and transportation industry; certifications in welding and carpentry; pre-apprenticeships for electricians, heavy equipment operators, and ironworkers; medical certifications, such as EMTs and certified nursing aides; certification of OSHA and HAZMAT agencies; and culinary arts and building maintenance repair.

These are all programs, Mr. Speaker, that help the working person and the young person to become prepared—just not going to college. They can become someone that can contribute to the good of our State and our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this legislation. I proudly stand here to support H.R. 2353.

HONORING THE LIVES OF CURTIS BILLUE AND CHRISTOPHER MONICA

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

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of two Georgia State corrections officers, Sergeants Curtis Billue and Christopher Monica, who were killed in the line of duty on June 13 in Putnam County, Georgia.

I share with their families the deep sorrow perpetrated by the violence of two rogue inmates, and I pray that God comforts the Billue and Monica families in their time of grief.

Described as hardworking, kind, and devoted, Sergeants Billue and Monica will be remembered for their service and sacrifice, for their loyalty as public servants, and for their love and dedication to their families.

I am grateful that the two perpetrators of this crime have been brought back into custody, and I am confident that justice will be served.

American law enforcement officers make a promise to keep our country and communities safe. In return, we must restore the tradition of respect and honor that is owed to all members of the law enforcement community who are on the front lines.

In gratitude to Sergeants Billue and Monica, Governor Nathan Deal ordered the flags of Georgia to fly at halfstaff on July 17 and 20.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing their lives and service and to say "thank you" to every brother and sister in uniform who stand on that thin blue line.

COMMENDING ARMY SPECIALIST MICHAEL MARTENEY FOR HIS HEROISM

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay special recognition to Army Specialist Michael Marteney for an incred-

ible act of heroism. While off duty, Specialist Marteney displayed remarkable selflessness and courage in the rescue and treatment of a fatally wounded civilian.

On May 27, 2017, a motor home traveling in Oak Grove, Kentucky, collided with a civilian building. With complete disregard for his own personal safety, Michael pulled his car over to the site of the accident and rushed to the scene. The front of the motor home was crushed, and Michael saw that the driver had life-threatening injuries to his head and leg.

With gasoline still rapidly spilling from the vehicle, Michael was able to gain access to the passenger side of the motor home and fashion a makeshift tourniquet. Oak Grove Police Officer Sergeant Havens arrived on scene and handed Michael a combat application tourniquet, which he swiftly applied.

Despite the imminence of fire or explosion, Michael went into the back of the motor home to locate a first-aid kit. Michael conveyed lifesaving information to EMS about the driver's disposition that prompted the call for immediate flight evacuation services.

If Specialist Michael Marteney had not taken control of the situation and implemented key medical assistance, the wounded driver would not have survived the trauma sustained.

I am honored to recognize Specialist Marteney's lifesaving actions, an inspiring illustration of the good will of others and the consequences of brave deeds. I thank Specialist Marteney for his bravery and all others in Oak Grove who were involved in the rescue.

RECOGNIZING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY'S PIONEER CLASS

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

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 50th anniversary of Grand Valley State University's pioneer class.

In June of 1967, in a tent on its Allendale, Michigan campus, Grand Valley held its long dreamed of first commencement ceremony. On that day, 138 seniors, including 86 members of the pioneer class that started in 1963, received their diplomas from Michigan's newest college.

These first graduates laid the foundation of a university that would grow to offer 124 degrees, enroll students from 82 different countries, and boast a 94 percent employment rate for its graduates—always a good thing.

After that first graduation ceremony in 1967, GVSU had 138 alumni. Today, the university has over 110,000 proud alumni throughout Michigan and, frankly, around the globe.

Under the leadership of its first president, James Zumberge, followed by the continued guidance of Arend Lubbers, Mark Murray, and current president, Thomas Haas, Grand Valley has come

to be a renowned institution and one of the 100 largest universities in this Nation.

During the very first commencement address, a speaker noted: "No one could ever possibly chart your course through these years." And it is hard to imagine that the pioneer class could have dreamed of the role that they would be playing in helping Grand Valley State University achieve such great heights.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Grand Valley State University's pioneer class of 1967, the original "Lakers for a Lifetime."

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2842, ACCELERATING INDIVIDUALS INTO THE WORKFORCE ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 396 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 396

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, 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. 2842) to provide for the conduct of demonstration projects to test the effectiveness of subsidized employment for TANF recipients. 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 Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-22. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments 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. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the

amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. 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.

SEC. 2. It shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of June 22, 2017, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1 of rule XV, relating to the bill (H.R. 2353) to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

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

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday the Rules Committee met and reported a rule for consideration of a very important measure. The resolution provides for consideration of H.R. 2842, Accelerating Individuals into the Workforce Act.

□ 1230

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2842 is a commonsense proposal to help transition welfare recipients into steady, paying jobs. Moving welfare recipients into work is a central goal of TANF, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. This bipartisan bill would incentivize employers to hire TANF recipients and help subsidize these new employees' salaries for up to a year to allow them to transition into the workforce.

The policy idea behind H.R. 2842 is simple: under this bill, States can establish partnerships with employers to hire recipients of TANF dollars. Through these partnerships, employers would receive a subsidy of up to 50 percent of the wage for a TANF recipient while the other 50 percent would be paid by the employer.

Beneficiaries would have to meet three requirements: they must be a TANF recipient, they must be unemployed, and they must have an income of 20 percent or less of the Federal poverty level. H.R. 2842 will direct our resources to the neediest individuals and families to help them accelerate these welfare recipients back into the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, President Ronald Reagan once noted: "We should meas-

ure welfare's success by how many people leave welfare, not by how many people are added."

The legislation under consideration in today's rule is a fulfillment of that promise. Under H.R. 2842, State and local governments will be able to better utilize their TANF dollars to help move individuals into paying work and eventually help them transition out of the welfare system altogether.

Helping people get back to work is a great deal for the individuals who will be helped under this program, for the employers, for the economy, and for the American people. This bill is, at its core, about helping unemployed Americans get back to work.

Mr. Speaker, we are a nation filled with hardworking people, and I have seen over and over again how badly many of the unemployed want to return to work. Many, if not most, recipients of TANF are in the program not because they want to be, but because they have been forced to be by circumstance. These unemployed Americans want nothing more than to return to the dignity of the workforce as quickly as they are able to do so. This bill will help remove barriers to employment and will incentivize employers to hire current TANF recipients.

Workers re-entering the workforce is a good thing for society. Not only will workers who receive jobs under this program be taken off of welfare rolls, thus ensuring the continued success of that program, but these new workers will be better able to contribute to better lives for themselves, for their families, and for their communities.

Here in Washington, we too often describe policy solutions as being "commonsense" or "win-win," but in this case it is absolutely true. H.R. 2842 is a commonsense solution and is a win-win for everyone involved: the workers, the employers, the community, and the country.

That is why this legislation will receive a substantial bipartisan vote tomorrow. Whatever their differences, Republicans and Democrats alike want to put unemployed people back to work. This bill will actually succeed in doing that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the rule and the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Oklahoma for yielding to me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

This measure is a bipartisan bill that will help Americans receiving support from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families find good-paying jobs.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are more than 6 million job openings in our country. That is the highest level recorded since we started tracking this data, yet the share of Americans participating in the workforce is at a four-decade low. Clearly, there are underlying issues

that need to be addressed to get more people plugged into the workforce.

For people looking for jobs, TANF serves as a lifeline. TANF is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and is designed to help in-need families achieve self-sufficiency. Under the program, States receive block grants to design and operate their own programs to fulfill the goals of the TANF program.

It is important to note that States are at risk of financial penalty if TANF participants receive more than a year of education or if States have more than 30 percent of the State TANF caseload in education and training programs. Due to these limits, States have largely abandoned efforts to promote or support work in their TANF programs. This is important to understand because one of the most effective ways to get more people employed is through employer-driven on-the-job training.

Research has shown that, properly structured, these programs result in better and more stable employment, especially for individuals who are otherwise unlikely to find work.

Although the measure we are debating today does not address this issue, this bill will help tip the scale back toward job-training programs. H.R. 2842 establishes demonstration projects that combine work, training, and support for hard-to-employ TANF recipients.

This bill provides a onetime appropriation of \$100 million to subsidize these programs. After the 12-month period, States are going to be required to report to Congress on the effectiveness of subsidizing wages in moving individuals receiving TANF into full-time jobs.

Since we are talking about jobs, we need to recognize that we as an institution have not provided the necessary resources to get people back to work. If you were to ask any Member of this body to outline his or her top priorities, I guarantee you that job creation would be mentioned every single time. We all agree on the need, but from there, the conversation stops. There are lots of proposals in Congress to create jobs, but we have been unable to pass a large-scale, bipartisan bill for quite some time. This really needs to change.

Given the legislation we are debating today, it is interesting to me that President Donald John Trump's budget proposal cut workforce training programs by 39 percent. Rather than present a jobs bill, he has presented a plan that would actually stop helping people looking for jobs. That, in my judgment, is penny-wise and pound-foolish. In bringing forward this legislation, I think it is being made clear that this body does not share that approach, but we need to do more than a single, targeted bill.

Five months into the Trump administration, Republican leadership still has not put forward a single large-scale piece of legislation to create good-pay-

ing jobs or raise the wages of hard-working Americans, but its leadership has rejected Democratic proposals out of hand.

We should be working every day on creating jobs and raising wages for everyone everywhere in America. But instead of focusing on job creation, Donald John Trump's budget request would destroy approximately 1.4 million jobs.

His budget would eviscerate billions of dollars from critical job-creating investments in infrastructure and innovation, dismantle skills training programs like the one we are discussing here today, ransack education benefits, and leave our country in a weakened state. Instead of bringing jobs back to communities that have fallen on hard times, the budget walks away from them.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will leave it at this. The underlying measure we are debating today is a good step forward. But one step is not nearly enough. We need to do more, not less, to strengthen our communities and help working families.

Just as I urge Donald John Trump to move past the campaign rhetoric and get serious, I also urge this body to lead with more bipartisan measures that will provide for necessary resources for those who need them most.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by agreeing with my good friend on many of the points that he made. I was particularly struck by the point he made about the low participation rate in the labor force. That has been a problem that has been with us, quite frankly, for, as he pointed out, several decades, and it is one that has gotten worse.

That is attributable in large part to another point that my friend made, effectively the thing around here we call the skills gap. We have literally millions of jobs available in this country, and employers are ready to hire people but they simply don't have the training.

I couldn't agree more with my good friend that on-the-job training is sometimes the best training. You actually acquire the skill that you need to be successful, and the situation of this legislation will actually, again, offset the cost of that to the employer and, by the way, not add any cost to the taxpayer.

That is something we ought to talk about as well. We are just taking money that we would have been spending anyway, and we are spending it a lot more productively.

Now, my friend is right. This is a new program. This is a new approach. So trying it out for a year, spending \$100 million—a lot of money—but obviously we would spend more this way if we would know this would be successful. But I can't help but think it will be successful.

It is important to note that this bill is actually, again, exceptionally bipar-

tisan. I was struck, as I hope my friend was, yesterday when we were in Rules Committee considering this legislation. We are used to seeing the members of the Ways and Means Committee come up and sort of fight in front of us. Instead, they actually came up arm in arm with a bipartisan proposal that they had agreed to that, again, is an excellent, excellent work.

It is exactly the way that Congress should work, quite frankly: find common ground and advance commonsense solutions that make life better for the American people. In this case, at least, I think we have succeeded in doing that.

It is also important to note that the rule authorizes the consideration of H.R. 2353, the so-called Perkins grant program. The Perkins grant is something we are pretty familiar with in Oklahoma. This is Federal money that moves into career tech systems that helps actually, again, workers acquire the necessary skills to be productive, quite often, again, working with the employer who has already got the jobs available. We then train the worker at a career tech system partly funded with Federal dollars, and that person is assured the job the day they walk out.

I suspect that bill, like this bill, when it finally reaches the floor will also have substantial bipartisan support. I want to pledge to my good friend that we are going to continue to work together on things like this. I don't think anybody disagrees about putting Americans back to work. Workers would rather be at work than, frankly, just receiving government assistance and not able to go work. So this bill does that.

I want to urge support of the rule and, again, the underlying legislation.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE), who is a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for the underlying legislation, which includes my amendment expanding apprenticeships for American workers.

I would like to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for supporting this important effort in the Ways and Means Committee, and I look forward to its passage.

We can all agree that helping people find long-term employment in a high-demand industry is one of the best ways to ensure that everyone has economic security. But technological advancements like automation and artificial intelligence are dramatically shifting the way our economy works, and these changes are only going to accelerate.

We cannot allow American workers to be left behind. Congress needs to be forward looking, not reactive, in crafting policies that help workers who are displaced from the workforce. I believe that means we need a national

commitment to addressing the skills gap and mitigating disruption in an evolving 21st century economy.

Apprenticeships and on-the-job training are an important part of that equation. Apprenticeships can be an incredible opportunity for businesses and workers alike.

□ 1245

They allow employers to build a pipeline of qualified workers while equipping job seekers with the specific skills they need to find and keep good-paying jobs.

Oftentimes, they provide skills that are portable and meaningful anywhere in the country, giving workers more freedom to transfer between companies and industries.

In my home State of Washington, investments and apprenticeships have been shown to give a higher return on investment than any other job training program, returning \$23 for each dollar that is invested.

It is important to remember these investments not only have an incredible impact on our economy but also on people's lives by helping them become more self-sufficient through specialized training and increased earning potential.

I appreciate my colleague's bipartisan support for this amendment, and I urge its passage in the underlying legislation.

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

Decades of experience tell us that the most effective antipoverty program is a job, and this bill helps low-income Americans earn success through the dignity of work.

States actually, as my good friends on the other side know, spend very little of their TANF funding on moving people into jobs. Today, half of all TANF recipients are neither working nor preparing for work. This bill ensures that money only goes to those who are working, providing individuals with paychecks in lieu of benefit checks, a key tenet in welfare reform.

This pilot only provides funding for one fiscal year, repurposing money that has already been appropriated and, frankly, using it in a better way than it was originally appropriated to achieve.

The bill requires that States report on outcome measures and provide high-quality evaluations so that Congress can make appropriate decisions after we have actually seen the results yielded by the program.

And finally, as we have been pointing out, but I think around here it is always worth pointing out multiple times, where actually CBO estimates the bill has no cost. So we are actually doing something good without increasing expenditures for the taxpayers, and, indeed, we are probably in the process of creating new taxpayers, people who can contribute to the wealth and the activity and the prosperity of the country; and people, honestly, who

want to contribute to the wealth and the activity; and employers who want to provide people with an opportunity to improve themselves and become more productive.

So it is a good bill all the way around, and, again, I will be urging the passage of the rule and the underlying legislation.

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

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

President Donald John Trump campaigned on the promise of job creation; however, his budget paints a very different picture. It cuts job training programs by 39 percent, and its radical spending cuts would lead to massive job losses.

In this body, we talk a lot about jobs, but we are 6 months into this Congress and have failed to pass any major job creation bills. While the bipartisan legislation before us today is, indeed, as my good friend points out, a step in the right direction, we can and we must do more.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that I have an amendment in my hand that will generate thousands of American jobs. If we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative DEFAZIO's bipartisan bill, H.R. 2510, the Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act. This bill will create thousands of new American jobs through increased investment in our Nation's wastewater infrastructure. Here is a chance to take today's momentum a step further and consider Mr. DEFAZIO's bill in addition to the bipartisan TANF bill.

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 Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), my very good friend, the distinguished ranking member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee who will discuss our proposal.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for this opportunity. As he noted, the President has talked and tweeted incessantly about creating jobs and infrastructure investment, but, unfortunately, the only substantive proposal to come out of the White House that relates to infrastructure, infrastructure investment, and jobs is in his budget, and it actually reduces Federal investment in infrastructure, which would basically eliminate jobs.

So I mean, the bill before us today, bipartisan bill on apprenticeships is great, but you have got to apprentice for something that is real: a job in the end, construction.

America is falling apart, and, right now, we have nothing but rhetoric coming out of the White House, and now ideology. They are talking about privatizing all of the infrastructure in the United States so that you will pay tolls everywhere you go, and, you know, they call it asset recycling. They have come up with a catchy new name. That has been floated, but they haven't put any substance behind it.

So this amendment would allow the House to debate and pass H.R. 2510, Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017. This bill would provide \$25 billion in direct infrastructure investment over the next 5 years to address America's crumbling wastewater infrastructure and local water quality challenges.

The state of our water infrastructure, according to the American Society of Engineers' report card of 2017, is a D-plus. Meanwhile, municipalities across the country have a backlog of more than \$40 billion—B, billion—in clean water infrastructure projects, and, according to the EPA, communities need close to \$300 billion over the next 20 years to bring their systems into a state of good repair.

It is clear that we cannot continue to neglect the serious needs of our aging water infrastructure. As these systems fail and degrade, they pose a risk to the health and safety of our citizens and obviously the environment.

I know the President promised, during his campaign, to make clean water a priority. I agree with that. He promised to triple funding for State revolving loan fund programs to help States and local governments upgrade critical drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.

Well, here is a chance to deliver on that promise. H.R. 2510 does exactly that. It triples investment in America's crumbling water infrastructure.

I was a county commissioner at a time when the Federal Government was a good partner, and, in those days, they put up 85 percent of the cost of our wastewater system. We put up the other 15. You know, this could—by renewing this legislation and a commitment to the State revolving loan fund programs and adding in a grant component for lower income areas, that could, you know, be a great step in terms of Federal partnership and creating actual jobs for the apprentices that this bill wants to create.

There is widespread support for this legislation. I include in the RECORD letters of endorsement from 30 separate groups.

OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL,
Columbus, OH.

Hon. GARRET GRAVES,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAVES AND RANKING MEMBER NAPOLITANO: On behalf of the Ohio Environmental Council, I am writing to enthusiastically support the Water Quality

Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017. This bill bolsters the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) by authorizing \$20 billion over five years for loans to improve wastewater infrastructure in local communities. It also provides crucial additional funding to help states control water pollution and address challenges from outdated sewer systems.

The need for this bill has never been greater as the nation faces a \$40 billion backlog of clean water infrastructure projects, with cities and towns needing \$300 billion over 20 years to update their water systems. In Ohio, the American Society of Civil Engineers found our state needs a total \$14.58 billion for wastewater improvements. The Clean Water SRF is an essential resource to help meet this need.

The Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) program, Ohio's Clean Water SRF, continues to provide fundamental capacity to improve water quality for Ohio communities and residents. The program includes several different loan options that help both cities and rural communities prevent water pollution. This includes funding to upgrade and replace Home Sewage Treatment Systems (HSTS), as well as assistance for wastewater collection and treatment, stormwater activities, and efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Interest from the WPCLF program funds the preservation and restoration of aquatic habitat to counter the loss of natural systems that helped maintain the health of Ohio's water resources.

Since its inception the Clean Water SRF has provided \$7.2 billion serving 621 villages, cities, counties and sewer districts helping to curb pollution while providing quality jobs. To ensure this program's continuing success and help Ohio address our water infrastructure needs, I urge your support for the Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017.

Sincerely,

HEATHER TAYLOR-MIESLE,
Executive Director.

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF
SANITATION AGENCIES,
Sacramento, CA.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Ranking Member, Committee on Public Works and Transportation, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE NAPOLITANO,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR RANKING MEMBERS DEFAZIO AND NAPOLITANO: The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) is pleased to support your efforts to address the water infrastructure funding gap and specifically the introduction of the Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017. For 60 years, CASA has been the leading voice for California's public wastewater agencies on regulatory, legislative and legal issues.

CASA agencies are faced with mounting challenges of aging infrastructure, growing demands from increasing population, and emerging challenges from changing climate conditions. Confronted with these realities, there is clear demand for increased infrastructure investment, including the need to invest in water recycling infrastructure and clean energy facilities derived from the wastewater treatment process.

Under your legislation, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) would be renewed at \$20 billion over five years. This authorization represents a critical down payment toward a robust federal commitment to the nation's water infrastructure needs. According to the report, the financial burden to

simply meet water quality and water-related public health goals of the Clean Water Act (CWA) in California was in excess of \$26 billion in 2012. Due to drought conditions and other strains on our wastewater systems, that figure has only gone up over the last 5 years. Nationwide the demand for all clean and drinking water infrastructure needs has been estimated at more than \$300 billion over the next two decades. CASA also supports the bill's provisions to authorize grant assistance for water recycling as well as the programs to address stormwater flows and combined sewer overflows. In California, the ability to construct water-recycling projects is vital to a safe and reliable water supply and to ensure protection of our ecosystems.

As you and your colleagues work to develop a comprehensive water infrastructure policy for the nation, we look forward to working with you to advance meaningful federal assistance programs.

ADAM D. LINK,
Director of Government Affairs.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2017.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR RANKING MEMBER DEFAZIO: The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) supports The Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017 to provide needed funds to fix the nation's wastewater treatment systems.

The nation's wastewater treatment systems are the most basic and critical infrastructure systems for protecting public health and the environment, but are badly underfunded. Nearly 240 million Americans—76% of the population—rely on the nation's 14,748 treatment plants for wastewater sanitation. By 2032 it is expected that 56 million more people will connect to centralized treatment plants, rather than private septic systems—a 23% increase in demand. In the U.S., there are over 800,000 miles of public sewers and 500,000 miles of private lateral sewers connecting private property to public sewer lines. Each of these conveyance systems is susceptible to structural failure, blockages, and overflows.

In March, ASCE released its 2017 Infrastructure Report Card, which graded our nation's wastewater systems a "D+." Many wastewater systems are aging and it's expected that over the next two decades, requiring at least \$271 billion to meet current and future demands.

This legislation is an important step towards meeting our country's wastewater investment needs and improving our wastewater systems.

Sincerely,

BRIAN PALLASCH,
Managing Director, Government Relations & Infrastructure Initiatives.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK,
May 2, 2017.

Re WIN's Strong Support for the Water Quality Improvement and Job Creation Act.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR RANKING MEMBER DEFAZIO: The Water Infrastructure Network (WIN), a coalition of the nation's leading construction, engineering, municipal, conservation, public works, labor and manufacturing organizations, strongly supports the Water Quality Improvement and Job Creation Act. WIN also commends your continued work to reauthorize our nation's critical water infrastructure funding programs. The United

States is facing a water infrastructure funding crisis as documented in recent reports by CBO, EPA and WIN pointing to a shortfall in funding for clean water infrastructure that exceeds \$300 Billion over the next two decades. The Clean Water Act was last reauthorized in 1987 and WIN believes that consideration and passage of legislation providing substantial increased investment in America's Water Infrastructure is long overdue.

WIN is encouraged by the growing bipartisan support in Congress for investing in our nation's clean water infrastructure. The FY '17 Appropriation Package released this week calls for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to be funded at \$1.39 Billion—a \$414 M increase over the original FY '17 funding request. The Trump Administration has also made investments in our nation's water infrastructure a top priority for the Environmental Protection Agency, requesting increases in funding for both the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act State Revolving Funds in their 2018 Budget.

WIN believes Congress must seize this unique opportunity make long overdue investments in our nation's critical water infrastructure. Investments in water infrastructure make eminent economic and environmental sense for our nation. WIN is committed to working with you and the bipartisan leadership of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to advance water infrastructure funding legislation in the First Session of the 115th Congress.

Sincerely,

The WIN Executive Committee—American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), American Public Works Association (APWA), American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Associated General Contractors of America (AGCA), International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA), National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), National Rural Water Association (NRWA), United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters (The United), and the Vinyl Institute (VI).

OREGON WATER RESOURCES CONGRESS,
Salem, Oregon, May 3, 2017.

Re The Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Washington, DC.

REPRESENTATIVE DEFAZIO: On behalf of the Oregon Water Resources Congress (OWRC), I am writing to express our support of Congressman DeFazio's efforts to reauthorize the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and tackle the water quality financing needs in the country under The Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017. The CWSRF is an effective program that addresses critical water infrastructure needs while benefitting the environment, local communities, and the economy.

OWRC was established in 1912 as a trade association to support the protection of water rights and promote the wise stewardship of water resources statewide. OWRC members are local governmental entities, which include irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, water improvement districts, and other agricultural water suppliers that deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon. These water stewards operate complex water management systems, including water supply reservoirs, canals, pipelines, and hydropower facilities that serve a diverse set of farmers, ranchers, and other water users contributing to the local and global economy.

The CWSRF is a perfect example of the type of program that should be reauthorized because it creates jobs while benefitting the environment, and is an efficient return on taxpayer investment. CWSRF funded projects provide family wage jobs in construction and professional services industry that are a crucial component to economic recovery in Oregon and other states. Moreover, as a loan program, it is a wise investment that allows local communities to leverage their limited resources and address critical infrastructure needs that would otherwise be unmet.

OWRC was very pleased to see the passage of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN) by Congress in December last year. An integral piece of the funding puzzle for our member districts was reinstated by this act, irrigation district eligibility for principal forgiveness. The CWSRF is often an integral part of an overall package of state, federal and local funding that necessitates a stronger level of assurance that loan funds will be available for planned water infrastructure projects. Irrigation districts are often located in rural communities and have a small number of farmers with limited capacity to take on loan debt. Even a small reduction in the principal repayment obligations can make the difference in whether or not a district can move forward with a project.

The CWSRF program is an important tool utilized by OWRC members across Oregon, and we applaud this effort by Congressman DeFazio to reauthorize this key program. OWRC looks forward to working with the Committee and this Congress as the Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017 moves forward.

Sincerely,

APRIL SNELL,
Executive Director,
Oregon Water Resources Congress.

SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL
LAW CENTER,
Washington, DC, May 3, 2017.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. JIMMY DUNCAN,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES DEFAZIO, NAPOLITANO AND DUNCAN: Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) writes in support of the Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2017. At a time when much of our nation's infrastructure is at a breaking point, bolstering our national infrastructure funds is more critical than ever. Thank you for your leadership on clean water infrastructure investment.

This bill authorizes \$20 billion in Federal grants over five years to capitalize Clean Water State Revolving Funds (Clean Water SRF). Across the country, many communities are struggling with how to pay for needed investments and upgrades to infrastructure that protects clean water and public health. According to the 2012 Clean Watersheds Needs Survey, municipalities need close to \$300 billion in investment over the next 20 years to bring their wastewater and stormwater management infrastructure to a state of good repair.

The Clean Water SRF provides a critical source of funding to states to address water infrastructure needs and reduce pollution from stormwater and wastewater across the

country. This legislation will help communities address the estimated \$40 billion backlog in clean water infrastructure projects. Additionally, this investment in our water infrastructure is good for the economy. The report Water Works: Rebuilding infrastructure, Creating Jobs and Greening the Environment shows that investments in our water infrastructure, including green infrastructure, would conservatively yield 1.9 million American jobs and add \$265 billion to the economy.

This legislation authorizes \$20 billion in Federal grants over five years for the Clean Water SRF to provide low-interest loans and additional loan subsidizations to communities for wastewater infrastructure. We are supportive of efforts to increase the resiliency of treatment works to natural or man-made disasters. In the face of a changing climate, resiliency of our nation's infrastructure is increasingly important.

Also, this legislation authorizes \$2.5 billion over five years for grants to address combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and recapture and reuse of municipal stormwater. CSOs and SSOs pose a significant health and safety risk to communities and can damage local economies that are dependent on clean water and tourism. We are supportive of funds to address this ongoing problem that can cost communities significant resources to address.

Economists estimate that between 20,000 and 26,600 construction, engineering, and manufacturing jobs are created for every billion dollars of federal investment in water infrastructure. Investments in the Clean Water SRFs are critical to protect public health, promote job creation, and restore clean water in our rivers, lakes, and streams.

SELC appreciates your leadership on clean water infrastructure investment and your continued work on reducing pollution related to aging and inadequately funded infrastructure.

Sincerely,

NAVIS A. BERMUDEZ,
Deputy Legislative Director,
Southern Environmental Law Center.

Mr. DEFAZIO. And according to the National Utility Contractors Association, every billion dollars invested in our Nation's water infrastructure creates or sustains 27,000 real jobs in the private sector. That means that the \$20 billion in Federal investment in the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, including H.R. 2510, would create or sustain approximately 540,000 jobs.

This is real. It is real. Real jobs for real people and real improvements in the infrastructure of this country. This would be a great step forward, and I urge that my colleagues adopt the amendment.

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

Mr. Speaker, we have been having such a wonderful bipartisan moment here. My good friend from Oregon, and appropriately, wants to change the tenor a little bit.

Let me begin by actually congratulating my good friend from Oregon because he is a serious legislator and does serious things, and I am probably going to find myself on the same side with him on the issue of air traffic controllers where I think his points have been very well made.

On this particular piece of legislation, I must admit, I have not had the

opportunity. I don't sit on my friend's committee to actually read it, but I suspect the committee hasn't picked it up and dealt with it either.

And just from a process standpoint, I think the appropriate thing to do would be for the committee to actually review it. It could be amended in committee, as indeed this bill was, and then we would have the opportunity to consider it on the floor. But to bring it to the floor immediately, to me, is premature, legislatively.

I also want to take issue, on the record, with my friends of the President of the United States in terms of job creation. I suspect President Trump, in his private life, has created more jobs than just about anybody in the Congress of the United States, and I think he has laid forward some incredibly important proposals to continue and build on his personal record, now that he is President of the United States.

One of those proposals, as my friends are surely aware, because I think they largely agree with it, is to enhance the apprenticeship program announcement he made recently. Another one that my friends may not be quite so much in agreement with, he has laid out his principles for tax reform.

The greatest engine for job growth is never going to be the Federal Government. It is going to always be the private sector. And if we could, as the President has suggested, cut corporate tax rates, incentivize the return of profit, something where perhaps we can work together, that are stranded overseas, bring them back here and invest in America, I think we would create a lot more jobs a lot more quickly and in a lot more sustainable fashion than we would do through additional public spending.

Finally, I think we ought to give the President a little bit of credit for emphasizing and bringing home American jobs, something that actually began once he was President-elect. We saw it in Indiana with Carrier air-conditioning. We have seen it in other cases where he has promoted the sale of American arms in the Middle East where we have got substantial things.

So I think this is a President who actually gets up each and every day and thinks profoundly about what can we do to create an overall ecosystem, an environment, if you will, that will incentivize private investment, private employment, American jobs, and bringing American companies back to this country.

I think he is actually off to an exceptionally good start in those areas, and I look forward to working with him on that. I suspect we will see a tax proposal on this floor in the not-too-distant future—our friends on Ways and Means are working on it now—that will mirror many of the principles that the President laid out in his initial draft discussion of what he thinks we ought to do.

And that one change, changing the Tax Code, I think, will do more than

all the programs that we would work on, many of them worthy programs, many of them things, I think, where the Federal Government does have a role.

I will agree with my friend from Florida, I am disturbed about some of the cuts in training programs. I have seen those programs work and work well, and I suspect the President will find out—we used to routinely praise President Obama's budget on the floor. It never got very many votes. I don't think it ever got any Democratic votes—that, you know, Presidents propose, as they should, that is their prerogative, they run the executive branch, but, at the end of the day, it is Congress that makes the final funding decisions.

I happen to know a little bit about those programs because they come through my subcommittee on appropriations, and I want to assure my friends they are not going to disappear. And we may have to make some tough choices, as you always have to do, in appropriated dollars, but on many of the programs that I know my friend cares about and has championed in his distinguished career, they are going to be protected, and we are going to try and work in a bipartisan fashion in those areas and keep those things going.

But, at the end of the day, I think the President's record on job creation will be outstanding, and I think the actions that he has taken in the opening part of his administration are a testament to how seriously he takes the challenge of making sure that every American has a decent job, a job that pays a good wage, a job that will provide for his or her family, and a job that will give them an opportunity to live a life of dignity and prosperity, something we want every American to have a chance at.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I first want to address my good friend about the previous question and the fact that it has not gone through the process. I will just remind him that the chatter in Washington today is about a healthcare measure that hasn't gone through the process, at least to the extent that most of us would all want.

I also have great respect for my good friend from Oklahoma, and I know he will see and get a chance to talk with President Donald John Trump. I am not likely to.

□ 1300

But I would ask him to tell him when he sees him for me that I came here in 1993, and there were 14,000 bridges in need of repair in America, and last year the statistics from the society that does that analysis showed that there are 54,000 bridges in need of repair in this country. The point that I wish to make is that we need a serious substantial infrastructure measure.

Mr. Speaker, we talk a lot about jobs in this Chamber. I was at a forum on Saturday, and someone mentioned: My governor's mantra is "jobs, jobs, jobs." And that person said: Well, he must mean that you have to have three jobs in order to get by.

I am glad that we are here today considering a bill that will help Americans in search of work to find a good-paying position that will help them support themselves and their families. We have a lot of issues facing us, and this bipartisan legislation is just one tiny step forward in the right direction. I hope this measure translates into more bipartisan bills.

Too often, from healthcare reform, tax reform—footnote right there. My friend mentions that we will likely see a tax reform measure sometime soon. I hope that it doesn't revert to trickle down. We have seen trickle down. It did not work, and I hope we don't do that again.

We have an opportunity on other issues, and in many respects the majority has shut out the minority from the process, just like what has happened until today, at least, in the other body with reference to healthcare.

The bills we have debated and even passed are projected to eliminate millions of jobs. Even as we talk about job creation, my friends across the aisle too frequently turn around and champion measures that would do just the opposite. There is so much room for cooperation in this area, yet time and time again we are kept out of the process, and the results speak for themselves. For the sake of our country, this needs to change.

Even though this is a bipartisan bill, it also serves as an example of what I mean. I was disappointed that my Republican colleagues in the Rules Committee blocked yesterday six germane amendments to this bill. It is a symptom of the closed process. When we prevent germane amendments from even being debated by the House, it does us all a disservice, yet my friends across the aisle do it again and again.

Mr. Speaker, I will close with this: President Obama is credited for creating 11.3 million jobs in our country. The economy added jobs for 75 straight months, and very fortunately that carryover for the last 5 months has continued.

While President Donald John Trump makes untenable pledge after pledge, I watched every word of his speech last night in Iowa, and all I heard was platitudes. I didn't hear anything about substance. And it seemed like a road test for some new ideas. He makes these untenable pledges, including a very humble promise to be—and I quote him—"the greatest jobs producer that God ever created."

The record is clear, the Democratic Party is, has been, and will be the party of job creation, and is ready to work with my Republican colleagues to continue significant job creation in this country.

So I will ask my friends across the aisle, let us continue the trend of the past few years and work together to produce bipartisan measures that will benefit the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by addressing a couple of points that my friend made. There will be places we agree; there will be places we disagree. I think too often around here we talk about how nothing gets done when this has actually been an extraordinarily productive period in terms of passing legislation. We are going to have differences on some of that legislation, there is no question. There is a reason why God created a Democratic Party and a Republican Party, and it probably wasn't to always agree all the time, but it was to challenge one another and try to work together when they could or define alternative paths when they felt they must, and let the American people make the decision.

Fortunately, we are blessed to live in a country where they get to make that decision on a regular basis like clockwork. They have been making some decisions recently. I think the President has had a pretty good run in special elections. We are pretty pleased with the decisions they have been making. But at some point they will change their mind—they always do—and they will decide somebody else has a better way.

I think in the interim we ought to stress occasionally so the American people know when we do work together. I actually was home after we managed to pass healthcare through this particular body, and that bill moved through multiple committees, had multiple amendments, lots of negotiation. Obviously it is in the Senate now. I think that process will start over there. But the day before we passed it, actually, we came together in a really quite remarkable way. We passed an omnibus spending bill of over \$1 trillion. That bill had worked through the Appropriations Committee of each House, 12 different bills put together to fund the Federal Government. That particular bill gave us the largest increase in defense spending in about a decade, the largest increase in border security money in about a decade. It gave us a substantial increase in money at the National Institutes of Health and at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, areas that Democrats and Republicans alike have been working together on and feel very strongly about.

That bill also broke the one-to-one relationship—pretty artificial relationship, in my view—that President Obama had laid down that, if you increase defense spending, you have to automatically increase domestic spending whether you need to or not or whether you can afford to or not.

Frankly, that bill actually passed with a majority of my friends on the Democratic side in both the House and the Senate and a majority of Republicans in the House and the Senate voting for the same bill and Donald Trump signing the bill.

Now, when I go home and I explain that to people, they look at me with a blank stare. It is like: What? That really happened? One trillion dollars with all those different elements in there and a majority of Democrats voted for it and a majority of Republicans voted for it and Donald Trump signed it?

I say: Yeah.

They are amazed. They have never heard about it. They have never seen it. I think that is because sometimes we present a false narrative of constant conflict. There is certainly plenty of conflict here. Look, I have some sympathy with the minority. Having been in the minority myself, you always feel shut out. But this is an occasion—this legislation, and, frankly, that spending bill—when my friends certainly weren't shut out. They participated, and they participated vigorously, and they contributed in the process.

I am with my friend. We need to do more of that. As a matter of fact, I think you will see it is happening right now. If you go to the Defense Committee, they are working on their authorization bill. That committee is the most bipartisan committee probably in Congress. Every time they report something out on an authorization—I think they have 63 or 64 members, something like that—the vote is always like 60 to 3. They have clearly put aside their partisan differences to work together.

In this bill, we have done exactly the same thing. So while we are going to have some points where we disagree, we are going to have some opportunities to agree and come together. And I pledge to my friend I will continue to work with him to try and see that we find more of them.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to encourage all of the Members, obviously, to support the rule, but I am sure my good friends on the other side probably won't accept the invitation. That is okay. This is a process vote and they have got other matters they want on the floor, and I certainly understand that they will be opposing our rule and trying to offer an alternative.

But when the matter counts, when the actual legislation reaches the floor, I think H.R. 2842 will draw broad bipartisan support. This House is taking steps to help workers leave welfare rolls and return to the workforce. Under this bill, employers will be incentivized to hire TANF recipients and will help bring the unemployed up into the workforce and the economy.

This bill is a commonsense bipartisan solution that will benefit everyone: the workers, the employers, the community, the economy, and the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to applaud my colleagues on the other side of the aisle

for their work on this important piece of legislation. I think if we can get it through this House and we get it through the Senate, I am sure that Mr. Trump will be more than happy to sign it.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 396 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS

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

SEC. 3. 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. 2510) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. 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. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 2510.

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. COLE. 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 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 226, nays 184, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 316]

YEAS—226

Abraham	Blackburn	Carter (TX)
Aderholt	Blum	Chabot
Allen	Bost	Chaffetz
Amash	Brady (TX)	Cheney
Amodel	Brat	Coffman
Arrington	Bridenstine	Cole
Babin	Brooks (AL)	Collins (GA)
Bacon	Brooks (IN)	Collins (NY)
Barletta	Buchanan	Comer
Barr	Buck	Comstock
Barton	Bucshon	Conaway
Bergman	Budd	Cook
Biggs	Burgess	Costello (PA)
Bilirakis	Byrne	Cramer
Bishop (MI)	Calvert	Crawford
Black	Carter (GA)	Culberson

Curbelo (FL)

Davidson

Davis, Rodney

Denham

Dent

DeSantis

DesJarlais

Diaz-Balart

Donovan

Duffy

Duncan (SC)

Duncan (TN)

Dunn

Emmer

Estes (KS)

Farenthold

Faso

Ferguson

Fitzpatrick

Fleischmann

Flores

Fortenberry

Foxo

Franks (AZ)

Frelinghuysen

Gaetz

Gallagher

Garrett

Gianforte

Gibbs

Gohmert

Goodlatte

Gosar

Gowdy

Granger

Graves (GA)

Graves (LA)

Graves (MO)

Griffith

Grothman

Guthrie

Harper

Harris

Hartzler

Hensarling

Herrera Beutler

Hice, Jody B.

Higgins (LA)

Hill

Holding

Hollingsworth

Hudson

Huizenga

Hultgren

Hunter

Hurd

Issa

Jenkins (KS)

Jenkins (WV)

Johnson (OH)

Jones

Jordan

Joyce (OH)

Katko

Kelly (MS)

Kelly (PA)

King (IA)

King (NY)

Kinzing

Knight

Kustoff (TN)

Labrador

LaHood

LaMalfa

Lamborn

Latta

Lewis (MN)

LoBiondo

Loudermilk

Love

Lucas

Luetkemeyer

MacArthur

Marchant

Marino

Marshall

Massie

Mast

McCarthy

McCaul

McClintock

McHenry

McKinley

McMorris

Rodgers

McSally

Meadows

Meehan

Mitchell

Moolenaar

Mooney (WV)

Mullin

Murphy (PA)

Newhouse

Noem

Nunes

Olson

Palazzo

Palmer

Paulsen

Pearce

Pittenger

Poe (TX)

Poliquin

Posey

Reichert

Renacci

Rice (SC)

Roby

Roe (TN)

Rogers (AL)

Rogers (KY)

Rohrabacher

Rokita

Rooney, Francis

Rooney, Thomas

J.

Ros-Lehtinen

Ross

Rothfus

Rouzer

Royce (CA)

Russell

Rutherford

Simpson

Smith (MO)

Smith (NE)

Smith (NJ)

Smith (TX)

Smucker

Stefanik

Stewart

Stivers

Taylor

Tenney

Thompson (PA)

Thornberry

Tipton

Turner

Upton

Valadao

Wagner

Walberg

Walsh

Walorski

Walters, Mimi

Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)

Westerman

Williams

Wilson (SC)

Wittman

Womack

Woodall

Yoder

Yoho

Young (AK)

Young (IA)

Zeldin

Maloney,

Carolyn B.

Maloney, Sean

Matsui

McCollum

McEachin

McGovern

McNerney

Meng

Moore

Moulton

Murphy (FL)

Nadler

Neal

Nolan

Norcross

O'Halleran

O'Rourke

Pallone

Panetta

Pascrell

Payne

Pelosi

Perlmutter

Peters

Peterson

Pingree

Pocan

Polis

Price (NC)

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

Sinema

Sires

Slaughter

Smith (WA)

Soto

Speier

Suozi

Swalwell (CA)

Takano

Thompson (CA)

Thompson (MS)

Titus

Tonko

Torres

Tsongas

Vargas

Veasey

Vela

Velázquez

Visclosky

Walz

Walters, Maxine

Watson Coleman

Welch

Wilson (FL)

Yarmuth

Buchanan

Buck

Bucshon

Budd

Burgess

Byrne

Calvert

Carter (GA)

Carter (TX)

Chabot

Chaffetz

Cheney

Coffman

Cole

Collins (GA)

Collins (NY)

Comer

Comstock

Conaway

Cook

Costa

Costello (PA)

Cramer

Crawford

Crist

Culberson

Curbelo (FL)

Davidson

Davis, Rodney

Denham

Dent

DeSantis

DesJarlais

Diaz-Balart

Donovan

Duffy

Duncan (SC)

Duncan (TN)

Dunn

Emmer

Estes (KS)

Farenthold

Flores

Fortenberry

Foxo

Franks (AZ)

Frelinghuysen

Gaetz

Gallagher

Garrett

Gianforte

Gibbs

Gohmert

Goodlatte

Gosar

Gottheimer

Gowdy

Granger

Graves (GA)

Graves (LA)

Graves (MO)

Griffith

Grothman

Guthrie

Harper

Harris

Hartzler

Hensarling

Herrera Beutler

Hice, Jody B.

Higgins (LA)

Hill

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Hollingsworth

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Hultgren

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Posey

Ratcliffe

Reed

Reichert

Renacci

Rice (SC)

Roby

Roe (TN)

Rogers (AL)

Rogers (KY)

Rohrabacher

Rokita

Rooney, Francis

Rooney, Thomas

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Ros-Lehtinen

Roskam

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Rothfus

Rouzer

Royce (CA)

Russell

Rutherford

Sanford

Schneider

Schweikert

Scott, Austin

Sensenbrenner

Sessions

Shimkus

Shuster

Simpson

Sinema

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Smith (TX)

Smucker

Stefanik

Stewart

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DeGette

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DeSaulnier

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Johnson (GA)	McGovern	Schakowsky
Johnson, E. B.	McNerney	Schiff
Kaptur	Meng	Schrader
Keating	Moore	Scott (VA)
Kelly (IL)	Moulton	Scott, David
Kennedy	Murphy (FL)	Serrano
Khanna	Nadler	Sewell (AL)
Kihuen	Neal	Shea-Porter
Kildee	Nolan	Sherman
Kilmer	Norcross	Sires
Kind	O'Halleran	Slaughter
Krishnamoorthi	O'Rourke	Smith (WA)
Kuster (NH)	Pallone	Soto
Langevin	Panetta	Speier
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Lawrence	Payne	Swalwell (CA)
Lawson (FL)	Pelosi	Takano
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Lofgren	Polis	Tsongas
Lowenthal	Price (NC)	Vargas
Lowe	Quigley	Veasey
Lujan Grisham,	Raskin	Vela
M.	Rice (NY)	Velázquez
Luján, Ben Ray	Richmond	Visclosky
Lynch	Rosen	Walz
Maloney,	Roybal-Allard	Waters, Maxine
Carolyn B.	Ruppersberger	Watson Coleman
Maloney, Sean	Rush	Welch
Matsui	Ryan (OH)	Wilson (FL)
McCollum	Sánchez	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Aderholt	Larsen (WA)	Ruiz
Bishop (UT)	Lieu, Ted	Scalise
Cummins	Long	Tiberi
Gabbard	Meeks	Wasserman
Hastings	Messer	Schultz
Johnson, Sam	Napolitano	Wenstrup
Lance	Perry	

□ 1342

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.

Stated against:

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained today for rollcall vote No. 317. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I was unexpectedly detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 316, and "yea" on rollcall No. 317.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I missed two votes on June 22. If I were present, I would have voted on the following: Rollcall No. 316: On Ordering the Previous Question, "yea." Rollcall No. 317: On Passage of H. Res. 396, "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall votes No. 316 and No. 317 due to my spouse's health situation in California. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2842. I would have also voted "nay" on H. Res. 396—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2842—Accelerating Individuals into the Workforce Act.

REPORT ON H.R. 2998, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

Mr. DENT, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-188) on the bill

(H.R. 2998) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

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 the motion to suspend the rules if a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or if the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

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

STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2353) to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2353

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 "Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act".

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. References.
Sec. 4. Effective date.
Sec. 5. Table of contents of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

Sec. 6. Purpose.
Sec. 7. Definitions.
Sec. 8. Transition provisions.
Sec. 9. Prohibitions.
Sec. 10. Authorization of appropriations.

TITLE I—CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ASSISTANCE TO THE STATES

PART A—ALLOTMENT AND ALLOCATION
Sec. 110. Reservations and State allotment.
Sec. 111. Within State allocation.
Sec. 112. Accountability.
Sec. 113. National activities.
Sec. 114. Assistance for the outlying areas.
Sec. 115. Tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions.
Sec. 116. Occupational and employment information.

PART B—STATE PROVISIONS

Sec. 121. State plan.
Sec. 122. Improvement plans.
Sec. 123. State leadership activities.

PART C—LOCAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 131. Local application for career and technical education programs.
Sec. 132. Local uses of funds.

TITLE II—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 201. Federal and State administrative provisions.

TITLE III—AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGNER-PEYSEYER ACT

Sec. 301. State responsibilities.

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect beginning on July 1, 2018.

SEC. 5. TABLE OF CONTENTS OF THE CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2006.

Section 1(b) is amended to read as follows:

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

"Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

"Sec. 2. Purpose.

"Sec. 3. Definitions.

"Sec. 4. Transition provisions.

"Sec. 5. Privacy.

"Sec. 6. Limitation.

"Sec. 7. Special rule.

"Sec. 8. Prohibitions.

"Sec. 9. Authorization of appropriations.

"TITLE I—CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ASSISTANCE TO THE STATES

"PART A—ALLOTMENT AND ALLOCATION

"Sec. 111. Reservations and State allotment.

"Sec. 112. Within State allocation.

"Sec. 113. Accountability.

"Sec. 114. National activities.

"Sec. 115. Assistance for the outlying areas.

"Sec. 116. Native American programs.

"Sec. 117. Tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions.

"PART B—STATE PROVISIONS

"Sec. 121. State administration.

"Sec. 122. State plan.

"Sec. 123. Improvement plans.

"Sec. 124. State leadership activities.

"PART C—LOCAL PROVISIONS

"Sec. 131. Distribution of funds to secondary education programs.

"Sec. 132. Distribution of funds for postsecondary education programs.

"Sec. 133. Special rules for career and technical education.

"Sec. 134. Local application for career and technical education programs.

"Sec. 135. Local uses of funds.

"TITLE II—GENERAL PROVISIONS

"PART A—FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

"Sec. 211. Fiscal requirements.

"Sec. 212. Authority to make payments.

"Sec. 213. Construction.

"Sec. 214. Voluntary selection and participation.

"Sec. 215. Limitation for certain students.

"Sec. 216. Federal laws guaranteeing civil rights.

"Sec. 217. Participation of private school personnel and children.

"Sec. 218. Limitation on Federal regulations.

"Sec. 219. Study on programs of study aligned to high-skill, high-wage occupations.

"PART B—STATE ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

"Sec. 221. Joint funding.

"Sec. 222. Prohibition on use of funds to induce out-of-State relocation of businesses.

"Sec. 223. State administrative costs.

"Sec. 224. Student assistance and other Federal programs."

SEC. 6. PURPOSE.

Section 2 (20 U.S.C. 2301) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—
(A) by striking “academic and career and technical skills” and inserting “academic knowledge and technical and employability skills”; and

(B) by inserting “and programs of study” after “technical education programs”;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “, including tech prep education”; and

(3) in paragraph (4), by inserting “and programs of study” after “technical education programs”.

SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.

Section 3 (20 U.S.C. 2302) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraphs (16), (23), (24), (25), (26), and (32);

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15), (17), (18), (19), (20), (21), (22), (27), (28), (29), (30), (31), (33), and (34) as paragraphs (9), (10), (13), (16), (17), (19), (20), (23), (25), (27), (28), (30), (32), (35), (39), (40), (41), (44), (45), (46), and (47), respectively;

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “5 different occupational fields to individuals” and inserting “three different fields, especially in in-demand industry sectors or occupations, that are available to all students”; and

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “not fewer than 5 different occupational fields” and inserting “not fewer than three different occupational fields”;

(4) in paragraph (5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in clause (i)—

(I) by striking “coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards” and inserting “content at the secondary level aligned with the challenging State academic standards adopted by a State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)), and at the postsecondary level with the rigorous academic content,”;

(II) by striking “and skills” and inserting “and skills.”; and

(III) by inserting “, including in in-demand industry sectors or occupations” before the semicolon at the end;

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking “, an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree” and inserting “or a recognized postsecondary credential, which may include an industry-recognized credential”; and

(iii) in clause (iii), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by inserting “, work-based, or other” after “competency-based”;

(ii) by striking “contributes to the” and inserting “supports the development of”;

(iii) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(iv) by striking “general”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) to the extent practicable, coordinate between secondary and postsecondary education programs, which may include early college programs with articulation agreements, dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities, or programs of study; and

“(D) may include career exploration at the high school level or as early as the middle grades (as such term is defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801)).”;

(5) in paragraph (7)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “(and parents, as appropriate)” and inserting “(and, as appropriate, parents and out-of-school youth)”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “financial aid,” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “financial aid, job training, secondary and postsecondary options (including baccalaureate degree programs), dual or concurrent enrollment programs, work-based learning opportunities, and support services.”;

(6) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following:

“(8) CAREER PATHWAYS.—The term ‘career pathways’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).”;

(7) by inserting after paragraph (10) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(11) CTE CONCENTRATOR.—The term ‘CTE concentrator’ means—

“(A) at the secondary school level, a student served by an eligible recipient who has—

“(i) completed three or more career and technical education courses; or

“(ii) completed at least two courses in a single career and technical education program or program of study; or

“(B) at the postsecondary level, a student enrolled in an eligible recipient who has—

“(i) earned at least 12 cumulative credits within a career and technical education program or program of study; or

“(ii) completed such a program if the program encompasses fewer than 12 credits or the equivalent in total.

“(12) CTE PARTICIPANT.—The term ‘CTE participant’ means an individual who completes not less than one course or earns not less than one credit in a career and technical education program or program of study of an eligible recipient.”;

(8) by inserting after paragraph (13) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(14) DUAL OR CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT.—The term ‘dual or concurrent enrollment’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).”;

“(15) EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL.—The term ‘early college high school’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).”;

(9) by inserting after paragraph (17) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(18) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means a consortium that—

“(A) shall include at least two of the following:

“(i) a local educational agency;

“(ii) an educational service agency;

“(iii) an eligible institution;

“(iv) an area career and technical education school;

“(v) a State educational agency; or

“(vi) the Bureau of Indian Education;

“(B) may include a regional, State, or local public or private organization, including a community-based organization, one or more employers, or a qualified intermediary; and

“(C) is led by an entity or partnership of entities described in subparagraph (A).”;

(10) by amending paragraph (19) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) to read as follows:

“(19) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligible institution’ means—

“(A) a consortium of two or more of the entities described in subparagraphs (B) through (F);

“(B) a public or nonprofit private institution of higher education that offers and will use funds provided under this title in support of career and technical education courses that lead to technical skill proficiency, an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree;

“(C) a local educational agency providing education at the postsecondary level;

“(D) an area career and technical education school providing education at the postsecondary level;

“(E) a postsecondary educational institution controlled by the Bureau of Indian Affairs or operated by or on behalf of any Indian tribe that is eligible to contract with the Secretary of the Interior for the administration of programs under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.) or the Act of April 16, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 452 et seq.); or

“(F) an educational service agency.”;

(11) by adding after paragraph (20) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(21) ENGLISH LEARNER.—The term ‘English learner’ means—

“(A) a secondary school student who is an English learner, as defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801); or

“(B) an adult or an out-of-school youth who has limited ability in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language and—

“(i) whose native language is a language other than English; or

“(ii) who lives in a family environment in which a language other than English is the dominant language.

“(22) EVIDENCE-BASED.—The term ‘evidence-based’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101(21)(A) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801(21)(A)).”;

(12) by inserting after paragraph (23) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(24) IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION.—The term ‘in-demand industry sector or occupation’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).”;

(13) by inserting after paragraph (25) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(26) INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIP.—The term ‘industry or sector partnership’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).”;

(14) by inserting after paragraph (28) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(29) LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD.—The term ‘local workforce development board’ means a local workforce development board established under section 107 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.”;

(15) by inserting after paragraph (30) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(31) OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.—The term ‘out-of-school youth’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).”;

(16) by inserting after paragraph (32) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(33) PARAPROFESSIONAL.—The term ‘paraprofessional’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

“(34) PAY FOR SUCCESS INITIATIVE.—The term ‘pay for success initiative’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801), except that such term does not include an initiative that—

“(A) reduces the special education or related services that a student would otherwise receive under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.); or

“(B) otherwise reduces the rights of a student or the obligations of an entity under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), or any other law.”;

(17) by inserting after paragraph (35) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(36) PROGRAM OF STUDY.—The term ‘program of study’ means a coordinated, nonduplicative sequence of secondary and postsecondary academic and technical content that—

“(A) incorporates challenging State academic standards, including those adopted by a State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)), that—

“(i) address both academic and technical knowledge and skills, including employability skills; and

“(ii) are aligned with the needs of industries in the economy of the State, region, or local area;

“(B) progresses in specificity (beginning with all aspects of an industry or career cluster and leading to more occupational specific instruction);

“(C) has multiple entry and exit points that incorporate credentialing; and

“(D) culminates in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential.

“(37) **QUALIFIED INTERMEDIARY.**—The term ‘qualified intermediary’ means a non-profit entity that demonstrates expertise to build, connect, sustain, and measure partnerships with entities such as employers, schools, community-based organizations, postsecondary institutions, social service organizations, economic development organizations, and workforce systems to broker services, resources, and supports to youth and the organizations and systems that are designed to serve youth, including—

“(A) connecting employers to classrooms;

“(B) assisting in the design and implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study;

“(C) delivering professional development;

“(D) connecting students to internships and other work-based learning opportunities; and

“(E) developing personalized student supports.

“(38) **RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL.**—The term ‘recognized postsecondary credential’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).”;

(18) in paragraph (41) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2))—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “foster children” and inserting “youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system”;

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking “and” at the end;

(C) in subparagraph (F), by striking “individuals with limited English proficiency.” and inserting “English learners.”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(G) homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a); and

“(H) youth with a parent who—

“(i) is a member of the armed forces (as such term is defined in section 101(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code); and

“(ii) is on active duty (as such term is defined in section 101(d)(1) of such title).”;

(19) by inserting after paragraph (41) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(42) **SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL.**—The term ‘specialized instructional support personnel’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

“(43) **SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES.**—The term ‘specialized instructional support services’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).”;

(20) in paragraph (45) (as so redesignated by paragraph (2)) by inserting “(including para-professionals and specialized instructional support personnel)” after “supportive personnel”; and

(21) by adding at the end the following:

“(48) **UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING.**—The term ‘universal design for learning’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

“(49) **WORK-BASED LEARNING.**—The term ‘work-based learning’ means sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, first-hand engagement with the tasks required of a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction.”.

SEC. 8. TRANSITION PROVISIONS.

Section 4 (20 U.S.C. 2303) is amended—

(1) by striking “the Secretary determines to be appropriate” and inserting “are necessary”;

(2) by striking “Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006” each place it appears and inserting “Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act”; and

(3) by striking “1998” and inserting “2006”.

SEC. 9. PROHIBITIONS.

Section 8 (20 U.S.C. 2306a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “Federal Government to mandate,” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “Federal Government—

“(1) to condition or incentivize the receipt of any grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, or the receipt of any priority or preference under such grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, upon a State, local educational agency, eligible agency, eligible recipient, eligible entity, or school’s adoption or implementation of specific instructional content, academic standards and assessments, curricula, or program of instruction (including any condition, priority, or preference to adopt the Common Core State Standards developed under the Common Core State Standards Initiative, any other academic standards common to a significant number of States, or any assessment, instructional content, or curriculum aligned to such standards);

“(2) through grants, contracts, or other cooperative agreements, to mandate, direct, or control a State, local educational agency, eligible agency, eligible recipient, eligible entity, or school’s specific instructional content, academic standards and assessments, curricula, or program of instruction (including any requirement, direction, or mandate to adopt the Common Core State Standards developed under the Common Core State Standards Initiative, any other academic standards common to a significant number of States, or any assessment, instructional content, or curriculum aligned to such standards); and

“(3) except as required under sections 112(b), 211(b), and 223—

“(A) to mandate, direct, or control the allocation of State or local resources; or

“(B) to mandate that a State or a political subdivision of a State spend any funds or incur any costs not paid for under this Act.”; and

(2) by striking subsection (d) and redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (d).

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 9 (20 U.S.C. 2307) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“There are to be authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act (other than sections 114 and 117)—

“(1) \$1,133,002,074 for fiscal year 2018;

“(2) \$1,148,618,465 for fiscal year 2019;

“(3) \$1,164,450,099 for fiscal year 2020;

“(4) \$1,180,499,945 for fiscal year 2021;

“(5) \$1,196,771,008 for fiscal year 2022; and

“(6) \$1,213,266,339 for fiscal year 2023.”.

TITLE I—CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ASSISTANCE TO THE STATES PART A—ALLOTMENT AND ALLOCATION

SEC. 110. RESERVATIONS AND STATE ALLOTMENT.

Paragraph (5) of section 111(a) (20 U.S.C. 2321(a)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “No State” and inserting “For each of fiscal years 2018, 2019, and 2020, no State”;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (A), as amended by paragraph (1), the following:

“(B) **FISCAL YEAR 2021 AND EACH SUCCEEDING FISCAL YEAR.**—For fiscal year 2021 and each of the succeeding fiscal years, no State shall receive an allotment under this section for a fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the allotment

the State received under this section for the preceding fiscal year.”; and

(4) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking “subparagraph (A)” and inserting “subparagraph (A) or (B)”.

SEC. 111. WITHIN STATE ALLOCATION.

Section 112 (20 U.S.C. 2322) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “10 percent” and inserting “15 percent”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking “1 percent” and inserting “2 percent”; and

(II) by striking “State correctional institutions and institutions” and inserting “State correctional institutions, juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “available for services” and inserting “available to assist eligible recipients in providing services”; and

(C) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking “a local plan,” and inserting “local applications.”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “section 135” and all that follows through the end and inserting “section 135—

“(1) in—

“(A) rural areas;

“(B) areas with high percentages of CTE concentrators or CTE participants; and

“(C) areas with high numbers of CTE concentrators or CTE participants; and

“(2) in order to—

“(A) foster innovation through the identification and promotion of promising and proven career and technical education programs, practices, and strategies, which may include practices and strategies that prepare individuals for nontraditional fields; or

“(B) promote the development, implementation, and adoption of programs of study or career pathways aligned with State-identified in-demand occupations or industries.”.

SEC. 112. ACCOUNTABILITY.

Section 113 (20 U.S.C. 2323) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “comprised of the activities” and inserting “comprising the activities”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking subparagraph (B) and redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B);

(B) in paragraph (1)(B), as so redesignated, by striking “, and State levels of performance described in paragraph (3)(B) for each additional indicator of performance”; and

(C) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.**—

“(A) **CORE INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR CTE CONCENTRATORS AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL.**—Each eligible agency shall identify in the State plan core indicators of performance for CTE concentrators at the secondary level that are valid and reliable, and that include, at a minimum, measures of each of the following:

“(i) The percentage of CTE concentrators who graduate high school, as measured by—

“(I) the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801)); and

“(II) at the State’s discretion, the extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate defined in such section 8101 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

“(ii) CTE concentrator attainment of challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)), and measured by the academic assessments described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(2)).

“(iii) The percentage of CTE concentrators who, in the second quarter following the program year after exiting from secondary education, are in postsecondary education or advanced training, military service, or unsubsidized employment.

“(iv) Not less than one indicator of career and technical education program quality that—

“(I) shall include, not less than one of the following—

“(aa) the percentage of CTE concentrators, as defined in section 3(11)(A)(ii), graduating from high school having attained recognized postsecondary credentials;

“(bb) the percentage of CTE concentrators, as defined in section 3(11)(A)(ii), graduating from high school having attained postsecondary credits in the relevant career and technical educational program or program of study earned through dual and concurrent enrollment or another credit transfer agreement; or

“(cc) the percentage of CTE concentrators, as defined in section 3(11)(A)(ii), graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning; and

“(II) may include any other measure of student success in career and technical education that is statewide, valid, and reliable.

“(v) The percentage of CTE concentrators, as defined in section 3(11)(A)(ii), in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to nontraditional fields.

“(B) CORE INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR CTE CONCENTRATORS AT THE POSTSECONDARY LEVEL.—Each eligible agency shall identify in the State plan core indicators of performance for CTE concentrators at the postsecondary level that are valid and reliable, and that include, at a minimum, measures of each of the following:

“(i) The percentage of CTE concentrators, who, during the second quarter after program completion, are in education or training activities, advanced training, or unsubsidized employment.

“(ii) The median earnings of CTE concentrators in unsubsidized employment two quarters after program completion.

“(iii) The percentage of CTE concentrators who receive a recognized postsecondary credential during participation in or within 1 year of program completion.

“(iv) The percentage of CTE concentrators in career and technical education programs and programs of study that lead to nontraditional fields.

“(C) ALIGNMENT OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS.—In developing core indicators of performance under subparagraphs (A) and (B), an eligible agency shall, to the greatest extent possible, align the indicators so that substantially similar information gathered for other State and Federal programs, or for any other purpose, may be used to meet the requirements of this section.”;

(D) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) STATE ADJUSTED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE FOR CORE INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible agency, with input from eligible recipients, shall establish and identify in the State plan submitted under section 122, for the first 2 program years covered by the State plan, State levels of performance for each of the core indicators of performance described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2) for career and technical education activities authorized under this title. The levels of performance established under this subparagraph shall, at a minimum—

“(I) be expressed in a percentage or numerical form, so as to be objective, quantifiable, and measurable; and

“(II) be sufficiently ambitious to allow for meaningful evaluation of program quality.

“(ii) STATE ADJUSTED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE FOR SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—Prior to the third program year covered by the State plan, each eligible agency shall revise the State levels of performance for each of the core indicators of performance for the subsequent program years covered by the State plan, taking into account the extent to which such levels of performance promote meaningful program improvement on such indicators. The State adjusted levels of

performance identified under this clause shall be considered to be the State adjusted levels of performance for the State for such years and shall be incorporated into the State plan.

“(iii) REPORTING.—The eligible agency shall, for each year described in clauses (i) and (iii), publicly report and widely disseminate the State levels of performance described in this subparagraph.

“(iv) REVISIONS.—If unanticipated circumstances arise in a State, the eligible agency may revise the State adjusted levels of performance required under this subparagraph, and submit such revised levels of performance with evidence supporting the revision and demonstrating public consultation, in a manner consistent with the procedure described in subsections (d) and (f) of section 122.”;

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

“(B) ACTUAL LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE.—At the end of each program year, the eligible agency shall determine actual levels of performance on each of the core indicators of performance and publicly report and widely disseminate the actual levels of performance described in this subparagraph.”;

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) ESTABLISHMENT OF LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE.—An eligible agency shall establish State levels of performance under subparagraph (A) in a manner consistent with the procedure adopted by the eligible agency under section 122(d)(9).”;

(E) in paragraph (4)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (i)(I), by striking “consistent with the State levels of performance established under paragraph (3), so as” and inserting “consistent with the form expressed in the State levels, so as”;

(II) by striking clause (i)(II) and inserting the following:

“(II) be sufficiently ambitious to allow for meaningful evaluation of program quality.”;

(III) in clause (iv)—

(aa) by striking “third and fifth program years” and inserting “third program year”; and

(bb) by striking “corresponding” before “subsequent program years”;

(IV) in clause (v)—

(aa) by striking “and” at the end of subclause (I);

(bb) by redesignating subclause (II) as subclause (III);

(cc) by inserting after subclause (I) the following:

“(II) local economic conditions.”;

(dd) in subclause (III), as so redesignated, by striking “promote continuous improvement on the core indicators of performance by the eligible recipient,” and inserting “advance the eligible recipient’s accomplishments of the goals set forth in the local application; and”; and

(ee) by adding at the end the following:

“(IV) the eligible recipient’s ability and capacity to collect and access valid, reliable, and cost effective data.”;

(V) in clause (vi), by inserting “or changes occur related to improvements in data or measurement approaches,” after “factors described in clause (v).”; and

(VI) by adding at the end the following:

“(vii) REPORTING.—The eligible recipient shall, for each year described in clauses (iii) and (iv), publicly report the local levels of performance described in this subparagraph.”;

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B) and redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B); and

(iii) in clause (ii)(I) of subparagraph (B), as so redesignated—

(I) by striking “section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i)” and inserting “section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii)”;

(II) by striking “section 3(29)” and inserting “section 3(40)”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the heading, by inserting “STATE” before “REPORT”;

(B) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “information on the levels of performance achieved by the State with respect to the additional indicators of performance, including the” and inserting “the”; and

(C) in paragraph (2)(A)—

(i) by striking “categories” and inserting “subgroups”;

(ii) by striking “section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i)” and inserting “section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii)”;

(iii) by striking “section 3(29)” and inserting “section 3(40)”.

SEC. 113. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

Section 114 (20 U.S.C. 2324) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “The Secretary shall” the first place it appears and inserting “The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Director of the Institute for Education Sciences.”;

(ii) by inserting “from eligible agencies under section 113(c)” after “pursuant to this title”; and

(B) by striking paragraph (3);

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

“(b) REASONABLE COST.—The Secretary shall take such action as may be necessary to secure at reasonable cost the information required by this title. To ensure reasonable cost, the Secretary, in consultation with the National Center for Education Statistics and the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education shall determine the methodology to be used and the frequency with which such information is to be collected.”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “may” and inserting “shall”;

(ii) by striking “, directly or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements,” and inserting “directly or through grants”;

(iii) by striking “and assessment”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “, acting through the Director of the Institute for Education Sciences,” after “describe how the Secretary”;

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “, in consultation with the Director of the Institute for Education Sciences,” after “the Secretary”;

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by inserting “, acting through the Director of the Institute for Education Sciences,” after “The Secretary”;

(II) by inserting “and the plan developed under subsection (c)” after “described in paragraph (2)”;

(III) by striking “assessment” each place such term appears and inserting “evaluation”;

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) in clause (v), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(II) in clause (vi), by striking the period at the end and inserting “, which may include individuals with expertise in addressing inequities in access to, and in opportunities for academic and technical skill attainment; and”;

(III) by adding at the end the following:

“(vii) representatives of special populations.”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “AND ASSESSMENT”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by inserting “, acting through the Director of the Institute for Education Sciences,” after “the Secretary”;

(II) by striking “an independent evaluation and assessment” and inserting “a series of research and evaluation initiatives for each year for which funds are appropriated to carry out this Act, which are aligned with the plan in subsection (c)(2).”;

(III) by striking “Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006”

and inserting “Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act”;

(IV) by striking “, contracts, and cooperative agreements that are” and inserting “to institutions of higher education or a consortia of one or more institutions of higher education and one or more private nonprofit organizations or agencies”; and

(V) by adding at the end the following: “Such evaluation shall, whenever possible, use the most recent data available.”; and

(iii) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

“(B) CONTENTS.—The evaluation required under subparagraph (A) shall include descriptions and evaluations of—

“(i) the extent and success of the integration of challenging State academic standards adopted under 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)) and career and technical education for students participating in career and technical education programs, including a review of the effect of such integration on the academic and technical proficiency achievement of such students (including the number of such students that receive a regular high school diploma, as such term is defined under section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 or a State-defined alternative diploma described in section 8101(25)(A)(ii)(I)(bb) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 7801(25)(A)(ii)(I)(bb)));

“(ii) the extent to which career and technical education programs and programs of study prepare students, including special populations, for subsequent employment in high-skill, high-wage occupations (including those in which mathematics and science, which may include computer science, skills are critical), or for participation in postsecondary education;

“(iii) employer involvement in, benefit from, and satisfaction with, career and technical education programs and programs of study and career and technical education students’ preparation for employment;

“(iv) efforts to expand access to career and technical education programs of study for all students;

“(v) innovative approaches to work-based learning programs that increase participation and alignment with employment in high-growth industries, including in rural and low-income areas;

“(vi) the extent to which career and technical education programs supported by this Act are grounded on evidence-based research;

“(vii) the impact of the amendments to this Act made under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, including comparisons, where appropriate, of—

“(I) the use of the comprehensive needs assessment under section 134(b);

“(II) the implementation of programs of study; and

“(III) coordination of planning and program delivery with other relevant laws, including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

“(viii) changes in career and technical education program accountability as described in section 113 and any effects of such changes on program delivery and program quality; and

“(ix) changes in student enrollment patterns.”; and

(iv) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) in clause (i)—

(aa) by inserting “, in consultation with the Director of the Institute for Education Sciences,” after “The Secretary”;

(bb) in subclause (I)—

(AA) by striking “assessment” and inserting “evaluation and summary of research activities carried out under this section”; and

(BB) by striking “2010” and inserting “2021”; and

(cc) in subclause (II)—

(AA) by striking “assessment” and inserting “evaluation and summary of research activities carried out under this section”; and

(BB) by striking “2011” and inserting “2023”; and

(II) by adding after clause (ii) the following:

“(iii) DISSEMINATION.—In addition to submitting the reports required under clause (i), the Secretary shall disseminate the results of the evaluation widely and on a timely basis in order to increase the understanding among State and local officials and educators of the effectiveness of programs and activities supported under the Act and of the career and technical education programs that are most likely to produce positive educational and employment outcomes.”; and

(C) by striking paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) and inserting the following:

“(3) INNOVATION.—

“(A) GRANT PROGRAM.—To identify and support evidence-based and innovative strategies and activities to improve career and technical education and align workforce skills with labor market needs as part of the plan developed under subsection (c) and the requirements of this subsection, the Secretary may award grants to eligible entities to—

“(i) create, develop, implement, or take to scale evidence-based, field initiated innovations, including through a pay for success initiative, to improve student outcomes in career and technical education; and

“(ii) rigorously evaluate such innovations.

“(B) MATCHING FUNDS.—

“(i) MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED.—Except as provided under clause (ii), to receive a grant under this paragraph, an eligible entity shall, through cash or in-kind contributions, provide matching funds from public or private sources in an amount equal to at least 50 percent of the funds provided under such grant.

“(ii) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary may waive the matching fund requirement under clause (i) if the eligible entity demonstrates exceptional circumstances.

“(C) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant under this paragraph, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary at such a time as the Secretary may require, an application that—

“(i) identifies and designates the agency, institution, or school responsible for the administration and supervision of the program assisted under this paragraph;

“(ii) identifies the source and amount of the matching funds required under subparagraph (B)(i);

“(iii) describes how the eligible entity will use the grant funds, including how such funds will directly benefit students, including special populations, served by the eligible entity;

“(iv) describes how the program assisted under this paragraph will be coordinated with the activities carried out under section 124 or 135;

“(v) describes how the program assisted under this paragraph aligns with the single plan described in subsection (c); and

“(vi) describes how the program assisted under this paragraph will be evaluated and how that evaluation may inform the report described in subsection (d)(2)(C).

“(D) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this paragraph, the Secretary shall give priority to applications from eligible entities that will predominantly serve students from low-income families.

“(E) GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants under this paragraph, the Secretary shall award no less than 25 percent of the total available funds for any fiscal year to eligible entities proposing to fund career and technical education activities that serve—

“(I) a local educational agency with an urban-centric district locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the Secretary;

“(II) an institution of higher education primarily serving the one or more areas served by such a local educational agency;

“(III) a consortium of such local educational agencies or such institutions of higher education;

“(IV) a partnership between—

“(aa) an educational service agency or a nonprofit organization; and

“(bb) such a local educational agency or such an institution of higher education; or

“(V) a partnership between—

“(aa) a grant recipient described in subclause (I) or (II); and

“(bb) a State educational agency.

“(ii) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding clause (i), the Secretary shall reduce the amount of funds made available under such clause if the Secretary does not receive a sufficient number of applications of sufficient quality.

“(F) USES OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that is awarded a grant under this paragraph shall use the grant funds, in a manner consistent with subparagraph (A)(i), to—

“(i) improve career and technical education outcomes of students served by eligible entities under this title;

“(ii) improve career and technical education teacher effectiveness;

“(iii) improve the transition of students from secondary education to postsecondary education or employment;

“(iv) improve the incorporation of comprehensive work-based learning into career and technical education;

“(v) increase the effective use of technology within career and technical education programs;

“(vi) support new models for integrating academic content and career and technical education content in such programs;

“(vii) support the development and enhancement of innovative delivery models for career and technical education;

“(viii) work with industry to design and implement courses or programs of study aligned to labor market needs in new or emerging fields;

“(ix) integrate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, including computer science education, with career and technical education;

“(x) support innovative approaches to career and technical education by redesigning the high school experience for students, which may include evidence-based transitional support strategies for students who have not met postsecondary education eligibility requirements;

“(xi) improve CTE concentrator employment outcomes in nontraditional fields; or

“(xii) support the use of career and technical education programs and programs of study in a coordinated strategy to address identified employer needs and workforce shortages, such as shortages in the early childhood, elementary school, and secondary school education workforce.

“(G) EVALUATION.—Each eligible entity receiving a grant under this paragraph shall provide for an independent evaluation of the activities carried out using such grant and submit to the Secretary an annual report that includes—

“(i) a description of how funds received under this paragraph were used;

“(ii) the performance of the eligible entity with respect to, at a minimum, the performance indicators described under section 113, as applicable, and disaggregated by—

“(I) subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2)(B) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(c)(2)(B));

“(II) special populations; and

“(III) as appropriate, each career and technical education program and program of study; and

“(iii) a quantitative analysis of the effectiveness of the project carried out under this paragraph.”; and

(5) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

- “(1) \$7,523,285 for fiscal year 2018;
- “(2) \$7,626,980 for fiscal year 2019;
- “(3) \$7,732,104 for fiscal year 2020;
- “(4) \$7,838,677 for fiscal year 2021;
- “(5) \$7,946,719 for fiscal year 2022; and
- “(6) \$8,056,251 for fiscal year 2023.”.

SEC. 114. ASSISTANCE FOR THE OUTLYING AREAS.

Section 115 (20 U.S.C. 2325) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking “subject to subsection (d)” and inserting “subject to subsection (b)”;

(2) by striking subsections (b) and (c); and

(3) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (b).

SEC. 115. TRIBALLY CONTROLLED POSTSECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS.

Section 117(i) (20 U.S.C. 2327(i)) is amended to read as follows:

“(i) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

- “(1) \$8,400,208 for fiscal year 2018;
- “(2) \$8,515,989 for fiscal year 2019;
- “(3) \$8,633,367 for fiscal year 2020;
- “(4) \$8,752,362 for fiscal year 2021;
- “(5) \$8,872,998 for fiscal year 2022; and
- “(6) \$8,995,296 for fiscal year 2023.”.

SEC. 116. OCCUPATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION.

Section 118 (20 U.S.C. 2328) is repealed.

PART B—STATE PROVISIONS

SEC. 121. STATE PLAN.

Section 122 (20 U.S.C. 2342) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “6-year period” and inserting “4-year period”;

(ii) by striking “Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006” and inserting “Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act”;

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking “6-year period” and inserting “4-year period”;

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “(including charter school)” and all that follows through “and community organizations)” and inserting “(including teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, school leaders, authorized public chartering agencies, and charter school leaders, consistent with State law, employers, labor organizations, parents, students, and community organizations)”;

(2) by amending subsections (b), (c), (d), and (e) to read as follows:

“(b) **OPTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF STATE PLAN.**—

“(1) **COMBINED PLAN.**—The eligible agency may submit a combined plan that meets the requirements of this section and the requirements of section 103 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3113), unless the eligible agency opts to submit a single plan under paragraph (2) and informs the Secretary of such decision.

“(2) **SINGLE PLAN.**—If the eligible agency elects not to submit a combined plan as described in paragraph (1), such eligible agency shall submit a single State plan.

“(c) **PLAN DEVELOPMENT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The eligible agency shall—

“(A) develop the State plan in consultation with—

“(i) representatives of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs, including eligible recipients and representatives of 2-year Minority-Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities in States where such institutions are in existence, and charter school representatives in States where such schools are in existence, which shall include teachers, faculty, school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel (including guidance counselors), and paraprofessionals;

“(ii) interested community representatives, including parents and students;

“(iii) the State workforce development board described in section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111);

“(iv) representatives of special populations;

“(v) representatives of business and industry (including representatives of small business), which shall include representatives of industry and sector partnerships in the State, as appropriate, and representatives of labor organizations in the State;

“(vi) representatives of agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless children and youth, and at-risk youth; and

“(vii) representatives of Indian tribes located in the State; and

“(B) consult the Governor of the State, and the heads of other State agencies with authority for career and technical education programs that are not the eligible agency, with respect to the development of the State plan.

“(2) **ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES.**—The eligible agency shall develop effective activities and procedures, including access to information needed to use such procedures, to allow the individuals and entities described in paragraph (1) to participate in State and local decisions that relate to development of the State plan.

“(d) **PLAN CONTENTS.**—The State plan shall include—

“(1) a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State’s career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with such activities;

“(2) the State’s strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State’s career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals;

“(3) a summary of the strategic planning elements of the unified State plan required under section 102(b)(1) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(1)), including the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B));

“(4) a description of the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved, including descriptions of—

“(A) the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients;

“(B) the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways, including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs; and

“(C) how the eligible agency will—

“(i) make information on approved programs of study and career pathways, including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities, and guidance and advisement resources, available to students and parents;

“(ii) ensure nonduplication of eligible recipients’ development of programs of study and career pathways;

“(iii) determine alignment of eligible recipients’ programs of study to the State, regional or local economy, including in-demand fields and occupations identified by the State workforce development board as appropriate;

“(iv) provide equal access to activities assisted under this Act for special populations;

“(v) coordinate with the State workforce board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards;

“(vi) use State, regional, or local labor market data to align career and technical education with State labor market needs;

“(vii) support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers, which may include the development of articulation agreements described in section 124(b)(3); and

“(viii) improve outcomes for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations;

“(5) a description of the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how—

“(A) each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;

“(B) each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and

“(C) each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations;

“(6) a description of how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support;

“(7) a description of how the eligible agency will use State leadership funding to meet the requirements of section 124(b);

“(8) a description of how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 will be distributed—

“(A) among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and

“(B) among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace;

“(9) a description of the procedure the eligible agency will adopt for determining State adjusted levels of performance described in section 113, which at a minimum shall include—

“(A) consultation with stakeholders identified in paragraph (1);

“(B) opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State adjusted levels of performance included in the State plan; and

“(C) submission of public comment on State adjusted levels of performance as part of the State plan; and

“(10) assurances that—

“(A) the eligible agency will comply with the requirements of this Act and the provisions of the State plan, including the provision of a financial audit of funds received under this Act, which may be included as part of an audit of other Federal or State programs;

“(B) none of the funds expended under this Act will be used to acquire equipment (including computer software) in any instance in which such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the acquiring entity or the employees of the acquiring entity, or any affiliate of such an organization;

“(C) the eligible agency will use the funds to promote preparation for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations and nontraditional fields, as identified by the State;

“(D) the eligible agency will use the funds provided under this Act to implement career and technical education programs and programs of study for individuals in State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities; and

“(E) the eligible agency will provide local educational agencies, area career and technical

education schools, and eligible institutions in the State with technical assistance, including technical assistance on how to close gaps in student participation and performance in career and technical education programs.

“(e) CONSULTATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The eligible agency shall develop the portion of each State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the—

“(A) State agency responsible for supervision of community colleges, technical institutes, or other 2-year postsecondary institutions primarily engaged in providing postsecondary career and technical education;

“(B) the State agency responsible for secondary education; and

“(C) the State agency responsible for adult education.

“(2) OBJECTIONS OF STATE AGENCIES.—If a State agency other than the eligible agency finds that a portion of the final State plan is objectionable, that objection shall be filed together with the State plan. The eligible agency shall respond to any objections of such State agency in the State plan submitted to the Secretary.

“(f) PLAN APPROVAL.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall approve a State plan not later than 120 days after its submission to the Secretary unless the Secretary—

“(A) determines that the State plan does not meet the requirements of this Act, including the requirements described in section 113; and

“(B) meets the requirements of paragraph (2) with respect to such plan.

“(2) DISAPPROVAL.—The Secretary shall—

“(A) have the authority to disapprove a State plan only if the Secretary—

“(i) determines how the State plan fails to meet the requirements of this Act; and

“(ii) provides to the eligible agency, in writing, notice of such determination and the supporting information and rationale to substantiate such determination; and

“(B) not finally disapprove a State plan, except after making the determination and providing the information described in subparagraph (A), and giving the eligible agency notice and an opportunity for a hearing.”

SEC. 122. IMPROVEMENT PLANS.

Section 123 (20 U.S.C. 2343) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “percent of an agreed upon” and inserting “percent of the”; and

(ii) by striking “appropriate agencies,” and inserting “appropriate State agencies.”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “purposes of this Act,” and inserting “purposes of this section, including after implementation of the improvement plan described in paragraph (1),” and

(ii) by striking “work with the eligible agency” and inserting “provide the eligible agency technical assistance”; and

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If the eligible agency fails to make any improvement in meeting any of the State adjusted levels of performance for any of the core indicators of performance identified under paragraph (1) during the first 2 years of implementation of the improvement plan required under paragraph (1), the eligible agency—

“(i) shall develop and implement, in consultation with the stakeholders described in section 122(c)(1)(A), a revised improvement plan (with special consideration of performance gaps identified under section 113(c)(2)(B)) to address the reasons for such failure; and

“(ii) shall continue to implement such improvement plan until the eligible agency meets

at least 90 percent of the State adjusted level of performance for the same core indicators of performance for which the plan is revised.”;

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (A), the following:

“(B) REVISED PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance, monitoring, and oversight to each eligible agency with a plan revised under subparagraph (A)(i) until such agency meets the requirements of subparagraph (A)(ii).”; and

(iv) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated by clause (ii), by striking “sanction in” and inserting “requirements of”; and

(D) by striking paragraph (4);

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “the eligible agency, appropriate agencies, individuals, and organizations” and inserting “local stakeholders included in section 134(d)(1)”;;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “shall work with the eligible recipient to implement improvement activities consistent with the requirements of this Act.” and inserting “shall provide technical assistance to assist the eligible recipient in meeting its responsibilities under section 134.”;

(C) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If the eligible recipient fails to make any improvement in meeting any of the local adjusted levels of performance for any of the core indicators of performance identified under paragraph (2) during a number of years determined by the eligible agency, the eligible recipient—

“(i) shall revise the improvement plan described in paragraph (2) to address the reasons for such failure; and

“(ii) shall continue to implement such improvement plan until such recipient meets at least 90 percent of an agreed upon local adjusted level of performance for the same core indicators of performance for which the plan is revised.”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(aa) by striking “In determining whether to impose sanctions under subparagraph (A), the” and inserting “The”; and

(bb) by striking “waive imposing sanctions” and inserting “waive the requirements of subparagraph (A)”;;

(II) in clause (i), by striking “or” at the end; (III) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) in response to a public request from an eligible recipient consistent with clauses (i) and (ii).”; and

(D) by striking paragraph (5); and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) PLAN DEVELOPMENT.—Except for consultation described in subsection (b)(2), the State and local improvement plans, and the elements of such plans, required under this section shall be developed solely by the eligible agency or the eligible recipient, respectively.”

SEC. 123. STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES.

Section 124 (20 U.S.C. 2344) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “shall conduct State leadership activities.” and inserting “shall—

“(1) conduct State leadership activities directly; and

“(2) report on the effectiveness of such use of funds in achieving the goals described in section 122(d)(2) and the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 113(b)(3)(A).”;;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) through (4) and inserting the following:

“(1) developing statewide programs of study, which may include standards, curriculum, and

course development, and career exploration, guidance, and advisement activities and resources;

“(2) approving locally developed programs of study that meet the requirements established in section 122(d)(4)(B);

“(3) establishing statewide articulation agreements aligned to approved programs of study;

“(4) establishing statewide partnerships among local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, and employers, including small businesses, to develop and implement programs of study aligned to State and local economic and education needs, including as appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations.”; and

(B) by striking paragraphs (6) through (9) and inserting the following:

“(6) support services for individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities;

“(7) for faculty and teachers providing career and technical education instruction, support services, and specialized instructional support services, high-quality comprehensive professional development that is, to the extent practicable, grounded in evidence-based research (to the extent a State determines that such evidence is reasonably available) that identifies the most effective educator professional development process and is coordinated and aligned with other professional development activities carried out by the State (including under title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6601 et seq.) and title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1021 et seq.)), including programming that—

“(A) promotes the integration of the challenging State academic standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)) and relevant technical knowledge and skills;

“(B) prepares career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide appropriate accommodations for students who are members of special populations, including through the use of principles of universal design for learning; and

“(C) increases understanding of industry standards, as appropriate, for faculty providing career and technical education instruction; and

“(8) technical assistance for eligible recipients.”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by striking paragraphs (1) through (17) and inserting the following:

“(1) awarding incentive grants to eligible recipients—

“(A) for exemplary performance in carrying out programs under this Act, which awards shall be based on—

“(i) eligible recipients exceeding the local adjusted level of performance established under section 113(b)(4)(A) in a manner that reflects sustained or significant improvement;

“(ii) eligible recipients effectively developing connections between secondary education and postsecondary education and training;

“(iii) the integration of academic and technical standards;

“(iv) eligible recipients’ progress in closing achievement gaps among subpopulations who participate in programs of study; or

“(v) other factors relating to the performance of eligible recipients under this Act as the eligible agency determines are appropriate; or

“(B) if an eligible recipient elects to use funds as permitted under section 135(c);

“(2) providing support for the adoption and integration of recognized postsecondary credentials or for consultation and coordination with other State agencies for the identification, consolidation, or elimination of licenses or certifications which pose an unnecessary barrier to entry for aspiring workers and provide limited consumer protection;

“(3) the creation, implementation, and support of pay-for-success initiatives leading to recognized postsecondary credentials;

“(4) support for career and technical education programs for adults and out-of-school youth concurrent with their completion of their secondary school education in a school or other educational setting;

“(5) the creation, evaluation, and support of competency-based curricula;

“(6) support for the development, implementation, and expansion of programs of study or career pathways in areas declared to be in a state of emergency under section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191);

“(7) providing support for dual or concurrent enrollment programs, such as early college high schools;

“(8) improvement of career guidance and academic counseling programs that assist students in making informed academic and career and technical education decisions, including academic and financial aid counseling;

“(9) support for the integration of employability skills into career and technical education programs and programs of study;

“(10) support for programs and activities that increase access, student engagement, and success in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields (including computer science), particularly for students who are members of groups underrepresented in such subject fields, such as female students, minority students, and students who are members of special populations;

“(11) support for career and technical student organizations, especially with respect to efforts to increase the participation of students who are members of special populations;

“(12) support for establishing and expanding work-based learning opportunities;

“(13) support for preparing, retaining, and training of career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, and leadership development programs;

“(14) integrating and aligning programs of study and career pathways;

“(15) supporting the use of career and technical education programs and programs of study aligned with State, regional, or local in-demand industry sectors or occupations identified by State or local workforce development boards;

“(16) making all forms of instructional content widely available, which may include use of open educational resources;

“(17) support for the integration of arts and design skills, when appropriate, into career and technical education programs and programs of study; and

“(18) support for accelerated learning programs (described in section 4104(b)(3)(A)(i)(IV) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7114(b)(3)(A)(i)(IV)) when any such program is part of a program of study.”.

PART C—LOCAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 131. LOCAL APPLICATION FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

Section 134 (20 U.S.C. 2354) is amended—

(1) in the section heading by striking “LOCAL PLAN” and inserting “LOCAL APPLICATION”;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the heading, by striking “LOCAL PLAN” and inserting “LOCAL APPLICATION”;

(B) by striking “submit a local plan” and inserting “submit a local application”; and

(C) by striking “Such local plan” and inserting “Such local application”; and

(3) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) CONTENTS.—The eligible agency shall determine the requirements for local applications, except that each local application shall contain—

“(1) a description of the results of the comprehensive needs assessment conducted under subsection (c);

“(2) information on the programs of study approved by a State under section 124(b)(2) supported by the eligible recipient with funds under this part, including—

“(A) how the results of the comprehensive needs assessment described in subsection (c) informed the selection of the specific career and technical education programs and activities selected to be funded; and

“(B) a description of any new programs of study the eligible recipient will develop and submit to the State for approval;

“(3) a description of how the eligible recipient will provide—

“(A) career exploration and career development coursework, activities, or services;

“(B) career information; and

“(C) an organized system of career guidance and academic counseling to students before enrolling and while participating in a career and technical education program; and

“(4) a description of how the eligible recipient will—

“(A) provide activities to prepare special populations for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations that will lead to self-sufficiency; and

“(B) prepare CTE participants for nontraditional fields.

“(c) COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive financial assistance under this part, an eligible recipient shall—

“(A) conduct a comprehensive local needs assessment related to career and technical education; and

“(B) not less than once every 2 years, update such comprehensive local needs assessment.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The comprehensive local needs assessment described under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) an evaluation of the performance of the students served by the eligible recipient with respect to State and local adjusted levels of performance established pursuant to section 113, including an evaluation of performance for special populations;

“(B) a description of how career and technical education programs offered by the eligible recipient are—

“(i) sufficient in size, scope, and quality to meet the needs of all students served by the eligible recipient; and

“(ii) (I) aligned to State, regional, or local in-demand industry sectors or occupations identified by the State or local workforce development board, including career pathways, where appropriate; or

“(II) designed to meet local education or economic needs not identified by State or local workforce development boards;

“(C) an evaluation of progress toward the implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study;

“(D) an evaluation of strategies needed to overcome barriers that result in lowering rates of access to, or lowering success in, career and technical education programs for special populations, which may include strategies to establish or utilize existing flexible learning and manufacturing facilities, such as makerspaces;

“(E) a description of how the eligible recipient will improve recruitment, retention, and training of career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and career, academic, and guidance counselors, including individuals in groups underrepresented in such professions; and

“(F) a description of how the eligible recipient will support the transition to teaching from business and industry.

“(d) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the comprehensive needs assessment under subsection (c), an eligible recipient shall involve a diverse body of stakeholders, including, at a minimum—

“(1) representatives of career and technical education programs in a local educational agency or educational service agency, including teachers and administrators;

“(2) representatives of career and technical education programs at postsecondary educational institutions, including faculty and administrators;

“(3) representatives of State or local workforce development boards and a range of local or regional businesses or industries;

“(4) parents and students;

“(5) representatives of special populations; and

“(6) representatives of local agencies serving out-of-school youth, homeless children and youth, and at-risk youth (as defined in section 1432 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6472)).

“(e) CONTINUED CONSULTATION.—An eligible recipient receiving financial assistance under this part shall consult with the entities described in subsection (d) on an ongoing basis to—

“(1) provide input on annual updates to the comprehensive needs assessment required under subsection (c);

“(2) ensure programs of study are—

“(A) responsive to community employment needs;

“(B) aligned with employment priorities in the State, regional, or local economy identified by employers and the entities described in subsection (d), which may include in-demand industry sectors or occupations identified by the local workforce development board;

“(C) informed by labor market information, including information provided under section 15(e)(2)(C) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491–2(e)(2)(C));

“(D) designed to meet current, intermediate, or long-term labor market projections; and

“(E) allow employer input, including input from industry or sector partnerships in the local area, where applicable, into the development and implementation of programs of study to ensure programs align with skills required by local employment opportunities, including activities such as the identification of relevant standards, curriculum, industry-recognized credentials, and current technology and equipment;

“(3) identify and encourage opportunities for work-based learning; and

“(4) ensure funding under this part is used in a coordinated manner with other local resources.”.

SEC. 132. LOCAL USES OF FUNDS.

Section 135 (20 U.S.C. 2355) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 135. LOCAL USES OF FUNDS.

“(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Each eligible recipient that receives funds under this part shall use such funds to develop, coordinate, implement, or improve career and technical education programs to meet the needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment described in section 134(c).

“(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR USES OF FUNDS.—Funds made available to eligible recipients under this part shall be used to support career and technical education programs that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective and—

“(1) provide career exploration and career development activities through an organized, systematic framework designed to aid students, before enrolling and while participating in a career and technical education program, in making informed plans and decisions about future education and career opportunities and programs of study, which may include—

“(A) introductory courses or activities focused on career exploration and career awareness;

“(B) readily available career and labor market information, including information on—

“(i) occupational supply and demand;

“(ii) educational requirements;

“(iii) other information on careers aligned to State or local economic priorities; and

“(iv) employment sectors;

“(C) programs and activities related to the development of student graduation and career plans;

“(D) career guidance and academic counselors that provide information on postsecondary education and career options; or

“(E) any other activity that advances knowledge of career opportunities and assists students in making informed decisions about future education and employment goals;

“(2) provide professional development for teachers, principals, school leaders, administrators, faculty, and career and guidance counselors with respect to content and pedagogy that—

“(A) supports individualized academic and career and technical education instructional approaches, including the integration of academic and career and technical education standards and curriculum;

“(B) ensures labor market information is used to inform the programs, guidance, and advisement offered to students;

“(C) provides educators with opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, and understanding of all aspects of an industry, including the latest workplace equipment, technologies, standards, and credentials;

“(D) supports administrators in managing career and technical education programs in the schools, institutions, or local educational agencies of such administrators;

“(E) supports the implementation of strategies to improve student achievement and close gaps in student participation and performance in career and technical education programs; and

“(F) provides educators with opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, and understanding in pedagogical practices, including, to the extent the eligible recipient determines that such evidence is reasonably available, evidence-based pedagogical practices;

“(3) provide career and technical education students, including special populations, with the skills necessary to pursue high-skill, high-wage occupations;

“(4) support integration of academic skills into career and technical education programs and programs of study to support CTE participants at the secondary school level in meeting the challenging State academic standards adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)) by the State in which the eligible recipient is located;

“(5) plan and carry out elements that support the implementation of career and technical education programs and programs of study and student achievement of the local adjusted levels of performance established under section 113, which may include—

“(A) curriculum aligned with the requirements for a program of study;

“(B) sustainable relationships among education, business and industry, and other community stakeholders, including industry or sector partnerships in the local area, where applicable, that are designed to facilitate the process of continuously updating and aligning programs of study with skills in demand in the State, regional, or local economy;

“(C) dual or concurrent enrollment programs, including early college high schools, and the development or implementation of articulation agreements;

“(D) appropriate equipment, technology, and instructional materials (including support for library resources) aligned with business and industry needs, including machinery, testing equipment, tools, implements, hardware and software, and other new and emerging instructional materials;

“(E) a continuum of work-based learning opportunities;

“(F) industry-recognized certification exams or other assessments leading toward industry-recognized postsecondary credentials;

“(G) efforts to recruit and retain career and technical education program administrators and educators;

“(H) where applicable, coordination with other education and workforce development programs and initiatives, including career pathways and sector partnerships developed under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) and other Federal laws and initiatives that provide students with transition-related services, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.);

“(I) expanding opportunities for students to participate in distance career and technical education and blended-learning programs;

“(J) expanding opportunities for students to participate in competency-based education programs;

“(K) improving career guidance and academic counseling programs that assist students in making informed academic and career and technical education decisions, including academic and financial aid counseling;

“(L) supporting the integration of employability skills into career and technical education programs and programs of study;

“(M) supporting programs and activities that increase access, student engagement, and success in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields (including computer science) for students who are members of groups underrepresented in such subject fields;

“(N) providing career and technical education, in a school or other educational setting, for adults or a school-aged individual who has dropped out of a secondary school to complete secondary school education or upgrade technical skills;

“(O) career and technical student organizations, including student preparation for and participation in technical skills competitions aligned with career and technical education program standards and curriculum;

“(P) making all forms of instructional content widely available, which may include use of open educational resources;

“(Q) supporting the integration of arts and design skills, when appropriate, into career and technical education programs and programs of study;

“(R) where appropriate, expanding opportunities for CTE concentrators to participate in accelerated learning programs (described in section 4104(b)(3)(A)(i)(IV) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7114(b)(3)(A)(i)(IV)) as part of a program of study; and

“(S) other activities to improve career and technical education programs; and

“(6) develop and implement evaluations of the activities carried out with funds under this part, including evaluations necessary to complete the comprehensive needs assessment required under section 134(c) and the local report required under section 113(b)(4)(C).

“(c) **POOLING FUNDS.**—An eligible recipient may pool a portion of funds received under this Act with a portion of funds received under this Act available to not less than one other eligible recipient to support implementation of programs of study through the activities described in subsection (b)(2).

“(d) **ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.**—Each eligible recipient receiving funds under this part shall not use more than 5 percent of such funds for costs associated with the administration of activities under this section.”

TITLE II—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. FEDERAL AND STATE ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.

The Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 311(b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), (C), or (D), in order for a State

to receive its full allotment of funds under this Act for any fiscal year, the Secretary must find that the State’s fiscal effort per student, or the aggregate expenditures of such State, with respect to career and technical education for the preceding fiscal year was not less than the fiscal effort per student, or the aggregate expenditures of such State, for the second preceding fiscal year.”;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “shall exclude capital expenditures, special 1-time project costs, and the cost of pilot programs.” and inserting “shall, at the request of the State, exclude competitive or incentive-based programs established by the State, capital expenditures, special one-time project costs, and the cost of pilot programs.”; and

(iii) by adding after subparagraph (C), the following new subparagraph:

“(D) **ESTABLISHING THE STATE BASELINE.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the State may—

“(I) continue to use the State’s fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures of such State, with respect to career and technical education, as was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act; or

“(II) establish a new level of fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures of such State, with respect to career and technical education, which is not less than 90 percent of the State’s fiscal effort per student, or the aggregate expenditures of such State, with respect to career and technical education for the preceding fiscal year.

“(ii) **AMOUNT.**—The amount of the new level described in clause (i)(II) shall be the State’s fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures of such State, with respect to career and technical education, for the first full fiscal year following the enactment of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.”; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **FAILURE TO MEET.**—The Secretary shall reduce the amount of a State’s allotment of funds under this Act for any fiscal year in the exact proportion by which the State fails to meet the requirement of paragraph (1) by falling below the State’s fiscal effort per student or the State’s aggregate expenditures (using the measure most favorable to the State), if the State failed to meet such requirement (as determined using the measure most favorable to the State) for 1 or more of the 5 immediately preceding fiscal years.

“(3) **WAIVER.**—The Secretary may waive paragraph (2) due to exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances affecting the ability of the State to meet the requirement of paragraph (1).”;

(2) in section 317(b)(1)—

(A) by striking “may, upon written request, use funds made available under this Act to” and inserting “may use funds made available under this Act to”; and

(B) by striking “who reside in the geographical area served by” and inserting “located in or near the geographical area served by”;

(3) by striking title II and redesignating title III as title II;

(4) by redesignating sections 311 through 318 as sections 211 through 218, respectively;

(5) by redesignating sections 321 through 324 as sections 221 through 224, respectively; and

(6) by inserting after section 218 (as so redesignated) the following:

“**SEC. 219. STUDY ON PROGRAMS OF STUDY ALIGNED TO HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-WAGE OCCUPATIONS.**

“(a) **SCOPE OF STUDY.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to evaluate—

“(1) the strategies, components, policies, and practices used by eligible agencies or eligible recipients receiving funding under this Act to successfully assist—

“(A) all students in pursuing and completing programs of study aligned to high-skill, high-wage occupations; and

“(B) any specific subgroup of students identified in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(h)(1)(C)(ii)) in pursuing and completing programs of study aligned to high-skill, high-wage occupations in fields in which such subgroup is underrepresented; and

“(2) any challenges associated with replication of such strategies, components, policies, and practices.

“(b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the study conducted under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall consult with a geographically diverse (including urban, suburban, and rural) representation of—

“(1) students and parents;

“(2) eligible agencies and eligible recipients;

“(3) teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals, including those with expertise in preparing CTE students for nontraditional fields;

“(4) special populations; and

“(5) representatives of business and industry.

“(c) SUBMISSION.—Upon completion, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit the study conducted under subsection (a) to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.”

TITLE III—AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGNER-PEYSEY ACT

SEC. 301. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 15(e)(2) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2(e)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

“(B) consult with eligible agencies (defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302)), State educational agencies, and local educational agencies concerning the provision of workforce and labor market information in order to—

“(i) meet the needs of secondary school and postsecondary school students who seek such information; and

“(ii) annually inform the development and implementation of programs of study defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302), and career pathways;”;

(2) in subparagraph (G), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in subparagraph (H), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by inserting after subparagraph (H) the following new subparagraph:

“(I) provide, on an annual and timely basis to each eligible agency (defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302)), the data and information described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(1).”

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. 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. 2353.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

Mr. Speaker, for years, Americans have urged Congress to work together and advance policies that promote good-paying jobs. We have heard the voices of those struggling to find the opportunities they need. They have been frustrated that the economy has taken so long to recover. Many feel stuck in a job market that has transformed dramatically due to advances in technology and an increasingly competitive global economy.

It is time to deliver the results hard-working men and women desperately need and restore rungs on the ladder of opportunity. That is exactly why we are here today.

This legislation is about jobs. I, along with my colleague Representative KRISHNAMOORTHY, introduced H.R. 2353 to help prepare more Americans to succeed in the workforce by improving career and technical education.

Today, far too many Americans lack the skills and education they need to build a promising career, and many jobs are going unfilled as employers face a shortage of skilled workers.

Paul Tomczuk, president of R. H. Marcon and a constituent of mine, said: “Workforce development is one of the most pressing challenges facing roofing contractors today.” This is a problem we cannot afford to ignore.

As co-chair of the Career and Technical Education Caucus, I have worked hard to address this challenge by enhancing awareness of how CTE programs can lift people out of poverty and expand opportunity.

Too often, it is suggested that, in order to be successful in life, you have to get a bachelor's degree, but that is not the reality of today's diverse economy. In fact, I have met people who have gone into debt from attending a 4-year college or university only to enroll in a CTE program after graduation to get that good-paying job.

Attending a more traditional college or university simply isn't the right fit for everyone. There are countless individuals who learn best in innovative, work-based programming where they can acquire hands-on experience aimed at a certain career.

CTE programs are preparing students for the jobs of the future, including in technology, engineering, healthcare, agriculture, and more. However, there is more that can be done to ensure these programs are successful.

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act will rein in the Federal Government's role in CTE and empower State and local leaders to tailor programs to meet the unique needs of the students in their communities. It will give students and parents the tools they need to hold programs accountable.

Most importantly, this legislation encourages local education leaders to collaborate with local employers and improves alignment with CTE programs and in-demand jobs. This legislation is a win for American workers.

By working together, we have developed a set of bipartisan reforms that will help address our Nation's skills gap, break the cycle of poverty, and help more individuals climb the ladder of opportunity.

I want to thank Representative KRISHNAMOORTHY and our colleagues on both sides of the aisle for all the work that went into moving H.R. 2353 forward, and I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2353. H.R. 2353 is a bill introduced by my good friend Congressman THOMPSON and myself to modernize and take career and technical education into the 21st century.

A persistent complaint I hear from employers throughout the State of Illinois is that CTE programs have not kept pace with the changing demands of industry. This bill would address the skills gap by aligning CTE programs to meet the needs of the labor market, giving stakeholders more autonomy in developing curricula, while ensuring robust accountability standards. I hope everybody will support passage of H.R. 2353.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), the distinguished chairwoman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, who has had a commitment to skills-based education for many years.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr. THOMPSON, for his leadership on this issue. As he said, I have been a strong supporter of this for a long, long time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

Mr. Speaker, when many Americans think of higher education, they think of a traditional college or university on a sprawling green campus. They think of students leaving colleges and universities with their degree in hand, ready for a career and set for life.

While many Americans choose this path, there is a misconception that this is the only pathway to success. For many hardworking Americans, the pathway to success does not require a baccalaureate degree. In fact, skills-focused education has helped countless Americans gain the specialized knowledge and skills they need to enter the workforce and build fulfilling lives.

So many men and women have found success through workforce development programs, however, we have come

to a critical juncture with the future of these programs, and our educational institutions have not caught up. As a result, American businesses, large and small, are having a hard time finding enough workers with the skills and talent they need.

Mr. Speaker, the bipartisan Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, which unanimously passed the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, provides critical reforms to our Nation's education programs and prepares students to compete in our competitive global economy.

Mr. Speaker, all education is truly career education, and we must give our students every opportunity to attain the skills they need to succeed. When students, parents, employers, and, yes, lawmakers understand that, we will be on the right track to closing the skills gap that exists in our country.

I want to thank my colleagues, especially Representative THOMPSON, for his leadership on this issue. As the co-chair of the CTE Caucus, he has spent years championing this issue.

I also want to thank Ranking Member SCOTT and Representative KRISHNAMOORTHY, as well as all committee members, for the bipartisan work that is reflected in this bill.

Expanding opportunity through CTE is vital to closing the Nation's skills gap, ending the cycle of poverty, and creating a better tomorrow for hard-working Americans.

I urge all Members to support H.R. 2353.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, someone who has dedicated his career, in part, to this issue.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for his leadership on this legislation.

I rise in support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, which will reauthorize the Perkins Career and Technical Education program. H.R. 2353 builds on the House's bipartisan efforts in the last Congress, when this Chamber passed CTE reauthorization by a vote of 405-5.

The research is clear: The United States workforce is suffering a skills gap. According to Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, by 2020, 65 percent of all jobs in the United States will require at least some postsecondary education or skills acquisition. Yet, if the current trend holds, by 2020, our Nation will have more than 5 million fewer skilled workers than necessary to fill the high-skilled jobs which will be available. In Virginia alone, that is 30,000 open jobs; 17,000 are in the area of cybersecurity, and those jobs have salaries starting at \$88,000.

This bipartisan, comprehensive reauthorization will improve program qual-

ity and services for students most in need of skills. It will also update the Federal investment in CTE to provide increased State and local flexibility, while ensuring greater accountability for program quality.

It ensures that there remains in place a Federal focus on equity of opportunity and the role of the U.S. Department of Education to protect and promote the civil rights of all students and compliance with Federal laws.

The bill also strengthens the Federal commitment to support delivery of high-quality CTE programs by retaining the Department of Education's full authority to approve or disapprove State and local plans.

The bill also requires Federal oversight, monitoring, and technical assistance to support program improvement and maintains full authority of the Secretary to enforce compliance with statutory program requirements and Federal civil rights laws.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for their bipartisan leadership, and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) for his leadership as the chair of the CTE Caucus and for his dedication to realizing a comprehensive program reauthorization.

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

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this bill was unanimously reported by the committee. It has nearly unanimous support from business groups, educators, and community stakeholders, so I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE), the subcommittee chairman for the Workforce Protections Subcommittee of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time, and I am proud to rise in support of this strong, bipartisan legislation.

Improving career and technical education programs is the most important thing Congress can do to help close the skills gap, combat poverty, and help put Americans back to work.

Studies clearly show that there are unfilled high-wage jobs out there that remain open because people lack the skills to fill the jobs. That is where CTE comes in.

When I was chancellor of Alabama's 2-year college system, I saw firsthand just how impressive these programs are. They really do work like magic by taking an untrained worker and giving him the skills he needs to fill an in-demand job. It is a win-win for everyone.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be an original cosponsor and supporter of this legislation. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this

reform-oriented bill that helps build the 21st century workforce.

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Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), the chair of the CTE Caucus.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Career and Technical Education Caucus, I rise in strong support of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. This bipartisan bill, Mr. Speaker, is long overdue. The Carl D. Perkins CTE Act, the primary Federal investment in CTE, has not been reauthorized in over a decade.

I want to thank my colleagues, particularly Chairwoman FOXX, Ranking Member SCOTT, Representative THOMPSON, and Representative KRISHNAMOORTHY for their leadership and collaboration on this important bill, and a particular thanks to my co-chair of the CTE Caucus, Mr. THOMPSON, for his outstanding leadership and partnership on this issue over the years.

Mr. Speaker, CTE provides students of all ages with the skills they need to succeed in high-demand, high-paying, high-skilled jobs. At a time right now when hundreds of thousands of jobs in manufacturing, IT, and other skilled trades remain unfilled, Congress has a responsibility to empower workers with appropriate education and training. If we fail to modernize and invest in CTE, we will be unable to build a skilled workforce, and American businesses will pay the price.

H.R. 2353 aligns CTE programs with industry needs, promotes work-based learning, and supports career counselors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. LANGEVIN. H.R. 2353 aligns CTE programs with industry needs, promotes work-based learning, and supports career counselors while strengthening Federal investment in CTE.

I encourage my colleagues to support students, businesses, and their local economies by supporting this bill.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), the chairman of the Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for sponsoring this legislation.

I rise today to voice my strong support for the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, H.R. 2353. In today's economy, we know that not everyone follows the same path into the workforce. Whether a student wants to pursue a

job in the auto industry, healthcare, energy, or IT, the reforms we are advancing will help aspiring workers get the hands-on experience they need to thrive in the 21st century workforce.

This bill is particularly important for my home State of Michigan, the heartland of American manufacturing, where high-skilled jobs are a vital component of our State's economy. I am also glad it includes my bipartisan provisions to address outdated and burdensome occupational licensing requirements.

As I meet with educators, workers, and manufacturers across my district, I consistently hear about the need to improve CTE programs and close the skills gap. Let's pass this bipartisan bill and help more men and women in Michigan and across the country secure fulfilling and good-paying jobs.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK).

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Illinois for his leadership on this bill; and also to Congressman THOMPSON for all he has done to bring this to where it is today, because millions of students and workers are eager to advance into good-paying, high-skilled technical careers.

From childcare to manufacturing, to carpentry or computer science, jobs that require technical training are in high demand, and we want to make sure that students across the country have the skills they need to get hired and develop their careers.

With this bill, we will help strengthen the Perkins career and technical education program that reaches over 11 million students every year. This bill will help policymakers measure what does and does not work in career and technical education, allowing us to build on past successes. It will ensure our CTE programs are aligned with the needs of high-demand growth industries to make sure that America is competitive globally, and it will support work-based learning and apprenticeships, and our early education and childcare workforce.

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

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. I yield an additional 15 seconds to the gentlewoman.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. This will bring the Perkins program into the modern, 21st century global economy. This has broad bipartisan support.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this act, and I urge them to fully fund the CTE programs and reject the proposed cuts of \$168 million.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GLENN THOMPSON for yielding. I appreciate his

effective leadership on strengthening America's workforce to create jobs.

I am grateful to speak today on the importance of career and technical education, a critical tool in closing the skills gap and creating jobs.

South Carolina has been successful in promoting career and technical education programs, recruiting Michelin, BMW, Boeing, Bridgestone, MTU, and now Volvo. I hope all communities across America can experience the success we have achieved creating jobs, leading to the lowest unemployment rate in 16 years.

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act will reduce regulations and allow State and local leaders to create CTE programs that are best for their communities by providing greater flexibility of Federal resources, allowing States to respond to their unique educational and economic needs to create jobs for fulfilling lives.

I appreciate the opportunity to encourage my colleagues to pass this bipartisan legislation. These efforts, amplified by President Donald Trump's executive order last week expanding apprenticeship programs, will be an important step forward in our educational system—closing the skills gap and training Americans for meaningful, skilled jobs.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. NOLAN).

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in support of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

I would be remiss if I didn't compliment my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and all of their respective staffs who have worked so hard to bring this really good, strong bipartisan measure here before the Congress for the benefit of the American people.

I have got to tell you: everywhere I go back in Minnesota and around the country, I hear two things when I am talking to businesspeople. And they say, you know, the people who are trained under this career and technical education program are the best employees that we have. The other thing I hear is that we need more of them.

So, again, thanks to my colleagues for bringing this bill forward. There are some good, new provisions in it that gives States an opportunity to focus better on what the needs are in their particular region. There are some other tools to help communities, the program itself, and the businesses to form partnerships to expand the program.

At the end of the day, it is all about creating good, strong jobs with living wages and strong futures. It is about creating opportunities for the working men and women in this country and for the businesses that are at the heart of our economy. And is it about creating a dynamic economy where people can grow and prosper in the 21st century.

It is a good bill for workers. It is a good bill for business. It is a good bill for our economy. And it is a good bill for our national security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge its adoption in the strongest language possible.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY).

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, may I ask my colleague from North Carolina, the chairwoman of the Education and the Workforce Committee, to engage in a brief colloquy.

Mr. Speaker, Wyoming has used CTE funds to pioneer innovative ways of improving the college and career readiness of our students.

Protecting CTE funding in Wyoming for cutting-edge programs like the Pathway Innovation Center in Casper is crucial, in part, because the previous administration's harmful energy policies that devastated our economy, and we must now work to address a depressed labor market and hedge against future energy market downturns.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the chairwoman and her committee colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their efforts to reform and reauthorize the CTE programs. However, I have concerns that the bill, as drafted in its current form, could negatively impact my State. Therefore, I can't support it.

Additionally, I know some Members from West Virginia and Louisiana share my concerns.

Therefore, I ask the gentlewoman, would she be willing to work with us as this process moves forward to help address these concerns so we can get a bill to the President's desk that we can all support?

Ms. FOXX. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. CHENEY. I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for sharing her perspective, and I look forward to working to address her concerns as we move forward in the legislative process.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support on reauthorizing the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, which really should be just called the JOBS Act. As we have heard from Members all across the country, Members are hearing the same thing from their employer community, which is jobs exist, but skills don't.

What this bill does is it connects people to that job market in response to the fact that the 21st century market is dynamic and changing, and this bill really gets it in terms of getting to that point.

In May, the U.S. Department of Labor reported that there are 5.9 million job openings in the U.S. economy; a record high since they even started collecting that data. So our job as Members of Congress is to update the law and update these programs to align

it with the Workforce Investment Act, which was passed in 2014, and the Every Student Succeeds Act, which was passed again in the last Congress.

This will be the final piece of the puzzle, which will, again, make sure that millions of Americans will have the opportunity to have good-paying jobs that they can support themselves and their families. In sector after sector, whether it is IT, whether it is healthcare, whether it is advanced manufacturing, all are going to benefit from this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate both of the sponsors for their great work on this, and I urge all Members to support it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER).

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2353. This bill will reform our career and technical education system, and strengthen the programs in my district in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, there are jobs available in my district right now, but there aren't enough trained workers. This bill will help businesses and schools partner to prepare students for jobs in today's in-demand industries.

We need to accommodate the needs of many different types of students like Steve Nunemaker from Ephrata, Pennsylvania, who, at the age of 47, graduated from Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology with a degree in engineering computer-aided drafting.

CTE programs are vital to training workers for new careers. The jobs that are available are good, family-sustaining jobs. So many people in this country are ready to learn and eager to work.

I would like to thank again Representatives THOMPSON and KRISHNAMOORTHY for their leadership, and I rise to urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

I recently had the opportunity to visit our new Pathways in Technology Early College, or P-TECH, program at Skyline High School in Colorado.

P-TECH is a partnership between the St. Vrain Valley School District, Front Range Community College, and IBM. It allows students to earn a high school diploma and an associate's degree in 5 or 6 years through dual enrollment.

I spoke with a number of students participating in P-TECH and they shared with me how the program equips them with the skills they need to get a well-paying, reliable job after

graduation. That is exactly the kind of innovation Congress should be supporting, and I am proud that the Perkins reauthorization bill does just that.

I urge this bill's final passage in the House, and I call on my colleagues in the Senate to take up this bipartisan legislation as soon as possible so more students can enjoy the kinds of opportunities that the students at the P-TECH High School and St. Vrain Valley School District do.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON), a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2353.

Not only does this legislation authorize more available funding for CTE programs, it also gives States more freedom to support CTE activities in rural districts like mine.

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This bill also gives authority back to the States to approve CTE plans rather than require Federal approval.

In the short time I have been in Congress, I have seen firsthand the unique differences across each of our States and districts. Increasing flexibility will enable States to have the flexibility to create and support programs that fit their unique workforce needs.

I am excited to be an original cosponsor of this legislation and look forward to its passage later today. Helping our young people transition from school into meaningful careers is one of the best ways we can move our Nation into a vibrant 21st century economy.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON).

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am a strong supporter of career and technical education. While this bipartisan bill makes needed improvements to current law, during the committee markup I offered and later withdrew an amendment to provide more Federal support for skill development and training programs for ex-offenders who need a second chance and opportunity.

Ex-offenders, who are disproportionately young men of color due to the bias in the criminal justice system, face numerous hurdles when they try to reintegrate into society after serving their time. Finding a decent job is a necessary first step towards developing self-esteem and self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, and too often, a prior criminal history is a barrier to ex-offenders seeking employment.

I withdrew my amendment because of the important work. Nevertheless, it is my view that my amendment should be considered as this bill advances to future conference consideration. Let's help stop recidivism for this special population.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia

(Mr. ALLEN), who is a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

Last week, President Trump laid out a plan to expand educational opportunities for American workers. President Trump's dedication to workforce development is admirable, and I am glad we have a President who has made this a priority.

As someone who has worked in the construction industry for my entire career, I know firsthand how difficult it can be to find skilled workers. In fact, I spoke at the Associated Builders and Contractors breakfast this morning, and they reported that there will be over 1 million job openings in the construction industry in the next few years.

I have met with many industries in my district. The workforce is aging. There aren't enough people who currently have the skills to take over, and it can take nearly 2 years for people to be fully trained for these positions.

First and foremost, it is our responsibility to make sure that young people today are equipped for the job market of tomorrow. Getting an education is essential, but it is equally important that our education efforts are aligned with the in-demand jobs in our communities.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Georgia an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, this bill will bridge the gap between the business community and education, which is critical to prepare America's future workforce.

I am happy to cosponsor this important bill, and I hope that my colleagues will join me in voting for H.R. 2353.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI), who is the vice ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act is an important step in educating students and preparing them for the workforce. It increases opportunities for historically underserved students. It strengthens alignment between CTE programs and stakeholders. It includes the amendment I worked on with Representative STEFANIK to encourage CTE programs to integrate arts and design skills.

This bill will support more programs that respond to local workforce demands and teach advanced skills and creative thinking, like the one I just visited at Portland Community College. Employers, including Intel, support the school's new STEAM Lab,

where students are pursuing certificates and degrees in fields like microelectronics technology.

The Federal Government does have an important enforcement role, and I am disappointed that the bill weakens the Department of Education's ability to hold States accountable for improving low-quality CTE programs. But despite that concern, this bill is worthy of support.

I thank Chairwoman FOXX, Ranking Member SCOTT, Representative THOMPSON, and Representative KRISHNAMOORTHY for their bipartisan work, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LEWIS), an Education and the Workforce Committee member.

Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. THOMPSON for his leadership and hard work on this important legislation.

Too often, students across the country leave school without the necessary skills to compete in the modern economy. As the cost of a 4-year degree continues to soar higher and higher and students are taking on greater debt, employers across this country are struggling to find skilled workers to fill good, high-paying jobs. Career and technical education bridges the gap between the classroom and the workplace, offering students a clear pathway to a meaningful career.

I am pleased this legislation includes my amendment supporting dual and concurrent enrollment. By allowing high school students to begin earning postsecondary credit, dual enrollment can shorten the time to degree or credential completion, puts students on the fast track to a good job, and saves families a significant amount of money. Students who participate in dual enrollment are more likely to continue and pursue postsecondary education, less likely to need remediation, and more likely to complete a degree.

My district is lucky to be home to a great technical college that does its job. For example, in Rosemount, Minnesota, Dakota County Technical College partners with local employers to provide students customized training that fits employer-specific needs.

I am proud to support this important legislation that will increase opportunity and prepare students with the skills to succeed.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Illinois has 8¾ minutes remaining.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Since coming to Congress, I have visited with business leaders across my

district, such as Cindy, the plant manager at Train in Charlotte, and educators at local colleges like Central Piedmont Community College. Each stressed the importance of educating our workforce to fill existing available jobs and to train for jobs of the future.

We must close the skills gap through innovation and work-based learning opportunities such as those provided through the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

CTE improves collaboration between secondary and postsecondary schools, employers, industry, and community partners, giving students, regardless of their background, access to quality job training and the opportunity to earn well-paying jobs without having to complete a 4-year degree. This training is critical to closing the opportunity gap that exists in communities like mine in Mecklenburg County.

IBM, which employs more than 1,300 people in the 12th District, wrote to me just last week to remind us that jobs in growing technology fields demand candidates with high-tech skills that don't always require a traditional degree.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in reauthorizing CTE to continue modernizing today's workforce training and securing America's future.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, one good thing about voting for this bill is the rhetoric we are hearing from this Chamber today. It sounds like the drumbeat from high school guidance counselors, college recruiters, and politicians kowtowing to the education lobby that everybody has to go to a 4-year college or that it is even wise for people to go to a 4-year college is beginning to come to an end.

I am glad, under this bill, we are going to make it easier for students to get a degree focused on skills. For some, that degree could be 1 year; for some, it could be 2 years. Frequently, these degrees lead to jobs that are higher paying than many jobs that you get after you have a 4-year degree.

Not only are they higher paying, but I think they result in more job security because you are not a generalist who will get laid off when you are 45 or 50 and not find a job. But if you have a skill, that skill is something in which you can still get a job when you are 50, 55, 60, or 65. Therefore, I am proud to announce for this bill today.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER).

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my friend from Illinois and also my friend Mr. THOMPSON for this bipartisan bill. I am happy to support it and hear all of my colleagues enthusiastically support it.

Career and technical education gives students the opportunity to get technical experience regardless of whether

their next step out of high school is to immediately join the workforce or to go to college.

In my district, I have had the opportunity to visit many students in programs that benefit from the inclusions of career pathways in their high school curriculum. Mt. Diablo High School students, for example, create a farm-to-table restaurant experience, while Pittsburgh High Schoolers design computer animations as a part of the school's Green Engineering Academy. At De Anza High School in Richmond, California, they run an Information Technology Academy focusing on IT career skills, while providing their community IT services free of charge.

By enacting this bipartisan legislation, Congress will affirmatively take steps to update our Nation's educational vision and will propel today's students into tomorrow's workforce.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT), who is a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

The economy is not growing as it should be—about 0.7 percent last quarter—and according to many of the employers in my district, our workforce is not prepared to meet the needs of today, let alone the future.

This legislation is important because it recognizes that we need an education system that best prepares our kids for the future—a future in business—as soon as they hit K-12, and they should be ready to enter the job market or move on to additional training. Traditional 4-year colleges and universities cannot be the only pathway for the next generation of students.

In Virginia, there were nearly 110,000 postsecondary students enrolled in CTE courses in the 2014 year. Programs I am privileged to represent in Virginia's Seventh Congressional District include Amelia Nottoway Technical Center, the Chesterfield Governor's Career and Technical Academy, and Chesterfield County Public Schools Governor's Health Sciences Academy.

While these innovative programs in my district have excelled, technical skills and on-the-job training must be ingrained in the thinking of our entire K-12 educational system, across the curriculum, in every class. I believe this bill is a positive step in that direction.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. NORCROSS).

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Illinois for yielding me the time.

Certainly, we are in the House today and sending a very clear message that career and technical skills matter, and I rise in support of this bill. For a 4-year college, that pathway is certainly

great for some, but not all. Technical training helped shape my life from community college to the construction site and, yes, here to Congress.

Career and technical education, or CTE, is often overlooked, and it shouldn't be. We need electricians and computer programmers just as much as we need doctors and engineers. In my State of New Jersey, 9 out of 10 of the fastest growing occupations don't require a 4-year degree, but they do require a certificate or on-the-job training.

This is an important reauthorization bill that will go a long way to providing students with opportunities to build skills that they need for those fast-growing, high-paying jobs.

I want to thank the sponsors for including my provision that will allow high schools to give more information on that career path in technical education.

Don Borden, who is the president of Camden County College in my State, says that we have an "understanding of the types of educational programs we need to provide for our students," and that "will lead to meaningful employment."

This is about employment and careers, to train the students on available curriculum, on available jobs. I urge support of this jobs bill.

□ 1430

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES).

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

I urge all Members to vote for this bipartisan bill that allows our educational institutions the ability to better adapt their programs to the specific needs of their students. This bill will give States and localities more flexibility in how to use Federal money for career and technical education programs, which will ultimately help Americans find the jobs they need.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Delaware (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER).

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. This important legislation would allow more Americans to enter the workforce with the skills needed to compete for high-skilled, in-demand jobs.

Delaware employers tell me they need a skilled workforce. CTE support is a vital tool in addressing the skills gap in many industries in our country. Our support ensures that all students have access to high-quality CTE programs. It allows States to strengthen these programs, providing hands-on

learning opportunities that lead to higher graduation rates as well as better postsecondary and career options.

In 2012, Delaware started Pathways to Prosperity to give high school students an industry-recognized certificate, college credits, and relevant work experience, all before they graduate. In 2 years, it has grown from 30 students to over 6,000 students, who are now better suited to determine their next steps and build a career.

I thank Mr. THOMPSON and also Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY for their leadership, and I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON).

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congressman from Pennsylvania for yielding.

As a former manufacturer, I have experienced firsthand the importance of career technical education in promoting meaningful work. It is especially helpful for helping people transition from a social safety net or a second-chance program, but I have seen it firsthand. For high school students and for adults who change careers, it can truly change lives.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation. I am confident it can do for our country what it has done in the Eighth District of Ohio.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his great work on this bill that would reauthorize a program that is critical to both American workers and businesses, and the future of our American economy.

I am continuously hearing from family-owned manufactures across my district, such as Atlas Tool and Die and ODM, that they cannot find workers with the skills they need to fill good-paying jobs. I hear this from companies also like Boeing, Intel, and Abbott. At the same time, millions of Americans are struggling to find jobs, but they don't have the skills that they need.

This bill addresses this problem by supporting career and technical education programs that are matched to regional, State, and local labor markets. These applied science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM education programs, are an important component of the innovation engine that drives our economy.

As we work to move innovative technologies into the marketplace, we need a skilled workforce to build and implement them. We also need to make sure that our innovation economy benefits all Americans, especially the middle class.

I thank my colleagues for this bill and urge all my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LIPINSKI. I want to thank Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY for all his work on this bill, and I thank the Republicans for their work. It is a good, bipartisan bill. It is something that America needs to help strengthen our economy and help strengthen America's middle class.

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

I would like to thank my staff and committee staff for all their work on this bill. I especially want to thank Alex Payne, the lead committee staffer on career and technical education from our side, who, unfortunately, couldn't be here with us today, due to the death of his father. I want to thank Congressman THOMPSON for his incredible leadership on this bill for all these years.

I also want to say that the main purpose of this bill is to coordinate what is taught in CTE classes with workforce demands. H.R. 2353 requires State plans to show how CTE curricula aligns with in-demand careers. School districts must consult business leaders, educators, parents, community leaders, representatives of special populations, and others to determine the most promising career fields. This bipartisan bill gives everyone a seat at the table and makes sure no one is left behind.

I also want to thank Chairwoman Foxx and Ranking Member SCOTT for their incredible leadership on this bill.

I want to take note of the fact that this is a bipartisan bill, at a time when bipartisanship is so needed in this town. I urge the Senate to take up our bill, and I urge a "yes" vote.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2353 has the power to improve the lives of countless Americans. By modernizing career and technical education, we can help prepare more men and women from all walks of life to succeed in the workforce.

I would like to note that it is important we continue to fund these programs at the authorized levels so the programs can adequately serve students of all ages. We really have an opportunity to make a positive difference today, and I couldn't be prouder of the bipartisan work that went into this.

Once again, I want to thank Representative KRISHNAMOORTHY as well as all the members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. I would be remiss not to thank my education staff on my team, Katie Brown; Education and the Workforce staffers, James Redstone and Alex Payne; and all of our colleagues, for their diligent work on this important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote in favor of H.R. 2353, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act is a long overdue reform and

reauthorization of the federal career and technical education (CTE) program. Unfortunately, I remain concerned that the bill included changes to the funding formula for states that would result in significant cuts to CTE funding for West Virginia and several other states beginning in 2021.

The removal of a hold harmless provision will result in a direct loss of \$4.07 million to West Virginia, a cut of nearly 20 percent over a three-year period. Given West Virginia's economic struggles in recent years, we can ill afford drastic cuts to workforce training programs. As the legislative process continues, I urge the U.S. Senate to find an equitable solution and consider states that will be disadvantaged by the removal of the hold harmless provision.

Without additional changes to the funding formula, in its current form I will oppose the bill.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

High school, community college, and trade school students in Houston and Harris County, Texas deserve the opportunity to receive a high-quality career and technical education (CTE). CTE education is the pathway for many in our community and throughout our great country to a good paying job and the middle class.

High-quality CTE programs are critical for our nation's economy. Nearly every sector of our economy, from refiners and shipbuilders along the Houston Ship Channel to medical device manufacturers and information technology firms, rely on skilled STEM-educated workers to innovate and compete in the global marketplace.

For over thirty years, the federal government has provided direct support to CTE programs nationwide through the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Congress has not successfully reauthorized the Perkins Act in 11 years, delaying the needed reforms and additional resources our CTE students deserve.

Today's legislation delivers the reforms and resources that will help improve our local career and technical education programs. The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act will provide states more flexibility in the use of federal resources in response to changes in education and the economy and reduce administrative burdens and simplify the process for states to apply for federal resources. This legislation will increase federal investment in CTE program by nine percent over the life of the authorization and reward success and innovation in CTE program practices that have been proven to best serve students and employers.

I ask all my colleagues to join in supporting this bipartisan legislation that is broadly supported by job creators and educators from across our great nation.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act.

I devoted 35 years to workforce education so I know the career and economic opportunities possible through technical education. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that there are 90 distinct career paths in my home state—Michigan—offering an average salary of \$50 thousand or more that do not require

a 4 year college degree. That salary is well above the state median annual wage of \$45 thousand.

Yet we lack effective technical training opportunities to reach those paths. Too often young people are unaware of those opportunities and far too often access to career and technical education is lacking. CTE programs give students the opportunities to experience those careers and build skills needed for careers.

This bipartisan legislation updates federal law to support CTE programs and to improve access. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, which reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

Mr. Speaker, it's estimated that the U.S. spends \$1.6 trillion dollars on human capital development each year. That includes spending on K-12 education, post-secondary education, and employer-based training. In spite of all that spending, fewer than half of Americans ages 25 to 64 have completed a credential beyond high school. All over my district I hear from employers about the need for workers with the right skills. Career and technical education is one way to do this.

I am pleased this legislation encourages states to utilize work-based learning, but I would also note that I think we can further strengthen it by encouraging apprenticeships, both registered and unregistered. As our nation continues to transition itself from analog to digital, so must our workforce. Apprenticeships are needed not only in traditional trades, but also in emerging fields like advanced manufacturing and the technology sector. President Trump demonstrated his commitment to this workforce development model in a speech last week, and I look forward to working on this model with the Chairwoman.

With these important reforms, we can help ensure the labor force of tomorrow has the skills it needs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2353, 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 SUPPLY PERMITTING COORDINATION ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 392 and rule

XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1654.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1440

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate Federal and State permitting processes related to the construction of new surface water storage projects on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to designate the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for permit processing, and for other purposes, with Mr. POE of Texas in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, the House meets for the second day in a row to consider another infrastructure bill that has come from the House Natural Resources Committee and its Subcommittee on Water, Power, and Oceans, of which I have the honor of chairing. My subcommittee has a strong infrastructure agenda, already hearing testimony on a number of bills aimed at improving our Nation's infrastructure and advancing an all-of-the-above energy and water strategy.

Many of our bills, including H.R. 1654, which we are considering today, apply simple solutions to expedite maintenance or construction of water and power infrastructure throughout the Nation. It is vital to rebuild our Nation's infrastructure, and one of the biggest roadblocks is the excess of regulatory red tape that applicants have to wade through before they can even move one shovel of dirt.

In Colorado, where I live, a water project was recently completed where water owned by the city of Colorado Springs was taken from a reservoir 60 miles to the south to the city of Colorado Springs for treatment and distribution. The project took 6 years to build. But before that could happen, there were over 200 permits and applications that had to be granted, any one of which could have stopped the whole thing, and that cost \$160 million in application fees, lawyers' time, and mitigation. That took 8 years. That took longer than the project itself.

Congressman TOM MCCLINTOCK's Water Supply Permitting Coordination

Act seeks to cut regulatory red tape by creating a one-stop-shop permitting process to the Bureau of Reclamation in order to streamline the current multiagency permitting processes for new or expanded non-Federal surface storage facilities.

However, this bill is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Mr. MCCLINTOCK's bill allows water storage project sponsors the flexibility to opt out of this process and, instead, choose the agency and process that works best for them.

While the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act will allow for much-needed relief in the sponsor's State of California, this bill will benefit States throughout the West, including my own State of Colorado.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK's bill goes hand-in-hand with language in the WIIN Act, which was signed into law last year, that supports additional water storage capacity across the West.

I commend my colleague, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, for bringing up this commonsense piece of legislation that simply looks to cut regulatory red tape for water storage projects that are essential to survival in the West.

Mr. Chair, I urge all of my House colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, we are debating today what is being called an infrastructure bill. I wish that were actually the case. Our country certainly needs Congress to take action to address our country's infrastructure needs, yet this Congress is spending its time today debating another sham infrastructure bill that won't actually provide a single cent for real infrastructure.

Our Nation currently spends less on infrastructure as a percentage of our GDP than at any time during the past 20 years, and it shows. Far too many areas around the country have infrastructure that is crumbling before our eyes. We have seen this occur with the recent tragedy and the situation for water at the Oroville Dam in California, and this bill offers no solutions for these issues. In truth, this bill is simply an environmental deregulation bill disguised as an infrastructure bill.

Now, the bill's proponents have claimed that environmental laws, and specifically NEPA, are blocking new dam construction. This claim, Mr. Chairman, simply put, is bunk. According to the Bureau of Reclamation, not a single dam has been denied construction because of a lack of coordination between Reclamation and other agencies or because of delays associated with environmental review or permitting.

So why do we not see all sorts of new dams sprouting up around the West like we did for years and years in the previous century?

Because there is no new water to be captured, and because, frankly, all the

best dam locations around the West were taken in the previous century when we had a heck of a dam-building spree.

New dams don't get built because they don't yield enough water to justify their multibillion-dollar price tags. You can ask the CRS if you don't believe other experts. In 2012, the Congressional Research Service found that the most likely causes of delay for major infrastructure projects are a lack of funding and State permitting issues, not environmental laws.

Now, new surface storage may be appropriate in some cases. The fact is, however, that much of the United States is already saturated with dams because of that dam-building spree we had in the previous century. The United States built tens of thousands of dams in the 20th century. California alone built 1,400 major dams. The best dam sites are already taken. Other than extraordinarily wet years like this one, thankfully, in California we are having a hard time even filling up the reservoirs that we already built.

Despite these facts, my Republican colleagues continue to peddle this fiction that we have to gut our Nation's environmental laws to build new dams and other infrastructure. I guess we should not be surprised because this crusade against our Nation's environmental laws is being led by a President whose relationship with the truth is complicated at best.

A couple of weeks ago, President Trump claimed that projects like the Hoover Dam were built in 5 years because they didn't have to go through years of permitting and regulation that current infrastructure projects are subjected to.

Well, the independent fact checkers at The Washington Post evaluated this claim and they awarded the President's claim, as you can see to my right, three Pinocchios, which is the rating for statements that include "significant factual error and/or obvious contradictions."

Now, the fact checkers noted that, according to the U.S. GAO, 95 percent of public infrastructure projects are actually excluded from environmental reviews under current law. They further pointed out that the President ignored the many years of planning, permitting, negotiating, and preparing that was required to make sure that projects like the Hoover Dam were financially feasible and actually had public support.

In fact, dam planning on the Colorado River began in 1902, yet the Hoover Dam was not completed until 1937. Not completed, I might add, until the Roosevelt administration put actual public infrastructure dollars on the table to get that project financed and moving. The project took many years because, even despite the absence of modern environmental laws, big complicated projects take time to plan and finance, and they always have.

I am sorry that my Republican colleagues refuse to let such facts get in

the way of their decades-long crusade against our country's bedrock environmental laws, but I hope we will eventually move on from this debate and get on to addressing real problems affecting our infrastructure, and that real problem is investment.

In terms of water infrastructure, our Nation is still not making necessary investments like water reuse projects and recycling projects. These are 21st century infrastructure projects that can provide us with water supplies that don't depend on the whims of an increasingly unpredictable hydrology. Given our changing climate, we can no longer rely exclusively on our 20th century infrastructure projects like dams.

Despite this, we have barely scratched the surface on building modern water infrastructure projects like reuse, recycling, desalination, groundwater storage, storm water capture, and water-use efficiency projects. Our country currently reuses less than 10 percent of our Nation's wastewater. Climate change will require us to do better. As George W. Bush's Reclamation Commissioner once said, the reuse of wastewater and recycled water could actually be the next river for the Western United States to tap for critical water supply.

This Congress should be working across the aisle to fully tap that next great river for the 21st century.

Reoperating existing facilities, modernizing those operations, is another example of something we should be working together on across the aisle.

All around the West we are dealing with dams and reservoirs that are being operated with the best technology from decades ago. The flood control manual at Oroville Dam, for example, hasn't been updated since 1970, which actually makes it cutting edge when compared to many of the reservoirs that are operating on 1950s flood control manuals. We are using slide rules instead of computers, with meteorological predictions that are based on historic data, backward-looking data, instead of looking up at the sky and using the data from modern satellite technology.

At Folsom Dam, we are watching a long overdue update to operations as part of a new auxiliary spillway. Forecast-informed operations, which is something that I have long advocated as part of comprehensive water legislation, is something we could work on together, and it would provide significant increases in water supply.

If my Republican friends are interested in expediting environmental reviews for infrastructure projects, then there is another thing that we can work on together, and that is we can end the slashing of budgets in Federal agencies that are in charge of environmental reviews for infrastructure projects. Budget cuts do nothing but hamper the ability of these agencies to participate in the review process and to protect our other Nation's fisheries and other natural resources.

This bill before us today compounds the problem by further undercutting the important role these agencies play to protect our natural resources. That is why several conservation and fishing industry groups have warned that this Congress should reject this bill, that it threatens tens of thousands of jobs in the fishing industry across the Pacific Coast.

Many of our Nation's iconic fisheries are already on the brink of extinction. We have heard firsthand in our committee from the fishermen struggling to pay their mortgages, boats being scrapped because owners can't pay mooring fees, homes being repossessed, and restaurants, hotels, and other retail and service businesses struggling just to scrape by. Let's not add to these struggles by passing an ill-conceived bill that does nothing to actually improve our infrastructure.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote "no," and I reserve the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. Members are advised and reminded not to engage in personalities toward the President.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the great State of California (Mr. MCCARTHY), our majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his work on this.

Mr. Chairman, I always get excited when I hear people speak on the floor, especially when they come from California. Mr. Chairman, it is always interesting when people want to tell us what is the best way to make things happen.

It is interesting, in California, when the legislature was controlled by Democrats, they did waive CEQA, but it wasn't for a dam. It wasn't to prepare for a drought we were going through. But they waived it twice, all for sports. One was in San Francisco, and one was in L.A. It seems odd, but sometimes people have their priorities, I guess, not in the right place.

Now, Mr. Chairman, California and the West recently endured the worst drought in our century. Though it was the worst drought, this was not our first. We have faced droughts for generations, and each time the rain and snow came back and delivered the water that we needed to survive.

Just like previous years, this past winter was a godsend to Californians; the wettest on record. Living in the naturally dry region that we do, you would think it would be common practice to prepare for inevitable times of drought by capturing water when Mother Nature blesses us with the rain and snow. But the fact is that we aren't doing enough to store the water we do get for the times we don't get it.

So what can we do now? What would help the people in our district and across California and across the West to prepare for future droughts that we know are coming?

We should start by building more dams and reservoirs.

So what is stopping us?

Well, some is a ridiculous permitting process that forces us to wait and wait and wait when actually we should be acting.

Just look at history. Take the High Savery Dam in Wyoming. It took 14 years to permit the project but only 2 years to build it. It was finished in 2004. Think about how much the world has changed in those 14 years of time.

In 1990, somewhere around 5 million people had cell phones and only about 15 percent of Americans owned a computer. By 2004, when the dam was finished, about 180 million people had cell phones and 62 percent of Americans owned a computer. In 1990, the most popular movie was *Total Recall*. By 2004, we were already on to *Shrek 2*.

Looking forward to my home State, we can't wait 14 years after starting the permitting process to finish our projects. The Temperance Flat Reservoir, once fully operational, can provide enough water to meet the needs of 172,000 households for an entire year. Finishing the Sites Reservoir proposal could provide 2 million California homes with enough water for a year. That is an astounding number. But, Mr. Chairman, I am sure on this floor we will hear those 2 million should actually wait. But I guess for a baseball stadium, no need to wait.

So fixing the process isn't just about saving some headaches or a few hours of time. This is about making sure millions of people in California and across America have the water they need and deserve.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Congressman TOM MCCLINTOCK for this legislation. Fixing this permitting process for water storage is more than just common sense. It is about making us a nation of doers again to get the American what they actually need.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. MCCLINTOCK has worked. He has tried to work with both sides of the aisle. He has been through this process.

But you know what?

Mr. MCCLINTOCK has been home. He has been listening to his constituents on both sides of the aisle that don't have water. We have been through these droughts. We know these droughts will come again, and they have only been worse in the last couple of years.

Why?

Because of what has been imposed by the Federal Government. Even in the years where we have more than 170 percent of snowpack, we don't keep the guarantee of 100 percent of the water.

So as the environmental laws continue to take water away and put it out to the ocean instead of providing for the fruits to be grown and the fiber across our country and provide the water for the citizens of California, we should build more dams, and they should not have to wait 14 years with only 2 years to build it. We can do bet-

ter, we should do better, and we will do better when we pass this bill.

□ 1500

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I was in the California Legislature for at least one of the those environmental waiver bills that the majority leader referenced involving an NFL stadium, and I am glad to hear him criticize that because I, too, criticized it. It was a bipartisan mistake. I voted against it.

There was a bit of vindication because at least one of those stadiums ended up not getting built anyway, despite the environmental waiver, and it sort of exposed the fact that these environmental laws are often put forward as scapegoats. We are often told that if you just clear away the environmental permitting, we can do these things.

There were many other reasons why that stadium didn't get built, complicated issues involving NFL franchises and financing, which is usually the real scapegoat when these projects aren't moving forward. So it is a worthy example to talk about in the context of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chair, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership on the Water, Power, and Oceans Subcommittee.

Mr. Chairman, droughts are nature's fault; they happen. But water shortages are our fault. Water shortages are a choice that we made a generation ago when we stopped building new reservoirs to meet the needs of a growing population.

The unvarnished truth is we will not solve our water shortages until we build more reservoirs, and we cannot build new reservoirs until we overhaul the laws that have made their construction endlessly time-consuming and, ultimately, cost-prohibitive.

For years, the Natural Resources Committee has heard testimony from frustrated water districts unable to navigate the Byzantine maze of regulations and the phalanx of competing, overlapping, duplicative, and often contradictory Federal agencies.

After years spent trying to satisfy one agency, another suddenly pops up to claim jurisdiction with an entirely new set of demands in an often endless permitting process, despite the fact they are studying the same project in the same location with the same data. The burden this places on our ability to deliver water for the next generation is crushing.

The leader mentioned the High Savery Dam in Wyoming—14 years to permit, only 2 years to actually build. The Federal Government has literally studied four storage projects in California nearly to death. One project, the Sites Reservoir, had over 50 alternative

locations studied, and there is no end in sight for the feasibility process on that potential reservoir. Similar delays have prevented the expansion of the Shasta reservoir for 39 years.

Mr. HUFFMAN tells us that no dam permits have been denied because of this. The problem is very few dam permits have been approved because of this. And the costs are caused by cost-prohibitive delays in time that run up millions and millions of dollars in costs until the agencies simply throw up their hands and give up.

H.R. 1654 will bring order from this bureaucratic chaos. It establishes a framework in which Federal agencies with permitting responsibilities for the construction of new reservoirs must work together, coordinate their schedules, share data and technical materials, and make their findings publicly available. The end result will be fewer delays, more efficient use of taxpayer dollars, and, ultimately, more abundant water supplies.

It is modeled on the Obama administration's approach to constructing new electric transmission lines to accommodate its reliance on wind and solar generation. There is nothing new in this process. In October of 2009, the administration formed the Interagency Rapid Response Team for Transmission, a consortium of nine Federal agencies to coordinate a single unified environmental review document for each project analysis.

It is also modeled on provisions sponsored by House Democrats that expedited improvements on the Hetch Hetchy dam serving the San Francisco region. This bill simply says, if there is a potential project on Interior or Agriculture Department lands, then the Bureau of Reclamation will be the coordinating agency for the permits. That is a one-stop permitting agency.

It will call together all of the agencies, the local and State jurisdictions and tribal governments of our Indian nations, establish a timeframe for studying decisionmaking, and then coordinate all the reviews and analyses and opinions and statements and permits or licenses and other Federal approvals required under Federal law.

It also requires transparency, assuring that all data is available to the public online so the science guiding these decisions can be rigorously scrutinized by all interested parties.

It also allows water agencies to fund the review process if Federal funding isn't provided, removing one of the excuses that Federal agencies have made in slow-walking or stalling project reviews.

I want to make this very clear: It does not bypass or alter or waive any environmental or safety laws. It doesn't waive CEQ or ESA or NEPA or any other law. It simply says the process needs to be more efficient, and the government agencies should coordinate and cooperate with each other rather than talking past each other as isolated and often inscrutable fiefdoms.

Five years of drought in California brought entire cities within months of exhausting their water supplies. The epic drought has now been followed with the wettest year on record, and we have helplessly watched our dams spilling millions of acre-feet of water to the ocean because we have no place to store the excess for the next drought.

Perhaps that is nature's way of reminding us that, if we didn't store water in wet years, we won't have it during dry ones, and the economic and social devastation have been immense.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LAMBORN. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chair, if you want to misuse our environmental laws to block any new water storage, well, then you should vote against this bill. We will continue to see increasingly severe water shortages and spiralling water and electricity bills.

But if you want to preserve our environmental laws, you ought to be supporting this bill because it places those laws back within a workable and practical framework, and it places our society back on the road to an era of abundance where our children can enjoy green lawns and gardens, brightly lit homes, and abundant and affordable groceries from America's agricultural cornucopia.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, the State of California is being mentioned quite a bit in this conversation.

It bears noting that the State of California is not asking for this legislation; and, in fact, the State of California has consistently opposed the rolling back of environmental standards and is busy passing bill after bill in this State legislative session to try to backfill for anticipated rollbacks in Federal environmental standards. So, certainly, if we are talking about the State of California and what it wants and it needs, its elected leaders are taking a very different direction than posing the false choice between environmental standards and infrastructure.

Again, the United States Bureau of Reclamation has emphasized that there are other factors, that it is not environmental review that has stopped any water projects in the West. The Congressional Research Service has reached the same conclusion.

And I just heard from my friend, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, that we can't build new reservoirs until we change these laws. Well, I have got to point out that California has built new reservoirs under current law. You can ask the folks in Contra Costa County about Los Vaqueros Reservoir.

They didn't need any environmental waivers or special legislation. They built their dam. And in fact, they are getting ready to move forward with an expansion of that surface storage project. It should be broadly supported,

and they are not asking for any special tweaks to the environmental laws. The same would apply to Diamond Valley Reservoir in southern California.

And, in fact, we have actually added nearly 6 million acre-feet of new surface and groundwater storage over the past few decades in California, all while honoring bedrock environmental protections like ESA and NEPA.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the Centennial State of Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank my colleague, Representative MCCLINTOCK, for putting forward a very sensible piece of legislation.

The Colorado Water Congress, who supports this bill, stated in their letter:

The economic viability of the State of Colorado is dependent on safe and reliable water supply. In recent years, the ability of water managers to meet growth demand and to create water storage has become more challenging.

In Colorado, the Windy Gap Project, whose formal environmental permitting process began in 2003, won't see construction start until at least 2019, with water storage ready by 2022—16 years to permit, 3 years to build.

For too long, Federal agencies have failed to properly coordinate and time their reviews of water supply project applications, resulting in missed opportunities for increased water storage during our wetter seasons.

Water is the lifeblood of Western communities. Without it, most communities in the Western United States could not survive, so it only makes sense to store as much of it as we reasonably can during those wetter years. Yet the Federal Government presents roadblock after roadblock that prevents a timely and cost-effective completion to many of these projects.

This legislation will streamline the permitting process and increase agency accountability by placing the Bureau of Reclamation at the center of the process and ensuring all other agencies are required to report to it in a timely fashion.

It is an effective piece of legislation, an effective approach to a problem that should not exist. I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Fresno, California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Chair, this is an issue that is, I think, one of most important long-term issues that we deal with not only in California and Western States but, really, in the world, because the fact is that water is a crucial element of the sustainability of all of us, and it always has been.

With the planet clicking 7 billion people a couple of years ago, soon to be 9 billion people by the middle of this century, with climate change clearly impacting our ability to manage our water supplies, we must look at the

long-term needs of using all the water tools in our water toolbox. And this is one effort to, in fact, look at how we can provide additional storage capacity not only in California, but elsewhere, so that when we have these periodic times—and we measure water on 10-year averages.

We have had near-record rainfall and snow in the snow-packed mountains of California, which we were blessed with the last 4 months. And after five of the most extremely dry periods of time, to have this rain and snow is wonderful.

But we know that you have got to plan for the future. And so in cases like California where it is either feast or famine, having an additional water reservoir supply is one of the important water management tools in our water toolbox, along with conservation, along with better irrigation technologies which we are implementing, along with conservation of all sorts of kinds, desalinization. All of these matter, as does storage.

This year, millions and millions of acre-feet of water have gone unused because of the lack of storage. This measure will help, but there are other things that we have to do to fix the broken water system in California, in the West, and, really, we can be a template if we better manage our water resources for the entire planet in the light of climate change.

I ask that we support this legislation. It is helpful, and we must do much more.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague from California for supporting this very important legislation.

We all, all of us in California, have experienced what happens when you have radical environmentalist nonsense determining policy. We have just gone through one of the worst droughts in our history, yet during that drought, those wonderful California environmental planners saw to it that billions of gallons of freshwater were dumped into the ocean instead of being redirected towards producing food crops in our Central Valley area or providing water to drink or providing water so that people could afford to have water throughout our State. Instead, it was dumped into the ocean.

Now, what we needed and what we need now that the drought is over is more water storage because we are in favor of people, not some grandiose concepts of what a better view counts—now, without people in it, that is, of course.

Now we need to think about what our policies will impact on average people. And what we have in this radical environmental approach is opposition to storing water, now that we have some extra water, right after a drought.

Now, whose side are you on?

You can't tell me you are on the side of ordinary people, because when water

prices go up and there is not enough water for the crops, the price of food goes up and the price of water goes up.

Who is the worst hurt?

America's lowest income people are the ones who are hurt the most, the ones who can't afford to pay the little extra for food that it costs when it costs more money to grow crops in the middle of a drought.

□ 1515

So with that said, I dramatically support doing something for the people, not some environmental theory—nonsensical theories in most cases—that we are facing doom if we store water.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from California.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. If we store water, that is going to be bad for the environment? I mean, I am sorry. That makes no sense to me.

And it doesn't make sense to ordinary people either that after a drought, that in some way it is against the environment to make it easier for us to store water so we don't have to have the same destruction and the same lowering of the standard of living of our poorer people when the next drought comes around.

This act by Mr. TOM MCCLINTOCK, H.R. 1654, will make it easier and quicker for us to build these dams. By the way, if we don't do this, many of those dams will probably be built, only we are talking about the evaporation not of water, but of money. After you have to go through years and years of paperwork, what evaporates is the money that should be going into education and transportation programs.

No. It is wrong all the way around not to permit people to go as fast as we can rationally and engineeringwise to build storage for our water supply today so when the next drought comes around, ordinary people won't be hurt.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my colleague from Orange County for those comments. I have been to Orange County and I have seen the cutting-edge water management work taking place in Mr. ROHRABACHER's district. Among other things, they are doing amazing groundwater recharge and water-use efficiency, water recycling. In fact, they have got one of the most cutting-edge potable reuse systems in the country. It is their reliance on those 21st century water management tools instead of large reservoirs—that, for the most part, were running dry during this drought we just went through—that enabled them to get through the most critical drought any of us have ever seen in much better shape than any communities around the State.

So kudos to the forward-looking water managers in Orange County. But if the gentleman is concerned about

low-income people being impacted by water shortage and water management issues, I really hope he will pay a visit to my district, because on the north coast of California, you get the other end of this water management challenge.

The fishing communities of the north coast have been hammered by the fact that our iconic salmon runs are teetering on the brink of extinction. We have left very little flow in the rivers, and this drought only exacerbated the problem.

So I am representing people that are deeply impacted by water shortage and water management decisions that need to be part of this consideration instead of trivialized when we talk about water wasting out through the estuary. This is water that sustains these fishery runs that have been the lifeblood of the communities in my district for many years.

Now, just to inject a couple of facts into what has been called a radical environmental agenda that caused the waste of all of this water during the drought—in fact, that didn't happen. In 2014, the fact is only 4 percent of all the runoff in the entire Bay Delta Watershed flowed to San Francisco Bay solely for environmental protection. In 2015, it was even less. Two percent of the runoff for the entire watershed made it all the way out to San Francisco Bay solely for environmental purposes. The rest of that flow that made it through was to control salinity in the delta so that you could continue to serve municipal and industrial and other water-use needs. Most of that water was diverted and used.

We need to remember the facts in what can sometimes be a hyperbolic discussion of California water.

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. GOSAR), who is also a subcommittee chairman on the Committee on Natural Resources.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1654, legislation sponsored by my good friend and colleague, TOM MCCLINTOCK.

For centuries, Western States have fought over scarce water supplies. We even have an expression in the West that says whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting over.

The water scarcity in the West led our visionary forefathers to build Federal water storage projects throughout to provide water, hydropower, recreation, flood control, and environmental benefits while adhering to State water rights. These were nonpartisan endeavors, as evidenced by President John F. Kennedy dedicating the San Luis Dam in California.

Now, while the Central Arizona Project came after President Kennedy, it continues to bring prosperity to Arizona's cities, tribal communities, and ranches almost 50 years from its inception.

The Glen Canyon Dam and other projects affiliated with the Colorado River Storage Project provided the backbone of a regional economy that produced year-round water and emissions-free hydropower.

Lake Powell, the reservoir behind Glen Canyon, allows for millions of dollars' worth of recreational boating annually and even provided the scenery for the astronaut crash landing in the 1968 science fiction classic, "The Planet of the Apes."

For generations, these projects provided benefits to a growing society, but what the Federal Government helped give, it has been taking away.

The current regulatory process for constructing new surface water storage is a bureaucratic maze that requires numerous permits and approvals from a multitude of different Federal, State, and local agencies. Conflicting requirements continue to cause unnecessary delays, kill jobs, and result in us failing to capture precious water supplies. Ranchers, agricultural and municipal water providers and other stakeholders in the West need a clear process without the bureaucracy.

H.R. 1654 establishes such a process by creating a one-stop-shop permitting shop, with the Bureau of Reclamation in charge of the permitting process for these important water storage projects in 17 Western States. This makes a lot of sense, as the Bureau of Reclamation's multipurpose water projects made the West what it is today. Generations of our prior leaders focused on the need to capture water and deliver it to cities and fields.

Our communities always need water, and with the projected population increases, we are going to need a lot more of it in the near future.

Let's build on the good work of previous generations. Get the bureaucracy out of the way and pass H.R. 1654 so we have a clear process moving forward for preserving worthwhile water infrastructure projects.

There is an old adage: save for a rainy day. In this case, it should be: save on a rainy day.

This act facilitates that very concept.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from California for sponsoring such needed legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this commonsense bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

It has been a good conversation, but I hope one thing is clear: this is not an infrastructure bill. This is an environmental deregulation bill that is masquerading behind the issue of infrastructure.

Environmental laws, environmental reviews are not the reason new dams have not been built and it is not the reason new dams will not be built. All of the serious analyses point to other factors, the big one being they don't generate enough water to justify the huge price tags that go along with

these projects. They are just rarely financeable, rarely do they make economic sense. So let's not scapegoat the environmental laws to try to address that problem.

Now, if my colleagues across the aisle are interested in an honest infrastructure bill, including a water infrastructure bill, they will find a lot of willing partners across the aisle, including myself. We have put forth all sorts of ideas. We want to see water infrastructure. Surface storage and new dams can be part of that, but we have got to put real dollars on the table. We have got to do what prior generations did when they got serious about building infrastructure, and not hide behind this ulterior agenda of gutting our environmental laws, repackaging that, and representing that as being responsive to our Nation's critical need for new infrastructure. This bill simply doesn't meet that test.

I request that my colleagues vote "no," and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

As I close, I do want to point out a bit of circular reasoning that my friend from California is using. He says that it is not the environmental regulations or the red tape that slows down the construction of dams, it is the high cost. But what he doesn't recognize or is not willing to admit is that the high cost is caused by all the red tape and environmental regulations. So that is arguing in circles, and I don't accept that.

Again, I commend the bill's sponsor for this bill that looks to promote additional and much-needed water storage throughout the West.

Mr. Chair, I urge the passage of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 1654

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 Supply Permitting Coordination Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **BUREAU.**—The term "Bureau" means the Bureau of Reclamation.

(2) **COOPERATING AGENCIES.**—The term "cooperating agency" means a Federal agency with jurisdiction over a review, analysis, opinion,

statement, permit, license, or other approval or decision required for a qualifying project under applicable Federal laws and regulations, or a State agency subject to section 3(c).

(3) **QUALIFYING PROJECTS.**—The term "qualifying projects" means new surface water storage projects in the States covered under the Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388, chapter 1093), and Acts supplemental to and amendatory of that Act (43 U.S.C. 371 et seq.) constructed on lands administered by the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture, exclusive of any easement, right-of-way, lease, or any private holding, unless the project applicant elects not to participate in the process authorized by this Act.

(4) **SECRETARY.**—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF LEAD AGENCY AND COOPERATING AGENCIES.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF LEAD AGENCY.**—The Bureau is established as the lead agency for purposes of coordinating all reviews, analyses, opinions, statements, permits, licenses, or other approvals or decisions required under Federal law to construct qualifying projects.

(b) **IDENTIFICATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COOPERATING AGENCIES.**—The Commissioner of the Bureau shall—

(1) identify, as early as practicable upon receipt of an application for a qualifying project, any Federal agency that may have jurisdiction over a review, analysis, opinion, statement, permit, license, approval, or decision required for a qualifying project under applicable Federal laws and regulations; and

(2) notify any such agency, within a reasonable timeframe, that the agency has been designated as a cooperating agency in regards to the qualifying project unless that agency responds to the Bureau in writing, within a timeframe set forth by the Bureau, notifying the Bureau that the agency—

(A) has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the qualifying project;

(B) has no expertise or information relevant to the qualifying project or any review, analysis, opinion, statement, permit, license, or other approval or decision associated therewith; or

(C) does not intend to submit comments on the qualifying project or conduct any review of such a project or make any decision with respect to such project in a manner other than in cooperation with the Bureau.

(c) **STATE AUTHORITY.**—A State in which a qualifying project is being considered may choose, consistent with State law—

(1) to participate as a cooperating agency; and

(2) to make subject to the processes of this Act all State agencies that—

(A) have jurisdiction over the qualifying project;

(B) are required to conduct or issue a review, analysis, or opinion for the qualifying project; or

(C) are required to make a determination on issuing a permit, license, or approval for the qualifying project.

SEC. 4. BUREAU RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The principal responsibilities of the Bureau under this Act are—

(1) to serve as the point of contact for applicants, State agencies, Indian tribes, and others regarding proposed qualifying projects;

(2) to coordinate preparation of unified environmental documentation that will serve as the basis for all Federal decisions necessary to authorize the use of Federal lands for qualifying projects; and

(3) to coordinate all Federal agency reviews necessary for project development and construction of qualifying projects.

(b) **COORDINATION PROCESS.**—The Bureau shall have the following coordination responsibilities:

(1) **PREAPPLICATION COORDINATION.**—Notify cooperating agencies of proposed qualifying

projects not later than 30 days after receipt of a proposal and facilitate a preapplication meeting for prospective applicants, relevant Federal and State agencies, and Indian tribes—

(A) to explain applicable processes, data requirements, and applicant submissions necessary to complete the required Federal agency reviews within the timeframe established; and

(B) to establish the schedule for the qualifying project.

(2) **CONSULTATION WITH COOPERATING AGENCIES.**—Consult with the cooperating agencies throughout the Federal agency review process, identify and obtain relevant data in a timely manner, and set necessary deadlines for cooperating agencies.

(3) **SCHEDULE.**—Work with the qualifying project applicant and cooperating agencies to establish a project schedule. In establishing the schedule, the Bureau shall consider, among other factors—

(A) the responsibilities of cooperating agencies under applicable laws and regulations;

(B) the resources available to the cooperating agencies and the non-Federal qualifying project sponsor, as applicable;

(C) the overall size and complexity of the qualifying project;

(D) the overall schedule for and cost of the qualifying project; and

(E) the sensitivity of the natural and historic resources that may be affected by the qualifying project.

(4) **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.**—Prepare a unified environmental review document for each qualifying project application, incorporating a single environmental record on which all cooperating agencies with authority to issue approvals for a given qualifying project shall base project approval decisions. Help ensure that cooperating agencies make necessary decisions, within their respective authorities, regarding Federal approvals in accordance with the following timelines:

(A) Not later than 1 year after acceptance of a completed project application when an environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact is determined to be the appropriate level of review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(B) Not later than 1 year and 30 days after the close of the public comment period for a draft environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), when an environmental impact statement is required under the same.

(5) **CONSOLIDATED ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD.**—Maintain a consolidated administrative record of the information assembled and used by the cooperating agencies as the basis for agency decisions.

(6) **PROJECT DATA RECORDS.**—To the extent practicable and consistent with Federal law, ensure that all project data is submitted and maintained in generally accessible electronic format, compile, and where authorized under existing law, make available such project data to cooperating agencies, the qualifying project applicant, and to the public.

(7) **PROJECT MANAGER.**—Appoint a project manager for each qualifying project. The project manager shall have authority to oversee the project and to facilitate the issuance of the relevant final authorizing documents, and shall be responsible for ensuring fulfillment of all Bureau responsibilities set forth in this section and all cooperating agency responsibilities under section 5.

SEC. 5. COOPERATING AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) **ADHERENCE TO BUREAU SCHEDULE.**—

(1) **TIMEFRAMES.**—On notification of an application for a qualifying project, the head of each cooperating agency shall submit to the Bureau a timeframe under which the cooperating agency reasonably will be able to complete the authorizing responsibilities of the cooperating agency.

(2) **SCHEDULE.**—

(A) **USE OF TIMEFRAMES.**—The Bureau shall use the timeframes submitted under this subsection to establish the project schedule under section 4.

(B) **ADHERENCE.**—Each cooperating agency shall adhere to the project schedule established by the Bureau under subparagraph (A).

(b) **ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD.**—The head of each cooperating agency shall submit to the Bureau all environmental review material produced or compiled in the course of carrying out activities required under Federal law, consistent with the project schedule established by the Bureau under subsection (a)(2).

(c) **DATA SUBMISSION.**—To the extent practicable and consistent with Federal law, the head of each cooperating agency shall submit all relevant project data to the Bureau in a generally accessible electronic format, subject to the project schedule established by the Bureau under subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 6. FUNDING TO PROCESS PERMITS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary, after public notice in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5, and chapter 7, of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Administrative Procedure Act”), may accept and expend funds contributed by a non-Federal public entity to expedite the evaluation of a permit of that entity related to a qualifying project.

(b) **EFFECT ON PERMITTING.**—

(1) **EVALUATION OF PERMITS.**—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall ensure that the evaluation of permits carried out using funds accepted under this section shall—

(A) be reviewed by the Regional Director of the Bureau of the region in which the qualifying project or activity is located (or a designee); and

(B) use the same procedures for decisions that would otherwise be required for the evaluation of permits for similar projects or activities not carried out using funds authorized under this section.

(2) **IMPARTIAL DECISIONMAKING.**—In carrying out this section, the Secretary and the head of each cooperating agency receiving funds under this section for a qualifying project shall ensure that the use of the funds accepted under this section for the qualifying project shall not—

(A) substantively or procedurally impact impartial decisionmaking with respect to the issuance of permits; or

(B) diminish, modify, or otherwise affect the statutory or regulatory authorities of the cooperating agency.

(c) **LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.**—None of the funds accepted under this section shall be used to carry out a review of the evaluation of permits required under subsection (b)(1)(A).

(d) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—The Secretary shall ensure that all final permit decisions carried out using funds authorized under this section are made available to the public, including on the Internet.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 115–186. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by a proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. LAMALFA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 115–186.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment made in order under the rule.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 2, after the period insert “Such term shall also include State-led projects (as defined in section 4007(a)(2) of the WIIN Act) for new surface water storage projects in the States covered under the Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388, chapter 1093), and Acts supplemental to and amendatory of that Act (43 U.S.C. 371 et seq.) constructed on lands administered by the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture, exclusive of any easement, right-of-way, lease, or any private holding, unless the project applicant elects not to participate in the process authorized by this Act.”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 392, the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank my subcommittee chairman, Mr. LAMBORN, for his leadership on this, and Mr. MCCLINTOCK for bringing the bill in chief forward here that I am asking to amend today.

This amendment ensures that State-led projects can also enjoy the coordination that the bill itself will do, State-led surface storage projects such as Sites Reservoir. These will be defined in the WIIN Act and they will be eligible under H.R. 1654’s permitting.

Doing so enables States to direct their own resources towards infrastructure needs at lower cost and improves States’ ability to partner with the Federal Government on projects that provide both State and Federal benefits.

Adopting this amendment to include State-led projects will allow the development of more water infrastructure more rapidly and at no additional cost to the Federal Government. For example, in my home State of California, the voters have approved billions of dollars toward infrastructure projects such as Sites Reservoir—not too far from my neighborhood—which will include enough water storage for millions more people in our State.

Now, if you know the saga of Sites Reservoir, the locals there will tell you they have been talking about it, studying it, poking it, prodding it for about 40 years. Bureaucracy plays a major role in that.

So the bill in chief is not looking to change environmental laws or get rid of environmental laws. Indeed, my colleague on the other side of the aisle talked about having an honest discussion in this area. Well, an honest discussion would show that the bill in chief is one that is merely coordinating. It is not changing the Water Quality Act. It is not changing NEPA, CEQA, or anything else, other than getting these people all in one room to coordinate at one time.

Yes, we, indeed, have costs involved, because people give up, whether it is

private sector money or the people that pass bonds as State voters give up after a while because they don't think their dollars are actually getting to the projects, when they hear needless, endless delays, when we have this game of bureaucratic badminton being played by various agencies knocking one idea to another, taking years of time and additional costs, especially those surprise ones at the last minute.

Lake Oroville is in my own backyard. Now, what we have seen there since the crisis happened with the breakage of the spillway is that coordination under an emergency, where, even though there are some trying to throw roadblocks in there, people recognized coordination was needed, because when 188,000 people have to evacuate an area due to some unknown factors with how the infrastructure is holding up, then they saw the need to fix it.

□ 1530

And the spillway at Lake Oroville is going to be fixed pretty rapidly over a 2-year period and made usable in this short amount of time. So that is how coordination can work to get a needed project done when it can be an emergency.

What we need to quit doing is waiting for emergencies like this and on levee projects when we know for years and years that levee projects—highways, bridges, other infrastructure that have this bureaucratic badminton played when people are trying to get these projects done—need to be coordinated. That is what this bill does.

My amendment adds to it, again, an important ability for State dollars under State-led infrastructure projects to be included in that. So I think it makes a heck of a lot of sense and will help our voters like in California and others around the country to be able to enjoy that coordination.

Mr. LAMBORN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAMALFA. I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. LAMBORN. We support the amendment. It improves the bill by expanding opportunities for increased water storage across the West. I urge its adoption.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Fresno, California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Marin for yielding me 2 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support this amendment offered by my colleague, Congressman LAMALFA. As I said earlier, we need to fix the broken water system in California because reliability is key.

We have a water system that was designed for 20 million people. Today, we

have 40 million people living in California. By the year 2030, we are going to have 50 million people living in California.

The simple truth is that in the San Joaquin Valley, where I live, which has been ground zero for the impact of an unreliable water supply because of this broken system, we have felt the devastation of the drought. This lack of reliability is due to many factors that have intensified as a result of climate change, impact on regulations, and other factors.

Luckily this year, as I noted earlier, it has been a deluge of rain and snow, and for that we are thankful. But we know in California that it is either feast or famine, and so, sadly, we must plan for the future, and that means including surface storage and using subsurface replenishment of our ground water and all the other water tools that are part of this water toolbox that is critical for the long term.

We need more storage. We need the underlying legislation that this provides. While not completely fixing or resolving our challenges, it is a small step, and, as was noted before, this does not amend NEPA or CEQA, but it simply provides a timeline, and a timeline is a good thing.

This collaboration that this legislation envisions is not too different from the collaboration that the Governor is working with the Department of the Interior on, the proposal to fix the plumbing system in the delta. They have a record of decision that has a timeline.

So if surface storage water is going to receive funding and support under the WIIN Act that we passed in December, matching State funds, along with this effort to provide the timeline, will be helpful.

Let me finally say that sustainability of our agricultural economy, sustainability of putting food and fiber on America's dinner table every night, and helping feed other parts of the world is really what we are talking about here. Reliability is key to making sure that we are sustainable under the adverse impacts of a lack of a fixed water system. We need to address this.

This legislation is a small step in providing timelines for certainty for this collaboration for this process to work better. I urge support of this amendment.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate my colleague, Mr. COSTA, for his bipartisan support and effort in ensuring we have a proactive way of doing things in California on water infrastructure. I appreciate that a lot.

So for anybody to say that the amount of effort it takes to get past the bureaucratic process, to simply get the existing permits under existing laws, is not burdensome is naive. Indeed, whether we are talking highway projects, levee projects, bridge projects, and, more particularly, this

bill, water storage projects, we need this coordination.

So the coordination will mean more for the American people, more for the people of my own State, with less dollars, less delay, and they can start enjoying the fruits of this project, the fruit of their tax dollars.

So my amendment simply adds to that, State-led efforts, whether it has been a bond passed by a State or other State funding in California and other States, that they, too, can enjoy that coordination that this bill would provide.

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I, unfortunately, must oppose this amendment. I am not sure if it was the intent of my friend, Mr. LAMALFA, but it appears that this amendment would prioritize permitting surface storage projects under the WIIN Act and not groundwater storage WIIN Act projects.

The WIIN Act, of course, authorized money for both surface and groundwater storage projects. These projects are yet to be named and prioritized. That still needs to happen.

Yet this amendment applies this bill's streamlining provisions to WIIN's "State-led projects for new surface water storage projects."

Now, providing surface storage above all other types of water infrastructure projects certainly is in keeping with some of the obsession with new dams that we have heard from my colleagues across the aisle. But the truth is, there are all sorts of other worthy projects that are needed if we are going to get serious about water infrastructure in California; and to put a thumb on the scale for one particular kind is not the right way to go.

So, Mr. Chairman, I respectfully request a "no" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. LOWENTHAL

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 115-186.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 7. CONDITION ON APPLICABILITY.

This Act shall not apply to any project that the Secretary determines could cause harm to commercial fisheries.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 392, the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I, like many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, am concerned about

the long-term prospects for water infrastructure and storage in the West.

As the western climate continues to get hotter, we are going to have more hot, dry, drought years. That is why many States and communities, including the cities that I represent, are doing all that they can to make their water infrastructure more resilient, to reduce unneeded runoff, to recycle water, and to store as much ground water as possible.

To support these critical activities, Congress needs to invest in our country's water infrastructure. The bill before us today does not do any of these things. It does not authorize new or additional funding for water projects. It is not an infrastructure bill.

Instead, the bill before us today makes many Americans nervous because it loosens key environmental safeguards and imposes arbitrary deadlines for the approval of dams on our rivers and streams. This bill threatens the health of our streams, our rivers, and coastlines, which could harm fish populations important to commercial fisheries.

Therefore, I am offering a straightforward amendment. It simply requires proposed new dams to go through the normal project review process if they are likely to harm commercial fisheries.

The construction of poorly permitted dams has been a major cause of mortality for California's fisheries. In California's Central Valley, they currently block Chinook salmon and steelhead from more than 90 percent of the historical spawning habitat.

My amendment will help protect my State's economically important fisheries from further harm. Commercial fisheries from my home State sustain thousands of jobs across California and the West Coast, and, currently, we have what can only be described as a fisheries crisis.

Many fisheries are at record-low population levels. According to some estimates, 78 percent of California's native salmon will be extinct or disappear within the next century if current trends continue.

Simply put, many West Coast fishermen and fisherwomen who depend on California's fish runs are hanging on by a thread. The thousands of fishermen and fisherwomen, and other employees of restaurants, hotels, and other businesses that depend on healthy fish runs, have been struggling mightily.

Even now, many fishermen and fisherwomen are still recovering from the total closure of the ocean salmon fishery along the West Coast in 2008 and 2009, because of poor California salmon returns. The closure devastated the Pacific Coast fishing industry and, ultimately, required millions of dollars in disaster aid from Congress.

In recent years, fishery managers have also had to severely restrict commercial fishing season because of low population levels. My amendment will help prevent future harm to people who are already struggling just to get by.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on my amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, first I would point out to my friend from California, if the climate continues to warm, we are not going to be able to store as much water in our mountains as snow, and we are going to need much more surface water storage reservoirs than the laws have allowed us to build because of the delays they have imposed in planning and construction.

The gentleman's amendment gives the Secretary of the Interior the ability to ignore this streamlining law if he determines it could "cause harm to commercial fisheries."

Well, now, remember, this bill makes no changes to any of our existing laws or regulations. It makes no changes to the licenses and permits required for a project or the criteria for obtaining those licenses and permits. It makes no changes to any law or regulation that could affect commercial fisheries or, for that matter, anything else.

It simply says that the agencies and jurisdictions involved with these projects have to cooperate and coordinate and communicate with each other, and it requires the science guiding these decisions to be available to the public to review and scrutinize.

So why the amendment? Well, for one reason and one reason only, I think, because for the last 8 years, we have had an administration that was actively hostile to constructing new reservoirs. That administration has used the fragmented nature of the approval process as a way to delay projects indefinitely. That is what this proposal corrects.

Mr. LOWENTHAL's amendment would allow any administration so inclined to make a specious finding as an excuse to ignore this law. Project applicants would not know from one election to the next whether their millions of dollars of studies and investments would suddenly come to naught, and projects already well along in the planning and approval process could find their efforts coming to a screeching halt.

For our laws to work, they must be predictable and fair. Mr. LOWENTHAL's amendment is a poison pill to render this law unpredictable and capricious.

The irony is this: the gentleman's constituents in southern California have the most to lose from his amendment because southern California depends on surplus water from northern California. And let me make this very clear to the gentleman and his constituents: northern California has first claim on northern California water.

If we can't store the extra water in the north, there is no surplus for the south, and the gentleman's constituents can look forward to dead lawns and gardens, brown parks, empty swim-

ming pools, astronomical water and electricity prices, spiraling grocery prices, and a future where they will have to ration and stretch every drop of water and every watt of electricity in their parched and sweltering homes. They might want to ask him about that some day.

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

□ 1545

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, how much time do I have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from northern California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

I rise in support of this amendment.

My colleague across the aisle just asked the rhetorical question: Why is this amendment needed?

It is needed because fishing jobs matter. The people whom I represent on the north coast of California and also other fishing communities up and down the Pacific Coast, including Oregon and Washington, their jobs matter, and their limited opportunity to have their interests considered when a dam project is moving forward is what is shortened by the streamlining in this bill.

Their interests are already subordinated oftentimes, but they get subordinated even further by the streamlining in this case, which places the Bureau of Reclamation, the proponent of the new dam, in charge of the administrative record, which places the fish agencies—which often advance the interests of protecting fisheries—in a subordinate role to the Bureau of Reclamation that controls the administrative record, which imposes shortened timelines to make it even harder for their interests to be considered.

Fishing jobs matter. And the truth is, right now, in my district and in many other fishing communities, people are hurting because they have been damaged by poorly operated and poorly permitted dams.

Let's not make things worse. This amendment is absolutely necessary, and I urge an "aye" vote.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I would first point out that commercial fisheries are controlled and regulated by the Secretary of Commerce, not the Secretary of the Interior, and yet it is the Secretary of the Interior to whom the gentleman would give the power to ignore this streamlining law and impose endless, repetitive, and duplicative delays in the consideration of these projects.

I would again point out that all of the considerations that are given to fisheries, that are given to environmental laws, that are given to engineering laws, everything that goes into the planning process in our dams under

our laws and regulations is fully respected under this measure.

All that it does is say that the agency, that the Bureau of Reclamation, when an application is provided, will pull these agencies together, and all of the jurisdictions and all of the affected parties establish a timetable according to their best judgment of what is necessary, have them talk with each other, and then stick to that plan.

That is what the bill does, and that is why it is so desperately needed in a State that has not built a major reservoir of over a million acre-fee of storage since the New Melones was completed in 1979.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD three letters, including one from the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, which is the largest organization of commercial fishing families on the West Coast, collectively representing thousands of family-wage jobs and the West Coast commercial fishing industry that contributes billions of dollars to the U.S. economy, strongly opposing this bill, H.R. 1654, and supporting the amendment.

PACIFIC COAST FEDERATION
OF FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS,
June 12, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations (PCFFA) is the largest organization of commercial fishing families on the West Coast, representing the interests of hundreds of family-owned commercial fishing operations who harvest and deliver fresh seafood to American consumers and for export. Collectively, we represent many thousands of family wage jobs and a West Coast commercial fishing industry that contributes billions of dollars to the U.S. economy.

On behalf of the hundreds of hard working commercial fishermen we represent, we are OPPOSED to H.R. 1654 for many reasons, among them the following:

While the concept of streamlining permitting for federal water projects is attractive on its face, our primary problem in the arid west is not a lack of water storage projects, but lack of funds for maintaining and repairing the many existing projects that are already in place. Hundreds of existing water projects are badly in need of repair, with many dangerously close to failing. And as we recently witnessed with the catastrophic failure of the Oroville Dam, an "expedited review process" like what is envisioned in H.R. 1654 could lead to poor or rushed impacts analyses potentially resulting in further catastrophe or economic disruption. It is now apparent that the Oroville Dam's 2017 emergency spillway failure was predicted—but the warning signs were ignored—in its expedited environmental impacts review process.

H.R. 1654 is simply the wrong approach. It would undermine existing laws protecting both the public and public resources by making the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) the lead agency for all environmental reviews, in effect leaving Reclamation in control of the entire environmental review process. However, Reclamation has neither the expertise nor the capacity of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service to inform the development of major infrastructure projects to reduce their impact on valuable wildlife and fisheries. Under H.R. 1654, these agencies would be stripped of their authority

and duties to oversee and authorize water storage projects, to the detriment of the people of the West and the American taxpayer.

H.R. 1654 also implements overly restricted and burdensome project review timelines, including provisions that would require expedited review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)—timelines that may be inappropriate for very complex projects like the damming of streams and rivers. These fast-tracking provisions interfere with the ability of agencies and the public to meaningfully analyze proposed complex projects, and could also limit the public's ability to weigh in on infrastructure developments that could affect communities for decades. Further, the bill permits non-federal public entities to contribute funds to expedite project permitting, raising serious conflicts of interest questions about the fairness and impartiality of the federal review process.

H.R. 1654 also establishes perverse incentives for western states to cede their independent authority. Under the new regulatory scheme, state agencies could be compelled to adhere to the bill's procedures, thereby requiring those state agencies to cede control to Reclamation and comply with its timelines. This weakens the essential and independent role that states play in reviewing proposed water infrastructure projects within their borders.

We sincerely request that you vote NO on H.R. 1654. This bill will not solve the problems it purports to address, and it would have widespread consequences far beyond water deliveries and water storage, including adverse effects to regional and local fishing industry economies and the jobs and communities those economies support.

Sincerely,

NOAH OPPENHEIM,
Executive Director.

AMERICAN RIVERS,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2017.

U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES: I am writing on behalf of American Rivers and our 200,000 members to oppose H.R. 1654, the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act, which is before the Committee on April 26, 2017. We understand that new surface storage projects are a consideration as part of a multi-faceted portfolio aimed at addressing long term drought in the Western United States. We also share Congress' view that long-term, balanced solutions to drought and water supply security that support and protect local economies, the viability of agriculture, municipal water supplies, recreation, and the riparian environment are critical to the future of Western communities. H.R. 1654, however, fails to provide a long-term, balanced solution, and goes far beyond the scope of authorities vested in the Bureau of Reclamation (the "Bureau") while undermining the critical role other federal agencies, tribes, and states play in the permitting of water supply projects in the West. We remain concerned about the potential harmful impacts to management authorities designed to protect streams and conserve watersheds. In light of these concerns, we ask you to oppose H.R. 1654.

This legislation amends the Reclamation Act, 43 U.S.C. 371, et seq., in a way that undermines the management authorities of other federal agencies, tribes, and states. H.R. 1654 allows the Bureau to preempt state laws and procedural requirements for agency decision-making by dictating unreasonable deadlines. It also weakens authorities under Endangered Species Act and Clean Water

Act, as well as other federal laws, by subordinating all other State and federal agencies to the Bureau's sense of how much time those administering agencies should have to do their jobs.

Specifically, H.R. 1654:

Designates the Bureau as the lead agency and allows the Bureau to set the schedule for all federal authorizations, including those issued pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA), and other federal authorizations, even where those authorizations have been delegated or devolved to the states or Native American tribes.

Forces all other federal, state, and tribal agencies to comply with the Bureau's schedule and to defer to the Bureau's proposed scope of environmental review.

Effectively waives the Endangered Species Act or the Clean Water Act if a state, tribe, or federal agency cannot meet the Bureau's schedule or misses a deadline. The Bureau and the project applicant may simply proceed with the proposed action and the authorization is waived. There are no similar remedies or penalties if the Bureau or the project applicant fails to meet a deadline, or if delay caused by Bureau or the project applicant results in an agency missing a deadline. The end result of this and the following provisions could be that states and tribes may be forced to deny certification for new projects in order to avoid potential legal liability.

It is important that federal natural resource agencies retain the authority and responsibility to condition operations of surface storage projects so as to protect streams and other public resources. A key part of protecting watersheds, especially in the arid West, is maintaining healthy flows in streams. For years, American Rivers has worked with the federal land management agencies, tribes, states and other stakeholders to protect healthy river flows on public lands. Federal land managers, states, tribes and the public have an important role to play in protecting streams—based on the Property Clause of the Constitution, Section 505 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and other authorities—and they also have a responsibility to work with their stakeholders to do it right. Provisions of H.R. 1654 would harm the ability of federal land managers, states, and tribes to use these authorities to protect streams, rivers, and vital fisheries.

We oppose H.R. 1654, and urge Congress to carefully consider the impacts of the legislation on federal, tribal and state authority before proceeding further and determine if legislation is needed.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW NIEMERSKI,
*Director, Federal Policy,
American Rivers.*

GOLDEN GATE SALMON ASSOCIATION,
Petaluma, CA, June 12, 2017.

Re H.R. 1654 (McClintock)—OPPOSE.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BISHOP AND RANKING MEMBER GRIJALVA: The Golden Gate Salmon Association is a coalition of salmon fishermen and women, both sport and commercial, and related businesses. As a business-oriented advocacy organization focused on conservation and restoration of Central Valley salmon stocks, with members throughout California, we write to offer our strong opposition to H.R. 1654 (McClintock), the "Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act." This legislation threatens tens of thousands of fishing related jobs and could result in severe impacts to a salmon fishing industry that is highly vulnerable today.

SURFACE STORAGE AND CALIFORNIA'S SALMON FISHING INDUSTRY

Surface storage projects have been the leading cause of the decline of California's historic salmon fishery. In the past decade, surface storage projects contributed to the first ever, historic closure of the California salmon fishery in 2008 and 2009. A fishery worth an estimated \$1.4 billion in annual economic activity to California in a normal season was shattered. This had devastating impacts on the 23,000 men and women whose livelihoods depend on the commercial and recreational salmon fishery.

In significant part as a result of dam projects, the health of our coastal fishing communities has decreased. We've seen a decline in the number of commercial salmon boats registered to fish from almost 5,000 in the late 1980's to just over 1,000 today. Once bustling salmon ports, like Fort Bragg and Eureka are lined with crumbling docks and pier pilings. In some places there aren't enough fish crossing the docks to maintain basic infrastructure like boat repair yards, fuel docks and ice making machines. Where once proud freshly painted houses beamed pride of fisherman ownership, too many are sadly in need of repair. Go to any California harbor with commercial fishing activity and inspect the deck hardware and rigging on boats and you'll see what deferred maintenance looks like for people who struggle to keep a roof over their family's heads and pay the bills.

Because of low populations of adult salmon in 2017, salmon fishing for much of Northern California has been closed entirely this year. For the remainder of the California coast, the commercial fishing fleet has lost approximately two thirds of their traditional fishing season. These low population numbers are the result of the drought and the impacts of existing surface storage projects.

Decision-makers should respond to this crisis by strengthening efforts to restore salmon runs. However, H.R. 1654 could increase the impacts of dam projects on salmon, with potentially devastating consequences.

SPECIFIC CONCERNS

This legislation threatens to weaken analysis and permitting for surface storage projects, with significant potential impacts on salmon. GGSA offers the following specific concerns.

Interfering With The Use of the Best Available Science: The bill would allow the Bureau of Reclamation to control the administrative record used by all federal agencies in reviewing surface storage projects. At best, the Bureau lacks the environmental expertise of the regulatory agencies on a range of issues, including salmon. In addition, as a potential applicant for surface storage projects, the Bureau would have a clear conflict of interest, were they to be given control of the record used by all federal agencies. Further, the Bureau has a record of asserting dubious environmental benefits from surface storage projects and working to suppress analysis by federal agencies. As a result, it is highly inappropriate for the Bureau to be given control of a single administrative record to be used by all federal agencies.

Interfering with Agency Review: The bill would give the Bureau authority to establish a binding schedule for all federal agency environmental review and permitting. For the same reasons cited above, this is inappropriate. In addition, this requirement would produce unnecessary, costly and time consuming litigation, in the likely event that a schedule adopted by the Bureau does not allow adequate time for review by regulatory agencies.

Undermining State Review of Projects: In cases where states chose to opt in, the bill would give the Bureau control over the administrative record and schedule for state agencies. In such a case, the bill would allow the Bureau undue control over state analysis and permitting. This is highly inappropriate, given more than a century of traditional federal deference to state law.

Surface Storage Bias: Surface storage construction and operation is among the water management activities with the most severe impacts on salmon and salmon rivers. This legislation inappropriately restricts analysis for the most environmentally destructive method of storing water and generating new water supplies, but not for less destructive activities.

For the above reasons, we urge you to oppose this damaging and unnecessary bill.

Thank you for considering our comments.
Sincerely,

JOHN MCMANUS,
Executive Director.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chair, by that token, I will include in the RECORD the support of the United States Chamber of Commerce as well as the Family Farm Alliance and others in support of this bill and the jobs that will expand as a result of its adoption.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, June 20, 2017.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce urges you to approve H.R. 1654, the "Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act," which would streamline the permitting process for new surface water storage projects. The Chamber may consider including votes on, or in relation to, H.R. 1654 in our annual How They Voted scorecard.

H.R. 1654 would establish the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for coordinating environmental reviews and permitting new or expanded non-federal surface storage facilities. The bill also would allow the Secretary of the Interior to accept funds from non-federal public entities and to use those funds to expedite the permitting process for designated projects. This type of coordination and streamlining is essential to the development and construction of much-needed water storage projects.

The structure of H.R. 1654 tracks the permit streamlining provisions contained in Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, which was passed during the 114th Congress. The Chamber urges you to approve H.R. 1654.

Sincerely,

NEIL L. BRADLEY,
Senior Vice President & Chief Policy Officer.

FAMILY FARM ALLIANCE,
Klamath Falls, OR, March 8, 2017.

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MCCLINTOCK: On behalf of the Family Farm Alliance (Alliance), we write to express our support for your "Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act". This important legislation would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate Federal and State permitting processes related to the construction of new surface water storage projects on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to designate the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for permit processing, and for other purposes.

The Alliance is a grassroots organization of family farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts and allied industries in 16 Western states. Several of our members are mutual ditch and irrigation districts. The Alliance is focused on one mission: To ensure the availability of reliable, affordable irrigation water supplies to Western farmers and ranchers.

The "Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act" provides a critical first step towards addressing current regulatory and bureaucratic challenges that many times will delay or even halt the development of new water supply enhancement projects in the Western United States. The recent drought has ramped up much-needed Congressional interest to enact legislation that will allow Western water providers to better manage and prepare for future dry times. Now, the heaviest rain in a decade has overwhelmed parts of the West Coast, underscoring the critical importance of having modernized and enhanced water storage infrastructure in place to optimize water resources management for the future.

Family Farm Alliance members rely on the traditional water and power infrastructure built over the last century to deliver irrigation water supplies vital to their farming operations. Our membership has been advocating for new water storage facilities for over twenty years, and we have provided specific recommendations to Congress and the White House on how to streamline restrictive federal regulations to help make these projects happen.

As you are aware, developing new water storage projects is much easier said than done. For many reasons—political, economic and social—the construction of traditional surface water storage projects is undertaken on a much more limited basis than in decades past. Even if federal authorization and funding, or funding from non-federal sources, is secured for a new storage project, the existing procedures for permitting the development of additional water supplies can make project approval incredibly burdensome.

By the time project applicants approach federal agencies for permits to construct multimillion dollar projects they have already invested extensive resources toward analyzing project alternatives to determine which project is best suited to their budgetary constraints. However, current procedure dictates that federal agencies formulate another list of project alternatives which the applicant must assess, comparing potential impacts with the preferred alternative. These alternatives often conflict with state law or are simply not implementable in the first place yet valuable resources are required to be expended to further study these additional alternatives in the federal permitting process.

Thus, we strongly support your bill. We look forward to working with you, the 115th Congress and other interested parties to build a consensus for improving the federal regulatory and permitting process. If we don't find a way to restore water supply reliability for Western irrigated agriculture through a combination of new water supply and management infrastructure, other water supply enhancement efforts and demand management—our country's ability to feed and clothe itself and the world will be jeopardized.

This bill takes an important step towards addressing this critical need. I encourage you or your staff to contact Dan Keppen if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

PATRICK O'TOOLE,
President.
DAN KEPPEEN,
Executive Director.

ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
WATER AGENCIES,
June 19, 2017.

Re Support for H.R. 1654.

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

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

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) is pleased to support H.R. 1654, the "Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act". ACWA's 450 public water agency members supply over 90 percent of the water delivered in California for residential, agricultural, and industrial uses.

As demonstrated by California's recent historic drought, it is important that Congress take actions now that help ensure California has sufficient water supplies for the future. Had the streamlining provisions contained in H.R. 1654 been in effect prior to the drought, California's water infrastructure and water supplies could have been improved to help mitigate much of the current personal and economic suffering that occurred.

Moreover, H.R. 1654 is consistent with policy principles ACWA has formally adopted embracing environmental and economic sustainability as co-equal priorities for water management in California.

Thank you for this opportunity to express ACWA's support for H.R. 1654.

Sincerely,

DAVID REYNOLDS,
Director of Federal Relations.

VOITH HYDRO INC.
York, PA, June 20, 2017.

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MCCLINTOCK: On behalf of Voith Hydro, I am writing today to extend our strong support for H.R. 1654, the Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act. Voith Hydro is a manufacturer of hydroelectric equipment and technology based in York, Pennsylvania. Additionally, we have Voith Hydro Services facilities located in Chattanooga, Tennessee and Springfield, Oregon. Voith Hydro currently employs approximately 680 workers across the United States. Water storage issues are critical to our ability to provide both the energy and jobs that sustain a nation.

As you are well aware, water provides multiple benefits to communities across the country. Without an abundant supply of water storage in the United States, hydropower production cannot reach its full potential. These same communities have been able to thrive in large part due to abundant water supplies and the production of renewable hydropower, especially in your home district in Northern California. Increasing water storage throughout the country will allow for better management during drought conditions, and thus prevent power outages to communities reliant on hydroelectricity.

Streamlining the permitting process to expand and develop new water storage throughout the United States is critical to increasing and upgrading our Country's infrastructure. I am pleased to see that Congress continues to consider bills targeted to improve the permitting processes and hope that other infrastructure permitting streamlining continues, especially as it concerns hydropower development.

I encourage the passage of the Water Supply Permitting Act this week in the House of Representatives and look forward to working with you on similar issues in the future.

Thank you for your leadership on water storage and other critical issues.

Sincerely,

ROBERT J. GALLO,
President and CEO.

MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
OF ORANGE COUNTY,
Fountain Valley, CA, May 30, 2017.

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MCCLINTOCK: The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) is pleased to support your measure, H.R. 1654—"The Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act." We applaud your efforts to streamline the permitting process that relates to the construction of new surface water storage projects on lands. This coordination is long overdue and will ultimately benefit the entire state.

The rains this past winter emphasized the critical need California has for surface water storage. We cannot let this resource slip out to the ocean due to lack of places to put it. Allowing the Bureau of Reclamation to be the coordinating agency for projects on Interior or Department of Agriculture lands will make the process more efficient and speed up the process for critical water infrastructure projects in our state.

The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC), a water agency serving the needs of more than two million residents and 28 retail water agencies, voted unanimously to support your legislation and to assist with its passage.

On behalf of the MWDOC Board of Directors, we are pleased to support H.R. 1654 and sincerely thank you for your efforts to address the ongoing water infrastructure needs in California.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact either Jim Barker, our advocate in Washington, or MWDOC General Manager, Rob Hunter.

Sincerely,

WAYNE S. OSBORNE,
Board President.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 179, noes 232, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 318]

AYES—179

Adams	Carbajal	Davis (CA)
Agullar	Cardenas	Davis, Danny
Barragan	Carson (IN)	DeFazio
Bass	Cartwright	DeGette
Beatty	Castor (FL)	Delaney
Bera	Chu, Judy	DeLauro
Beyer	Cicilline	DelBene
Bishop (GA)	Clark (MA)	Demings
Blumenauer	Clarke (NY)	DeSaulnier
Blunt Rochester	Clay	Deutch
Bonamici	Cleaver	Dingell
Boyle, Brendan F.	Clyburn	Doggett
Brady (PA)	Cohen	Doyle, Michael F.
Brown (MD)	Connolly	Ellison
Brownley (CA)	Conyers	Engel
Bustos	Cooper	Eshoo
Butterfield	Courtney	Espallat
Capuano	Crist	Esty (CT)
	Crowley	

Evans	Lipinski	Rosen
Fitzpatrick	Loebback	Roybal-Allard
Foster	Lofgren	Ruiz
Frankel (FL)	Lowenthal	Ruppersberger
Fudge	Lowe	Rush
Galleo	Lujan Grisham,	Ryan (OH)
Garamendi	M.	Sánchez
Gonzalez (TX)	Luján, Ben Ray	Sarbanes
Gotthelmer	Lynch	Schakowsky
Green, Al	Maloney,	Schiff
Green, Gene	Carolyn B.	Schneider
Grijalva	Maloney, Sean	Schrader
Hanabusa	Matsui	Scott (VA)
Hastings	McCollum	Scott, David
Heck	McEachin	Serrano
Higgins (NY)	McGovern	Sewell (AL)
Himes	McNerney	Shea-Porter
Hoyer	Meng	Sherman
Huffman	Moore	Sinema
Jackson Lee	Moulton	Sires
Jayapal	Murphy (FL)	Slaughter
Jeffries	Nadler	Smith (WA)
Johnson (GA)	Neal	Soto
Johnson, E. B.	Nolan	Speier
Kaptur	Norcross	Suozy
Keating	O'Halleran	Swalwell (CA)
Kelly (IL)	O'Rourke	Takano
Kennedy	Pallone	Thompson (CA)
Khanna	Panetta	Titus
Kihuen	Pascrell	Tonko
Kildee	Payne	Torres
Kilmer	Perlmutter	Tsongas
Kind	Peters	Vargas
Krishnamoorthi	Pingree	Veasey
Kuster (NH)	Pocan	Vela
Langevin	Polis	Vélázquez
Larson (CT)	Price (NC)	Visclosky
Lawrence	Quigley	Walz
Lawson (FL)	Raskin	Watson Coleman
Lee	Renacci	Welch
Levin	Rice (NY)	Wilson (FL)
Lewis (GA)	Richmond	Yarmuth

NOES—232

Abraham	Davis, Rodney	Jones
Aderholt	Denham	Jordan
Allen	Dent	Joyce (OH)
Amash	DeSantis	Katko
Amodei	DesJarlais	Kelly (MS)
Arrington	Diaz-Balart	Kelly (PA)
Babin	Donovan	King (IA)
Bacon	Duffy	King (NY)
Banks (IN)	Duncan (SC)	Kinzinger
Barletta	Duncan (TN)	Knight
Barr	Dunn	Kustoff (TN)
Barton	Emmer	Labrador
Bergman	Estes (KS)	LaHood
Biggs	Farenthold	LaMalfa
Bilirakis	Faso	Lamborn
Bishop (MI)	Ferguson	Lance
Bishop (UT)	Fleischmann	Latta
Black	Flores	Lewis (MN)
Blackburn	Fortenberry	LoBiondo
Blum	Fox	Loudermilk
Bost	Franks (AZ)	Love
Brady (TX)	Frelinghuysen	Lucas
Brat	Gaetz	Luetkemeyer
Bridenstine	Gallagher	MacArthur
Brooks (AL)	Garrett	Marchant
Brooks (IN)	Gianforte	Marino
Buchanan	Gibbs	Marshall
Buck	Gohmert	Masse
Bucshon	Goodlatte	Mast
Budd	Gowdy	McCarthy
Burgess	Graves (GA)	McCaul
Byrne	Graves (LA)	McClintock
Calvert	Graves (MO)	McHenry
Carter (GA)	Griffith	McKinley
Carter (TX)	Grothman	McMorris
Chabot	Guthrie	Rodgers
Chaffetz	Harper	McSally
Cheney	Harris	Meadows
Coffman	Hartzer	Meehan
Cole	Hensarling	Messer
Collins (GA)	Herrera Beutler	Mitchell
Collins (NY)	Hice, Jody B.	Moolenaar
Comer	Higgins (LA)	Mooney (WV)
Comstock	Hill	Mullin
Conaway	Holding	Murphy (PA)
Cook	Hollingsworth	Newhouse
Correa	Hudson	Noem
Costa	Huizenga	Nunes
Costello (PA)	Hultgren	Olson
Cramer	Hunter	Palazzo
Crawford	Hurd	Palmer
Cuellar	Jenkins (KS)	Paulsen
Culberson	Jenkins (WV)	Pearce
Curbelo (FL)	Johnson (LA)	Perry
Davidson	Johnson (OH)	Peterson

Pittenger	Rutherford	Turner
Poe (TX)	Sanford	Upton
Poliquin	Schweikert	Valadao
Posey	Scott, Austin	Wagner
Ratcliffe	Sensenbrenner	Walberg
Reed	Sessions	Walden
Reichert	Shinkus	Walker
Rice (SC)	Shuster	Walorski
Roby	Simpson	Walters, Mimi
Roe (TN)	Smith (MO)	Weber (TX)
Rogers (KY)	Smith (NE)	Webster (FL)
Rohrabacher	Smith (NJ)	Wenstrup
Rokita	Smith (TX)	Westerman
Rooney, Francis	Smucker	Williams
Rooney, Thomas J.	Stefanik	Wilson (SC)
Ros-Lehtinen	Stewart	Wittman
Roskam	Stivers	Womack
Ross	Taylor	Woodall
Rothfus	Tenney	Yoder
Rouzer	Thompson (PA)	Yoho
Royce (CA)	Thornberry	Young (AK)
Russell	Tipton	Young (IA)
	Trott	Zeldin

NOT VOTING—20

Castro (TX)	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (AL)
Cummings	Larsen (WA)	Scalise
Gabbard	Lieu, Ted	Thompson (MS)
Gosar	Long	Tiberi
Granger	Meeks	Wasserman
Gutiérrez	Napolitano	Schultz
Issa	Pelosi	Waters, Maxine

□ 1612

Messrs. YODER, REED, BUDD, CURBELO of Florida, CORREA, PITTENGER, MULLIN, WITTMAN, AND KATKO changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Messrs. ESPAILLAT, BLUMENAUER, and JOHNSON of Georgia changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BYRNE). The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) having assumed the chair, Mr. BYRNE, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate Federal and State permitting processes related to the construction of new surface water storage projects on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to designate the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for permit processing, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 392, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. BARTON was allowed to speak out of order.)

CONGRESSIONAL BASEBALL GAME

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, last Thursday evening, we played the annual Congressional Baseball Game for Charity. This is normally the time when the losing manager has to congratulate the winning

manager. Over the last 10 years, I have become fairly proficient at congratulating Mr. DOYLE.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to tell a lot of jokes because, as we all know, at the Republican practice the Wednesday morning before, an individual opened fire on the Republican team and wounded the majority whip, Mr. SCALISE; both Capitol Police officers who were part of Mr. SCALISE's security detail; and two volunteers who were assisting us in our practice. So I don't have a lot of jokes today, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to congratulate Mr. DOYLE and his team. They played fair and square. They were extremely gracious before the game. We had a unity prayer. We had a unity introduction of the players. The night before, Mr. DOYLE and his team invited the Republican team, believe it or not, to the Democratic political headquarters. I went with my two sons. The food was great, and the fellowship was even better.

So I do sincerely want to congratulate him and his players for playing the best game. They deserved to win.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Republican team. We had approximately 25 of our Members at the practice. Every one of them exhibited courage and composure. They all looked out for their fellow teammates.

We had an equivalent number of staff and volunteers. We had two of the best Capitol Hill police officers it is possible to have. They risked their lives.

I want to say this, and then I will yield to my good friend, Mr. DOYLE.

The shooter that attacked the Republican baseball team, Mr. Speaker, was attacking democracy. When we are at full strength on this floor, there are 435 of us. Every one of us is a winner. We get here because we have won an election. We get here because we have got the faith of approximately 600,000 or 700,000 people who are depending on us to be their voice for democracy. We argue. We debate. But as I said in one of my interviews, before our names is United States Representative. United.

Last Thursday, at the baseball game, we were united. I could not be prouder of being a Member of this body, Mr. Speaker. I could not be prouder of the Republican team, including our MVP, RON DESANTIS; our honorary MVP, STEVE SCALISE; and every member of the Republican team.

Would the members of the Republican team stand and let's acknowledge their heroism.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE).

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This is different from the other years that we have stood up here. This trophy isn't for either team. This trophy is for STEVE.

I just want you all to know that when we got the news at our baseball practice about what was going on, the

only thing we could think about is that we are a family. When we stood in the dugout and prayed that you were safe and that no one was hurt, we weren't thinking about Democrats and Republicans. We were thinking about our fellow Members.

I was thinking about your son, Jack, and all the fun times I have had kidding him. I was thinking about CEDRIC RICHMOND's 3-year-old son, who was with us, and what would have happened if that shooter had come over to our dugout.

If there is a silver lining to that terrible day, it was reflected in the outpouring of people who showed up at our game. We normally get a crowd of 9,000 to 10,000. We had 25,000 people come to that game.

We normally raise about \$500,000 for the three charities that the game supports. I have a check here that says we raised \$1.5 million, but that is not correct. It is \$1.7 million. Some worthwhile charities are going to get a check they weren't expecting.

I want to reiterate what you said about our Capitol Police. To have someone shooting bullets at you, that is terrifying enough. To make the decision to put yourself out there and charge at that shooter to make sure that there wasn't a massacre takes a special kind of person.

To see Crystal throw that ball out last night at the women's softball game brought a lot of joy to my heart. We owe a real debt of gratitude to the Capitol Police who protect us on these grounds.

I want JOE to know that we continue to think about all of you. You are in our prayers, you are in our thoughts. Something terrible happened. For many of you, it might take days before it hits you. I would encourage anyone who is feeling that to talk to someone. Don't be bashful about that. This was a traumatic experience for your team, especially, but I want you to know that you are in our hearts and in our prayers.

As we said before, JOE and I are going to walk this trophy over to STEVE's office. When the hospital gives us clearance, we are going to go over to the hospital and present it to STEVE personally. This is for him right now. We want him to know that the entire Congress thinks about him every day, prays for him and his family, and we hope to get him back here on the House floor as soon as possible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 233, noes 180, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 319]

AYES—233

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

Woodall
Yoder

Yoho
Young (AK)

Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—180

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
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

Cielline
Clark (MA)

Clarke (NY)
Clay

Cleaver
Clyburn

Cohen
Connolly

Conyers
Cooper

Courtney
Crist

Crowley
Davis (CA)

Davis, Danny
DeFazio

DeGette
Delaney

DeLauro
DelBene

Demings
DeSaulnier

Deutch
Dingell

Doyle, Michael F.

Ellison
Engel

Eshoo
Espaillat

Esty (CT)
Evans

Fitzpatrick
Foster

Frankel (FL)
Fudge

Cummings
Doggett

Gabbard
Gosar

Granger
Issa

Johnson, Sam

Gallego
Garamendi

Gonzalez (TX)
Green, Al

Green, Gene
Grijalva

Gutiérrez
Hanabusa

Hastings
Heck

Higgins (NY)
Himes

Hoyer
Huffman

Jackson Lee
Jayapal

Jeffries
Johnson (GA)

Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur

Katko
Keating

Kelly (IL)
Kennedy

Khanna
Kihuen

Kildee
Kilmer

Kind
Krishnamoorthi

Kuster (NH)
Langevin

Larson (CT)
Lawrence

Lawson (FL)
Lee

Levin
Lewis (GA)

Lipinski
LoBiondo

Loeb sack
Lofgren

Lowenthal
Lowe

Lujan Grisham,
M.

Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch

Maloney,
Carolyn B.

Matsui
McCollum

McEachin
McGovern

McNerney
Meng

Moore
Moulton

Murphy (FL)
Nadler

Neal
Nolan

Larsen (WA)
Lieu, Ted

Long
Meeks

Napolitano
Pelosi

Rogers (AL)

Norcross
O'Halleran

O'Rourke
Pallone

Panetta
Pascarell

Payne
Perlmutter

Peters
Pingree

Pocan
Polis

Price (NC)
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

Slaughter
Smith (NJ)

Smith (WA)
Soto

Speier
Suozi

Swalwell (CA)
Takano

Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)

Titus
Tonko

Torres
Tsongas

Vargas
Veasey

Vela
Velázquez

Visclosky
Walz

Watson Coleman
Welch

Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, due to a personal conflict, I was unable to make votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 318 and "yea" on rollcall No. 319.

SUPPORTING THE UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE

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

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dutiful service of the United States Secret Service. The Secret Service protects the President and Vice President, their families, and foreign dignitaries, while also investigating cybercrimes and preventing fraud. These men and women place their lives on the line daily to protect some of the most highly targeted individuals in the world.

Further, they continue to conduct counterfeit interdiction operations despite the increasing need for protective details and low retention numbers.

While the Secret Service is often in the news for personal shortcomings, the organization has had a storied history in protecting the United States. It is a remarkable fact that, within the last year, they have successfully conducted security operations for multiple Presidential candidates, the U.N. General Assembly, a visit to New York City by Pope Francis, and countless foreign dignitary visits to our soil.

So from all of us here in Congress, I would like to thank the Secret Service for their service to our Nation and for their sacrifices. In the coming months, I plan to routinely honor this great example of American exceptionalism.

THE BETTER CARE RECONCILIATION ACT

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the latest plan to gut the Affordable Care Act.

Senate Republicans, as has been reported, just unveiled their draft of their healthcare bill, the Better Care Reconciliation Act, which was developed entirely behind closed doors and will be rushed to a vote, from what I understand, without additional input or public debate.

Mr. Speaker, make no mistake about it, this bill will not provide Americans access to better care and it will not create more affordable coverage.

Changes to Medicaid will mean Americans in the expansion population will eventually lose access to crucial services and supports, and shrinking the program will force States to cut services to the poor, the sick, and the elderly.

□ 1632

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:

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 319 (passage of H.R. 1654), I did not cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on this vote.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall votes No. 318 and No. 319 due to my spouse's health situation in California. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the Lowenthal Amendment. I would have voted "nay" on the Final Passage of

Like the House Republican version to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, the Senate's bill is an attack on the preservation of essential health benefits, and it will not ensure middle-income Americans can receive sufficient financial support to obtain coverage.

The Senate Republican Better Care Reconciliation Act does not deviate from the damage of the core policies found in the Republican House version of the American Health Care Act, and I just hope my Republican colleagues have a chance to realize this before they take a vote on a bill that will only undermine health coverage for the American people.

INTRODUCING THE PUPPIES ASSISTING WOUNDED SERVICE-MEMBERS ACT

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, according to recent VA analysis, an average of 20 veterans commit suicide per day. Additionally, 20 percent of those who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan suffer from PTSD or major depression.

Addressing the mental health of our veterans needs to be a top priority, which is why I am cosponsoring the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers Act, or the PAWS Act. It is an additional way to provide better treatment for our soldiers who are struggling with various forms of mental health following their service and deployment.

This initiative allows the VA to create a 5-year program to give organizations grants to pair veterans suffering with PTSD with service dogs to increase their recovery. Studies show that service dogs contribute considerably to one's emotional and psychological well-being.

Mr. Speaker, the PAWS Act will help with the recovery of our veterans who have paid a great price in serving our country. It is imperative that our veterans' mental health remains a high priority and that they have access to as many options as possible.

JUNE IS NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH

(Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize June as National Homeownership Month and to introduce three bills to protect homeowners: the Foreclosure Fairness Act, the National Homeowners Bill of Rights Act, and the Keeping Families Home Act.

In 2016, the homeownership rate in the U.S. fell to 62.9 percent, the lowest rate since 1967. Before the Great Reces-

sion, it peaked at about nearly 70 percent.

Unfortunately, in the past 8 years, New Mexico, my home State, has not seen economic recovery. In fact, as of April 2017, New Mexico's foreclosure rate is 40 percent higher than the national average.

Owning a home is not only the American Dream, it also increases economic activity as well as wealth for the owners. The average homeowner has a net worth that is 36 times that of the average renter—\$195,400 compared to \$5,400.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support my bills, which will make the foreclosure process more transparent and fair, prohibit deficiency judgments, help non-English speakers communicate with mortgage servicers, and keep families in their home.

COMPENSATING VICTIMS WHO CONTRACTED FUNGAL MENINGITIS

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

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a national victim's compensation issue that must be treated with the urgency it deserves.

Nearly one year ago, because of the work of the Members of this body, \$40 million was made available to a victim's compensation program for people who had contracted fungal meningitis as a result of tainted NECC steroid injections distributed in 2012, which resulted in convictions with multiple people. That money was delivered to the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office 9 months ago, yet not a single claim has been paid.

Mr. Speaker, these victims, many of whom are from my district, need justice. We are nearing the 5-year mark of this terrible outbreak, and families across America need this Congress to continue to fight for them.

Against their own will, they became victims of this terrible tragedy, and they certainly do not need to also be victims of more bureaucratic red tape. Enough is enough. It is time to use these funds we secured and start compensating these victims.

I stand ready, willing, and able to help in any way I can, but I urge the officials in Massachusetts to treat this matter like the priority it truly is.

NEW JERSEY MAYORS UNDERSTAND COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I stand here proud to represent the New Jersey 12th Congressional District. I stand here proud that Mayor Eric Jackson of Trenton, Mayor Liz Lempert of Princeton, Mayor Francis Womack of North Brunswick,

and Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood led the charge in understanding that our global responsibility to combating climate change starts at home.

By passing resolutions that pledge their commitment to the Paris climate accord, these cities understand that American exceptionalism means we lead from the front, not from the back. I consider myself very fortunate to have lived my entire life in a State that has so many progressive nonprofit organizations and individuals that are working every day to protect public health, our environment, and our quality of life.

I commend these cities in my district and the elected officials, the business leaders, and the private citizens nationwide who have chosen to ensure the cultivation and preservation of this Earth for generations to come.

JUNE IS ALZHEIMER'S AND BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, and it has reached crisis proportions.

There is no effective treatment, no means of prevention, and no method for slowing the progression of the disease. Sadly, one in three seniors will die with the disease.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 5 million Americans were living with Alzheimer's disease in the year 2013. This number is expected to almost triple to 14 million by the year 2050.

Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable. Alzheimer's also has a devastating impact on caregivers and loved ones of those diagnosed with the disease. More than 15 million Americans provide unpaid care to family and friends living with Alzheimer's and other dementias.

Compared with caregivers for people without dementia, twice as many caregivers for people with dementia indicate substantial emotional, financial, and physical stress.

Mr. Speaker, the time to act is now. Let's join the fight. Let's take the pledge to raise awareness about Alzheimer's disease, and to never stop searching for a cure.

□ 1645

PTSD AWARENESS MONTH

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

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, because June is PTSD Awareness Month, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary organization in my district that is making a huge impact on the lives of Maine

veterans managing this challenging condition.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have paid close attention to effective alternative therapies for the symptoms of PTSD, from service dogs to equine therapy, from book and writing groups to yoga and acupuncture. A group in my home State of Maine, called K9s on The Front Line, has created an extraordinary model. At no cost to the veteran, volunteer police dog handlers teach participants to train their own dogs or dogs selected from shelters to be PTSD service dogs.

Many of these veterans have had years of therapy or drug treatment with limited success. Yet, in so many instances, the impact of these service dogs on both veterans and their families has been nothing short of miraculous.

I am proud to honor my constituents at K9s on The Front Line for improving the lives of Maine veterans with PTSD.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the importance of technical education.

Technical education allows Americans of nearly any age to gain practical skills for the modern economy. Students graduate with less debt and also great career prospects because growing industries often partner with local education centers to find the best employees.

My home State of Tennessee, where global auto companies have created a network of high-tech manufacturers, is a prime example. This week, in Franklin County, we are celebrating the groundbreaking of another Tennessee College of Applied Technology campus. The program has been enormously successful across the State, helping Tennesseans who prefer to learn a trade to find meaningful work and helping employers to fill specialized jobs.

I applaud President Trump for his focus on apprenticeship and vocational programs to create jobs and economic growth. This week, I voted to simplify Federal funding for States, which administer a broad range of programs for everything from mechanics to coding. I have also voted to lift Federal restrictions on overdue energy and infrastructure projects requiring thousands of engineers and operators.

The United States must always be an industrial leader. That leadership starts with hardworking Americans pursuing their passions through technical education.

TAX REFORM

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

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against dark-

of-night policymaking and extreme partisanship and turn to where we can work together with civility on our most pressing issues.

Instead of focusing on what we do not agree on, we must work together where we can find common ground on cutting taxes for hardworking Americans and businesses of all sizes and investing in the crumbling roads, tunnels, and bridges Americans drive over every day. In New Jersey, our roads are the eighth worst in the country, while our taxes are way too high.

As co-chair of the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus, I have been working around the clock with both parties since I was sworn in to fix our roads, while lowering taxes and cutting unnecessary regulation and red tape. By doing so, we can increase economic growth in jobs, improve safety, fight terror, ensure clean drinking water, stand by our vets and first responders, and give our country a competitive advantage on the world stage.

We simply can't have a first-rate nation with second-class infrastructure and sky-high taxes. There is political will on both sides of the aisle on these issues, but we can't be spending our energy on rehashing the same tired partisan debates and jamming through partisan bills. We must work together to get things done for the American people.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF STAN McETCHIN

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the passing and celebrate the life of a good friend to many, Mr. Stan McEtchin. Hailing from Vancouver, British Columbia, Stan passed away on June 9, after 92 years of enriching the lives of those around him.

For the past few decades, the small town of Paradise, California, has known Stan as a pillar of the community, whose sculpted metal artwork decorated shops and houses all across Butte County. But before his creative artwork made him a local celebrity, Stan served his country in World War II.

In 1943, he volunteered for the First Special Service Force in the Canadian Army, an elite American and Canadian commando unit that preceded the modern Special Operations Forces we have today. In 2014, the man beloved for his artwork and for his charity was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal right here in Washington, D.C., for his unit's heroism in battle.

I consider myself fortunate to have known him just a little bit, and our country fortunate to have gained such a good man from our northern neighbors.

God bless his family and his memory.

TRUMP CARE, BUT AT WHAT COST?

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, Senate Republicans have negotiated their TrumpCare bill in the dark, and that is just where it should have stayed. And just wait until the CBO score comes out next week.

Knowing that this bill will cause immeasurable harm to millions of American families who will lose their coverage and protections while facing higher costs, I do not understand how anyone could support it.

We constantly hear from our Republican colleagues that TrumpCare keeps their promise to repeal the Affordable Care Act. So you keep that misguided promise, but at what cost?

We are talking about the lives of real people, millions of real people. Aren't they worth more than just a tax cut for the rich?

Mr. Speaker, I urge my Republican colleagues to scrap this disastrous bill. Let's work together to improve the Affordable Care Act and not destroy it.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS PROVIDE STUDENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR TODAY'S ECONOMY

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of today's legislation to advance our country's career and technical education programs. These programs help students learn the skills needed to be competitive and set our young people on the path to success.

I have visited with our manufacturers regularly, and they have repeatedly told me that more skilled workers are needed.

As a former vocational teacher, I have seen firsthand the fulfillment a student can find from getting real-world training in a useful skill, and I am encouraged by the positive steps this bill takes to address this skill shortfall.

There are many paths to success, and the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act helps us pave the way for a high-skilled workforce of Americans to have successful, fulfilling careers.

LGBT PRIDE MONTH

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

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, all over the country, millions of Americans are celebrating Pride Month and our LGBTQIA communities across the country. In fact, this week I will join tens of thousands of Washingtonians at our annual Seattle pride events.

We will come together to support our family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues; we will come together to celebrate the advancement of LGBTQ rights in our country; and we will come together to celebrate the second anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision that reaffirmed our commitment to the principle of marriage equality in this country.

But this year, we also come together to acknowledge that we have seen a spike in hate crimes, an increasing coarseness of public discourse, and greater fear-mongering for political gain. We have a lot of work to do.

We intend to protect every advancement that has been made and continue demanding progress toward full protections in employment and housing, safety for our transgender brothers and sisters, and equitable access to healthcare and other services.

There is a lot to celebrate, but much more to do to ensure the promise of equality for all in our Nation. That is what this month has been about, and we celebrate it.

LET'S WORK IN A BIPARTISAN WAY TO IMPROVE OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FOR EVERY AMERICAN

(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, I rise today in strong opposition to the Republicans' ongoing plans to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. Senate leadership unveiled their plan this morning and plans a vote as soon as next week.

This bill was drafted in secrecy and will have massive consequences for the healthcare of every American. It will affect more than one-sixth of our economy. Yet for all its impact, it was written behind closed doors, with absolutely zero bipartisan input.

I have heard from more constituents on this issue than any other—more than 5,000 letters, emails, and telephone calls: people like the cancer survivor in Lake Bluff who is worried whether she will be unable to find affordable insurance without the ACA's preexisting condition protections; or my constituent in Grayslake, who says he could only start his business because of the individual coverage he bought on the exchange.

I urge my colleagues to listen to the great majority of the American people. It is time to end this ill-considered charade to repeal ObamaCare and work together in a bipartisan way to improve our healthcare system for every American.

SENATE VERSION OF AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT RELEASE

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have a copy of the Senate bill to repeal ObamaCare, and it is no wonder they didn't want us to see it.

Like the mean-spirited bill passed by the House, it rips insurance away from millions of Americans, rolls back key protections to patients with pre-existing conditions, and allows insurers to charge older people five times more than others.

Despite the promises that the Senate bill will moderate the coverage cuts in the House-passed bill, the Senate is not only retaining the House bill's fundamental restructuring of the Medicaid program to a per capita cap on Federal funding, but it is deepening the cuts on Medicaid after a few years. This will inevitably lead to the rationing of healthcare for 70 million Americans who are beneficiaries of Medicaid: pregnant women, people in nursing homes, children, and people with disabilities.

It is not even clear what policy goal this bill is trying to solve, except for making insurance more expensive or unavailable for people who really need it the most. It is almost hard to call this a healthcare bill at all.

There were no hearings, no public debate, and after weeks of backroom deals and operating in secrecy, we now have this terrible product that the Senate plans to vote on next week.

I think the American people deserve better.

SENATE HEALTHCARE BILL

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the healthcare bill that has emerged from secret Republican-only negotiations in the other body.

Mr. Speaker, 900,000 people—nearly 1 million—gained health insurance just in Ohio through the Affordable Care Act. But this lopsided Republican bill is even more cruel than their House version. It will rip away care from millions, including very sick people who are suffering from mental illness and opioid addiction.

We all know amazing families, many of whom have come to our offices telling their stories, families who care for the sick and for those who will never be able to realize the dreams due to illness and disability. To put them on the chopping block is un-American and it is anti-life.

The Republican bill slashes Medicaid, which is a lifeline to working people, and puts more crushing costs on millions of seniors dependent on Medicaid for nursing home care.

The Republican bill is anti-life. The Republican proposal makes healthcare unaffordable for many Americans, and basically gives a tax cut to those who make millions and billions of dollars. How cruel is that?

Caring for the most dependent and ill among us cannot be left to chance.

Americans should rise up in protest from coast to coast and oppose this anti-life Republican bill.

LET'S FIGHT TO SAVE THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, healthcare should not be partisan.

I have on my jacket a sign that says "Restore the Vote" to give opportunities to Americans to vote because Republicans have decided that TrumpCare and healthcare is partisan. We need to be able to ensure that everyone has the right to vote.

Today, they issued a mean healthcare bill that is meaner than the House bill. Trillions of dollars are cut from Medicaid, from children and senior citizens. Subsidies are not given to all of those given under the Affordable Care Act. Hospitals will crumble; federally qualified clinics will close; and emergency room doctors, of whom I had the chance to speak to just a few hours ago, indicated 140 million Americans go to emergency rooms, or have gone, for their healthcare. The Affordable Care Act eased that.

But, now with this monstrosity of a bill that undermines and throws Americans off healthcare—23 million and growing—then it really does say that elections do matter and that this is a sinister Republican plan to undermine the American people.

It is time for us to come together, not partisan, but nonpartisan, to fight for our lives and fight for our children and fight to save the Affordable Care Act.

Let's do it now.

□ 1700

IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I am fortunate to represent the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, where a blend of cultures has shaped our community, from the food that we eat to the traditions that we celebrate. The north Texas area has benefited from immigrants that now call the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex home. In fact, over one-third of the district I serve was born outside of the United States.

It is the rich diversity found in Texas and across the country that have helped make our country great. Immigrants bring their skills and cultures and a belief in the American Dream that benefits each and every one of us. They work alongside us, teach our children, worship in parishes, and contribute to the innovation that has kept America on the cutting edge for decades.

In honor of Immigrant Heritage Month, I remind my colleagues of our

country's legacy as a nation of immigrants. I urge each of you to keep these ideas in mind as the month ends and as we promote policies that directly impact our immigrant communities.

URGING MEMBERS TO REMEMBER THE COMMITMENT THEY MADE TO ONE ANOTHER

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak after my friend from Texas. He is absolutely right. We have an incredibly vibrant fabric of folks across this country. My district looks very much like his district. I appreciate him recognizing those things that unite us and bring us together.

You know, it hasn't been much over a week, Mr. Speaker, since we committed ourselves to changing the discourse here, and just in the last 5 minutes of listening to speakers on this floor, I have heard sinister accusations of what our healthcare bill will do, of mean bills and meaner bills, of cruel bills.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a man or woman in this Chamber who doesn't work every day to serve their constituents better than they did yesterday. There is not a man or woman in this Chamber who doesn't want to do better for America tomorrow than we did yesterday. And I promise you that that pathway is not paved with accusations of "sinister," "cruel," and "mean." It is paved with confessions of common ground, common goals, and common opportunity. I urge my colleagues to remember our commitment that we made to one another last week.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF SENATOR JIM BUNNING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARR. 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 the topic of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to honor the memory of a legendary Kentucky statesman, a baseball Hall of Famer, a man of this House, and a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Senator Jim Bunning, who recently passed away at the age of 85.

The Members who are joining us tonight, many of them who hail from Senator Bunning's home in the Com-

monwealth of Kentucky, extend our deepest sympathy to his beloved wife, Mary, who was his best friend for many years; his nine children; his 35 grandchildren; and his 21 great-grandchildren.

Those who met Senator Jim Bunning walked away with an impression, and that impression was: That has to be the most competitive person I have ever met.

In a recent op-ed in the Lexington Herald-Leader, providing a great tribute to Senator Jim Bunning, one of his very best friends, sports marketing executive Jim Host, wrote that Jim Bunning was "full of integrity" and, "the straightest arrow I ever met."

In that op-ed, he recounted a story where a reporter of the Louisville Courier-Journal wrote that former U.S. Senator Jim Bunning was "one of a kind," and Jim Host, in remembering his friend, said, "I agree, but more than that, he was an original. No one in politics in Kentucky or, for that matter, nationwide has been or ever will be like him."

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Congressman HAL ROGERS, the dean of the Kentucky delegation.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise, like most of the delegation here, in memory of our longtime friend and colleague, the late Jim Bunning, who was an indomitable force on the pitcher's mound, a stalwart champion for the Commonwealth, and the proud patriarch of a remarkable family.

Jim Bunning is the type of guy you always wanted in your starting lineup. With his multilayered talent, Jim valued strategic offense as much as staunch defense not only on the pitcher's mound, but in the Halls of Congress, where he fervently stood for conservative values.

Jim once said: "I have been booed by 60,000 fans at Yankee Stadium standing alone at the pitcher's mound, so I have never really cared if I stood alone here in Congress as long as I stood for my beliefs and my values."

Jim was bold and headstrong, but also fiercely loyal, a combination that made him effective in every endeavor he undertook. He lived a courageous life that was highlighted by his Hall of Fame record and commitment to public service. Jim left an indelible mark on our State, on our Nation, and his legacy will endure for generations.

My wife, Cynthia, and I extend our heartfelt sympathy to Mary and the entire Bunning family. We are forever grateful for Jim's courage of conviction to faithfully serve the people of the Commonwealth.

I had the pleasure of serving with Jim in the House before he was elected to the U.S. Senate, and many times we would be on this floor when Jim's indomitable spirit would surface. He held strong beliefs and he had strong opinions, but, as Jim Host has said, you have never met a straighter arrow than Jim Bunning.

We are going to miss you, Big Right-Hander.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I yield to JOHN YARMUTH, my friend from Louisville in the Third Congressional District of Kentucky and a good Kentuckian who will demonstrate that Jim Bunning's appeal crossed party lines.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, my neighbor from just down I-64, for organizing this Special Order honoring the life of Senator Bunning this evening.

This is the first time in my 11 years serving in Congress that I have spoken from this side of the aisle, and it is a fitting occasion that I do that. I am proud to join my Republican colleagues and friends this evening.

During his baseball career, Jim Bunning was once asked what his proudest accomplishment was, and he recalled the fact that he went nearly 11 years without ever missing a start. "They wrote my name down, and I went to the post," he said.

I can't help but think that is a fitting way of also describing his political career and his love of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Kentuckians wrote his name down time after time again, and he went to work for them, no questions asked.

Jim and I obviously didn't see eye to eye politically all the time, and as amazed as I was by the curve balls that he threw on the field, I sometimes found myself equally amazed by some of the curve balls he threw off the field, but that was Jim. When so much of what happens in Congress is political theater, you can't deny that he was always real and that every word he spoke, he genuinely believed.

I am sure Jim's family takes great pride in that fact. I join with my colleagues in offering them my thoughts and prayers as they continue to grieve their loss. I hope they find comfort in the lifetime of memories they share together.

It is reported that Daniel Boone once said: "Heaven must be a Kentucky kind of place."

I sure hope that is true.

As I said at the time of his passing, Jim Bunning can now throw no-hitters forever on his field of dreams.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I yield to Congressman BRETT GUTHRIE, my friend from the Second Congressional District of Kentucky.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about my good friend, Senator Bunning, a mentor to me. I first came across Senator Bunning when I was a young boy watching baseball and watching him pitch for the Detroit Tigers and for the Philadelphia Phillies. But I really got to know them—and when I say "them," it is because most of us from Kentucky cannot talk about Jim Bunning without saying Jim and Mary. It is just Jim and Mary. They were grammar school sweethearts. I think the only people they ever dated were each other.

It was wonderful to see Mary the other day, unfortunately under these circumstances, but a wonderful lady.

I have a couple of stories. When I first thought I might run for public office for the State senate—and my now 23-year-old was 5, and I had a 3-year-old son—I went to Oldham County, Kentucky, to meet Jim Bunning. And, of course, you show up, there is Jim and Mary. And she said: “Are you going to be our candidate in the 32nd District?”

And I said: “Well, I just don’t know. I am really concerned about it. I have got a young family.”

And she looked at me and she said: “Young man, I have raised nine kids”—I think at that point 20-something grandkids—“we have done politics, we have done baseball, city council.” She went through a whole list of things. And I will never forget she said: “You are worried about your family because of the experiences that you have had, and you want them to have the same kind of experiences, but you have got to take your family and make your family experiences. Our kids have gotten to do things no other kid has gotten to do because of the positions and the things that we have done as a family.”

You know, when you start to run for office, you kind of want to talk yourself out of it. So I will never forget driving back home convinced that, yes, I am going to run for this office. I walked in, and the first thing my wife said is: “Guess what. We are going to have our third child.”

I guarantee you, if I had not had that conversation with Mary Bunning, and after my wife telling me during the time of that decision we are going to have another one—now our 19-year-old—I wouldn’t have moved forward.

My other story is Senator Bunning took me under his wing. I won my first race by 130 votes out of 27,000 cast. Jim Bunning was running in a fight for his life for the U.S. Senate. Bob Dole comes to Bowling Green, Kentucky, to have a rally for Senator Bunning, and he wanted me to speak. Well, then we see people around town like this that are operatives for our parties, and this one guy says: “No. No State, no local candidates. Only Federal candidates can speak.”

I had to leave the podium because this young, 25-year-old guy said that. And Jim Bunning looks over—and they are all there for his rally—he says: “If he is not speaking, I am not speaking.”

So the next thing I know, I got on the agenda. They said: “Yeah. Three minutes.”

So I had my 3-minute talk.

The final thing I want to say is that one of my favorite Jim Bunning stories is he did not like to sign baseballs made in China. That was just his thing. He didn’t want to sign a baseball made in China, which I didn’t know that, but I had two major league baseballs for my two oldest kids to get them signed. He was going to be in Bowling Green, Kentucky. I show up there. And on the

way, my youngest daughter, which we didn’t think even cared, started crying. Well, to buy a real major league baseball in Bowling Green, Kentucky, at the last minute is not very easy to do. So we went by Walmart, picked up just a little official league ball. And I walked to the restaurant and I hand Jim the first ball. He signs it. The second one, he signs it. The third one—and it is in my office today, because I may have the only one—he picks it up and he points to the “China” imprinted on the ball and just gives me this look like only he could give. And fortunately Mary was there, and she says: “Jim, you are signing that ball for that little girl.” So I now have it in my office in the Rayburn building, a Jim Bunning baseball that says “Made in China” on it. It is something I cherish.

His granddaughter has interned in my office, and she is a chip off the old block, both her grandmother and grandfather. During the spring, we were getting a lot of phone calls in our office because of some of the actions here on the House floor. She was wonderful and mature beyond her years at 20 or 21 years old.

So the old right-hander, as Mr. HAL ROGERS said, is somebody we miss, is somebody that is important to me, somebody that leaves a fantastic legacy in Washington, in Major League Baseball. But far more important, if you had the opportunity to go to the funeral home, just looking at those nine children, and with over 30-something grandchildren and now into the great-grandchildren, that is his legacy. His legacy is his family, and there is no other way he would want it from that first few days in grammar school when he first met his wife, Mary, till today. It is just a legacy that all of us should strive to have.

We love him. We are going to miss him. And we certainly love his wife, Mary, and his family.

□ 1715

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from the First Congressional District of Kentucky, Congressman JAMES COMER.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Senator Jim Bunning. I met Senator Bunning in 1983, when I was 10 years old. He was running for Governor. At the time, he was a State senator in Kentucky, and my grandfather was chairman of the Republican Party of Monroe County.

So when he ran for Governor, my grandfather was the chairman of the county for his election. And I went up to him, a 10-year-old boy, and I had my baseball in my hand—because that is what you did when you saw Jim Bunning, you gave him a baseball to sign—and I said: “Mr. Bunning, I am like you. We have two things in common.” I said: “I am a fan of sports and a fan of politics.”

And he laughed and patted me on the head, and he said: “We are going to get

along just fine.” And he figured out who I was, who my grandfather was, and we stayed close through the years.

When I ran for State representative in 2000, he was one of the first people to call and encourage me and offer his support. I won that election. I served in the Kentucky General Assembly. He was always a supporter. He was always there for me.

I ran for commissioner of agriculture in another statewide office, and he was always there for me. I think the world of Jim Bunning just because I knew him and I knew that he cared and he remembered things.

In 2004, he was running for reelection for the U.S. Senate, and it was a tough election. It was a very close election. In fact, there were 120 counties in the State. With 118 counties in, he was behind in that election. And there were two counties left, Metcalfe County and Monroe County, two counties in my State House district. So he knew he was going to win because he won those counties by 4-to-1 margins.

So every time I would see him, he would remind me that he is in the Senate because of those counties in south central Kentucky. Most politicians probably wouldn’t remember that, but he did.

So I am honored to stand here tonight with Representative BARR and show my support and appreciation for Jim Bunning. Kentucky is a better State because of the leadership of U.S. Senator Jim Bunning.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, when you think about U.S. Senator Jim Bunning and when you think about his remarkable baseball career before politics, Jim Bunning could have gone anywhere and he could have done anything, but it is important to remember that those early days during his baseball career—and I will have to recount a story that was in that tribute that Jim Host wrote about the Hall of Famer Jim Bunning.

And he said that, after his career had ended, it had been about 15 years, and he had not yet been named to the Baseball Hall of Fame by the baseball writers, though when he retired, he was second in strikeouts to the famed Walter Johnson, he had won 100 games in both leagues, he had a perfect game in one of those leagues, and he had a no-hitter in the other league.

He had never pitched for a pennant winner.

A prominent sportswriter told me, quoting Jim Host, that the writers would have never elected him because he never developed relationships with most of them.

But this wrong was corrected the first year that the old-timers committee of the Hall could vote on him. Probably his greatest thrill, other than the birth of his nine children, was the call he got from Ted Williams and others saying they were correcting a tragic wrong by voting Jim Bunning into the Hall of Fame.

When he called Jim Host to tell him the news, his voice was filled with emotion unlike any that he had heard from him before.

And here is what Jim Bunning said to Jim Host:

I am glad those writers—he used another word—did not vote me in, being voted in by the players means more anyway.

In his acceptance speech, he attacked the ills in the game he loved so much that the commissioner and others were not addressing. The officials of Major League Baseball sat on the stage quite uncomfortable. Vin-tage Bunning.

But you know, after that remarkable baseball career and after that wrong was corrected and he was ultimately voted into the Hall of Fame by the players, he chose to come home to Kentucky where he dedicated his life to his family and to public service.

He served on the Fort Thomas City Council and in the Kentucky State Senate before serving in this body, in the House of Representatives, as a Congressman from Kentucky's Fourth Congressional District, and he did so for six terms in a very distinct fashion.

And he capped off his remarkable career in public service by serving two terms and very consequential terms in the United States Senate. Throughout his entire career, he remained a principled conservative, and he was an unrelenting fighter for the causes he believed in and for the people of the commonwealth. Just as he was unafraid to face the boos and the jeers of tens of thousands of opposing fans in Major League Baseball stadiums around the country, Jim Bunning was unafraid to stand alone in Congress for the causes that he felt were right.

And a great example of this—and I like telling this story as the current chairman of the Monetary Policy and Trade Subcommittee in this House. Jim Bunning was a fighter for accountability and transparency of the Federal Reserve. And when so many just took the Fed for their word, Jim Bunning stood up and he challenged then-Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan. And many of his colleagues looked at him in dismay because they believed that the Fed just deserved deference, and this great economist should always be taken as being right in what he was doing.

But Jim Bunning, in the end, was right, as Fed policies ended up being one of the causes of the Great Recession of 2008. Senator Bunning's legacy lives on in his amazing wife, Mary, and their many children and grandchildren, including his grandson Eric Bunning, who has been an important part of my team since I first took office.

And I just have to tell one story from the campaign trails. Many of my colleagues have told these stories, but I have got to tell one that is personal to me. Jim Bunning was a legend, and we all revered him. And when I made my first run for Congress, it was kind of coming down the home stretch, and we were the underdog, but I really respected Senator Bunning, and I wanted his political experience and his advice.

And as we were going down the home stretch of the campaign—it was a tight election—Jim Bunning approached me at an event, and he said: "Andy, how are you doing?"

And I said: "We are doing great. We have got the momentum. We are moving forward, and it is really tightening up, and I really feel like we have got the momentum, and we are going to get over the top."

And in his way that only Jim Bunning could be, as honest as he was, he said: "That is not what I hear. I hear you are down by 10 points, and you are going to lose in a landslide."

Well, as it turned out, a few weeks later, it was a close election, and we only lost that campaign by a few hundred votes. But you know what? Just a few days after that concession speech that I had to give, you know who called? It was Senator Jim Bunning.

And even though he was certainly candid in that conversation a few weeks before election day, he said: "Andy, you ran a great campaign. You are a tenacious campaigner. Don't give up. Keep fighting. Be persistent. Do it again. The next time you are going to win."

And you know, that embodies the character of Jim Bunning: tenacious, persistent, determined, principled, a man of integrity.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in praying for the extended Bunning family as we remember a respected former member of this House and a great Kentuckian.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor to join many of my colleagues from Kentucky, and all of the other fellow members of this body, to celebrate the life and the legacy of Senator Jim Bunning.

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

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members participating in this Special Order hour with the Progressive Caucus have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order, which is healthcare.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be here tonight on behalf of the Progressive Caucus to manage this Special Order hour along with my colleagues, who I will be introducing. Several of them will be joining me tonight to discuss what is going on in the Senate today with the GOP finally unveiling their closely guarded secret plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act, a plan they are unveiling that has had the legislative benefit of no hearings, no witnesses, no expert testimony, no tes-

timony by the public, and, again, no Congressional Budget Office score so far, which is the same way that the legislation passed out of the House side.

So does all of this sound familiar? It should, because this is the same clandestine, in-the-dark process that led to the plan which emerged here in the House of Representatives on the barest of margins with every manner of power play and power ploy engaged by leadership to produce the final result.

That bill, by the way, now stands at a whopping 9 percent in the polls, which means it is even more unpopular than Congress itself. And even though my friends across the aisle rented buses and vans to take them over to the White House to go and celebrate and exult in their dubious victory and uncork the champagne and drink beer with the President and his staff after they pushed the bill through the House, today, President Trump now calls the bill that he celebrated and he campaigned for mean. He says it is a mean bill today.

And there is no question he is right about that. We said that at the time, mean as a rattlesnake, that bill, which would have thrown 24 million people off their health insurance plans and destroyed preexisting health insurance coverage for people with preexisting health conditions.

The Senate version, though, is just as mean. It is downright mean. It may even be meaner than the House version. It not only strips health insurance coverage from tens of millions of our fellow American citizens; it not only forces American families to pay higher premiums and deductibles, increasing out-of-pocket costs, all to pay for a tax cut for the wealthiest of our citizens; it forces Americans, ages 50 to 64, to pay premiums five times higher than everyone else, no matter how healthy you are.

That is right. If you are in the age bracket of 50 to 64, your premiums, under their bill, will be five times higher than everybody else in the population, no matter how healthy you are. It reduces the life of the Medicare trust fund and robs funds that seniors depend on to get the long-term care that they need. It blocked grants, Medicaid to the States, and then, astonishingly, for the first time ever, places a per capita cap on Medicaid payments for all recipients, including disabled Americans and senior citizens.

That is just unconscionable. Think about it. For the first time ever, under Medicaid, the Federal Government would not commit to pay for all of enrollees' health bills. So if your illness or your injuries are too severe or too complicated, your treatment too long, tough luck for you, buddy; you are on your own, Jack. That is the new proposal that is coming out from the Senate today.

The people that railed about death panels before passage of the Affordable Care Act, panels that never materialized and were proven to be an absolute

fiction and fantasy, now seek to throw millions of people off of their health insurance, roll back the Medicaid expansion in the Affordable Care Act, which benefitted millions of our countrymen and -women, and then cut the heart out of the Medicaid guarantee by placing a per capita cap on payments to beneficiaries.

□ 1730

And this particular assault on the health and well-being of the American people doesn't even claim to be a response to any alleged problems with the Affordable Care Act, or with ObamaCare as they call it. It is, instead, a sweeping change to Medicaid that so-called free market conservatives have been trying to make for years.

This Senate legislation, cooked up in secret and seasoned with slashing cuts to Medicaid, is one fine mess. It does nothing but make our healthcare system more expensive, dangerously throws tens of millions of people off of their insurance, and eviscerates the core protections of Medicaid.

And why? What is the public policy being advanced here? All for a tax cut for the wealthiest Americans. It takes a special kind of single-minded focus to turn a healthcare bill into a massive tax cut for the people who need it the least in America.

Now, I heard some of my friends, my distinguished colleagues on the other side, say that other colleagues should not have been talking about how the bill was "mean," or "mean spirited," or "mean" because we have a renewed spirit of civility in this Chamber, which we do; and I praise it, and I celebrate it. Ever since the terrible attack on our colleague STEVE SCALISE and other colleagues and the Capitol Police officers who rose valiantly to defend them, we have really tried to put aside a lot of the partisan rancor. But my friends, we have got to talk honestly about legislation which is threatening the well-being of our own citizens.

The word "mean" comes not from my colleagues who were speaking before. The word "mean" comes from the President of the United States himself, who said that the legislation that passed out of the House, looking back on it, was "mean." Now, all of that was in order to say he likes the Senate version instead, but we think that the Senate version is even meaner than the bill that the President has already described as "mean" that came of the House.

So to describe more of the specific terms of this legislation and why it is a threat to our public health, why it is a threat to the basic values of solidarity and justice and community that defines us as Americans, we have invited a number of our colleagues to come up and participate, beginning with the Congresswoman from Seattle, Washington, PRAMILA JAYAPAL, who used to co-chair the Progressive Caucus hour with me.

She has now been replaced by someone because she is moving on to an even bigger assignment right now, but please welcome a great Congresswoman, PRAMILA JAYAPAL, from Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL).

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, Representative RASKIN.

Mr. Speaker, it is great to have you presiding over the Chamber as well. It is all of our new Members here, and Representative KHANNA from California, who is going to be taking over as co-chair of this Special Order hour for the Progressive Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure that the American people understand exactly what is going on. This is a bill that the Senate has been negotiating in private. It has been 13 men discussing healthcare for all Americans across this country in a secret room. That is really what has been happening.

Today we saw a draft of this bill, and the prevailing wisdom, when the bill passed the House, was that the Senate would completely revamp the bill. But according to The New York Times, it said: The Senate bill "once promised as a top-to-bottom revamp of the health bill passed by the House . . . instead maintains its structure, with modest adjustments."

It is the same bill. It is the same bill. And in fact, in some ways, it is a little bit worse because the cuts to Medicaid, while they don't take effect as quickly and they are more gradual, they are actually deeper than the House cuts to Medicaid.

There are other things in the bill that have been done, really, in part, to affect how the American people see the bill but don't change the basic provisions of this bill.

Part of the reason they delayed the cuts to Medicaid is so that they hope that they can get a better CBO score, Congressional Budget Office score, which the American people should know the last time around, the second time around after the first time the bill was about to come to the floor and then it got pulled from the floor because there weren't enough votes in the House, the second time when it did pass, it passed without a CBO score. It was not scored.

The reason it was not scored was because there was a belief that that very narrow passage in the House would not happen if Republicans and Democrats found out that the bill, as "revised," was actually just as bad.

So the bill that passed the House still took away health insurance from 23 million Americans. This is where we are today: a bill that has been crafted in secret but is essentially the same bill.

I have received more than 9,000 calls and letters from constituents who have been very clear that Congress needs to

do all it can to protect our seniors, to expand Medicaid, and to defend the gains that have been made over the last 7 years.

And you know what is really ironic about this whole situation is that, if you think about some of the things that Republicans said about the Affordable Care Act when it was being passed—here is a quote.

In 2010, Speaker PAUL RYAN said: "After months of twisting arms, Democratic leaders convinced enough members of their own party to defy the will of the American people and support the Senate health bill which was crafted in secret, behind closed doors."

Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL said: "When it comes to solving problems, Americans want us to listen first, and then, if necessary, offer targeted, step-by-step solutions. Above all, they're tired of a process that shuts them out. They're tired of giant bills negotiated in secret, then jammed through on a party-line vote in the middle of the night."

That is what Speaker RYAN said and Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL said when the Affordable Care Act was being debated.

But here is the thing: When the Affordable Care Act was being debated, Democrats actually threw open the doors in Congress. They held over 100 Senate hearings. I wasn't here. This is based on actual reports and documents and files from Congress. There were over 100 Senate hearings, 25 consecutive days of consideration, and 161 amendments from Republicans. Many of those amendments were accepted into the bill.

This is a completely different process. We didn't have a single hearing on this bill. The bill came to the House floor, and there was some debate, but it certainly wasn't 100 hearings. It wasn't 25 days of consideration. There weren't 161 amendments. There weren't any amendments that were accepted from Democrats because there was no amendment process.

And now, in the Senate, we are going through the same process where a bill that is about the healthcare of hundreds of millions of Americans across this country is about to come to the floor, and they are not going to accept any amendments, certainly not from the Democratic side. Maybe they will take a few amendments from the Republicans before it comes to the floor. I don't know. We will have to see. But there is no debate on this.

How can we talk about the process of democracy and even of civility and the ability to work together if we didn't offer the other side a chance to weigh in?

This bill will take away health insurance from millions of people, and it will make it less affordable for those who still have insurance because it is not very different from the House bill, and we already know that that is what the House bill does.

It would raise out-of-pocket costs for middle class families with higher

deductibles and cost sharing. It would essentially defund Planned Parenthood by blocking people with Medicaid coverage from accessing preventive care at Planned Parenthood health centers for birth control, cancer screenings, and STD treatment and testing. And it would cut the essential health benefits protections.

Now, what are the essential health benefits protections? We talk about that phrase, but a lot of Americans don't know exactly what that means. So here is what it means.

It means that if you buy insurance, then you can be assured that that insurance is going to cover certain things. It will cover, for example, hospitalization. It will cover if you get cancer. It will cover some of your treatments that you need for cancer, certain things that are included in that. Mental healthcare is part of that essential health benefits coverage.

That is what it means. Otherwise, an insurance company can sell you something, and it can even say we cover, you know, X, Y, and Z, but when you get to the hospital because you are sick, you will find out that it doesn't actually cover hospitalization.

So this was an attempt to say, there is sort of an essential understanding, an essential set of things that would be covered. We will guarantee you that they will be covered if you buy insurance.

Now, I want to talk about Medicaid for a second, because this is one of the biggest travesties of the bill that is being proposed by the Republicans in the Senate.

This bill would literally decimate Medicaid. And between the Medicaid cut of over \$800 billion in the healthcare bill in the Senate and the budget cut that is proposed of over \$600 billion, let me be clear that we are talking about almost a \$1.5 trillion cut to Medicaid through these two mechanisms.

I want to talk about what Medicaid is because a lot of people might think that Medicaid just covers poor folks, which, frankly, I think we should cover poor folks. Let's be clear about that. But I want to tell you what Medicaid actually covers.

It covers half of all the births in the United States. It covers insurance for one in five Americans. It covers treatment for 220,000 recovering people with drug disorders, including those who suffer from opioid abuse. It covers 1.6 million patients, mostly women, who get cancer screenings, and STD testing. It covers 64 percent of all nursing home residents. It covers 30 percent of all adults with disabilities. It covers 39 percent of all kids in this country and 60 percent of kids with disabilities.

So if you cut half of Medicaid, which is what a \$1.5 trillion cut to Medicaid would include—it would be half of what we spend on Medicaid today—a program that covers 74 million Americans across this country, 38 million Americans would lose their coverage.

No wonder, as Mr. RASKIN said, this healthcare bill has had such low approval ratings in the House, and now it is the same bill in the Senate.

Americans understand that whether you live in blue America or red America, whether you live in rural America or urban America, whether you are a man or a woman or a child, whether you are young or old, one of the great things about this country is that we are a country that believes in trying to provide for people when they get sick.

Now, we have been trying to do that for a long time, and until the Obama administration and the Congress passed the Affordable Care Act, we weren't doing that. But in Washington State, my home State, when we passed the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid expansion allowed us to cover an additional 600,000 people across our State. We cut the uninsured rate in half, and we created over 22,000 jobs across the State, including in rural areas.

So what we need to do now is to stop this bill from moving forward because it would be bad for the American people. It is that simple. It is going to kick Grandma out of her nursing home. It is going to stop a kid with asthma from getting an inhaler. It is going to put a premium on being an elder American. If you are an older American, you are going to pay four to five times as much as anybody else. Why? You just have to ask why.

So who benefits from this bill? This bill is a transfer of wealth from middle class Americans to the wealthiest Americans, corporations in this country. So this is about tax cuts for the richest. Sheldon Adelson, who is a Republican donor, casino magnate, he will get, if the Senate bill passes, he will get a \$44 million tax cut in 2017 alone.

How are they paying for that? By cutting Medicaid, taking away protections for preexisting conditions, for seniors, for average Americans.

Mr. Speaker, that is just not right. It is not right if you are a Democrat. It is not right if you are a Republican. It is not right if you are an Independent. It is just not right.

And, yes, the President is correct on this point: It is a mean bill. It is mean; it is cruel; it is unjust. And I hope we defeat it.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

□ 1745

Mr. RASKIN. I thank the gentleman, Ms. JAYAPAL.

We have next with us Congressman RO KHANNA who is from California. He is an economist, and he is a lawyer. He has taught economics at Stanford, and he has taught law at Santa Clara. He was a Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Commerce Department under President Obama. He is a well-known author who has written a very good book about manufacturing and economic competitiveness in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA) who is

going to be taking over for Congresswoman JAYAPAL as my co-convenor of this Special Order hour from here on in.

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman RASKIN. It is a real honor to be able to co-chair this Special Order hour with the gentleman. The gentleman is one of the most brilliant Members of our body on constitutional issues and constitutional law, really understanding our role in Congress as a check on the executive branch, and I look forward to working with the gentleman. I appreciate Liz Bartolomeo's and my staff's help in organizing this.

Mr. Speaker, I want to echo what Congresswoman JAYAPAL said about this bill and the impact it is going to have on middle class families and on jobs, because here is one of the things that Congresswoman JAYAPAL said that folks don't understand: this bill is going to affect almost every family that has someone that goes for eldercare, to a nursing home.

The average cost at a nursing home is about \$80,000 a year. Most families can't afford that. Most middle class—most upper middle class families can't afford that.

So what do they do when their savings run out?

Medicare, by the way, doesn't cover nursing home costs. They rely on Medicaid.

What this bill does, in a shocking way, is say: we are going to cut Medicaid funding. Of course, we are going to conveniently cut it starting 7 years from now, coincidentally, after everyone has faced reelection, because we don't want people to know that we are going to cut these programs that they rely on. We are going to start these cuts 7 years from now, and we are going to make sure that people no longer have access to funding to be able to go for eldercare.

Now, here is what is so problematic about this from an economic perspective. One of the biggest job creators, according to McKinsey and according to every economic study, is in healthcare, is for eldercare. Medicaid creates more jobs for working class families and middle class families at a time of globalization and automation than probably any other significant government program.

So not only are we hurting middle class families and the elderly, we are eliminating the very jobs that we ought to be creating at a time of automation. We are eliminating jobs of people who are going to take care of folks who are sick or folks who are elderly, service jobs, jobs that should be paying more.

At the same time, we are coupling this with drastic cuts in a budget for Alzheimer's research and for research on diseases that are affecting middle class families.

Congressman RASKIN said what the bill's motivation is. It is to really save money for tax cuts for the well-off—not for the well-off talking about people

making 70 grand or 80 grand or \$100,000. Those are folks who are going to need Medicaid. We are talking about tax cuts for people who are making over \$1 million, over \$1.5 million.

Now, let's put aside the President that he said it is mean. Let's just see what is their philosophy. Give him the benefit of the doubt. Why do they want to do this? Because they think that giving these tax cuts to these multi-millionaires is going to somehow fuel more entrepreneurship and more growth.

I ask people who are listening to this: Is that the problem in our country? Is that really the issue, that we think millionaires and corporations aren't making enough profits? Is that really what is the issue about why we aren't creating jobs? Or is the issue that, for half this country, their wages have stagnated for the past 30 years, and that people can't afford a decent place to live, college, and healthcare, and they are having trouble getting jobs?

If you believe that the problem is we need more corporate profits, we need more speculation on Wall Street, and we need more economic breaks for the investor class, that that is really what America needs at this moment in our economy, then I suppose you could look for the Republican bill. But if you believe that the real problem in our economy is that the middle class and the working class are getting squeezed by the economic concentration of power, by the excess on Wall Street, that ordinary folks are having a hard time getting jobs, and that what we really need to be doing is providing more jobs in healthcare for people so that they can have a decent middle class life, that what we really need to be doing is providing middle class families with basic economic security so they know that when they retire they will have some dignity for them, or their spouses when they fall sick, that they know that they won't be bankrupt because they have to bear the cost of the care for their parents; if you believe that we ought to be on the side of middle class families—working class families—then it is such a no-brainer that you would oppose this bill.

I will just end with this: People often say, Well, what can we do?

Well, I think you can speak out. I believe you should speak out and hold every Member in this body and in the Senate accountable because this bill is about our fundamental values. It is about what type of country we want to be. Are we going to be a country that gives power to the elite and believes that that is the ticket to American success? Or are we going to bet on middle class families and working class families like we have throughout our history?

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman RASKIN, and I am looking forward to co-chairing this with the gentleman.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman KHANNA for his very wise and insightful words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman RASKIN for yielding to me.

I am very proud and excited to be here because we have so much at stake right now.

I wanted to point to this incredible photo that we blew up from today's news. Fifty people with disabilities were forcibly removed and arrested outside Senator MITCH MCCONNELL's office today. They were there to protest what could happen to them and the 10 million Americans who rely on Medicaid to live a life—often still struggling, but a life with more dignity because they have Medicaid.

I want to take some time to thank them for so passionately but peacefully resisting against the cruel Republican bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act. People were pulled out of their wheelchairs and ejected at the order, I presume, of the leader of the Senate to make space in front of his office. They were exercising their freedom to protest for themselves and for others in their situation. As I said, 10 million Americans with disabilities rely on Medicaid.

The Affordable Care Act incentivizes States to offer home and community-based care under Medicaid. The Republican bill would undo that. It would make it very likely that States would eliminate that home care and community-based care.

Now, I have worked for years with people with disabilities, and I know some of them have struggled to get out of nursing homes and to be able to live in the community which, by the way, is actually less expensive than taxpayers paying for people to be in nursing homes. This has been a tremendous battle for the disability community to be able to live independently.

That ability is threatened. By the way, even the amount of money that would go to nursing homes would be cut dramatically, or could be.

Right now, one-half of the cost of nursing homes and home care and community-based care is paid for by Medicaid, and \$800 billion was cut out of the House bill. I hear that the Senate bill is even worse. So this monstrosity of a bill would do a countless amount of harm to millions and millions of Americans. Just about everyone will be affected.

So, today, I want to focus on the damage it would do to two groups in particular: Americans age 50 to 64 and people with disabilities whom we saw represented by the courageous protesters today outside Senator MITCH MCCONNELL's office.

This bill would impose a crippling age tax on people 50 to 64 years old, which means that they will be either unable to afford insurance altogether or be forced to pay thousands more for it every year.

This is the same age tax that was in the House's version of the bill. The

nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office gave this example: It estimated that a 64-year-old who makes \$26,000 a year could see his or her premiums rise by over 800 percent. That would be in the area of about \$14,000 a year. How does that work? There is simply no way she would be able to keep her insurance.

The Senate bill would allow individual States to undermine the essential health benefits package that is in the Affordable Care Act that ensures older Americans have insurance that actually covers the services they need. Without those essential benefits, insurance companies could end coverage for prescription drugs, for cancer care, for emergency care, and much more.

On top of those attacks on Americans age 50 and older, the bill also guts—as I pointed out—the Medicaid program which is absolutely essential for people with disabilities, both young and old.

Medicaid pays for nearly half of all long-term care in our country, and that includes, as I said, not just care provided by nursing homes, but home and community-based and personal care services that allow people with disabilities to live independently, sometimes to even travel to Washington, D.C.

We fought really hard to provide those home and community-based services. We expanded access to them in the Affordable Care Act. This mean bill not only undoes the progress, it moves us backwards by slashing Medicaid funds and turning it into a capped program, capping the amount of money that may go to every person. The Senate bill is even meaner than the House. Caps would rise more slowly and cause even more damage.

So it is no wonder that the AARP, the Alliance for Retired Americans, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, the National Council on Independent Living, the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, the American Medical Association, and the American Nurses Association, really all the providers of healthcare, say no to this disastrous bill.

It spells disaster for anyone who depends on Medicaid. That includes pregnant women, infants, children, people with disabilities, and adults—including low-income seniors. The bill is also devastating for women's health. It defunds Planned Parenthood. Let's remember Planned Parenthood is often the only clinic within driving distance of people in rural areas.

□ 1800

Sometimes it is the only clinic available in medically underserved areas for things like cancer screening, primary care, birth control, testing men and women for HIV/AIDS, et cetera. It defunds Planned Parenthood and targets private insurance plans that would cover abortions.

So we really have to ask ourselves: Who benefits from this bill? Who wins if TrumpCare were to pass?

Well, there is an answer. The ultrawealthy individuals who get a massive tax break from this bill—that is why they want to cut all those hundreds of billions of dollars out of Medicaid—they are the winners.

Insurance, prescription drug, and medical device companies also get a huge tax break in this so-called healthcare bill.

Yes, they call it a healthcare bill that benefits only the healthy and the wealthy. I know which side and whose side I am on.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to pause from our analysis of the specific terms of the bill that was unveiled today to ask the question: What is the value that is really at stake in healthcare policy in the United States?

When we were debating on the House side, I heard a colleague get up on the floor and say something to the effect of: Under ObamaCare, under the Affordable Care Act, healthy people are having to pay insurance to take care of sick people.

It took a second for that to register with me. Then I turned to the person I was sitting next to and said: Yes, that is what insurance is. The whole point of insurance is that all of us pay money in, knowing that people get sick in the course of life.

We hope that we are not going to be one of them. We hope we won't get injured. We hope we won't get sick or ill or come down with a terrible disease, God forbid, but we know it can happen, so we all pay in. When it does happen to some people, that is what insurance is for. So the value there is one of solidarity among everybody together.

In the richest country on Earth, at its richest moment in our history, there is another value at stake here, which is the value of justice.

Forgive me, but I want to speak personally for a moment here, because I have what we call a preexisting condition. So this issue of preexisting condition coverage is important to me and my family. I understand it is important for tens of millions of families across the country.

If you are having a great day, and you have got not one, but two jobs you love—I have been a professor of constitutional law at American University for 27 years now, and I was serving in the Maryland Senate. But if you wake up and it is a beautiful day and you have got two jobs you love, a family you love, great kids, and constituents you are committed to, and a doctor tells you that you have got stage III colon cancer, that is what I immediately took to be a misfortune.

It is a terrible misfortune, but we have to remember that it happens to people across the country, all over the world, every single day, where people get a diagnosis of colon cancer, lung cancer, Alzheimer's disease, autism, bipolar disorder, depression, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, you name it. It is a misfortune because it can happen to anybody.

But if you are told that you have colon cancer, for example, and if you can't get health insurance because, for example, before marriage equality, if you loved the wrong person and you couldn't get health insurance through your spouse, or if you can't get health insurance because you lost your job and you are without health insurance, or if you are too poor to afford it, that is not just a misfortune. That is an injustice.

We can do something about that. Life is hard enough with all of the illness, sickness, accidents, and injuries that people receive without government compounding all of the misfortune with injustice. Life is hard enough without government doing the wrong thing. So the Affordable Care Act added more than 20 million Americans to the rolls of people who have health insurance.

The bill that came out of the Senate today wants to strip health insurance from tens of millions of Americans and jack up everybody's premiums and make healthcare more inaccessible for people. They want to compound the normal difficulties and misfortunes of life with the injustice of distributing healthcare in a radically unequal and unjust way.

We can't go back. It is too late for that. The great Tom Payne once said that it is impossible to make people un-think their thoughts or un-know their knowledge. We have come too far as a country to turn the clock back.

I know there are people on the Senate side, like RAND PAUL, who I saw on TV speaking about this, who think we should get rid of all forms of public attempts to get people health insurance. RAND PAUL takes a perfectly principled position. He says the government shouldn't be involved at all. I don't know how he feels about Medicare or Medicaid. He certainly hates the Affordable Care Act. He just wants to outright repeal it, which is what the GOP said they would do.

So he is going to vote against that bill because it keeps the remnants of the system that we voted in with the Affordable Care Act. I understand that. I understand his position. I disagree with it completely because I think, as Americans, we have got to have solidarity with each other and we have got to take care of each other through insurance because the misfortunes of life can happen to anybody. So we have got to stand together.

He says that is not part of the social contract. Okay. That is fine. I get it. But what I don't understand is people are saying: Well, we said we would just get rid of it, but we will get rid of some parts of it. We will throw millions of people off their health insurance. We will make insurance more expensive for everybody. We will cut the heart out of Medicaid.

Why? What is the public policy that is being advanced here?

It doesn't make any sense. Countries all over the world have arrived at the

point of universal single-payer plans, like in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada. The countries that can afford it overwhelmingly have said: healthcare for everyone.

That is why I am a proud cosponsor of a bill, which is proudly cosponsored by a majority of the people in the Democratic Caucus. It is Congressman CONYERS' Medicare for All bill.

I think that is where we need to go. I am convinced we are going to get there sooner rather than later. Winston Churchill once said: You can always count on the Americans to do the right thing, once they have tried everything else first.

We have tried some other stuff in between, but we are on the way to taking public responsibility for the healthcare of our people. My healthcare is connected to your healthcare because my health is connected to your health. We want the families whose kids go to school with our kids to be in a relationship with a primary care doctor. We want them to get their shots. We don't want them coming to school sick.

Public health dictates that everybody be in the system. A lot of young men, for example, think that they are too tough to go see doctors. That becomes a danger for everybody else. We need everybody to be in a relationship with a doctor. We owe that not just to ourselves and our families, but we owe it to everybody.

Everybody in the system, everybody covered. That is where America needs to go. But understand that what is coming out of the Senate has nothing to do with that. The Senate plan is all about rolling back the progress that we made under the Affordable Care Act, like the ban on throwing people off of healthcare because they have a pre-existing condition or denying people insurance in the first place because they have a preexisting condition.

The fact that someone has got a pre-existing health condition is the reason that they need health insurance. It is not a reason to deny them health insurance. What they are doing is perfectly backwards.

The Affordable Care Act also said that young people could stay on their family's plan until age 26. Thank God we have had that provision. Even the GOP doesn't want to mess with that, at this point. We got millions of people into relationships with doctors. We could show you dozens of emails and letters and calls that we are getting from people who say: The Affordable Care Act saved my life. I would have had no access to healthcare without it.

The whole idea of turning the clock back and moving in the opposite direction is completely antithetical to the direction of American history. We are moving forward. We want universal coverage for everybody.

By the way, we spend more on healthcare than most of those countries that have single-payer healthcare. I think we may spend more than anybody else on Earth on healthcare, but

we don't get the best results because we leave so many people out and we are spending lots of money on insurance. The last I looked, it was around 30 or 31 cents on the dollar we are spending on the insurance companies, on bureaucracy and red tape, instead of getting people healthcare.

That is the direction we need to be moving in, not dismantling and saving the healthcare protections that we have in place right now.

I want to close with some thoughts just about the process that is going on. Back when the Affordable Care Act was being debated, my dear friends across the aisle complained about how fast things were going and how they thought the legislation was being rushed.

I don't want to embarrass anybody by calling out specific statements made, but we have got voluminous statements made by people on the other side of the aisle saying: This is too fast. You're trying to sneak it through. You're trying to ram it down the throats of the American people. All of this is happening too fast.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the debate over the Affordable Care Act spanned more than 12 months. It took more than a year. The Senate bill was unveiled today with no hearings, no witnesses, no professional testimony, no opportunity for the public to testify for nurses or doctors or patient advocates or any of the groups that are interested; none of them.

In the Affordable Care Act, there were 79 hearings that I was able to find in Congress. That is 79 hearings. Not zero hearings, which is what they are proposing to do now. There were 79 hearings. There were 181 witnesses, both expert witnesses and ordinary citizens, who came to testify before Congress, in public. So far, there has been zero testimony on what the ramifications and consequences are of the bill that was unveiled in the Senate today.

We had multiple Congressional Budget Office scores that analyzed the costs and the impact of different proposals that were part of the ACA. By contrast, the House was forced to vote on the GOP healthcare repeal plan in this body with no CBO score at all, no estimate on how much the bill would cost the taxpayers, no estimate on how many Americans precisely would lose their health insurance. We have learned later the CBO estimate of \$23 million, but that was after we voted on it.

So the people who were saying that the debate moved too fast back then—a year of debate, with dozens of hearings and witnesses, and so on—now seem perfectly content with a process where a bill comes out on Thursday, and then they are going to vote on it next Thursday with no hearings, very little public debate, no opportunity for people to come and testify, and no real opportunity for the public to process what is going on.

What is the urgency?

If it is such a great bill, then we should be out trumpeting it and advertising it. And everybody should have at least one townhall meeting back in their congressional districts to explain how they feel about it so that everybody's constituents can ask us about the bill.

Is it going to improve America's healthcare? Is it going to improve the health and well-being of the people, or reduce the health and well-being of the American people? Is it going to drive our premiums, copays, and deductibles even more?

Those are questions we should have to face with our constituents.

Regardless of what your political party or ideology is, everybody should tell their Member of Congress: At the very least, let's have some public discussion about it. Let's have the opportunity for townhall meetings across the country before we completely rewrite the healthcare plan for the American people.

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I urge my colleagues to slow down, take a step back, and work across the aisle for the best possible results. There are things we can do together to help.

For example, I heard the President of the United States come to our body and make a speech in which he said that prescription drug prices were out of control and we needed to give government the authority to negotiate lower drug prices. I agree 100 percent with the President of the United States about that.

There has been no action on that by my friends across the aisle in the House or in the Senate, and I beseech the President of the United States, before you advance 1 centimeter further on this extremely controversial bill, which I understand four Republican Senators have already announced their opposition to today, before you go any further on this, let's get to something we can agree on for once. Let's find the common ground. And the common ground has got to be prescription drug prices are out of control for Americans.

Let us give the government the authority to negotiate for lower drug prices in Medicare the way that we have got it for VA benefits or for Medicaid prescription drugs. We have got that authority, but there was a special interest provision slipped into Medicare part D, and the government doesn't have that authority. That is authority we should have.

Mr. President, we agree with you about that. Why don't you put a pause on trying to demolish the ACA and Medicaid, and let's see if we can get some prescription drug legislation that will bring prices down for all Americans. We are ready to work with you on that.

There are reports that there is some effort to come up with a phony plan on prescription drug prices that wouldn't

actually give the government the authority to negotiate lower prices. I hope that is not true, but let's have a real plan to bring people's prescription drug prices down.

There are things we can do together across the aisle. In fact, the President of the United States said repeatedly during the campaign that his plan would be a magnificent plan that would cover everybody. He said everybody would be part of it. And a lot of people, including me, took him to be invoking the single-payer universal health plans that work all over the world, that work in Canada and that work throughout Europe and so on.

Mr. Speaker, let me ask, would it be possible for us to get together with the President in order to come up with a single-payer plan, the kind that he invoked over the course of the campaign? Let's seize upon the new spirit of civility and community in this body and in Congress to come up with plans that bring us together, that don't drive us apart.

The plan that passed out of the House of Representatives is standing at 9 percent in the public opinion polls. I can't imagine that the Senate plan is going to be any more popular. If this was a mean plan, as the President said, the Senate plan looks meaner, or at least as mean as the House plan is.

But even if you doubled it and said 18 percent of the people would support it, that is still a tiny fraction of the American people. The overwhelming majority of Americans are not sold on this idea of turning the clock back and throwing millions of people off their health insurance plans.

Let us work together, and we can do it. In the societies that have universal health coverage, it is accepted now by people across the political spectrum. If you go to France or the United Kingdom or Canada, the conservatives are not agitating to throw people off of healthcare. The conservatives support a universal payer plan. And there are lots of conservative arguments for it.

For example, let's liberate our businesses, especially our small businesses, from the burden of having to figure out people's healthcare. Let's take that completely off of the business sector, and let's make that a public responsibility the way they have done in so many countries around the world. Wouldn't that be good for business? And doesn't it enhance feelings of community, solidarity, and patriotism for everybody to be covered by the healthcare system of the country that they live in?

We can do this as Americans. We are the wealthiest country that has ever existed. This is the wealthiest moment in our history. Let's come up with a real plan for health coverage that eliminates as much insurance bureaucracy and waste as possible and gets people the healthcare coverage that they need.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to have this Special

Order hour on behalf of the Progressive Caucus, which has advanced the Medicare for All plan, and I encourage everybody to check it out.

But in any event, we are not retreating 1 inch from defending the Affordable Care Act and the progress that has been made under it, and I hope that we will have maximum transparency and scrutiny of what came out of the Senate today, because we think that the only possible outcome is that bill will go down; then we can come together, find the commonsense solutions, find the common ground, and make progress for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. GABBARD (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1238. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Health Affairs responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security related to food, agriculture, and veterinary defense against terrorism, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, June 23, 2017, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1764. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Salable Quantities and Allotment Percentages for the 2017-2018 Marketing Year [Doc. No.: AMS-SC-16-0107; SC17-985-1 FR] received June 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1765. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's affirmation of the interim rule as final rule — Changes to Reporting and Notification Requirements and Other Clarifying Changes for Imported Fruits, Vegetables, and Specialty Crops [Doc. No.: AMS-SC-16-0083; SC16-944/980/999-1 FIR] received June 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121,

Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1766. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service; Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Beef Promotion and Research Rules and Regulations [No.: AMS-LPS-15-0084] received June 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1767. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Importation of Fresh Pitahaya Fruit From Ecuador Into the Continental United States [Docket No.: APHIS-2015-0004] (RIN: 0579-AE12) received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1768. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General John E. Wissler, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1769. A letter from the Chief Operating Officer, Armed Forces Retirement Home, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation, titled "Revision of Armed Forces Retirement Home Leasing Authority"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1770. A letter from the Chief Operating Officer, Armed Forces Retirement Home, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation, titled "Revision of Armed Forces Retirement Home Leasing Authority"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1771. A letter from the Chief Operating Officer, Armed Forces Retirement Home, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation, titled "Revision of Armed Forces Retirement Home Leasing Authority"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1772. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Credit Union Occupancy, Planning, and Disposal of Acquired and Abandoned Premises; Incidental Powers (RIN: 3133-AE54) received June 19, 2017, 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.

1773. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants From the Portland Cement Manufacturing Industry: Alternative Monitoring Method [EPA-HQ-OAR-2016-0442; FRL-9964-14-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AT57) received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1774. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; VT; Infrastructure State Implementation Plan Requirements [EPA-R01-OAR-2014-0604; FRL-9963-88-Region 1] received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1775. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Amendment to Standards and Practices for All Appropriate

Inquiries Under CERCLA [EPA-HQ-OLEM-2016-0786; FRL-9958-47-OLEM] received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1776. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Limited Approval and Limited Disapproval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; California; Mendocino County Air Quality Management District; Stationary Source Permits [EPA-R09-OAR-2016-0726; FRL-9960-08-Region 9] received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1777. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; CFR Update [EPA-R05-OAR-2016-0760; FRL-9963-70-Region 5] received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1778. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District and the Town of Mammoth Lakes [EPA-R09-OAR-2016-0409; FRL-9955-67-Region 9] received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1779. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Western Mojave Desert, Rate of Progress Demonstration [EPA-R09-OAR-2017-0028; FRL-9963-86-Region 9] received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1780. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's technical amendment — Correction to Incorporations by Reference [EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0292; FRL-9963-67-OAR] received June 20, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1781. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report covering the period from February 7, 2017 to April 8, 2017 on the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1541 note; Public Law 107-243, Sec. 4(a); (116 Stat. 1501) and 50 U.S.C. 1541 note; Public Law 102-1, Sec. 3 (as amended by Public Law 106-113, Sec. 1000(a)(7)); (113 Stat. 1501A-422); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1782. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-044, pursuant to Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(A); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 104-164, Sec. 141(c)); (110 Stat. 1431); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1783. A letter from the Federal Co-Chair, Appalachian Regional Commission, transmitting the Commission's semiannual report from the Office of Inspector General for the period October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017, pursuant to the Inspector General Act of

1978, as amended, including statistical tables on reports and actions as required by the Inspector General Act Amendments of 1988; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1784. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a notification of a federal 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.

1785. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Mill Creek, Hampton, VA [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0075] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1786. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Chincoteague Channel, Chincoteague Islands, VA [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0248] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

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. DENT. Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 2998. A bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-188). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. ESTY of Connecticut (for herself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. TONKO, Mr. HIMES, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. CICILLINE, and Ms. MATSUI):

H.R. 2995. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for the issuance of Green Bonds and to establish the United States Green Bank, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H.R. 2996. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to modify the work requirement applicable to able-bodied adults without dependents; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. SHUSTER (for himself, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri,

Mr. MITCHELL, Ms. HANABUSA, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 2997. A bill to transfer operation of air traffic services currently provided by the Federal Aviation Administration to a separate not-for-profit corporate entity, to reauthorize programs of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DENT:

H.R. 2998. A bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H.R. 2999. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to limit copayment, coinsurance, or other cost-sharing requirements applicable to prescription drugs in a specialty drug tier to the dollar amount (or its equivalent) of such requirements applicable to prescription drugs in a non-preferred brand drug tier, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. COHEN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. BOST):

H.R. 3000. A bill to terminate the designation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan as a major non-NATO ally, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL (for himself, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. MEADOWS, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. POCAN, Mr. ROHRBACHER, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 3001. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to establish a Multimodal Freight Funding Formula Program and a National Freight Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program to improve the efficiency and reliability of freight movement in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. CHABOT:

H.R. 3002. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BIGGS, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 3003. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to modify provisions relating to assistance by States, and political subdivision of States, in the enforcement of Federal immigration laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 3004. A bill to amend section 276 of the Immigration and Nationality Act relating to reentry of removed aliens; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. O'HALLERAN):

H.R. 3005. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a bison management plan for Grand Canyon National Park, and

for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 3006. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to make loan guarantees and grants to finance certain improvements to school lunch facilities, to train school food service personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California (for herself and Mr. CAPUANO):

H.R. 3007. A bill to apply the provisions of title 5, United States Code, related to veterans' preference to the Federal Aviation Administration personnel management system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CONAWAY (for himself, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CARTER of Texas, and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 3008. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the George W. Bush Childhood Home, located at 1412 West Ohio Avenue, Midland, Texas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 3009. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the volume cap for private activity bonds shall not apply to bonds for facilities for furnishing of water and sewage facilities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana):

H.R. 3010. A bill to provide for the identification and documentation of best practices for cyber hygiene by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 3011. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for forgiveness of certain overpayments of retired pay paid to deceased retired members of the Armed Forces following their death; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 3012. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to increase the authorization of appropriations for youth workforce investment activities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 3013. A bill to provide funding for Violent Crime Reduction Partnerships in the most violent communities in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3014. A bill to require servicers to establish a deed-for-lease program under which eligible mortgagors may remain in their homes as renters; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3015. A bill to amend the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 to provide protections to borrowers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3016. A bill to allow homeowners facing foreclosure to avoid deficiency judgments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. TONKO):

H.R. 3017. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to reauthorize and improve the brownfields program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. HURD, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BOST, Mr. BABIN, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. WALZ, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HILL, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. KATKO, and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 3018. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that veterans may attend pre-apprenticeship programs using certain educational assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MEADOWS (for himself, Mr. BEYER, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 3019. A bill to require executive agencies to avoid using lowest price technically acceptable source selection criteria in certain circumstances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. O'ROURKE (for himself and Mr. PEARCE):

H.R. 3020. A bill to increase transparency, accountability, and community engagement within U.S. Customs and Border Protection, provide independent oversight of border security activities, improve training for U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents and officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, 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 Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 3021. A bill to amend the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 to stop a scheduled increase in the minimum wage applicable to American Samoa and to provide that any future increases in such minimum wage shall be determined by the Secretary of Labor; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 3022. A bill to prohibit the awarding of discretionary grants to institutions of higher education that will use the grant award for indirect costs; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 3023. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay reporting fees to educational institutions; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.R. 3024. A bill to require certain standards and enforcement provisions to prevent child abuse and neglect in residential programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. GALLEGOS, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. COOPER, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. MCEACHIN, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. O'HALLERAN, and Mr. SUOZZI):

H.R. 3025. A bill to strengthen security and deterrence in Europe and to hold the Russian Federation accountable for violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SWALWELL of California (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 3026. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for a percentage of student loan forgiveness for public service employment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. TROTT:

H.R. 3027. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve recordkeeping and information sharing with States regarding military training performed by members of the Armed Forces and other skills developed through military service that translate to civilian occupations to expedite the transition of veterans to post-military employment; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. TROTT:

H.R. 3028. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide training for school certifying officials; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. VEASEY:

H.R. 3029. A bill to prevent Federal funds from being used to carry out Executive Order 13799; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mrs. WAGNER (for herself, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MESSER, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. KEATING, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. EVANS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CRIST, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. ROSEN, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 3030. A bill to help prevent acts of genocide and other atrocity crimes, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States Government capacities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to such crises; 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. DAVIDSON (for himself, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. BROOKS of Alabama):

H.J. Res. 106. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the

United States to provide that Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the number of persons in each State who are citizens of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRIST (for himself, Mr. JOHN-SON of Louisiana, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. BACON, Ms. BARRAGAN, Mr. BERGMAN, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. CORREA, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FASO, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MAST, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. MITCHELL, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. SOTO, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. TAYLOR, Ms. TENNEY, and Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota):

H. Res. 400. A resolution supporting the designation of a National Day of Civility; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HASTINGS (for himself and Mr. BUCHANAN):

H. Res. 401. A resolution urging China, South Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, India, and all nations to outlaw the dog and cat meat trade and to enforce existing laws against the trade; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Ms. FUDGE, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois):

H. Res. 402. A resolution supporting the designation of July 2017 as Uterine Fibroids Awareness Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia:

H. Res. 403. A resolution supporting the designation of March 2018 as Endometriosis Awareness Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

70. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the states to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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 Ms. ESTY of Connecticut:

H.R. 2995.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H.R. 2996.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. SHUSTER:

H.R. 2997.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3 and Clause 18.

By Mr. DENT:

H.R. 2998.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law. . . ." In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States. . . ." Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 2999.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 1: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 3000.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 14.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H.R. 3001.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Spending Authorization

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform through the United States.

Necessary and Proper Regulations to Effectuate Powers

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

The Congress shall have Power * * * To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 3002.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. GOODLATTE:

H.R. 3003.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 4 of Section 8 of Article I—The Congress shall have the Power to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States.

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I—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. GOODLATTE:

H.R. 3004.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 4 of Section 8 of Article I—The Congress shall have the Power to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States.

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 3005.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (The Property Clause). The Property Clause states that Congress has the power to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States. The Supreme Court in *Fort Leavenworth Railroad v. Lowe* (1885), reasoned that the authority of the federal government over federal lands is "necessarily paramount." The Court opinion went on to further reason that state governments also have rights though with regards to certain activities that take place on federal lands within state borders. The Act provides guidelines for controlling populations of bison in Grand Canyon National Park and requires the Secretary to coordinate with the appropriate State Wildlife Management Agency, thus making it constitutionally permissible.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 3006.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 1; and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 3007.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 3008.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 3009.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 3010.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes).

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof).

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 3011.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution, which grants Congress the power to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 3012.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 3013.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3014.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 the United States Constitution: "The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3015.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 the United States Constitution: "The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3016.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 the United States Constitution: "The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 3017.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to enact this legislation to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Ms. MCSALLY:

H.R. 3018.

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; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform through the United States.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 12: To raise and support Armies . . .

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 13: To provide and maintain a navy.

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. MEADOWS:

H.R. 3019.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution provides Congress the power to "to make Rules for the Government".

By Mr. O'ROURKE:

H.R. 3020.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United

States, or in any Department or Office thereof.

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 3021.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 3022.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 3023.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.R. 3024.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 3025.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authorities on which this bill rests are the powers of Congress to: “provide for the common Defence”, “raise and support Armies”, “provide and maintain a Navy” and “make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces” as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SWALWELL of California:

H.R. 3026.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. TROTT:

H.R. 3027.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. TROTT:

H.R. 3028.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8 of the constitution

By Mr. VEASEY:

H.R. 3029.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1—The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 3030.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DAVIDSON:

H.J. Res. 106.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3: “The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.”

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 19: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. WALZ, Mr. SABLON, Mr. GALLEGGO, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. UPTON, Mr. VELA, Mr.

QUIGLEY, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. CORREA, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 95: Mr. VELA.

H.R. 112: Mrs. DEMINGS.

H.R. 203: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 299: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.

H.R. 380: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 392: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 400: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 435: Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 459: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 490: Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. FLORES, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. ARRINGTON.

H.R. 504: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 535: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.

H.R. 548: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.

H.R. 608: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 632: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 676: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 681: Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH and Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 747: Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 792: Mr. MOOLENAAR.

H.R. 795: Ms. WILSON of Florida and Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 799: Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 820: Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. GALLAGHER, and Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 821: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 831: Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 849: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. TROTT, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Mr. COMER.

H.R. 881: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 1035: Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 1045: Mr. RUTHERFORD.

H.R. 1057: Mr. THORNBERRY and Ms. SÁNCHEZ.

H.R. 1094: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. GALLEGGO, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.

H.R. 1098: Mr. CRIST.

H.R. 1116: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 1148: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. KINZINGER.

H.R. 1149: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 1155: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1164: Mr. TROTT, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1200: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 1205: Mrs. TORRES, Mr. KEATING, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1231: Ms. MENG and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 1243: Ms. SÁNCHEZ and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 1284: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1315: Mr. LoBIONDO and Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 1316: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 1317: Mr. NEWHOUSE and Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 1361: Mr. FASO.

H.R. 1374: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 1384: Ms. GABBARD.

H.R. 1422: Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 1434: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 1454: Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 1457: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 1537: Mr. DUNN and Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 1552: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. FLORES, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. RUTHERFORD.

H.R. 1606: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 1626: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia and Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 1648: Mr. HOLDING, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1651: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.

H.R. 1661: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 1664: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 1676: Mr. FASO and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 1686: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 1697: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 1719: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 1729: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 1772: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 1779: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1783: Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico.

H.R. 1810: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 1815: Mr. PETERS, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 1928: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. ESPAILLAT.

H.R. 1953: Mr. RASKIN and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 2040: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 2044: Mr. HECK, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 2077: Mr. MOULTON and Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 2106: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 2121: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 2149: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. POLIQUIN, and Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 2152: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 2155: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2181: Ms. SÁNCHEZ.

H.R. 2198: Mr. HUNTER, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 2215: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 2248: Mr. POLIS, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. RASKIN, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 2261: Mr. CRIST, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. EVANS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. MAST, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. SOTO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 2286: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 2287: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 2315: Mr. OLSON, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 2319: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2341: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2418: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY.

H.R. 2433: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 2478: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 2482: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Ms. TENNEY, and Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 2499: Ms. BASS.

H.R. 2522: Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 2544: Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 2550: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.

H.R. 2578: Ms. NORTON and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 2643: Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 2644: Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 2651: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 2663: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 2669: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 2678: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 2683: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.

H.R. 2690: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 2694: Mr. EVANS.

H.R. 2715: Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 2733: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 2740: Mr. CRIST, Mr. BACON, and Mr. DESANTIS.

H.R. 2762: Mr. KILMER,

H.R. 2788: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 2805: Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas.

H.R. 2822: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
 H.R. 2823: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 2829: Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 2840: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. KHANNA.
 H.R. 2845: Ms. SINEMA.
 H.R. 2856: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 2862: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
 H.R. 2871: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. THORNBERRY.
 H.R. 2879: Ms. TITUS.
 H.R. 2884: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H.R. 2887: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 2890: Mr. MESSER.
 H.R. 2895: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
 H.R. 2901: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 2902: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. LEE, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.
 H.R. 2908: Mr. WALZ, Mr. PANETTA, and Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 2909: Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. COMER, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. LONG, and Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 2910: Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 2917: Mr. KING of Iowa.
 H.R. 2918: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. OLSON.
 H.R. 2919: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
 H.R. 2940: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 2942: Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. PALLONE.
 H.R. 2944: Mr. SERRANO, Mr. PETERS, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
 H.R. 2951: Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr.

LAMALFA, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, and Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.
 H.R. 2956: Mr. GROTHMAN.
 H.R. 2958: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. JAYAPAL.
 H.R. 2970: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 2976: Mr. SOTO.
 H.R. 2978: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. VISCLOSKEY, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
 H.R. 2981: Mr. PETERS.
 H.J. Res. 51: Mr. TROTT, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
 H. Con. Res. 13: Mr. BRADY of Texas, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
 H. Con. Res. 58: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
 H. Con. Res. 62: Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MAST, and Mr. KILMER.
 H. Res. 185: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
 H. Res. 351: Mr. KILMER and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
 H. Res. 359: Mr. CICILLINE and Mr. GROTHMAN.
 H. Res. 390: Mr. WALZ, Mr. CORREA, and Mr. VISCLOSKEY.
 H. Res. 395: Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. KILMER.
 H. Res. 398: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

54. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City Council of Akron, OH, relative to

Resolution No. 184-2017, expressing opposition to the proposed federal budget put forth by President Trump; urging President Trump, members of Congress, and other policy makers in Washington to pass a fiscally responsible budget nation; and declaring an emergency; which was referred to the Committee on the Budget.

55. Also, a petition of the Town of Conway, MA, relative to a Resolution calling upon the Massachusetts Legislature and the United States Congress to implement Carbon Fee and Dividend (or "Rebate"), placing a steadily rising fee on carbon-based fuels, and returning all fees collected, minus administrative costs, to households; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

56. Also, a petition of City Council of Akron, OH, relative to Resolution No. 185-2017, expressing opposition to the United States' recent withdraw from the Paris Agreement on Climate Control (the "Paris Agreement"); offering support for the Paris Agreement and its goal of combating climate change on an international level; and declaring an emergency; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

57. Also, a petition of the City Commission of Miami, FL, relative to Resolution R-17-0208, urging President Donald J. Trump and the members of the United States Congress to grant temporary protective status to Haitians in the United States; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.



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No. 107

Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable DAN SULLIVAN, a Senator from the State of Alaska.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Lord of the Universe, inspire our lawmakers today with the magnetism of Your presence. Give them a longing to know and do Your will, receiving Your guidance and following Your admonition. Lord, provide them with the liberating assurance that all things are possible for those who believe. Go before our Senators to guide, beside them to inspire, above them to bless, behind them to protect, and within them to transform. Fill their minds with Your Spirit and their hearts with Your joy, becoming their Providential Guide in all they think, say, and do.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 22, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable DAN SULLIVAN, a Senator from the State of Alaska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SULLIVAN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 7 years ago, Democrats imposed ObamaCare on our country. They said it would lower costs. It didn't. From 2013 to 2017, premiums have on average doubled in the vast majority of States on the Federal exchange. Next year, ObamaCare premiums will go up across the country once again, potentially by as much as 43 percent in Iowa, 59 percent in Maryland, and even a staggering 80 percent in New Mexico. Does it sound as if ObamaCare is working?

They said it would increase choice. They said it would increase choice, but of course it didn't. This year, 70 percent of American counties have had little or no choice of insurers under ObamaCare. Next year, at least 44 counties are projected to have no choice at all, meaning, yet again, Americans could be thrown off their plans in States like Missouri and Ohio and Wisconsin. Does this sound as if ObamaCare is working?

Now Democrats tell us it would be wrong for the Senate to actually address these problems in a serious way while the law they have defended for 7 years teeters, literally teeters on the edge of total collapse. They were wrong before; they are wrong again now because ObamaCare isn't working. By nearly any measure it has failed, and

no amount of eleventh-hour reality denying or buck-passing by Democrats is going to change the fact that more Americans are going to get hurt unless we do something.

I regret that our Democratic friends made clear early on that they did not want to work with us in a serious bipartisan way to address the ObamaCare status quo, but Republicans believe we have a responsibility to act, and we are—for our constituents, for our States, and for our country.

We have long called for a better way forward, and we have been engaged in intensive talks on how to get there. Through dozens of meetings, open to each and every member of the conference, we have had the opportunity to offer and consider many ideas for confronting the ObamaCare status quo.

We have debated many policy proposals, and we have considered many different viewpoints. In the end, we have found that we share many ideas about what needs to be achieved and how we can achieve it. These shared policy objectives and the solutions to help achieve them are what made up the healthcare discussion draft that we finished talking through this morning.

We agree on the need to free Americans from ObamaCare's mandates, and policies contained in the discussion draft will repeal the individual mandate, so Americans are no longer forced to buy insurance they don't need or can't afford. We are repealing employer mandates, so Americans no longer see their hours and take-home pay cut by employers because of it. We agree on the need to improve the affordability of health insurance, and policies contained in the discussion draft will do that. It will eliminate costly ObamaCare taxes that are passed on to consumers, so we can put downward pressure on premiums; expand tax-free health savings accounts and deploy targeted tax credits, so we can help defray out-of-pocket costs; and shift power from Washington to the States,

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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so they have more flexibility to provide more Americans with the kind of affordable insurance options they actually want.

We agree on the need to stabilize the insurance markets that are collapsing under ObamaCare as well, and policies contained in the discussion draft will implement stabilization policies, so we can bring financial certainty to insurance markets and hope to Americans who face the possibility of limited or zero options next year under ObamaCare and ultimately transition away from ObamaCare's collapsing system entirely, so more Americans will not be hurt.

We also agree on the need to strengthen Medicaid, preserve access to care for patients with preexisting conditions, and allow children to stay on their parents' health insurance through the age of 26.

I am pleased we were able to arrive at a draft that incorporates input from so many different Members, who represent so many different constituents who are facing so many different challenges.

The draft containing the solutions I mentioned, along with many others, is posted online, and I encourage everyone to carefully review it. There will be ample time to analyze, discuss, and provide thoughts before legislation comes to the floor. I hope every Senator takes that opportunity.

Next week we expect the Congressional Budget Office to release a score. After that, we will proceed with a robust debate and an open amendment process on the Senate floor—a process I would encourage each of our 100 Senators to participate in.

When legislation does come to the floor, it will present Senate Democrats with another opportunity to do what is right for the American people. They can choose to keep standing by as their failing law continues to collapse and hurt more Americans, but I hope they will join us, instead, to bring relief to the families who have struggled under ObamaCare for far too long. Either way—either way, it is time to act because ObamaCare is a direct attack on the middle class, and American families deserve better than its failing status quo. They deserve better care, and that is just what we are going to continue to work to bring.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Billingslea nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Marshall Billingslea, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing, Department of the Treasury.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we are beginning to receive the first bits of information about the Senate Republican healthcare bill, which has until now been shrouded in absolute secrecy.

I can see why. Even as we continue to get more details, the broad outlines are clear. This is a bill designed to strip away healthcare benefits and protections from Americans who need it most in order to give a tax break to the folks who need it least.

This is a bill that would end Medicaid as we know it, rolling back Medicaid expansion, cutting Federal support for the program even more than the House bill, which cut Medicaid by \$800 billion.

Let me remind everyone in this Chamber, Medicaid is not just a health insurance program for Americans struggling in poverty, though that is an important and necessary part of it. Medicaid is increasingly a middle-class program. Medicaid is how many Americans are able to access opioid abuse treatment, Medicaid foots the bill for two-thirds of all Americans living in nursing homes, and Medicaid provides the cushion, particularly in rural areas, so hospitals can survive and give topnotch healthcare to all of us.

From what is reported, in just 3 short years under the Senate bill, Republicans will take millions off their Medicaid coverage, and then, starting in 2025, the plan will institute even more Medicaid cuts, and each year those cuts get deeper than the year before. Within 10 years of this new funding system, the cuts to Medicaid could total hundreds of billions of dollars above the more than \$800 billion the House bill already cuts from the program.

Every senior in America should read the fine print of this bill. It looks as if American seniors could be paying way more. Why do this? Looking at the bill, the answer is, because the Republicans want to give a tax break to the wealthiest Americans—those making over \$200,000 a year—and set themselves up to give these folks another, even larger tax cut in their tax bill.

Even though much of the early reporting says that the bill will keep certain protections for Americans with

preexisting conditions, the truth is, it may well not guarantee them the coverage they need by allowing States to waive essential health benefits. What the bill is saying to those Americans is that insurance still has to cover you, but it doesn't have to cover what you may actually need. It doesn't have to cover all or even most of your costs.

If you need treatment for opioid addiction, your plan may no longer cover it. If you are pregnant and need maternity care, your plan may have decided that is too expensive. The coverage that Americans with preexisting conditions actually need may well become either unaffordable or even nonexistent under this bill.

Simply put, this bill will result—

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, will the Democratic leader yield for a question?

Mr. SCHUMER. Not right now—at the end of my remarks.

Simply put, this bill will result in higher costs, less care, and millions of Americans will lose their health insurance, particularly through Medicaid. It is every bit as bad as the House bill. In some ways, it is even worse.

The President said the Senate bill needed heart. The way this bill cuts healthcare is heartless. The President said the House bill was mean. The Senate bill may be meaner.

The Senate Republican healthcare bill is a wolf in sheep's clothing, but this wolf has even sharper teeth than the House bill.

It is clear that Republicans know that cutting Medicaid will hurt so many people in the middle class, so many in my home State of New York. Republicans know that people want essential health benefits, so they have created a disguise by saying that these changes will not occur for a year. But, in reality, the Senate Republican bill is a wolf in sheep's clothing, only this wolf has even sharper teeth than the House bill.

We are potentially voting on it in a week—with no committee hearings, no amendments in committee, no debate on the floor, save for 10 measly hours, on one of the most important bills we are dealing with in decades. That brings shame on this body. We won't even know the full cost or consequence of the bill until CBO scores it, and that could take a few days more.

How can my friend the majority leader expect this body to fairly consider this legislation, prepare amendments, and debate it in 1 week with only 10 hours of debate? How can he expect his own Members to do the same? Many of them on the Republican side are learning the details of the bill the same way we Democrats are: They are reading it today.

Now, listen to what the majority leader had to say in 2009 when we were debating healthcare—his words:

This is a very important issue. . . . We shouldn't try to do it in the dark. And whatever final bill is produced should be available to the American public and to Members of the Senate, certainly, for enough time to

come to grips with it. . . . And we are going to insist—and the American people are going to insist—that it be done in a transparent, fair, and open way.

Is 5 or 6 days enough time for the American people and the Members of the Senate to come to grips with a bill that affects one-sixth of the economy and the lives of every American in this country? I don't think so, neither do the American people and neither do a whole bunch of Republican Senators.

Senator CASSIDY: Would I have preferred a more open process? The answer is yes.

Senator COLLINS: I don't think it gives enough time to thoroughly analyze the bill, but we will see when it comes out.

Member after Member—RAND PAUL, LINDSEY GRAHAM, JERRY MORAN, MARCO RUBIO, BOB CORKER—has repeatedly said that this process—in their words and now in mine—is unfair, it is truncated, and it is rushed.

For my dear friend the majority leader to say we are going to have an open amendment process is turning truth upside down. I would ask our leader, rhetorically, because I know the answer: Can we allow at least 1 hour on each amendment, not 2 minutes? Will we have more time than 10 hours to debate the bill? I hope so. But, if not, please don't call this an open and fair process. If you want to rush it through, admit the consequences.

The debate over healthcare has been fierce. We know that Republicans and Democrats had differences when we debated the Affordable Care Act. At least we had a debate. At least we had committee hearings and a process. More broadly than that, at least we Democrats were trying to pass a healthcare bill that helped more Americans afford insurance and tried to bring costs down and end some of the most egregious practices of the healthcare industry.

What is this bill—TrumpCare—trying to achieve? It seems designed to slash support for healthcare programs in order to give tax breaks to the very wealthy.

When the CBO score comes out, I believe it will verify that millions of Americans in this great country will be unable to afford insurance or the insurance they can afford won't cover the services they need.

Somewhere in America there is a family who takes a trip each Friday to visit grandma or grandpa at a nursing home, who sacrificed all of their savings to pay for their healthcare until they had no more savings and now rely on Medicaid to help pay the cost of long-term care in a nursing home.

Somewhere in America there is a father who is eaten up inside watching his son struggle with opioid addiction, who knows in his heart that his son will be able to go on and live a healthy and fulfilling life if he could only afford treatment to get him out from under this devastating addiction.

Somewhere in America there is a parent whose child has cancer, a mother

and father who stay up late at night worried that their insurance will either not be available or run out when the family needs it most.

In the America that my Republican friends envision with this healthcare bill, those Americans, and many more besides, might not get the coverage and care they need.

We live in the wealthiest country on Earth. Surely, surely, we can do better than what the Republican healthcare bill promises.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—H.R. 1628

Now I have a unanimous consent request. I am going to have to delay my friend from asking questions until we finish our unanimous consent requests.

I ask unanimous consent that any substitute or perfecting amendment offered to Calendar No. 120, H.R. 1628, not be in order if the text of the amendment has not been filed at the desk and made available on a public website for at least 72 hours, along with an analysis by the Congressional Budget Office of the bill's budgetary, coverage, and cost implications.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, my colleague Senator CORNYN was going to ask a question, which I will answer, which was that the minority leader is referring to a bill that he hasn't seen a copy of because it hasn't yet been released. So the speech we just heard was about a bill that he hasn't seen.

With regard to his unanimous consent request, I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, leader time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has the floor.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, 142 pages thus far of this supposed bill have been printed online, and that is what I have used.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, several weeks ago the House of Representatives passed a bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act and to replace it. It was passed without hearings. It was passed without an amendment process, and it was passed before the Congressional Budget Office provided the traditional analysis that we count on before we take up a measure of such magnitude.

The measure passed with a party-line vote—all Republicans. Had two Republicans voted the other way, it would not have moved forward.

After it passed, the President of the United States decided to have a celebration at the White House. We saw him on television, gathering the Republican Members of the House of Representatives and celebrating the fact that this measure had passed and that, finally, they were going to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

But then the American people took a close look and the Congressional Budg-

et Office issued its analysis, and it turns out that 23 million Americans would lose their health insurance because of this Republican measure that passed the House of Representatives.

It turns out as well that there would be a dramatic increase in health insurance premiums for people between the ages of 50 and 64.

It turns out that in my State and many other States hospitals were in danger. The Illinois Health and Hospital Association says they would lose 60,000 jobs in Illinois with the dramatic cutbacks in Medicaid, endangering hospitals in rural areas and inner-city areas.

The facts started coming out about this repeal bill passed by the House of Representatives, and the President of the United States had a change of heart and announced to the American people that it was a mean bill—a mean bill. The President was right. It was mean legislation—mean to the millions who lost their healthcare, mean to seniors who would find their premiums going up dramatically, and mean to the people living in rural areas and small towns who count on those hospitals.

The President was right. It was mean.

Then, the responsibility shifts to the Senate. The majority leader, Senator McCONNELL, and his Republican followers had a chance to do a bill that was not mean. They had a chance to sit down on a bipartisan basis and to have the same process we used to create the Affordable Care Act.

That would have involved public hearings. We had 50 public hearings on the Affordable Care Act. It would have involved a real amendment process. The Affordable Care Act had 300 amendments. How many were offered by the Republicans? There were over 150 offered and adopted in a bipartisan process when we passed the Affordable Care Act. The American people got a good look at the bill. The Congressional Budget Office issued their analysis before we voted on it. We passed it, and I am glad we did, and I am proud of that vote.

But what happened in the Senate when it came to the Republicans? They went into secrecy. Thirteen chosen Republican Senators all sat in a room and wrote the alternative, or so we are told. They met in secret and never once had a public hearing, never once disclosed to the American people what was being debated, never once gave an opportunity for real bipartisan cooperation to strengthen our existing healthcare system—not at all.

So all we have at this moment is truly press accounts of what has been announced to the Republican Senate caucus, what they are going to get a chance to read and see. But it is enough to see that when it comes down to the basics, there is not much of a change between the House of Representatives' effort and the Senate effort.

You can put a lace collar on a pit bull, and it is still a mean dog.

What we have here with the Republicans in the Senate is an attempt to dust off the edges of the House bill and say: This is not as mean. I will tell you, at the end of the day, from the reports we have, this is still a mean dog, and one the people of the United States don't want to see happen.

There isn't a single medical advocacy group—not one in my State, and I don't know of any nationwide—that endorses what the Republicans in the House have accomplished with the passage of their bill, and this bill mirrors it, as well, and we can expect the same result.

So the only thing we can offer the American people is a chance to be part of the conversation on a bill that will literally change healthcare for millions of Americans. If they are going to be part of the conversation, there has to be a chance for amendment and debate, at least, and a chance for the American people to see what is in the Senate Republican measure.

So I ask unanimous consent that any substitute or perfecting amendment offered to Calendar No. 120, H.R. 1628, be subject to a point of order if the text of the amendment has not been filed at the desk and made available on a public website for at least 72 hours, along with an analysis by the Congressional Budget Office of the bill's budgetary, coverage, and cost implications; and that a motion to waive the point of order be in order, and if a motion to waive is made, an affirmative three-fifths vote of those duly chosen and sworn is required to waive the point of order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I want to thank my friend the assistant Democratic leader for confirming that the majority leader's remarks obviously were made on the basis of news accounts. The bill has only been posted online for the last 20 minutes.

Mr. SCHUMER. Would the majority leader yield?

I am the minority leader, at this point.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I will yield for a question.

Mr. SCHUMER. The question is, Does the majority leader know that a half hour before we came to the floor were 142 pages of the bill listed online? That is what we used in our report.

I would ask the majority leader a further question: If there is anything I said—anything I said—that is not going to be in the bill, could he clarify?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, what we are seeing here today is just the latest broken promise from President Trump and his Republican Party. After weeks of secret negotiations, backroom deals, shutting out patients, families, and Democrats and even many

Republicans from this process, Senate Republican leaders are now just days away from putting a bill on the floor that could not be more impactful or more devastating to families' bank accounts and their health. As even Republicans are pointing out, there has not been a single hearing, no robust debate, no opportunity for the people who will really suffer under this bill to see exactly how bad it would be.

This disastrous TrumpCare bill deserves full scrutiny under an open process, like the process that Democrats conducted when we passed the Affordable Care Act. We held hearings, we took amendments from both sides, and we certainly didn't leave the fate of women's healthcare up to a few Republican men.

Senate Republicans are right to be ashamed of this mean and heartless legislation. Just like the House TrumpCare bill, it will increase premiums, it will undermine protections for people with preexisting conditions, it will defund Planned Parenthood, and it will allow insurance companies—insurance companies—to charge women more. It is going to gut Medicaid. It will take away care for our seniors, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and it will take health insurance coverage away from millions of people across the country—and for what? To give another massive tax cut to the wealthy and well-connected.

I would be ashamed, too, if I had to defend a bill that is cruel. I can certainly understand why Republican leaders do not want to give people time to see what is in this bill and why they don't even want to give their own Members time to see how much their constituents hate it, but that is the bed Senate Republicans have now made. If they are going to try to pass this disastrous version of TrumpCare, at the very least they shouldn't get to jam it through without the public knowing good and well what they are up to.

Mr. President, I ask a parliamentary inquiry: Is the Chair able to confirm that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions considered S. 1679, the Affordable Health Choices Act, which was ultimately incorporated into the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, in executive session on 13 calendar days prior to reporting the bill favorably?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Secretary of the Senate's Office through the Senate Library can confirm that.

Ms. MURRAY. That is confirmed.

So I ask unanimous consent today that any substitute or perfecting amendment offered to Calendar No. 120, H.R. 1628, not be in order if the text of the amendment has not been the subject of a hearing, subject of executive session, during which amendments from both the majority and minority were considered and reported favorably by the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

None of these Senators have read the bill.

I have the floor.

The bill is 142 pages long compared to the 2,700-page ObamaCare bill. They can read the bill; if they have objections to the provisions, we can debate them, but what they are talking about is a bill that does not exist, which they have not read.

I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The minority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, would my dear colleague from Texas yield for a question?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas does not have the floor. You have the floor.

Mr. SCHUMER. I would like to just then tell my friend from Texas: This is the bill. It was posted online a half hour before we came in. I would ask a page to come over and bring it to my dear friend and ask him if this is the bill which we have read.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, all Senators have a copy of the discussion draft bill. It is a discussion draft which will be open to an amendment process, with unlimited amendments which can be offered by both sides, before which we will have a fulsome debate.

Our colleagues here are complaining about secrecy that doesn't exist. This bill is online. The American people can read it. You can read it. I would suggest that they do read it before they start criticizing it.

Mr. SCHUMER. I would ask my friend from Texas to yield for another question.

Mr. CORNYN. I will.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will we get more than 2 minutes to debate each amendment we ask for or will we be under the reconciliation process, where we have 10 hours of debate and then every amendment only gets 2 minutes? Does he consider that—2 minutes, if that is the case—a full and fair debate on each amendment?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say, in response to my friend from New York, the fact that we are having to conduct this under the reconciliation rules is a result of their refusal to participate in the process, thus necessitating Republicans doing this under budget reconciliation rules.

If they would do this in a true bipartisan way, where we can get 60 votes to get on the bill and open to an amendment process, we could have a better bill, but given the refusal of our Democratic colleagues to participate in the process, this is the only way we can come to the rescue of the people who are being hurt by the meltdown of ObamaCare today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Just to clarify, did the Senator

from Texas object to the request of the Senator from Washington?

Mr. CORNYN. I do object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I heard the objection.

I just have to say, the exchange we just heard is exactly what we have been objecting to. We were told the bill would be online at 9:30 this morning. It was online at 11. I have a copy of it, but we are hearing from the other side now that this isn't the bill. This is a discussion draft. We aren't going to see the bill. We will not see the real bill, apparently, until next week, even though we were told we would see it this morning.

This has been the problem we have had since this discussion started. We started in January with a process which cut us out of this under reconciliation. Thirteen men in a private room wrote this "discussion draft," which is not a bill, that we are supposed to now look at and decide whether we like it—and the American public—a discussion draft, a bill even the other side doesn't know what we have. That is what we are objecting to.

We are asking that the American people—who have a right to know what is going to impact every one of their lives, every one of their families, every one of their communities, every one of their businesses—have more than a discussion draft, more than 10 hours of debate, time to look at it, and know how we are going to do an amendment process next week.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, would the Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. MURRAY. I would be happy to.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would ask the Senator from Washington if she is aware of the fact that under the budget reconciliation process, there will be an unlimited number of amendments that could be offered by either side to the bill which is ultimately filed?

Mrs. MURRAY. Oh, Mr. President, I am well aware of that; and I will remind our colleagues and everybody in this country what will happen: There will be 10 hours of debate, where we hopefully have more than a discussion draft that we will be allowed to offer amendments on, and there will be no debate on those amendments. No one will know what it is. It will be a chaotic process on this floor. The American public will not know. We will be able to tell them days later, after this gets undone.

That is not an amendment process. That is not what we went through when we passed the Affordable Care Act. The American public deserves better.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I would ask my colleague a question.

What would be wrong with 1 hour of debate on every amendment to this

bill? What is the objection to that, since the majority is proposing no debate on amendments, and then saying it is an open process? What is wrong with 1 hour of debate on every amendment offered to this bill?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say, in response to my friend the minority leader, that it is as a result of their refusal to participate in the usual process of passing legislation through the regular order—

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. CORNYN.—that we have to resort to the budget reconciliation process which has a set of statutory provisions and rules.

There will be a fulsome debate. There has already been a debate on a bill you haven't read. I suggest you take the time to read it, and then we can talk about the details.

This bill—142 pages compared to 2,700 pages of ObamaCare—doesn't take that long to read. This is a start. This is not the finish. This is called the normal legislative process. I suggest colleagues, rather than criticize a bill they haven't read, they read it, and then let's have a credible debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I would ask my friend, the majority whip from Texas, a series of questions.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. What was the date that reconciliation was added to the budget resolution which said we don't need any Democratic votes? Was it May, was it April, was it March, or was it the very beginning of this session?

I would ask him another question. Where were the meetings held to discuss this bill, and were any Democrats invited?

I would ask him another question. Why did the majority leader not accept our offer to go into the Old Senate Chamber—100 Senators, no press, no anything else—and debate the bill?

How can my good friend—and he is a good friend; we are on the bikes in the morning together—my good friend from Texas say there was a bipartisan process when, at the outset—at the outset—our Republican colleagues said the only thing we will debate is repeal and then replace? There was no discussion of whether repeal was the right thing to do or the wrong thing to do. Now, overwhelmingly the American people prefer fixing ObamaCare—which we offered to do—than repeal and replace.

It is no wonder, I would say to my colleague as he answers these questions, that this bill is being brought in the dark of night. It is because my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are ashamed of the bill—because, believe you me, if they liked this bill, they would have brass bands down

every Main Street in America talking about it, but they are trying to sneak it through because mainly their goal is a tax cut for the rich.

I would ask my colleague to answer those three questions, and then he can respond to my rhetoric.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am really taken aback by the characterization of the minority leader here.

The minority has made it clear they don't want to participate in the process of rescuing the American people from the failures of ObamaCare.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. CORNYN. It has been made clear to us that you don't want to participate in the process, and you are turning a blind eye to the millions of people being hurt today by outrageous premiums, deductibles they can't afford, and a loss of choices because insurance companies have pulled out of the individual market. Your response to them is: We don't care.

We care, and we are doing our best to deal with this.

This is like going by a car accident with somebody seriously injured, and rather than stopping and rendering aid, just driving on by. That is what our colleagues on the other side are doing. They are turning a blind eye, driving right on by a seriously injured person in a car accident. We are coming to the rescue of the millions of people who are being hurt by ObamaCare today.

We would love to have our Democratic friends join us and do something truly sustainable, but you have to remember, my friends, how this started: Democrats jammed ObamaCare through on a party-line vote and Republicans weren't able to participate in that process.

What we are trying to do is we are trying to save the people who are currently being hurt and whose healthcare has become unaffordable. If you would like to join us in this process, we would love to have you, but failing that, we are going to get it done, and you can just drive by the car wreck.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, here is the correct analogy: Yes, there has been an accident. Yes, someone needs help. Someone who is not a doctor, not a physician, doesn't know how to help the patient—our Republican friends go by the side of the road, but they don't know what to do.

So the Democrats come by. We are doctors. We say: We know how to fix this system. We know how to fix this patient, and the Republicans say: No, don't help with us. We will drive right by. Now the patient is ailing.

I would ask my colleagues, let's forget the past for the moment because we have a much better argument than you. We had hundreds of amendments offered by Republicans that became part of our bill. I doubt there will be a

single Democratic amendment that will be—we had hours of hearings, hours of debate. You didn't. So you may not have thought the process was perfect, but it was a lot more open than yours.

I have a proposal to my friend. Let us forget this draft bill. Let us right now, Democrats and Republicans, sit down and try to come up with a bipartisan bill. We are willing to do it today, now, this minute. Will you accept that offer?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, if I thought that was a sincere offer, I would take it in a minute—in a New York minute, but it is not.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. CORNYN. The fact is, insurance companies are having to go to the State regulators as we speak to get insurance rates approved for 2018. That is the urgency we are experiencing here.

Unless we act—and act in an expedited fashion—here, very soon, we will see millions of people have their insurance rates raised by another double digits. It has been 105 percent since 2013—105 percent. ObamaCare was sold under the premise that families of four would see a reduction of \$2,500. If you like your policy, you can keep your policy. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. All of that is false. False. This is a failed experiment.

They may not be willing to help, but we will, and we will get it done and help the American people who are being hurt by the failure of ObamaCare today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am struck by this conversation as the ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee. My colleague and distinguished Senator from Texas is on the Finance Committee. He knows I know something about writing bipartisan healthcare reform bills. I have written them. They have become law. I could tell my colleague, I have not once—not once—been asked to be part of any bipartisan effort with respect to this legislation.

I think, colleagues, it is real clear what is going on here. Senate Republicans are going to keep telling Americans they are fixing their healthcare right up until the second it gets taken away.

Now, as the ranking member of the Finance Committee, I find it bizarre that a health bill of this importance was hidden for so long behind closed doors, denying the American people the opportunity to see it in an open debate.

There have been no hearings on this dangerous, destructive proposal, not one hearing on whether Medicaid should be slashed to pay for tax cuts for the fortunate few, not one hearing on whether the bedrock protections for those with preexisting conditions ought to be shattered, not one hearing on whether Americans should face

higher costs, along with annual and lifetime limits, on insurance coverage.

This secretive process of concealing and rushing this bill, which until today had been seen by nobody—nobody outside of the Republican leadership and their lobbyist allies who dwell on K Street—the secretive process stands in sharp contrast to the process that led to the Affordable Care Act.

I now put forward a parliamentary inquiry. Is the Chair able to confirm that the Committee on Finance considered S. 1796, the America's Healthy Future Act, which was ultimately incorporated into H.R. 3590, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, in executive session on 8 separate calendar days prior to reporting the bill favorably?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Secretary of the Senate's office, through the Senate Library, confirms that.

Mr. WYDEN. I have information that indicates that 135 amendments were considered in the committee and that of those, 14 amendments offered by Republican members of the committee or offered in a bipartisan manner were adopted during the consideration of S. 1796. Is the Chair able to confirm that?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Secretary of the Senate's office, through the Senate Library, confirms that.

Mr. WYDEN. Therefore, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that no motion to proceed to Calendar No. 120, H.R. 1628, be in order until the bill has been the subject of executive session meetings in the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, during which amendments from the majority and the minority received votes and the bill has been favorably reported from those committees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, our colleagues are coming here today and saying they want to participate in the process to fix what is broken in the Affordable Care Act. Yet I have in my hand a newspaper article about a letter that the Democratic leader and his colleagues sent saying they refused to participate in the process unless we drop all of our plans to repeal and replace ObamaCare. They refused to participate in the process.

I would point out that the failures of ObamaCare didn't just start today; it has been failing over 7 years. They did nothing—nothing—nothing to help the millions of people who are being hurt, who had to move from full-time work to part-time work because their employer didn't want to pay the employer penalty for not providing ObamaCare coverage. We know that many people have been hurt by it and not the least of whom are the people who are finding their premiums skyrocketing. They will do so again next year unless we

come to their rescue. They have seen their deductibles so high, they effectively have been denied the value of their insurance.

I had a conversation a couple of days ago—I won't name the Democratic Senator because it was done in confidence. The Senator confided to me that his own son had effectively seen his premiums go up so high that he had—it cost roughly \$12,500 out-of-pocket to deal with his deductible and to pay his premiums—\$12,500. That is not affordable to anybody, certainly in the middle class.

I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I want to indicate before the distinguished majority whip leaves that what is being talked about here is like having a hole in the roof of your house. Instead of patching it, they want to burn down the house. What we are not willing to participate in is burning down the house. We are more than happy and, in fact, have proposals and are anxious to work with the majority to improve healthcare—not rip it apart, not take tens of millions of people's healthcare away, but improve it.

Before asking a question of the majority whip, I also want to indicate for all those listening that we have the bill. We can actually read pretty quickly, and it has been out. Even though it is considered a discussion draft—we don't know what it is at this point—we have it. We are analyzing it.

What our leader, the Democratic leader, indicated is what we have been able to read in this discussion draft, which is not only more of the same but is worse for seniors, those in nursing homes, and children in Michigan and across the country. That is what is in this, which we now have, whatever it is called.

I would ask the majority whip, instead of burning down the house at this point in terms of ripping apart the healthcare system, would you join with us in putting forward a bill that would allow Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices for seniors, which my hospitals and insurance companies tell me are one of the driving forces that are raising the costs of healthcare? Would you be willing to work with us on a bill to lower prescription drug prices and allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices on behalf of America's seniors?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say to the Senator from Michigan that we would be happy to work with you on high drug prices. That is a serious problem and one of the primary cost drivers of healthcare costs today. But this bill doesn't touch Medicare at all. We leave intact the healthcare for seniors, and it is not touched by this at all. When the time comes for us to deal with Medicare, I think that is a debate we should have and we would welcome.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, to the distinguished leader, I simply would say I am proposing that instead of this, which is essentially burning down the house in America in terms of healthcare, that you instead join with us in what you have admitted is one of the top drivers of healthcare costs in this country, which is what we want to tackle. We want to bring down the costs. We want to bring down the cost of prescription drugs, the out-of-pocket costs for everyone whose copays and premiums are too high. That is what we want to do. Taking away nursing home care, taking away the ability for a parent to take their child to the doctor or someone with cancer to get the treatment they need or a small business owner being blocked from getting healthcare because of a preexisting condition—we consider that burning down the house. We are opposed to that.

Frankly, we would love to have a ceremony and light this on fire and come back together and work together on the No. 1 driver, which is the cost of prescription drugs.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, maybe I misunderstood the question initially. I would suggest to the Senator from Michigan that it is the Democrats, under ObamaCare, who burned down the house because the individual market for healthcare has been decimated—decimated. And we are coming to the rescue of those millions of people who don't have employer-provided insurance. They don't get their coverage under Medicare or any other government program. They get it from the individual market. We are talking about individuals and small businesses. Right now people have almost no choices in many parts of the country, and for those who have choices, it is simply unaffordable.

It is an important conversation to have on drug prices and Medicare, and I am happy to do that. That would do nothing—zip, zero, nada—to help the people who are hurting now as a result of the failures of ObamaCare, and that is whom we are determined to help by passing this legislation after an open amendment process and fulsome debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, in conclusion, I wish to make one other comment, and that is, the people in Michigan who are purchasing on the private exchange—over half of whom are able to get a policy today for their families for less than \$100—I would say they would have a different perspective.

We need to fix those things that are not working, but for the 97 percent of the children in Michigan who can now see a doctor because of what has been done; for the hospitals that now see 50

percent fewer people walking into the emergency room without insurance, raising the costs for all policies; for the savings the State of Michigan is going to have in its budget next year of \$432 million in savings to taxpayers because they did the right thing by allowing children to go to a doctor instead of getting sick and going to the emergency room, I would suggest this is the wrong direction.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, last week, President Trump reportedly told several of our Republican colleagues that the House-passed version of TrumpCare's healthcare repeal of the Affordable Care Act was mean. This week, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said that the President would like to see a healthcare bill from the Senate that "has heart in it." What did we get? We got a bill from my Senate Republican colleagues that is identical to and in some cases even worse than the disastrous House-passed American Health Care Act that would rip coverage away from 23 million Americans and gut Medicaid by more than \$800 billion.

Nothing changes the fact that this undemocratic, secretive process has resulted in legislation that is so mean-spirited, it would make the Wicked Witch of the West cringe. The Senate Republican bill will rip away economic security from young families, make grandma and grandpa pay more for health insurance simply because they are old, tear away coverage for opioid addiction patients desperate for treatment, and punish Americans with pre-existing conditions such as cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's. For once, I agree with President Trump. This bill is mean.

Let's take a closer look about what is really inside of the Senate GOP's proposal on healthcare. Let's start by looking at the lower quality coverage. First, this bill will roll back the clock to the days before the Affordable Care Act, when an insurance card did not guarantee comprehensive coverage.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, there are certain things an insurance plan just has to cover—things like emergency services, maternity care, prescription drugs, mental health services. There is security in knowing that if you pay your premiums, this sort of basic minimum coverage is in place when you need it. But Republicans want to rip that away. They want to give States and insurance companies the option to not cover these things.

This would make it so that a consumer could easily be faced with an unexpected medical bill for services they had assumed were covered with their healthcare plan.

Independent analysis from the Congressional Budget Office estimates that out-of-pocket costs for maternity care or mental health or substance abuse disorder services could increase by thousands of dollars in a given year under TrumpCare. That is not increasing quality, as President Trump promised; that is lower quality. And that just increases inequality between the healthy wealthy, who can pay out of pocket for their care, and providing lower quality coverage for everyone else. That is mean.

Second, an age tax. Since the Affordable Care Act became law, the uninsured rate for Americans ages 50 to 64 decreased by one-half. Those are the baby boomers, and it is estimated that more than 28 million of these baby boomers will develop Alzheimer's disease between now and the year 2050. This reduction in the uninsured rates came about because the Affordable Care Act expanded Medicaid and put protections in place to prevent insurers from charging exorbitant prices just because of age. But instead of caring for our family and friends as they age and ensuring they can afford quality coverage on what may be a dwindling income, TrumpCare punishes you for achieving your milestone 50th birthday.

Under the Republican healthcare proposal, insurance companies can charge older Americans five times more than younger Americans for the same coverage. That is unconscionable. It doesn't matter if you are a 50-year-old marathoner in the best shape of your life; you will still be paying at least five times more for your insurance than your 40-year-old neighbor who smokes. As a result, Americans over the age of 60 could see their premiums increase by an average of \$3,200 or 22 percent. That might not sound like a lot to some people, but for those with decreasing incomes and fewer job opportunities, it is the difference between being able to eat and being kicked out on the street.

To add insult to injury, the subsidies in TrumpCare to help individuals purchase insurance are far less generous than what is currently available under the Affordable Care Act. Because that will result in premiums that are higher, the tax credits will not keep pace to help pay for more expensive insurance, and, as a result, this age tax is going to be mean to those who are older in our country.

No. 3, Medicaid cuts. Medicaid is a lifeline for families across our country. More than 70 million Americans—nearly half of whom are children—depend upon it. But it is clear that with TrumpCare's cuts to the program, Republicans want Medicaid to flatline. For a program that covers more than one-fifth of the Nation's population, including the sickest, the oldest, and the

poorest amongst us, Medicaid is especially irreplaceable.

But Republicans harbor an ancient animosity toward Medicaid. Republicans say that we need to restructure Medicaid's financing to help control the program spending and make it more efficient. That is just another way of saying to America's most vulnerable that you are just not as important as those who donate to our campaigns.

Raiding the Medicaid coffers achieves two goals. First, it tears holes in a critical social safety net for more than 70 million low-income and working-class Americans. Second, it provides the GOP with an open checkbook to pay back their donors with huge tax breaks.

Republicans might want to refer to these changes as capping the Medicaid program, but don't be fooled. What capping really means is decapitating access to primary care, decapitating the ability of grandma and grandpa to secure a nursing home bed, and decapitating access to treatment for substance abuse and mental health conditions. Gutting the Medicaid program—that is mean.

Next, they are going to reduce access to care. This one is simple. Less insurance coverage equals less access to care. While it is possible to get a doctor's appointment and treatment without health insurance, it is usually at prices that are impossible to afford for a typical uninsured person. Most working Americans can't conceive of paying more than \$150 every time they want to visit a primary care doctor or footing the bill for a couple of thousand dollars in the event they need more specialized care. The best medicines and the most effective treatments are only as good as the insurance coverage people have to help them to access to it.

How will these 23 million Americans who lose insurance under TrumpCare get the care which they need? They will not get the care. Unfortunately, when patients do try to access care, it will be because their illness has progressed to the point where it can no longer be ignored. Instead of seeking care with a primary care doctor in a less expensive healthcare setting, most uninsured patients will end up going straight to the emergency room—the most expensive site for care. And the cost of that uninsured patient—well, that is just going to get absorbed by everyone else in our country, as our rates for treatment and insurance coverage increase to make up for this uncompensated care. So reduced access to care—that is mean.

Then we move on to higher premiums. Higher premiums are going to be the new rule in our country because that is going to be what happens if the Republicans are successful in repealing the Affordable Care Act. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, TrumpCare would increase premiums by an average of 20 percent in 2018. In Massachusetts alone, premiums

for next year could increase by \$600, threatening coverage for more than 180,000 of my constituents with private insurance. Because of everything else in TrumpCare, even though you are paying more, you will be getting less. It is like paying for a Cadillac, but only getting a tricycle. This will only prevent Americans from securing access to the care and the treatment they need and they deserve. Less care for more cost—that is going to be mean. Premiums are going to go up for everyone.

Finally, it threatens all of those in America who have preexisting conditions. For so many Americans, allowing insurance companies to refuse coverage or charge more because of a preexisting condition is inhumane, and it is immoral. Anyone who tried to buy individual health insurance before the Affordable Care Act remembers this problem. Before the healthcare act passed, in most States, if you had a preexisting condition, you could either be denied coverage, charged a much higher premium, or forced to wait potentially for years before receiving treatment for the condition to be covered. For many people, this meant they either had to go without needed care or spend their entire savings. For those with the most serious conditions, it was the difference between life and death.

The anxiety of suffering from an illness was only exacerbated by financial insecurity. It was a cruel and unusual form of punishment. Sadly, the Republicans want to take us back to this era. Threatening preexisting conditions—that might be the meanest of them all because protections for families who have preexisting conditions is something that goes right to the heart of what the Affordable Care Act provided as a protection.

Why would millions of Americans have to suffer these cruelties, these indignities, these punishments? That is the most outrageous part of all of this. President Trump and the congressional Republicans are proposing this healthcare heartlessness, all so they can give tax breaks to the wealthiest in our country.

We heard it from President Trump himself last night when he talked about the people he hired for his Cabinet. "I just don't want a poor person," he said. But who does he want running the government and our economy? He wants the wealthiest people in America. He wants people who are billionaires to be making the decisions as to how we run our economy. President Trump has in place a goal of turning over to the richest people in our country the responsibility for putting together the plan to cut the programs for the poor and the working families in our country.

The Republicans and their wealthy planners have put together a very simple one-step program: The rich get richer, and the rest get sicker in the United States. Make no mistake, this

healthcare plan is of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich. It is giving billions in tax breaks to people who don't need or deserve them, paid for by people who can't handle or afford it. That is cruel, that is inhumane, that is immoral, that is just plain wrong, and my Democratic colleagues and I will not stand for it.

We are standing up to say no to ripping away coverage for millions of Americans. We are raising our voices to say no to increasing costs for middle-class families. We are saying here today that we are going to say no to this legislative malpractice. The health of the American public is too important for us to be so mean, so callous to the people we were elected to serve.

This Republican proposal has never been about policy. It has always been about politics, and it is time to stop playing political games with people's lives, with people's healthcare.

Healthcare is a right and not a privilege. That is the promise we made to the American people with the Affordable Care Act, and it is a promise we must keep.

The President is keeping his promise to the rich in our country. They have now written a healthcare plan for one-sixth of our economy that slashes \$800 billion that would be used for the poor, for the sick, for the working class, for senior citizens in nursing homes by \$800 billion in order to give an \$800 billion tax break to the wealthiest people in our country. That is wrong.

This is a critical moment in our country's history, and we, as Democrats, are going to battle every single day here on the Senate floor and across this country to make sure that every person understands what the consequences of this incredibly callous, mean bill will mean—lower quality coverage, an age tax on the elderly, Medicaid cuts that hurt families across our country, reduced access to care, threatening of the protections for preexisting conditions, and resulting in higher premiums for everyone. It will be a disgrace.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, first I want to thank Senator MARKEY for his comments. I share his concerns. I agree with what he has said about the risk factors of the bill that was announced this morning by the Republican leader and what it could do to millions of people around this country and what it will do to coverage for hundreds of thousands of people in my State of Maryland who will lose coverage and just about every Marylander whose healthcare will be impacted if this bill were to become law.

I want to start by saying that I think this is a shameful moment for the Senate—the Senate, whose traditions have made it be known as the most deliberative body in the world; the Senate, which has been known as a body that

allows for robust debate and benefits from the views of all 100 Members, where each of us has opportunities to get our voices heard. That tradition has been badly damaged by what the majority leader has done in bringing a bill that affects one-sixth of the economy of our country to the floor of the Senate without the deliberation by our committees and without transparency to the American people.

When I got to the Senate, I worked hard to get on the Senate Finance Committee. I did that because the jurisdiction of the Senate Finance Committee contains areas that I have devoted a good part of my public career to, including issues of taxation and issues concerning social programs in our State. But it also included healthcare, an area that I worked on when I was first in the Maryland State legislature. I wanted to be on the committee that had a role in developing the health policy of this Nation. I thought I could add to that debate with my experience, and I wanted to make sure that the people of Maryland had a voice as we developed healthcare policy in America.

That role is being denied by what the Republican leader is doing in bringing this bill to the floor without the benefit of hearings. Let me just repeat that. There has not been one hearing held on the legislation being brought forward by the majority leader. There hasn't been one committee markup of the bill.

Now, let me explain to the general public what a markup is. It is when the committees that have expertise on a bill—in this case, it would be the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and the Senate Finance Committee—have had a chance to bring the public in to get their views on the legislation, have had the committee staff go through it and explain all of the aspects to the members of the committee, with an opportunity for us to offer amendments to improve the bill, and then, ultimately, taking a vote on the recommendation to the full Senate. That is the regular order, but it is particularly the regular order on complex pieces of legislation.

I don't think there is a Member of this body who would say that this is not a complex field when we are dealing with healthcare—one-sixth of our economy. But the process that was used denied the people of Maryland and the people of this Nation the opportunity to have their voices heard through their elected representatives. It is a shameful moment.

Now, I know this has been done before on the floor, but I will just repeat it one more time. Compare this to how the Affordable Care Act was passed by the Senate. We had transparency, opportunities for the public to have input. We had hearings—many, many hearings that took place. My staff tells me there were 50 hearings or roundtable discussions or walk-throughs. We had 26 consecutive days of Senate de-

bate. There were hundreds of amendments offered by both Democrats and Republicans that were adopted on the bill before the bill reached the floor of the Senate. That all took place before we started the debate on the bill.

You cannot justify this process. This is an abuse by the majority, and it will affect the functioning of the Senate.

There are concerns about what this bill will do. The process is terrible. The impact on the Senate is terrible. But the real tragedy here is the impact, if this bill were to become law, it would have on healthcare in America.

So let me talk a little bit about my State of Maryland. It has been projected under this bill that those who will not have insurance coverage will go back basically to what it was prior to the passage of the Affordable Care Act; that is, a little over 400,000 Marylanders are at risk of losing basic health coverage. Now, it is going to affect everyone with insurance in Maryland, and I will get to that in a moment. But as many as 400,000 people are in jeopardy of losing their insurance because of what is done with regard to the alliances and the Medicaid Program itself. Many more will lose quality coverage.

Senator MARKEY talked about pre-existing conditions. You claim that there is protection for preexisting conditions, but it does not guarantee that the services will be provided because the States are given tremendous discretion as to what would be required as essential benefits within the healthcare plans. So if someone has a mental illness or someone has a drug addiction, is there a guaranteed coverage that that person would be able to get services? If that person has a pre-existing condition, it may very well not be covered because of the absence of essential health benefits.

Let me just give you another example of what could happen under this bill, and this is a real example on gender discrimination. Obstetrics coverage is critical for a childbearing woman. Now, if that becomes an optional coverage because of the State plans and discretion that it is given, obviously only those women who are planning to have children will take that coverage. Why would someone who doesn't need that coverage take the coverage? What are the consequences of allowing that type of choice? It is very clear.

Younger women are going to pay a lot more for their health insurance than they otherwise would. Is that fair? I think not. I think not. That is the consequence of the type of changes that are being made in the Affordable Care Act.

I was very instrumental in making sure that we had full coverage for pediatric dental. Why? Well, unfortunately, in my State in 2007—the year I first started in the Senate—we had a youngster, Deamonte Driver, who lived not far from here, who died because of an untreated tooth decay. It became abscessed and went into his brain. He had

to go through a couple of surgeries, and he lost his life. What was needed was \$80 of dental care. He couldn't get access to it because there was no coverage for it. He had no access to that care. He lost his life and, of course, the healthcare system had to pay a lot of money when it only needed to spend \$80 to keep him healthy.

Well, we took care of that and fixed that with the essential benefits now, including pediatric dental. Is that protected under the Republican bill? The answer is unclear—probably not. It is up to the States. It may be different in one State versus another. We don't have the protection.

Then we get to the affordability issue for Marylanders to be able to afford to have health insurance. Under this bill, there will be discrimination on those that are older. They are going to have to pay more for their health insurance. Is that right? No, it is not right. I heard the majority leader this morning give examples of how the Affordable Care Act is in danger, and he cited high premium increases. One of the States he quoted was the State of Maryland, and it was very misleading the way he did that. He was talking about the individual marketplace, and he was talking about one segment of that. What he didn't tell you is that CareFirst, the insurance company that is proposing that rate increase, indicated that at least half of that increase is the result of action taken by the Trump administration, because the Trump administration has not made it clear whether they will fund the cost-sharing provisions, which keep the costs down and affordable in the individual marketplace. That is a self-inflicted increase in premiums by the Trump administration.

There is a second issue that CareFirst mentioned, and that is the President's insistence on not enforcing the individual mandate, and, by the way, that is in the Republican bill. It means that younger, healthier people will choose not to have health insurance. Now, if they happen to ride a motorcycle and wrap themselves around a tree and get flown to the Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore and we are going to treat him, guess who is going to pay the bill? All of us are going to pay the bill through uncompensated care. It is going to raise my insurance policy and everybody's insurance policy. That person should have had insurance, but that person thought he or she didn't need that insurance. So they didn't take out the policy.

You find that those who will take out the insurance policies are the higher risks because they know they need the insurance. So those with high-risk issues will be in the pool raising the costs and that is why CareFirst has a higher ask, because they know it is less likely that healthier people will be in the pool than projected under the original Affordable Care Act. Why? Because of President Trump.

So when the leader says that the Affordable Care Act is falling apart, the

Affordable Care Act is strong, but it has been made vulnerable by the actions of the Trump administration, and the provisions in this bill will make it even weaker.

Now, 1.2 million Marylanders are in our Maryland Medical Assistance Program, or Medicaid Program. Many of these people are working families. Many of these people are our seniors who need long-term care and are in the Medicaid Program because it pays for their long-term care expenses. Many of these people are veterans or returning warriors who are under the Medicaid Program.

Under the Republican-released bill, they may make it a gentler slope before we get to the full impact of the Medicaid reductions, but the Medicaid reductions, if I understand correctly, are even more severe than under the House-passed bill.

Now, I could speak for Maryland. I know our legislature. Our legislature is going to try to do what is right, but they have limited resources in order to try to meet the needs that are out there. It is just not right to say that we are passing these problems on to the States when the States don't have the fiscal capacity to deal with them. Who gets hurt? The 1.2 million Marylanders who rely upon the Medicaid Program and all Marylanders who don't want to see what we call cost shifting, when someone who doesn't have health insurance ends up in our emergency room and doesn't pay the bill and everyone else pays those bills.

So why are we doing this? What is the reason we have gone through this pain? I have heard my colleagues talk about it, and it is absolutely true. The Republicans need to make room for the tax cut. They are pretty clear about it. Close to \$1 trillion in tax cuts is what they need to do. Who benefits from tax cuts? The wealthy, those who have access to healthcare. Who pays for the tax cuts? Those who are the most vulnerable in our community. That is just wrong.

My staff has put together a lot of individual letters that have been sent to us. I don't even need to go through them. I can tell the Presiding Officer just the experiences I have had walking on the streets to Baltimore or, quite frankly, walking anywhere, including here in Washington.

When people come up to me and say: Senator CARDIN, keep up the fight. Do you know what is going to happen if that healthcare bill becomes law? We have done some tests and we have certain genes, we are in a high-risk pool for cancer. We are not going to be able to get coverage if you let insurance companies go back to the practices they had before the passage of the Affordable Care Act.

People say that if they didn't have the insurance they now think they are going to lose, they would have to go through personal bankruptcy. That is not a hypothetical. Before the passage of the Affordable Care Act, unpaid

medical bills was the leading cause of bankruptcy. Are we going to go back to those days?

I talked to a parent who has a child with a disability—and to think what the cost of that child is going to be in the healthcare system. They don't possibly have the means to be able to afford that if they didn't have access to healthcare coverage without discrimination. You leave these discretions to how the insurance companies will respond with their businesses, they are going to figure out a way so a family who has a disabled child will not have adequate coverage. That is what is at risk. Senator MARKEY is right—healthcare should be a right, not a privilege, and we are moving in the wrong direction.

In Maryland, we have hospitals that are located throughout our State to meet the needs of the people of Maryland. We have hospitals that are located in areas where they have a lot of elderly and a lot of poor people, but because of the way we deal with our hospital reimbursements, we don't have cost shifting. We can have what is known as an all-payer rate, where whoever goes into the hospital, they pay the same rate so a hospital can locate in an inner city or poorer neighborhood. If you increase the cost sharing for people who don't have insurance, hospital facilities will not locate in those communities, adding to the costs of everyone's healthcare.

One of the great benefits, one of the great achievements of the Affordable Care Act, is that we now have facilities that are more conveniently located to people in this country, whether they live in a rural area or urban setting. Some are healthcare centers and some are health clinics, but they are more conveniently located because more people have third-party coverage and have insurance in order to pay those bills.

So I read with interest that certain segments of the advocacy community are going to be given certain concessions in this bill, and they think they are going to be OK. One is, I understand—and I am not sure what this term means, and maybe someone can explain it to me—medically complex children. These are children, I assume, who have special needs.

If I understand the bill correctly, there is going to be a carve-out in the Medicaid system so that these complex cases will be, at least for a period of time, reimbursed. Where are they going to get care?

Right now they are getting care, in many cases, in a school-based health clinic that is going to be closed under the Republican bill that is out here because it is not qualified to receive reimbursement. The expansion of our qualified health centers under the Affordable Care Act is going to be in deep jeopardy. I met with the CEOs of our qualified health centers where we have expanded to deal with pediatric care, dental care, and mental health. That is

in jeopardy of being contracted if you don't have the reimbursements from the people who live in that community that we have under the Medicaid expansion. That is in jeopardy. So don't believe you are protecting any vulnerable population when you don't provide the structure in which you can have reasonable reimbursements so that doctors, hospitals, and clinics can locate in communities and be treated fairly under our reimbursement structure.

I am deeply disappointed. I am deeply disappointed with what we have done to this great institution on this, such an important subject. I am deeply concerned, about the impact this is going to have on the people of Maryland and our Nation, and I will join my colleagues in doing everything I possibly can, during the limited opportunities we have only on the floor of the Senate, not in our committees—to do everything I can to protect the interests of the people of Maryland and our Nation so healthcare can be a right and not a privilege.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Maryland for articulating the issues in this discussion draft that has been released this morning.

As I hear him talk about these complex kids, how the cap is going to work, and when people are going to be affected, it reminds me of the book, "The Smartest Guys in the Room." Right? Basically, people cook up schemes they think other people can't understand or the broader public will not catch on to in the hopes they can pass something. That is exactly what is going on here, a hoax and a scheme that is not cost-effective for the American taxpayer and will literally cut people off of access to healthcare, and literally, if the House bill was mean, this is doubling down on mean.

So I thank my colleague from Maryland for articulating the complex kids issue because these are concepts. If this is a discussion draft, I would hope my colleagues would come to the floor and discuss it—discuss the concepts that are in this bill and debate them, but that is not what is happening. In fact, we know very little detail at this point in time because people are assessing the information and trying to read and assess in between the lines.

I can state what I know and have gleaned so far by the accounts, and that this is a continuation on the war on Medicaid. I say that because with regard to this war on Medicaid, we didn't know where the Senate would go in their proposal. We know what the House decided to do. The premise and structure of the House bill is to cut Medicaid by capping it and continually driving down the amount of Federal obligation to this program.

I will tell you, it is not even a smart idea. If you want to reform and deliver

better healthcare at a lower cost, there are many ways to do that and save dollars and give better patient care, but that is not what the House proposal is. It was a budget mechanism. I am not just saying that. I am talking to my healthcare providers at home, I am talking to university professors, people who know and understand healthcare and have studied it for a long time. What the House did and now the Senate is doubling down on is nothing but a budget mechanism to cut people off of healthcare—as my colleague said, the most vulnerable of our population.

It is a wrong-headed idea. It is not going to help us control costs. Medicaid reduces bankruptcy rates, helps people stay employed, and boosts our GDP. Why would we want a draconian idea like cutting Medicaid as the centerpiece of a budget proposal by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle? As people have said, because they want to take that revenue and give it away in tax breaks for the wealthy. I guarantee you that is not what we should be doing.

The access to Medicaid is so important. Our veterans access the healthcare system through Medicaid. Many of them receive care through the VA, but also they receive services through Medicaid. Veterans would be impacted and would lose care. Our children who are seen at hospitals, such as the Children's Hospital in Seattle, are Medicaid populations, and they would not have the resources to get access to care. Our institutions that are covering individuals at Medicaid rates would take a hit.

All the Senate proposal does is basically move that cap, but it is a steeper cap at a point in time that makes and exacerbates this problem of cutting people off of access to care. So if the House bill is mean, this is just doubling down on mean.

There is nothing about destructing this safety net that is so important to Americans that goes hand-in-hand with the philosophy about how to drive down costs to healthcare. If you think about it, if we came out here and had a discussion with 100 U.S. Senators and said a great way to drive down the cost of healthcare would be to cut people off of healthcare, most people would say that is not a smart idea because when people are cut off of healthcare, we know that uncompensated care exacerbates healthcare needs, challenges other parts of our system, and delivering care to them makes it more expensive. When we have had discussions and roundtables about the proposal that the House had put out, providers in my State told me point-blank, covering the Medicaid population has helped drive down and control the rate of insurance in the private markets. By saying we are going to cut Medicaid at a more drastic rate, we are going to just send a signal to the market that rates for the private insurers should go up.

I don't think that is what my constituents want. They want us to inno-

vate. They want us to drive quality care and managed care into parts of the United States where it doesn't exist. They want us to take care of our most vulnerable population, and they want to make sure we are not delivering that off people who are going into the emergency room 50 times in a year because they don't have insurance.

We know the Medicaid rate is critically important. Medicaid costs up to one-quarter less than private insurance. It is a way to deliver care. We know measures we put into the Affordable Care Act, such as moving people off of nursing home care to community-based care, has saved Medicaid dollars. More States should do it.

We know plans such as bundling up the individual market into larger programs so they can have clout like others who work for a larger employer has also driven down costs. So those are the things we should be accelerating, not this notion that we move forward as a country by cutting the most vulnerable off of healthcare.

I ask my colleagues to come out and discuss this concept, discuss this idea, how it will affect the healthcare providers in their States. I plan to do that with my State. I hope they will come out here and tell us why it is a smart strategy to cut people off from Medicaid. I know no State that has the money to make up for the Federal share of Medicaid that is going to be doubled down in this bill.

I do not want to see a war on Medicaid. What I want to see is innovation. What I want to see is that covering people with some level of insurance basically helps save everybody on their insurance bills as well. I hope my colleagues will take this discussion draft and be proud to come out here and discuss it, but we have heard very little of that thus far.

Let's look at the real numbers, and I guarantee that we will hear from Governors, we will hear from States, we will hear from providers, we will hear from businesses, and we will hear from people who do not think this is a good idea.

Already there are comments from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging: "This strategy will also put . . . Medicaid [and] states [and consumers] on a fiscally precarious path."

We have heard from other people that the Medicaid cap is up to twice as bad for States, will cause problems, and also from children's healthcare groups: "Converting Medicaid into a per capita cap . . . would dismantle critical protections . . . to care for all enrollees."

These aren't just partisan comments. These are the facts. What my colleagues don't realize is that by taking a huge chunk out of Medicaid, you are taking a huge chunk out of the safety net so many Americans depend on. It will not help us lower costs. It will exacerbate an escalation of rates for everyone in the market.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, all postcloture time on the Billingslea nomination expire at 2 p.m. today and that if cloture is invoked on the Svinicki nomination, the postcloture time not expire until 5:30 p.m. on Monday, June 26.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in March, Mr. Comey briefed Ranking Member FEINSTEIN and this Senator on the Russia investigation. This included telling us who was and who was not under investigation.

After that meeting, I publicly called for Mr. Comey to tell the public what he had told us about whether President Trump was under investigation. I did this because the public had a right to know. Mr. Comey told me and other congressional leaders that the President was not under investigation. He even told the President himself, and I understand that he repeatedly told this to the President. But Mr. Comey didn't listen to my request for transparency. I think transparency in government is very important because transparency brings accountability, and government needs to be accountable. Mr. Comey didn't listen to the President's request. Only months later has the truth finally come out.

Well, it ought to raise the question with anybody: What happened in the meantime? What happened because Mr. Comey refused to tell the American people that the President wasn't under investigation? The short answer is something you see almost hourly, particularly in this city: media hysteria. Countless media articles falsely claimed the President was under investigation for colluding with Russia. Unfortunately, a number of our Democrat colleagues in the House and Senate played right along. Over and over again, the media published selective leaks. They published classified half-truths. All this was used to make false allegations of sinister conduct by the President. And, of course, there were a lot of people who believed it.

The intelligence community conducted an assessment of Russia's efforts to interfere in the election. That assessment said one of Russia's goals was to undermine public confidence in our democratic system.

Because Mr. Comey refused to tell the public that the FBI was not investigating the President, conspiracy theories and, of course, wild speculation have run rampant about the election, the President, and Russia. These conspiracy theories and wild speculation have played right into Russia's aim of undermining faith in our democratic system.

That doesn't come out very often in these stories, but we have to understand that Russia makes a career of not only undermining democratic systems in the United States, look at what they have done in Ukraine militarily, and look at what they have done in France with the elections and in the Netherlands with the elections. They are talking about upcoming elections in Germany, where the Russians will try to do the same thing because autocrats don't like democratic systems that work and whatever they can do to undermine those democratic systems is going to obviously make them look better in comparison.

Those national security concerns should have taken precedence. Mr. Comey said he was worried about a duty to correct the record if evidence of collusion involving the President came to light later on. But that concern was merely hypothetical—in other words, pure speculation. In the unlikely event that it came to pass, the public should know if the FBI is pursuing a criminal investigation against the President, just as the public should know if the FBI is pursuing a criminal investigation against a major party's nominee for President. But Mr. Comey agreed with Attorney General Lynch to shade the truth in favor of the Clinton campaign's rhetoric and call what was an investigation a "matter" instead of using the word "investigation." This came about because of an order by Attorney General Lynch.

After a year of the entire might of the U.S. intelligence community and the FBI looking for evidence of collusion with the Russians, where is that evidence? But after all of this chaos and mountains of innuendo about the President and collusion with Russia, the truth finally came out: The FBI was not investigating President Trump in the Russia probe. The media was wrong. The Democrats were wrong. The wild speculation and conspiracy theories ended up harming our country. They played right into Russia's hands.

How did we all learn the truth? In President Trump's letter removing Mr. Comey from office. At first, most didn't believe it. The media scoffed when they read what the President said in that letter. They insisted that Mr. Comey would never tell the President that he was not under investigation. We learned earlier this month from Mr. Comey himself that he had done exactly that. It wasn't a surprise to me because Mr. Comey had told me the same thing.

I have to note something else here. Mr. Comey didn't just tell the President, Senator FEINSTEIN, and me that the President was not under investigation. He had also told the Gang of 8. Of course, the Gang of 8 includes the Senate minority leader, Mr. SCHUMER. But even after Mr. Comey told the Gang of 8 that the President was not under investigation, the minority leader told the media that the President was under investigation, and, of course, that fur-

ther helped feed media hysteria. The minority leader even tried to say that the Senate shouldn't vote on the Supreme Court nomination because the President was under investigation, and the whole time, he knew it wasn't true.

Media hysteria and baseless political attacks filled the vacuum left by Mr. Comey's failure to inform the public—to be transparent, to be accountable.

The odd thing about it is none of this fiasco had to happen. If Mr. Comey had just been transparent with the public, as I urged him to be, it could have been avoided.

Unfortunately, now it looks as if Mr. Comey and the media might be doing the same thing to Attorney General Sessions.

Two weeks ago, Mr. Comey said he didn't tell the Attorney General about the conversation he supposedly had with the President about General Flynn. Mr. Comey said this was because he believed the Attorney General was going to recuse himself from the Russia investigation.

Mr. Comey said the FBI was aware of the facts that he couldn't discuss in an open setting that could have made the Attorney General's continued engagement problematic. Well, that vague statement sounds very mysterious to people who don't know the whole truth. They will wonder: What were those secret facts? What did the FBI conclude about those secret facts? Was the Attorney General under investigation? Did the Attorney General collude with Russia?

Once again, Mr. Comey is not being as transparent about senior government officials and the Russia investigation as he could or should be. Now the speculation is running rampant again, this time about the Attorney General instead of the President.

CNN reported that Mr. Comey told the Intelligence Committee behind closed doors that the issue was a possible additional meeting between Sessions and the Russian Ambassador. The media has begun to speculate all sorts of nefarious things. So here we go again. The rumor mill is back in business. It is insinuating improper ties with Russians and undermining people's faith in another senior government official, with the follow-up that it also undermines people's confidence in our institutions of government, and maybe even in our Constitution.

This is the same destructive pattern, and it plays right into the Russians' hands again. Well, this time around, we shouldn't put up with it. We ought to say enough is enough. There is no reason Mr. Comey couldn't have told the public the whole truth.

Once again, 3 months ago, Mr. Comey specifically told Members who was and who was not under investigation in the Russia probe. He should also tell the public whether the FBI ever had an open investigation on Attorney General Sessions. He should tell the public whether the FBI checked out the times Sessions met the Russian Ambassador.

He should tell the public whether the FBI looked into the Mayflower Hotel event that went on. He should tell the public if the FBI found nothing improper about these meetings. If there was nothing to it, he should say so publicly. He should not be telling Senators one thing behind closed doors and then making public insinuations that are different. He is the person who can nip this ridiculous speculation in the bud.

Mr. Comey should have told the public earlier what he told Members about the President, and now he should tell the public what he told Members about the Attorney General. Enough of this nonsense.

The investigations of Russian interference and of circumstances surrounding Mr. Comey's firing will continue. I am confident that we will eventually get all the facts, one way or another, and we are going to go where the facts take us. In the meantime, it is time to stop the rumor-mongering. It is time to stop the innuendoes and half-truths. It is time to stop leaking national security information to score political points. And it is time to stop playing into Russia's hands by intentionally sowing false doubt about your political opponents. Instead, it is quite obvious that it is time to get back to doing the people's business.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a relevant supplemental article from the Washington Post.

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

[From the Washington Post, June 14, 2017]
THE SESSIONS HEARING SHOWS WHO'S REALLY
COLLUDING WITH RUSSIA
(By Marc A. Thiessen)

According to the U.S. intelligence community, Russia's objectives in meddling in the 2016 election included not only hurting Hillary Clinton's chances but also undermining "public faith in the U.S. democratic process," "impugning the fairness of the election" and calling into question "the U.S.-led liberal democratic order." If the spectacle of the past few months is any indication, Russian leader Vladimir Putin is certainly succeeding in these latter goals.

And here is the great irony: Those who are falsely claiming that Trump was under FBI investigation for collusion with Moscow are, in fact, the ones inadvertently colluding with Putin to undermine American democracy.

Case in point is the campaign of McCarthyite character assassination on display in the Senate Intelligence Committee hearing Tuesday. No doubt Putin was smiling as Attorney General Jeff Sessions was forced to rebut what he correctly called "appalling and detestable" accusations that he colluded with the Russians and lied to the Senate. Sessions testified that the much-vaunted "third meeting" between Sessions and the Russian ambassador at the Mayflower Hotel—which Sessions reportedly failed to disclose—did not happen, at least not beyond possible incidental contact that he doesn't even recall.

There was a time when airing unproven allegations of coordinating with the Kremlin was seen as bad form. Now it is common practice in Washington. These kinds of false charges and innuendo directly assist Russia

in its efforts to undermine public confidence in our democratic institutions. Those raising such accusations without proof are, wittingly or unwittingly, doing the Kremlin's bidding.

For months, Democrats (a.k.a. "The Resistance") have been spinning the false narrative that President Trump was under FBI investigation to call into question the validity of his presidency. In March, Democrats used it as a pretext to argue that Trump did not have the legitimacy to fill a Supreme Court vacancy. Senate Democratic leader Charles E. Schumer (N.Y.) declared in a floor speech that the Senate should not vote on Neil Gorsuch's nomination because Republicans "stopped a president who wasn't under investigation" from filling the seat. Two days later, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) said the same thing, declaring, "The FBI has revealed that the sitting president of the United States is under investigation. And it raises a really, I think, important question and that is whether or not a president who is under investigation by the FBI ought to be ramming through a Supreme Court nominee that would have a lifetime appointment."

The media gleefully echoed these false claims. The day before Comey testified, CNN blared: "In testimony, Comey will dispute President Trump's blanket claim that he was told he wasn't under investigation." In fact, Comey said precisely the opposite. When Sen. James Risch (R-Idaho) asked, "While you were director, the president of the United States was not under investigation. Is that a fair statement?" Comey replied: "That's correct." Even then, CNN was not willing to concede its error, declaring in a so-called "correction" that "Comey does not directly dispute that Trump was told multiple times he was not under investigation" (emphasis added).

No, Comey did not fail to "directly dispute" it, he directly confirmed it. The CNN story—and its non-correction correction—was "fake news."

Not only that, Comey also testified that Trump never tried to get him to stop the probe into Russia's election meddling, which Comey explained was a separate matter from the FBI's investigation of disgraced former national security adviser Michael Flynn. Not only did Trump not ask Comey to stop the probe, the former FBI director told Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), "He went farther than that. He said, and if some of my satellites did something wrong, it'd be good to find that out." Rubio pressed Comey, asking whether he was testifying that Trump effectively said, "Do the Russia investigation. I hope it all comes out. I have nothing to do with anything Russia. It'd be great if it all came out, people around me were doing things that were wrong." Comey replied, "That was the sentiment he was expressing. Yes, sir."

Given these facts, Trump has legitimate reason to be frustrated. If you knew you were not under investigation by the FBI, but everyone was saying you were, you'd want the truth to get out. And you might be upset with an FBI director who refused to lift the "cloud" hanging over your administration by confirming that he was not investigating you.

That said, Trump has been fueling the liberal feeding frenzy with his tweetstorms taking his critics to task. If Trump knows he did nothing wrong—and if he really wants to find out whether any of his "satellites" did—he should stop talking and tweeting about the investigation, let special counsel Robert S. Mueller III do his work and focus on his job: governing. His daughter Ivanka Trump was recently asked how she dealt with the media frenzy over Russia. She replied, "I'm trying to keep my head down, not listen to

the noise and just work really hard to make a positive impact in the lives of many people."

That's a good strategy—and one her father ought to emulate.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, today we finally got a look at the monstrosity of a bill that the Republicans have been hiding behind closed doors for weeks. Yes, it is finally clear how the Republicans were spending their time, locked in those back rooms.

Now we know the truth. Senate Republicans weren't making the House bill better—no, not one bit. Instead, they were sitting around a conference room table, dreaming up even meaner ways to kick dirt in the face of American people and take away their health insurance.

Remember, the Senate Republicans worked for weeks on this new bill. They worked really, really hard on it. It is pretty clear now exactly who they were working for. This bill has one flashing neon sign after another telling us who the Republican Party cares about, and it is not American families.

The Senate bill is crammed full with just as many tax cuts as the House bill—tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, tax cuts for wealthy investors, and tax cuts for giant companies. All those tax cuts don't come cheap. They start to add up after a while.

Senate Republicans had to make a choice—how to pay for all those juicy tax cuts for their rich buddies. I will tell you how: blood money.

Senate Republicans wrung some extra dollars out of kicking people off the tax credits that help them afford health insurance. They raked in extra cash by letting States drop even more protections and benefits, like maternity care or prescription drug coverage or mental health treatment.

Then they got to the real piggy bank, Medicaid, and here they just went wild. Senate Republicans went after Medicaid with even deeper cuts than the House version—the Medicaid expansion gone, ripped up, and flushed down the toilet. The rest of the Medicaid Program? For Senate Republicans, it wasn't enough that the House bill was going to toss grandparents out of nursing homes or slash funding for people with disabilities or pull the plug on healthcare for babies born too soon. Senate Republicans wanted to go bigger.

The Republican bill claims to protect kids with disabilities by leaving them out of the calculations that decide how

big the Medicaid cuts will be in each State. I don't know if the Republicans were expecting a round of applause for pitting kids with breathing tubes against vulnerable seniors or someone needing treatment for addiction, but I do know this so-called exemption will not do a thing to help these kids. The Republican cuts still slash hundreds of billions of dollars for Medicaid, leaving States with no choice—no choice but to cut services that kids with disabilities desperately need.

Medicaid is the program in this country that provides health insurance to 1 in 5 Americans, to 30 million kids, to nearly 2 out of every 3 people in a nursing home. These cuts are blood money. People will die. Let's be very clear: Senate Republicans are paying for tax cuts for the wealthy with American lives.

Think about what would happen if the Republican bill becomes law next week. Picture a woman in her eighties who lives at home. She is shaky on her feet. She needs help preparing her meals or taking a bath, but her only income is her Social Security check. Right now, Medicaid helps pay for home and community-based services so she can stay in her home, someone who comes by to help for a few hours a week. Because of that help, she gets to stay home, to live independently. The Republicans are determined to cut taxes for millionaires and billionaires, so their healthcare plan cuts Medicaid money that helps millions of seniors stay in their homes.

Without these services, this elderly woman can't live alone. Where does she turn? The usual answer would be a nursing home. Wait. Medicaid pays for most nursing home care in this country. The Republicans are determined to cut taxes for millionaires and billionaires, so they have cut Medicaid funding so much that there is no help for this woman at home and no nursing home bed for her either.

What does she do? She stays home without help. She can't climb the stairs anymore. Her world shrinks. Eventually, most likely, she falls and ends up in the hospital. The care is expensive, and she is miserable.

Finally, let's say the hospital gets her back on her feet, but there is nowhere for her to go when she is discharged. She heads back home to wait for the next fall, maybe the one that will be fatal.

In their determination to cut taxes for the rich, is this what Republicans have planned for frail seniors in our country? Wait until they are all used up and then leave them out at the curb for the next trash pickup?

It isn't just seniors who will be hit hard. How about a premature baby born with lung defects? His parents both have full-time jobs, but no matter how hard they work, no matter how many hours they put in, they will never be able to pay for the millions of dollars in surgeries, equipment, medicine, and therapy that their child

needs. Right now, Medicaid makes sure that kids with complex medical needs have coverage for feeding tubes and medication and surgery and physical therapy.

Senate Republicans were so determined to offer tax breaks for the rich that they have taken away this baby's Medicaid. What happens next? Maybe the parents try their best, but they can't pay. Maybe they try a Kickstarter campaign, but it is not going to bring in enough to cover the medical bills. They take out a second mortgage, and then they go bankrupt and lose their home.

Is that the Republican plan for this family—go live in a homeless shelter with your little baby, whose only crime was to be born 14 weeks early?

Senate Republicans can wave their hands and say that everyone will be fine, but it is time for the rest of us to take a long, hard look at exactly what would happen to the people who have to live with the Republicans' reckless cuts.

Senate Republicans know exactly what they are doing with this healthcare bill. Their values are on full display. If they want to trade the health insurance of millions of Americans for tax cuts for the rich, they better be ready for a fight because now that this shameful bill is out in the open, that is exactly what they are going to get.

I yield my time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss, for just a couple of minutes this afternoon, the issue of healthcare and, in particular, the legislation that was unveiled today, what is referred to as a "discussion draft." It is legislative text, but it is not the final word on this issue. So we have to begin in earnest to engage in debate because we are going to be very limited in the time that we have.

I think the best way to describe this legislation can be very simple, actually, in terms of the impact on a lot of Americans. Unfortunately, I don't think this is really an effort to improve the healthcare system. I think it is a scheme. It is a scheme that sells out the middle class. It hurts seniors and children and devastates the protections and healthcare for individuals with disabilities over time, and all of that is done to finance tax breaks for the very rich. There are other ways, of course, to describe it, but I will focus mostly on Medicaid.

As it relates to Medicaid, this isn't a repeal and replace, or repeal and improve, or repeal and reform. This is repeal and decimate when it comes to Medicaid. The cuts may be stretched out, but they are, in fact, deeper over time.

So if you are one of the 1.1 million children in Pennsylvania who receives Medicaid or one of over 720,000 Pennsylvanians with a disability who benefits from Medicaid, your healthcare could be at risk. My test would be that if any of those individuals lose their Medicaid benefits, it is a bad bill. I would hope that would be the test for every Member of the Senate.

The other adverse consequence of this legislation is that it will cripple efforts to battle the opioid addiction in our country. We just had a great consensus at the end of last year where both parties came together on two pieces of legislation—one that dealt directly with the opioid epidemic, the so-called CARA bill, or the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. Then later in the year, there was another bill that provided some additional funding. All of that would be compromised, undermined, or degraded, at least, if this legislation went through because the biggest payer—certainly, in the top two, in terms of our paying for opioid treatment and services—is, of course, the Medicaid Program.

So what we have here before us is a bill that is a tax giveaway to the wealthiest. The top one-tenth of 1 percent would receive thousands and thousands, if not tens of thousands, of dollars. One estimate of the earlier version of the House bill said, if you were in the top one-tenth of 1 percent, you would get \$197,000 each. Those people don't need \$197,000 from a tax break from a so-called healthcare bill. They would, I think, expect that we would take care of the people that need healthcare: Vulnerable children. Some 40 percent of the children in America get Medicaid. Almost half the births in the country are paid for by Medicaid. People with disabilities are disproportionately dependent upon Medicaid, and they should have a right to expect—and their families should have a right to expect—that, if you have a disability, you should get Medicaid today, tomorrow, years from now, decades from now, and as long as you need it. You should have that guarantee. This bill takes away that guarantee for those families with a loved one with a disability.

One of the many stories that we get from back home are from parents. Many of them are writing because their child has a disability or multiple disabilities, and they are dependent upon Medicaid. Here is just one:

My son, Anthony, was born at 25 weeks and he weighed one tiny pound. We were overcome with medical bills which Medicaid thankfully paid for us. Since his birth he has had multiple health crisis, seizures, sleep disorders just to name a few.

Most recently, Anthony was diagnosed with Autism spectrum disorder, Tourette's syndrome, severe obsessive compulsive disorder and Dyspraxia. He has suffered the most physically and mentally because of his Tourette's. It's severe and he is frequently unable to attend school due to his "tics." They are painful and debilitating. They make him unable to eat, breathe and see at

their worst. Far from what is commonly depicted in the movies and on TV.

Then, this father goes on to say:

Two years ago I was forced to quit my job of twenty years as a therapist to stay at home and care for Anthony because of the amount of doctors' appointments he has and the number of days of school he misses every year. Luckily with medical assistance—

That is the Pennsylvania version of Medicaid—

covering his services I am still able to do so. If we lost coverage, we would not be able to provide the support he needs. We are sure of that.

I truly realize that unless you are actually living this kind of life, it's easy to turn a blind eye. I can assure you that my story is much like thousands of others that DEPEND—

And he has that word "depend" in all capital letters—

on funds from medical assistance to cover doctors, medications, therapies and durable medical equipment that children with disabilities require. Families of children with disabilities are desperate to not lose those benefits.

My son Anthony is currently attending school almost regularly and functioning the best he has for a very long time thanks to the services he received from medical assistance.

That is otherwise known as Medicaid.

So that is the reality for a lot of families. Now, I can hear some folks in the Senate saying: Well, maybe Anthony will not be affected because the Medicaid provisions are going to be up to the States, and the States can handle that. We are just going to put a cap on the dollars, and we are going to wind down the Medicaid expansion that covered 11 million Americans at last count, and the States will handle it.

So we are sending back these challenges and the disproportionate burden that States will have to bear to make sure that Anthony—who has all those challenges in his life—has the coverage of Medicaid. The Federal Government will just wash its hands of that responsibility.

No, Medicaid is a guarantee now, based upon your eligibility. That guarantee should remain. We are a great country. We have the strongest economy and the strongest military in the world, and we have the Medicaid Program. We don't have to sacrifice those kids or sacrifice the healthcare for one child who depends on Medicaid. We don't have to sacrifice that child in order to have another part of our budget funded appropriately. That is an insult, and anyone who is going to choose to support legislation that would fund tax cuts for the wealthiest, while at the very same time and in the very same bill would result in others losing coverage—and I am not only talking about children with disabilities. I am talking about adults who have coverage—20 million people in the last couple of years. Any Member of the Senate who chooses tax cuts for the wealthy over those children and over those individuals, I think, should examine their conscience, to use an old expression, because this kind of policy

that results in the most vulnerable among us losing their healthcare coverage is obscene. There are a lot of other words we could use—words we can't use here—because that is the definition of an insult to our values and to our country.

We are a better country than what we will become if this Chamber votes in favor of a bill that will decimate Medicaid, the way this bill will. I realize it might take a long time. I realize it might be another Presidency or many Congresses from now, but the deed will be done here that will lead to that kind of misery. We have no sense of the misery that will be imposed upon those families because we have never had this before.

We had a program in place for 50 years, and it has helped a lot of kids with disabilities. It has helped a lot of families to be able to hold down a job while their child gets the benefit of Medicaid because of a disability. It has helped a lot of poor children rise up from poverty and overcome terrible poverty because when they were kids—when they were very, very young—they got early periodic screening diagnosis and testing—the kind of early intervention and good healthcare that children get on Medicaid.

A lot of seniors get into nursing homes. A lot of middle-class seniors from middle-class families get into nursing homes solely because they get the benefit of Medicaid, in addition to Medicare.

The last thing I would say is that I think Senators in this Chamber should think about the basic inequity when they have healthcare. Everyone here has healthcare. All the families here have healthcare. All of our loved ones who are dependent upon us have healthcare. Yet some will vote to take away healthcare from some, and, in the very same bill, vote for gross, obscene tax cuts for the wealthiest among us—most of whom, I would bet, don't want those tax cuts. They would rather see us take care of the vulnerable.

So it is a basic choice. This isn't complicated. This is a very simple choice. I hope that in the course of this debate, some will come forward with some courage, some guts, and some compassion and do the right thing and vote this bill down.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, last month, Republicans in the House of Representatives passed a healthcare bill. They call it the American Health Care Act. It has been widely described as cruel and poorly crafted. Last week, President Trump described it as "mean."

The House bill, by design, would take health coverage away from tens of millions of Americans. It ends the guarantee of affordable coverage for people with preexisting conditions. It cuts Medicaid, which is the principal program for ensuring children, people with

disabilities, and seniors in nursing homes. It cuts Medicaid by more than \$800 billion, and to compound that cruelty, the same legislation gives an enormous tax cut—over \$30 billion—to those at the top of the income scale.

We just heard this morning some of what is in the Senate bill, the Senate version of the American Health Care Act. In fact, not only does it not do what President Trump claims the Senate was working on—it doesn't address the mean aspect of it—but it actually makes it worse. In a State like New Hampshire, it provides for even deeper cuts to our expanded Medicaid Program, a bipartisan program that provides for treatment for substance use disorders for people dealing with the heroin and opioid epidemic. It would tax older Americans more than younger Americans for their health insurance and defund Planned Parenthood. There are all kinds of reasons. It would eliminate the requirement that people with preexisting conditions are able to have healthcare coverage. And all of this was done in secret behind closed doors.

My office has been deluged with messages from constituents who oppose the Republican leader's bill. This shows whom we have heard from in recent weeks. I have received more than 5,400 messages opposing the bill and 108 in support, so 5,461 are in opposition, and 108 are in support.

I am sure my colleagues on the other side of the aisle must be receiving similar volumes of mail and phone calls from their constituents, and they are hearing what I am hearing from my constituents: that if we go forward with this legislation that the House passed and that the Senate is considering, we are going to have people lose their access to healthcare and many people will have to pay more.

So I appeal to Republican leaders. I urge you to stop and reconsider what you are doing. I want you to listen to some of the people we have heard from in New Hampshire, everyday Americans whose lives would be devastated by this legislation.

Several months ago, I asked people across the State of New Hampshire to tell me their stories about the Affordable Care Act, to tell me their concerns, to let me know how it has made a difference for them.

Here we see one of the people I heard from. This is Deodonne Bhattarai and her son Bodhi. They live in Concord, NH. As you see, Bodhi is in a special chair. Deodonne writes:

Our three-year-old son is a bright, curious, funny little boy who also has Spinal Muscular Atrophy.

That is a degenerative neuromuscular disease that causes his muscles to be very weak.

Our insurance initially denied coverage for his wheelchair, but because of the Affordable Care Act—

The ban on discrimination against those with preexisting conditions—my son is now able to explore his world independently.

She goes on to say:

I have [read news reports about the Republican legislation], and I fear for our ability to maintain not just insurance coverage but the type of quality coverage my son's life depends upon.

Next we have a picture of the McCabe family. They are from Kingston, NH, and this is their story:

Our daughter, Ellie, was born with a rare and serious heart defect called Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome.

You can see Ellie there. She looks like a healthy, inquisitive little girl, and she is looking healthy because she underwent her first surgery when she was just 3 days old.

The McCabes go on to say:

It terrifies us to think about what would have happened to our family if Ellie hadn't been protected by the pre-existing conditions protections in place thanks to the Affordable Care Act. Without those protections, either we would be in serious debt for the rest of our lives or Ellie would not have had her life-saving surgeries.

Next, this is Dr. Marie Ramas. She serves at the Lamprey Health Care Center in Nashua, NH. That is a clinic I recently visited. She wrote to me:

I have a 24-year-old patient who was born with a congenital condition that did not allow his leg bones to grow completely. This patient was unable to afford proper care and had been walking with an old prosthetic for the last 3 years.

Imagine not being able to get your prosthetic replaced for 3 years.

Thanks to expanded Medicaid and to the ACA protections for those with pre-existing conditions, he's now getting quality care and can afford a new prosthetic.

So his life has been changed by the Affordable Care Act.

I have also heard stories from scores of entrepreneurs and small business owners who have benefited from the Affordable Care Act.

This is Steve Roll of Keene, NH, and he wrote:

In late 2015, I left my job to start my own business. I've built a profitable business and expect to hire employees within a year or two. Before the ACA, I wouldn't have taken the risk to start a business because I have a pre-existing condition and I wouldn't have been able to get an individual health insurance policy. If the ACA is repealed, I'm concerned that I'll need to put my business on hold in order to go back to a corporate job just to get the healthcare benefits.

Well, the healthcare legislation that has been produced by the Republican leadership in the Senate would take away the requirement that people with preexisting conditions have to have access to healthcare.

We have another businessperson here, Dave Lucier. He is the owner of Claremont Spice & Dry Goods in western New Hampshire. Dave wrote this:

Before the Affordable Care Act, insurance costs were more than a third of my business expenses. Now they're less than an eighth. The ACA made it possible for me to go out on my own and realize my dream of starting a small business here in Claremont.

And his business is doing well.

Many women have written to me about how the Affordable Care Act has

ended discrimination against them by the health insurance industry—discrimination because of their gender. In particular, they are grateful that the Affordable Care Act includes maternity care and contraception among the law's essential health benefits.

This is Maura Fay of Exeter, NH. I talked about her last night when I was talking about the impact of this Republican bill on women's health. Maura wrote:

My husband and I are self-employed. Before the ACA, we were paying rates that were simply unsustainable for a middle-class family like ours. When I was pregnant in 2013, we were forced to pay a maternity rider of an additional \$822 a month. I'm worried about the rollbacks in regulations around essential health benefits, especially since so many of them impact women. Maternity coverage shouldn't come with an additional \$800 a month price tag.

Here in Washington, some folks seem to think that repealing the Affordable Care Act is all about politics, that it is about winning this debate. But for ordinary people in New Hampshire—people like Maura, like the McCabe family, like all the people I have shown pictures of this afternoon—for ordinary people in New Hampshire and across America, repealing the Affordable Care Act isn't about politics. For so many of them, it is about life-and-death. It is about the kind of lives they are going to lead. It is about whether they are going to be able to continue to afford healthcare, whether they are going to continue to pay their mortgage and buy prescription drugs. We need to listen to these ordinary people in each of our States whose lives and financial situations will be turned upside down if the Affordable Care Act is repealed.

This process has really not been in keeping with our democratic process in America. For the Republican leadership here in the Senate and before that in the House to pursue a partisan approach to healthcare, to deny Democrats and even deny many of my Republican colleagues the ability to engage in the writing of this bill—it is deeply misguided to deny the public access, to deny a hearing on this bill, legislation that we know is going to hurt tens of millions of Americans.

There really is a better way forward for both the Senate and for our country. If we put ideology and partisanship aside, if we work together, we can strengthen the parts of the Affordable Care Act that aren't working. We can continue Medicaid expansion so it can help people with substance use disorders, so it can help kids with disabilities, so it can help elderly people in nursing homes. We can fix what is not working, and we can improve on this law and make it better, but we can't do that if we continue to be divided up on our partisan sides, if we are not willing to talk about the issue, not willing to work together.

The American people want us to work together here in Washington to address their concerns. Well, it is time to respect their wishes. Let's strength-

en the Affordable Care Act so that it works even better for all Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

REQUESTS FOR AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I have six requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They do not have the approval of the Democratic leader; therefore, they will not be permitted to meet, but I ask unanimous consent that a list of committees requesting authority to meet be printed in the RECORD.

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

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Committee on the Judiciary

Committee on Intelligence

Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard

NOMINATION OF KRISTINE SVINICKI

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak in support of President Trump's nomination of Kristine Svinicki to continue serving as a nuclear safety regulator.

Ms. Svinicki has served as a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for more than 9 years. In January, President Trump designated Ms. Svinicki as the Chair of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. She is well qualified. In her time in office, she has proven to be knowledgeable, dedicated, and an outstanding public servant.

She also has been very responsive to Congress. Since becoming a Commissioner, she has testified 18 times before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. Before becoming a member of the NRC, she served as staff in the U.S. Senate, as a nuclear engineer at the Department of Energy, and as an energy engineer for the Wisconsin Public Service Commission.

She has already been confirmed twice to serve on the NRC. In both 2008 and 2012, her nomination was approved by the Environment and Public Works Committee and by the full Senate, each time by voice vote. Earlier this month, the Environment and Public Works Committee approved her nomination for a third time, again by voice vote.

Her nomination has garnered support from groups like Third Way, which is a think tank once labeled as "radical centrists" by the New York Times. Josh Freed, who is the vice president of the Clean Energy Program at Third Way, said this: "Svinicki's work at the NRC has resulted in improved readiness to regulate small modular and advanced reactors that could provide enormous benefits for climate, American leadership, and domestic job creation." He went on to say that Chairman Svinicki's continued leadership at the NRC is needed now more than ever.

The Senate must act quickly to confirm Ms. Svinicki. Unless she is confirmed by June 30, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will no longer have a quorum of its members. We can't let that happen. The NRC has an important mission of regulating America's nuclear industry. The Commission serves to protect public health and the environment. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission needs a quorum of its members in office to meet its mission.

We need to confirm Kristine Svinicki, and I urge all Senators to vote yes on her nomination.

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. BARRASSO. 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. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired and the question occurs on the Billingslea nomination.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Billingslea nomination?

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 152 Ex.]

YEAS—65

Alexander	Fischer	Murkowski
Baldwin	Flake	Nelson
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Bennet	Graham	Perdue
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rubio
Cochran	Inhofe	Sasse
Collins	Isakson	Scott
Coons	Johnson	Shelby
Corker	Kaine	Strange
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	King	Tester
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Manchin	Toomey
Donnelly	McCaill	Warner
Duckworth	McCaskill	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	

NAYS—35

Blumenthal	Franken	Merkley
Booker	Gillibrand	Murphy
Brown	Harris	Murray
Cantwell	Hassan	Peters
Cardin	Heinrich	Reed
Carper	Hirono	Sanders
Casey	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Schumer
Durbin	Markey	Shaheen
Feinstein	Menendez	

Stabenow
Udall

Van Hollen
Warren

Whitehouse
Wyden

Udall
Van Hollen

Warner
Whitehouse

Wicker
Young

The nomination was confirmed.

NAYS—10

Booker
Cortez Masto
Gillibrand
Harris

Heller
Markey
Merkley
Sanders

Warren
Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Alexander

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 89, the nays are 10.

The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Kristine L. Svinicki, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2022.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, John Hoeven, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Chuck Grassley, John Thune, Mike Crapo, Bill Cassidy, James M. Inhofe, Thad Cochran, Steve Daines, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Kristine L. Svinicki, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 89, nays 10, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 153 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Baldwin	Feinstein	Moran
Barrasso	Fischer	Murkowski
Bennet	Flake	Murphy
Blumenthal	Franken	Murray
Blunt	Gardner	Nelson
Boozman	Graham	Paul
Brown	Grassley	Perdue
Burr	Hassan	Peters
Cantwell	Hatch	Portman
Capito	Heinrich	Reed
Cardin	Heitkamp	Risch
Carper	Hirono	Roberts
Casey	Hoeven	Rounds
Cassidy	Inhofe	Rubio
Cochran	Isakson	Sasse
Collins	Johnson	Schatz
Coons	Kaine	Schumer
Corker	Kennedy	Scott
Cornyn	King	Shaheen
Cotton	Klobuchar	Shelby
Crapo	Lankford	Stabenow
Cruz	Leahy	Strange
Daines	Lee	Sullivan
Donnelly	Manchin	Tester
Duckworth	McCain	Thune
Durbin	McCaskill	Tillis
Enzi	McConnell	Toomey
Ernst	Menendez	

lies in South Korea and Japan. These threats are not just hollow words any longer. North Korea's capabilities are rapidly improving to meet their long-stated intent.

We thought that Kim Jong Il was bad, but in 6 years, his son Kim Jong Un has conducted as many as 75 ballistic missile tests. In comparison, over a 17-year period, his father conducted about 30. In other words, he has done over twice as many in a fraction of the time.

Additionally, Kim Jong Un has sped up North Korea's nuclear program since taking power in 2011. North Korea's nuclear technology is advancing at an alarming rate. For example, the bomb North Korea tested in its most recent test last September was 10 times more powerful than what the regime could have produced in 2006—10 times more.

At the same time, North Korea has actively worked on miniaturizing nuclear weapons so that they can deliver by way of a ballistic missile. Earlier this year, analysts detected activity at a North Korean nuclear test site, indicating another nuclear test may be imminent.

Intelligence and military experts have repeatedly argued that it is prudent to assume that North Korea has successfully miniaturized their nuclear weapons. That means the only technology they need to conduct a nuclear strike on the U.S. mainland—that is us; that is right here—would be a functional intercontinental ballistic missile, or ICBM.

In January, Kim Jong Un said North Korea is in the "final stage in preparations."

Let's make sure we understand what we are talking about. We know that their capability is getting very close to it, and they have already said that they would send something over to the mainland United States.

Unfortunately, when you talk to people in the real world, they can't believe this could be true—that one guy who is mentally deranged could be heading up a country that has the capability of blowing up an American city. Yet we know this is going on right now.

Recently, in the Armed Services Committee—and I was in attendance at that time—the Defense Intelligence Agency Director, Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, told the Armed Services Committee: "If left on its current trajectory the [North Korean] regime will ultimately succeed in fielding a nuclear-armed missile capable of threatening the United States homeland."

That is a direct quote by the guy who knows more about this than anybody else. Lieutenant General Stewart added that "the North Korean regime is committed and is on a pathway where this capability is inevitable."

I will say that again. Our intelligence experts assessed that, unchecked, North Korea will inevitably achieve the capability to strike the U.S. homeland with a nuclear missile.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kristine L. Svinicki, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2022.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for as much time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NORTH KOREA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, as we begin the markup—that is what we are going to be starting on right away. We have already had an initial meeting with the Senate Armed Services Committee on the National Defense Authorization Act. I want to express my deep concern over the continued malign behavior by the overtly hostile nation of North Korea.

I often talk to people, and they shake their heads in disbelief about a country that is run by a mentally deranged individual who is rapidly developing the capability of hitting the mainland United States with a missile. I think it is important that we immediately get to our Defense authorization bill, so we can start addressing this and many other problems that we have.

It is important to us in the Senate to communicate to the American people the incredibly grave situation we are facing right now in North Korea. The Kim Jong Un regime has expressed a desire to destroy the United States of America. Normally that wouldn't be a concern because he wouldn't have the credibility, but right now we are seeing progress being made in their technology and their ability to actually hit major areas.

In April, North Korea's official newspaper relayed the threat of a pre-emptive strike to "completely and immediately wipe out not only U.S. imperialists' invasion forces in South Korea and its surrounding areas but the U.S. mainland and reduce them to ashes."

That is a threat—a threat that has come directly from the leader of North Korea. This is the most recent in a long line of threats by that individual.

In addition, North Korean leaders constantly threaten our friends and al-

Even without the ICBM capability, the missiles we know they already have can range U.S.—that means it can reach the United States—military personnel and other citizens in South Korea, Japan, Guam, and many other areas.

North Korea's known missile inventory now includes a missile that North Korea successfully tested for the first time on May 14. That missile represented a major breakthrough in North Korean ballistic missile technology. The reports indicate the missile traveled over 1,300 miles at an altitude and successfully exited and then reentered the Earth's atmosphere—a key requirement for nuclear capable ICBMs.

If fired at its maximum range, the missile could reach Guam. Though the missile itself was not an ICBM, the technological breakthrough demonstrates a significant advancement that North Korea has made in their ballistic missile capability. This is actual. This is happening. This is today. This is reality.

Another significant advancement that occurs to me is the solid-fueled, road-mobile missiles the regime is developing. Kim Jong Un has successfully tested two such missiles already this year—one in February and another last month on May 21.

Solid-fueled missiles mounted on mobile launch vehicles can be prepared ahead of time. They can build up an inventory and come back and use that inventory whenever they desire to do so.

What can we do? It is clear that North Korea does not respond to international pressure. All of these ballistic missile tests violate multiple U.N. resolutions. Yet North Korea carries them out, despite sanctions and international condemnation. The normal type of negotiation doesn't work with those guys. Furthermore, conventional wisdom has led us to believe that China—North Korea's main trade partner in that region—holds significant sway over the regime. That conventional wisdom has been called into question recently. I commend the Trump administration for recognizing this and for working with China on this issue, but we can't assume that China will be able to help us close the deal in a diplomatic way.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to take all appropriate steps to defend ourselves from this threat that exists today. We have to keep in mind that as we formulate this year's National Defense Authorization Act—that is what I am talking about now—we have to do it. For 53 consecutive years, we have passed the Defense authorization bill, and right now there is some doubt as to whether we will get enough cooperation from those in this Chamber to make that happen again.

I remember 4 years ago, when I was ranking member on the Senate Armed Services Committee, we didn't get this done until the latter part of December. If you wait around until the latter part

of December and it passes midyear, we will have our soldiers over there not getting what they need to be getting in the way of hazard pay and other things. It would be an absolute disaster. Right now, they are watching us. Our kids are over there watching us now to see what we will do with the most important bill we pass every year.

We are going to get started. I applaud the President for the fiscal year 2018 budget request that calls for increases to defense spending and aims to fill critical readiness gaps. Right now, in Congress, we need to build on that even further.

First, we need to bolster our national ballistic defense capabilities to address the threats we face from North Korea. That is a no-brainer. We all understand that. Since 2006, the Missile Defense Agency budget has fallen 23 percent when adjusted for inflation. While we have taken positive steps in recent years, we need to ensure our last-resort defenses are airtight.

We should heed the recommendations of defense experts like Gen. Lori Robinson, commander of the U.S. Northern Command, who testified in April before our committee. I am quoting her now, Lori Robinson: “As adversaries continue to pursue credible and advanced capabilities, we, too, must evolve our missile defense capabilities to outpace increasingly complex threats.” I think that is a recognition by her—the one who probably knows more about it than anyone else—that we are not keeping pace right now.

Simultaneously, we have to boost our military. Our forces are smaller than the days of the hollow force. I chaired a committee not too long ago that had the Vices of all four services. They all came in. The conclusion was—even though some of them were not old enough to remember, as I remember, the 1980s at the end of the Carter administration, but they made the statement that we are in a situation now that we have never been in before and that we are, in fact, a hollow force, just as hollow as we were back in 1989 after the Carter administration.

We really owe our brave service men and women better. We owe them an obligation. It is our obligation to let them know what we are doing. Our forces are smaller than the days of the hollow force in the 1980s. Our equipment is aging, and our base infrastructure requires critical maintenance and upgrades. We went through 8 years of the Obama administration. We paid our price in not really giving our brave young warriors the equipment they needed. Through this year's NDAA, we ought to prioritize across the board end-strength increases and additional investments in maintenance to fill gaps in existing formations and to get our existing equipment back to par. The first thing that happens when you are on a starvation diet is you let your maintenance and modernization go. We have done that.

I hear people say defense spending is out of control. The truth is, defense

spending, as a proportion of total government spending, has steadily decreased since World War II. How many people are aware that in 1964, we spent 52 percent of our total resources on defending America? Today, it is 15 percent. No one seems to care about it because they don't know about it. Nonetheless, that is where we are today.

In the recent years, despite waging multiple wars and facing unparalleled global threats, our spending has decreased to about 15 percent of our total spending. The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Milley, said it best when it comes to funding our military. This is really significant now when people are talking about spending too much. He said:

The only thing more expensive than deterrence, is actually fighting a war. And the only thing more expensive than fighting a war, is fighting one and losing one . . . We're expensive. We recognize that. But the bottom line is, it's an investment that is worth every nickel.

So we have to immediately make up for the damage done by the years of the dangerous defense cuts and recognize what the government is really supposed to be doing. I refer to that old document nobody reads anymore called the Constitution. You read that, and it tells us what we are supposed to be doing here; No. 1, defending America; No. 2, they called it post roads back then but infrastructure. That is what we are actually supposed to be doing.

The good news is, under the leadership of President Trump, we have already started that process working. The appropriations bill last month stopped the decline in Army strength. Instead of the planned 460,000 Active soldiers, we now have 475,000. We added 1,000 marines, a few hundred airmen. In total, we currently have 24,000 more servicemembers than we would have had under the previous administration.

More good news is that we have exceptional patriots like the airmen at Tinker, Vance, and Altus Air Force Bases and those who are protecting the skies with F-16s out of my city of Tulsa. Soldiers like those in Fort Sill and in Oklahoma's 45th Infantry Brigade, who are right now in Ukraine training our allies there.

People don't know that the policy we are following under this new administration is, we are using our resources to help others train themselves. In the case of Ukraine—what happened in Ukraine should never have happened. Ukraine had this great parliamentary election. I happened to be there at the time, about 4 years ago. For the first time in 96 years, Ukraine doesn't have one Communist in its Parliament. They did that because they love us. They love the West. Consequently, when Putin came in right after that—this is back during the Obama administration—he started killing the Ukrainians, who were seeking their freedom—our best friends over there—and our administration refused to let us even send defensive weapons over there.

We are correcting that. In fact, the bill we are talking about right now, the Defense authorization bill, is one where we are going to be addressing that problem.

I am optimistic we will rise to the occasion and meet the challenge presented by the agnostic North Korean regime and confident President Trump has taken the appropriate steps to address this threat diplomatically. We, in Congress, need to follow his lead to ensure that our men and women in uniform have the resources required to answer the call quickly and effectively. We don't have the luxury of time. Just think of the statement I read a minute ago, where Gen. Vincent Stewart told the Armed Services Committee a week ago: "If left on its current trajectory the regime will ultimately succeed in fielding a nuclear-armed missile capable of threatening the United States homeland."

While we have a lot of problems right now on this floor—and we are trying to address these problems—the No. 1 problem is what is happening to our military and the absolute necessity of getting a defense authorization passed very rapidly. We are starting today.

CARBON TAX

Mr. President, let me just mention one more thing because I think I do have a little bit more time. Earlier this year, several major oil and gas companies announced their support for a carbon tax plan. This is kind of interesting because we have been fighting this battle for a long period of time. You have to keep in mind there are some very large corporations that would inure to benefit from a carbon tax.

The plan they are backing is one put forth by the Climate Leadership Council. This group's plan is labeled as a conservative climate solution that would tax greenhouse gas emissions and return money to the taxpayers as a climate dividend.

It ain't going to happen, folks. You pass a tax, and it is going to cost everyone—at least everyone who uses energy. I don't know of anyone right now in America who doesn't. The heart of the plan is to make energy from fossil fuels more expensive.

One of the things I do every week, I go back to my State of Oklahoma where there are logical people. I talk to them about things you don't hear in Washington; things, for example, back there in the Obama administration. It was in Chaddick, OK. A farmer came up to me and said: Explain this to me, Senator. If right now we have a President who is trying to do away with fossil fuels—that is coal, oil and gas—and he also wants to do away with nuclear, and while we are dependent—in order to run this machine called America, for 89 percent of the energy we use, we are dependent upon fossil fuels and nuclear, and if he is successful, how do you run the machine called America? The answer is, you can't. This fight has been going on for a long period of time. If you drive a car, you use electricity, or heat your home, you will see higher

prices at the pump or if you pass one of these carbon taxes. While these are the obvious increases, higher energy costs would be felt across the economy as it becomes more expensive for all industries to operate and transport their wares, raising food prices and the price of consumer goods. In return for paying these higher prices, you get a check or what someone would call free money, but this money isn't really free. The higher costs of energy, food, and goods are paid by the consumer. That is by everyone in America, no exceptions, and then returned to the consumer. Why can't they just avoid the transition and just keep their money in the first place? Well, they can. That is the answer.

Furthermore, if every American gets the same amount of money as this money calls for, is that really equitable? A family who lives in a small apartment, who walks or takes the subway to work or to school and doesn't own a car in New York City would get the same amount of money as the independent long-haul trucker or a farmer in rural Oklahoma who spends a lot of time in his truck and running his tractor and using more energy to run his farm and his home. As unreasonable as it sounds, this is a reality. There are those out there.

The conservative climate solution sounds more like a redistribution from our rural citizens to more urban populations. Usually, we are talking about taxing the rich to pay to the poor. This is something new.

Furthermore, I always find it interesting that the Warren Buffetts of the world want more taxes. They feel comfortable enough in their wealth to ask for more of their money to be taken, knowing that raising taxes is a non-starter for many of us in Congress. As I pointed out to him, and will point out to the companies that have joined the Climate Leadership Council, you are free to write your check, if you want to do it anyway. If you are so wrapped up in this idea, then you need either to go—or if, for some other reason, you want to pay money to the Treasury, they are open for business and would be glad to take your money. If you feel that strongly, why wait for legislation that would be a nonstarter? If you are a citizen and want to pay for your carbon footprint, the Treasury would be very glad to accept that.

Let's face it. I am not going to support a new tax—what could very well end up a tax, maybe even the largest tax we would have in this country that does not accomplish anything.

Let's keep in mind, if there is somebody out there who it inures to their corporate benefit, or otherwise, to increase their taxes, let them go ahead and send their check to the Treasury. They will be glad to get it.

BILLINGSLEA NOMINATION

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider with respect to the Billingslea nomination be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. BLUMENTAL. Mr. President, I am here to share the words, the stories, the fears, and some of the faces of people in Connecticut who will be impacted by the bill that was released this morning—the so-called discussion draft, if that is the right term for it. We learned this morning, I think, why that discussion draft has been shrouded in secrecy. The reason is very simply that my Republican colleagues are ashamed and embarrassed about it, and rightly, because it is not only mean, as the House bill was, but it is meaner. It is cruel and costly.

It will be cruel and costly to the people of Connecticut, in human suffering and illness and disease, and it will be costly in failing to prevent and treat disease before it becomes more expensive. That is one of the lessons of public health policy today: Treat earlier; prevent before diseases or illnesses or conditions become even more costly. It is not only a way to save lives; it is a way to save money.

The voices and faces of Connecticut have been heard nowhere in this process because of its secrecy, because it has denied anyone in America, in fact, the opportunity to be heard, to comment, to make their views known. Speed and secrecy have been the watchwords, and they are a toxic recipe, and they should mean this discussion draft is dead on delivery today.

My constituents have actually come in overwhelming numbers to an emergency field hearing on healthcare that I began in Hartford earlier this week, Monday morning at 9 a.m. They came for 2 hours. There were many more than we expected on very short notice, and they were there to make sure their voices and faces were heard and seen. That is what I did earlier in the week when I entered their testimony into the RECORD of the Senate. I was proud to do so.

We are continuing that emergency field hearing, in fact, tomorrow at 1:30 in New Haven at the Aldermanic Chambers, which have even greater capacity. We are expecting many more, judging by the response to the email blast and invitations that we have sent, because people care about healthcare.

They should care because it is the difference between life and death, and this bill will be the difference between life and death for so many people in Connecticut. It will be death. Even though that statement may sound like hyperbole or exaggeration, the public health experts, the docs, and the hospitals that deliver healthcare in Connecticut and around the country know that it is true, and so do the people of Connecticut and our country.

My colleagues have failed to hear those faces and voices because they have refused to have hearings, mark-ups, committee meetings, and robust full debate on the floor of this Chamber, as is the practice and should be in other pieces of legislation. Why is it not for one of historic and unprecedented importance for the future of our Nation?

Instead, they have met behind closed doors, a group of men who, maybe, coincidentally, produced a bill that defunds Planned Parenthood and, in effect, furthers a war on women's health—an assault on women's healthcare that will deny mammograms, screenings, preventive care—and on primary care for men, as well as women, in this country.

It will gut Medicare and Medicaid. It will rob millions of people of the healthcare they now have through Medicaid. It will mean higher costs and less care for America and especially for our seniors, who will be among the most victimized by these cuts.

For anyone who cares about opioid addiction and abuse—and everyone in this Chamber, by an overwhelming majority, during the last session voted for the 21st Century Cures Act and then for the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, bipartisan, but it was nowhere nearly enough funded—this bill means, in fact, less funding than the House measure would have provided, from \$65 billion increased funding for opioid addiction and abuse treatment to \$2 billion.

When my colleagues characterize this bill as heartless, they underestimate its impact on people who suffer from the disease—it is a disease, not a moral failing—of addiction and abuse.

Yesterday the voices and faces that I elicited on the floor of the Senate were three people who have struggled with substance use disorder and encountered different endings—Justice, Sean, and Frank. We lost Sean just a few weeks ago. Frank could not come to the hearing we conducted on Monday because he is recovering, as well, and the heartbreak of Sean's loss so affected him.

But Maria Skinner described their struggle to recover from that substance use disorder. Justice will likely never recover from the injuries she sustained when she overdosed. Although Frank is doing well, I am pleased to say he has access to Medicaid and the essential treatment services that he needs only because Medicaid exists in the present form. Denying him that kind of service and treatment means that he may be consigned to the risk that doomed Justice and Sean. The coldheartedness of the House bill was hard to match, but on Medicaid the Senate version has outdone even that coldheartedness—cutting the program even more drastically and costing our Nation, not just healthcare but also jobs.

When we say Medicaid, let's be very clear whom we are talking about, and let me introduce three of the people who are affected.

With me in this photograph are Evan, Amelie, and Amanda. They live with their mom in Ansonia, CT. Following their father's death 6 years ago, the entire family went on Medicaid so they could continue receiving the coverage they need and deserve and the healthcare they need and deserve.

Their mom reached out to my office to speak at the hearing that I am having tomorrow. She wrote to me:

I am very frightened that federal funding for state Medicaid programs will receive tremendous cuts with this potential repeal. I hope to advocate to all those in positions of power that will listen so they can see a face to this problem.

The face to this problem is before us in this Chamber. It is children and families that will see Medicaid decimated for them if the Affordable Care Act is repealed, as would be done by this so-called discussion draft from our Republican colleagues.

Today Evan, Amelie, and Amanda's mom is just learning how tremendous these cuts will be, and today she will fear even more for her children's health and well-being, because when we talk about cuts to Medicaid, we aren't talking about a line item on a budget. We aren't talking about a simple number or a statistic. We are talking about literally millions of children like Evan, Amelie, and Amanda, who have parents fearing what will happen if their reliance on Medicaid is betrayed ruthlessly, senselessly, and recklessly and if their dependence on this vital program for the basic healthcare they need is stripped away.

This bill would also jeopardize affordable access to people with preexisting conditions. At my hearing, a woman named Michelle Virshup told her story of how the Affordable Care Act was there for her to provide coverage as well as services when she was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease in her early twenties. Now, 3 years later, she is doing a lot better and is actually an attorney fighting to remove barriers to healthcare for others in her community. She will suffer under this bill because her access to essential services will be weakened. She will be stripped of coverage that is actually affordable. She will be effectively cut from healthcare once and for all.

When telling me about her illness, Michelle said:

The Affordable Care Act allowed me to see it through and the Affordable Care Act protects me now. Though my health is good, my experience is a preexisting condition that will follow me for the rest of my life.

That is the thing about a preexisting condition. It follows people for the rest of their lives. It is preexisting before they have insurance coverage, and so it is preexisting forever. This bill, in enabling States to eviscerate the safeguards against abuse of preexisting conditions, means their healthcare will be in jeopardy and their lives will be at risk and the abuses that I fought when I was attorney general—time after time, year after year—will come back again.

Among the most meaningful of the work I did as attorney general was to fight person by person when insurance companies said: No, we will not cover that preexisting condition. Their excuse proved to be a ruse, a charade, because they could abuse preexisting conditions, and they will do it again if this bill passes.

This bill's depravity unfortunately goes even further. It actually defunds Planned Parenthood, our Nation's largest women's healthcare provider, while eviscerating protections that guarantee women have access to maternal care throughout their pregnancy. It not only stops and undermines effective family planning, but it then denies effective healthcare when women become pregnant. So it is a kind of catch-22.

This action is cruelly ironic, turning women away from basic birth control services and then threatening their access to maternity care when they unavoidably become pregnant. It is really and simply devastatingly bad public policy, a foolish proposal that attacks women's healthcare and defunds Planned Parenthood, which is an overwhelmingly popular healthcare provider. The objective is to score cheap political points on the far right.

Tomorrow in Connecticut, when I hold another hearing—and we may have another afterward—many of my colleagues may wonder why. They may well be scared of having that kind of hearing, where they have to listen to the voices and see the faces of the people who will suffer under this bill. They certainly have been too scared to have that kind of hearing in the U.S. Senate.

I will hear from the people this bill will hurt. I will hear from people whose lives will be put at risk as a result of this heartless, cruel, and costly measure. I will be inspired by these people, and I will fight as long and as hard as possible to be sure that this bill never becomes law.

Listening to our constituents is really the way democracy is supposed to work. We are proud of talking about democracy. We are approaching the Fourth of July. What better way to celebrate our democracy than to listen in this Chamber, in these halls, to the people who have expertise and experience that we need instead of the secrecy and speed that we are seeing now.

I am proud that we are having these hearings in Connecticut. I urge my colleagues to do the same. They are emergency hearings because we face the historic and unprecedented exigencies of a proposed bill that will rip away guarantees of effective insurance coverage that Americans need and deserve.

Healthcare is a right. Eventually we will have single-payer in this country. But for now, let's build on the Affordable Care Act, let's make it better, let's cure its defects, and let's work together across the aisle. We can do that if we have that resolve.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues to speak out and ask for a normal process, for hearings, and for debates.

The Presiding Officer and I have talked about this issue. I know the Presiding Officer has many good ideas to contribute, and I am hopeful that we can start over with a bill that would consist of a number of changes in our existing healthcare system. That is what I think we need to do, instead of this repeal bill that came to us without hearings. It is just not the right way to do this.

I have already gotten reactions from my State. Just to use some quotes from an article in the Minneapolis StarTribune that was just posted—we have our health plans saying that what matters is Medicaid, and they are the leaders in our healthcare community, calling this bill disappointing because of the continued insistence on significantly cutting Medicaid, the federally paid health insurance program for those who are the most vulnerable.

They have said things—the big story has been, What is it going to do to Medicaid? But, in fact, what our experts in our State are saying—our health plans—is that this is really more of the same from what we have seen in the House bill, but over a different time period. There is an argument that in the end, it involves even deeper cuts.

The Minnesota Hospital Association came out and has already, in just the last few hours, said that the last of the guaranteed benefits discourages preventive care and that this proposal “creates a lot of chaos.”

One of the heads of one of our major hospitals said:

They are shortening up the money. But they're not giving us the ability to manage the care.

I have long advocated for changes to the Affordable Care Act—significant changes. I think seniors should be given the ability to harness their marketing power and negotiate for lower prices under Medicare for prescription drugs. They are currently prohibited from doing that. I think that is wrong. I said that when the Affordable Care Act passed.

I think there are many good things we could do to help with the exchanges and with small business rates, including doing something federally on reinsurance. My State legislature, which is a Republican State legislature, joined with our Democratic Governor and worked out an agreement on insurance. We are currently awaiting word from the administration on a waiver, but we think that is a good idea, and there are things we can do to bring that out nationally. I don't see that happening with this bill.

In the end, what matters to me is how this bill affects individual people in my State. Laura from North St.

Paul wrote to me about her concerns about the very similar House bill. Laura recently retired, but she will not be eligible for Medicare until next year. She has a daughter with several chronic health conditions. She is concerned that if these proposals get passed, she will end up paying far more for her health insurance, and her daughter might lose her coverage altogether.

Take Mike from Grand Marais—that is in the far corner of Minnesota, right up at the tip. He has been self-employed his whole life and is now approaching retirement. He told me that just as he is about to retire, he will not be able to afford health insurance because of the way this proposal works. Like the House bill, it would increase premiums for older Minnesotans.

A woman from Andover, MN, wrote to me that she is worried about this slam dunk attempt to check off a box on a to-do list, when, in fact, she is squarely in the middle of that box. She asked me to put a face on the type of person who is affected by rushing through this checklist, and that would be her 28-year-old son. She said that Medicaid coverage has been a lifesaver for her son because it helps him afford the treatment he needs to strive for an independent, productive life.

I have heard from so many people from all of the corners of my State, from the old, the young, the middle-aged. I have heard from many people from the rural parts of my State about the House bill, which, of course, is very similar to the Senate bill that has been proposed here. They were especially worried about the billions in cuts to Medicaid, which is the lead part of the concern from the Minnesota Council of Health Plans.

The Senate proposal, as I mentioned, would make even deeper cuts over the long term to Medicaid. Medicaid covers more than 1.2 million Minnesotans, including more than one-fifth of the people in the rural part of our State—20 percent of our rural population. This funding is vital to the ability of our rural hospitals and healthcare providers in those parts of our State to stay open and serve their patients. Many people who work in rural hospitals and who are served by rural hospitals have deep concerns.

Even after seeing the Senate proposal for just these few hours, it is clear that this healthcare legislation would have massive life-changing implications for families all over the country.

We know the President of the United States is not known for mincing words, but we also know he used very direct language when he talked about the House bill. The reports are that he called it mean, and there has been no denial that he said that. He didn't need a poll or focus group. He didn't need to know every detail of the bill. But when you hear that millions and millions of people could lose their health insurance, the wealthiest would get tax cuts, and then the people who need

help the most would be forced to pay more, you can see why that would be a good word to describe a bill like this—“mean.” What we don't want to have come out of the Senate is the “son of mean” or “mean 2.”

Most of us agree that we must make changes to the Affordable Care Act, as I said at the beginning of my remarks. I would love to see those changes to prescription drug prices, not only with the Medicare negotiation I just mentioned, getting rid of that prohibition that stops 41 million seniors from negotiating for lower prices for prescription drugs by passing the bill that I have led for years to allow for that negotiation, but I would like to see more competition in two other ways. One is bringing in safe drugs from other countries like Canada. Senator MCCAIN and I have a bill that would allow that to happen.

The second is allowing for more generic competition and making it easier to have generic competition—again, not in the House or the Senate bill. Senator GRASSLEY and I have a bill that would stop “pay for delay.” That is where companies pay generics to keep their products off the market. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has assessed that we would not only save billions of dollars for the government but also for taxpayers if this passed. I would like to have that bill come up for a vote, maybe in the form of an amendment, because I believe it would pass.

We could make improvements in the exchanges with the idea of reinsurance. There are many ways we could come together to make sensible changes to the Affordable Care Act. We can never have a bill that big without making some changes, and I think the time has come.

Instead, we see a bill that was drafted behind closed doors. Yes, Democratic Senators were not a part of that; that is the way it is. But I don't think those doors should be closed to the American people.

Last week I attended the men's baseball game between Democrats and Republicans. It was an amazing event with over 25,000 people. At the end, when the Democratic team won, they took their trophy and gave it to the Republican team, and they asked them to put it in Representative SCALISE's office. We should take the spirit that we saw at that congressional baseball game. We should take that spirit, and we should bring it into this Chamber, and we should start working on a bill together—not this bill. We should start working on a bill that makes some major changes to the Affordable Care Act. We have ideas on both sides, and that is what I think we should do.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I enjoyed listening to the comments of my friend, the Senator from Minnesota, and I would just say a couple of things.

One is that if 10 or so Democrats would have the courage to work with us, we could pass a true bipartisan healthcare bill, but the message we received from Democratic Leader SCHUMER and others is that they don't want to get involved in the process. So it is a little hard to take seriously the statement that if we would just be willing to work with them, we could get this done, because we have asked, and they have refused.

But it is not too late. If we could get a bipartisan group of Senators to actually improve the status quo, which is a disaster under ObamaCare, then I think we could make progress. But that is not what I hear.

I hear Senators criticizing the House bill. I guess that is because they haven't read the Senate bill, and we have said all along that we want to improve on what the House did. I think the draft bill, which is just that—it is a draft; it is a work in progress—does represent in many instances an improvement over the House bill.

I look forward to working with a coalition of the willing, whoever that might be. I hear some happy talk, but I don't see many people willing to cross over and actually work with us, roll up their sleeves, and do the hard work to actually pass a bipartisan bill.

I just have to say, I hear the criticism about cutting Medicaid. Well, the fact is, under the draft bill that was filed today, the essential safety net for low-income Americans is preserved. We actually will end up spending more money next year than this year and more money the following year because what we do is add a consumer price index increase.

As the Presiding Officer knows, being a practicing physician, this is a complex issue, but the fact is, it is absolutely critical to reforming Medicaid and making it work better. In addition to spending more money each year, which is not a cut in most of America—maybe it is in Washington, DC—as we all know, Medicaid is an open-ended entitlement, so if you qualify based on your income, then you get access to Medicaid. Medicaid continues to drive the budgets—not only the Federal Government but also the State government—and crowd out other priorities that are also important, such as law enforcement and education.

What we have decided we must do is to put Medicaid on a sustainable path by spending more money each year on low-income Americans. We still have some more work to do. But the idea that just because—compared to an uncapped entitlement with no limits on spending—we end up spending a set amount, as we spent this year or will spend next year and add more each year based on the cost-of-living index, that somehow is a cut, is just ludicrous. That is certainly not my understanding of what a cut is; it is a reduction in the rate of growth. So if you call that a cut, that assumes we are going to spend all of that uncapped

amount of money, and we can't sustain the program if we do that.

This is one of the three major entitlement programs—Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security. I think it is our obligation, our duty, as we are saving the millions of people who are being hurt by the status quo and ObamaCare, to act responsibly to make sure this safety net program is available for low-income people going forward. We all should agree on that—that it is important and that we ought to put it on a sustainable, responsible fiscal path.

So this was kind of an interesting experience here this morning. We roll out the discussion draft of the ObamaCare repeal-and-replace bill, we put it on the internet, we make sure everybody has access to it, and we ask for their input, their advice, and their suggestions, and we are starting to get suggestions. We welcome suggestions that people have to this initial discussion draft. But you have to start somewhere, and this is where we are going to start. Then we will have a process next week whereby any Senator who has an amendment to the bill has an absolute right to file that amendment and get a vote on it. I can't imagine a more transparent and open process than putting it on the internet, inviting people to comment and discuss, and then having an open amendment process following debate and then vote. That is what we are supposed to do—vote.

So I think today represents a big step forward in saving those Americans who are being punished by health insurance choices that limit their right to choose a product at a price they can afford that suits their family's needs.

We know what the promises were, and I guess I just have to repeat them again. President Obama said: If you like your policy, you can keep your policy. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. An average family of four will see a \$2,500 decrease in their insurance premiums.

What we have seen is a \$3,000 increase in insurance premiums for the average family of four—not a decrease of \$2,500, an increase of \$3,000. And people who buy their health coverage on the insurance exchanges in the individual market have experienced a 105-percent increase in their premiums. Now, I don't know about you, but there are not many things that come out of my paycheck on which I can sustain over a period of just a few years an increase like that of 105 percent. Imagine if you had a 105-percent increase in your rent payments for your apartment or your mortgage payments for your house or your car payments or anything else. That is harmful and damaging to hard-working Americans, and it really is a breach of faith with them, when they were told when ObamaCare passed that they would actually save \$2,500.

This discussion draft that was released today and put on the internet and is available to anybody who wants access to it is a product of years of de-

bate on this floor and discussions among not just Republicans but the entire Senate and our constituents as well. We made our ideas public, and we sought feedback.

The Senate Finance Committee alone, on which the distinguished Presiding Officer and I serve, has had no fewer than 36 hearings on ObamaCare since 2011, ranging from the high cost of ObamaCare to transparency in the Medicaid system.

Just this year, there have been dozens of meetings throughout our conference. We would love to include Democrats, but they have chosen not to participate. Since May 4 alone, 18 of our conference lunches have been entirely dedicated to healthcare. There is a practical reason for that too—because without Democrats participating in the process, we have 52 Republicans in order to get 51 votes to pass a bill. That means everybody is essential to a successful outcome in repealing and replacing ObamaCare.

So no one has been excluded. Everybody's ideas have been solicited. That doesn't even count individual meetings we have had with Senators and constituents.

Even after receiving this discussion draft, some of my colleagues across the aisle continue to refuse to enter into debate because they say it is not a final bill. Well, that is the point. We didn't present this as a fait accompli; we presented this as a place to start. And they don't even want to start. All they want to do is criticize. But they don't want to criticize an actual bill; they want to criticize the House bill, because they haven't even read the 142-page Senate bill. This is called a discussion draft for a reason: We are opening up a conversation and a discussion with the American people.

But we know Senate Democrats have chosen not to help to clean up the mess left by ObamaCare. I don't really understand how they can turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to their constituents. I am confident, with all of the people who are writing and calling me in Texas, that they have to have people in their States who are calling them and saying: My premiums are skyrocketing. My deductible is so high that I effectively don't have access to insurance.

By the way, the insurance companies are pulling out of my State as fast as they can because they are hemorrhaging money.

I don't know why they are not motivated to work with us, but apparently that is the decision they have made.

Unfortunately, I think it goes back to this: When President Obama visited Capitol Hill the last time, in January of 2017, he had one message to Senate Democrats; that is, don't work with Republicans on healthcare. The President of the United States said don't work with Republicans on healthcare. This flew in the face of three consecutive elections since ObamaCare had passed where the voters had clearly

demonstrated their dissatisfaction with how ObamaCare actually worked. That shouldn't have been a surprise to anybody.

I remember being here on Christmas Eve 2009 when Democrats passed ObamaCare with only Democrat votes at 7:30 in the morning. No Republicans voted for the bill; only Democrats voted for the bill. Since that time, they have gone from 60 Democratic Senators down to 48. They went from the majority in the House to the minority in the House. They went from holding the White House to Republicans now holding the White House. To me, the message isn't all that confusing, nor is it subtle. It is clear to me that the American people have rejected the failed promises of ObamaCare and have, frankly, punished our Democratic colleagues for passing it in the way they did and as a result of the failure to keep the promises that were made when it was sold.

I have heard these concerns from my constituents in Texas for the last 7 years. I have read their letters and their emails, sharing some of their stories here on the Senate floor.

This law has been expensive—about \$1 trillion in new taxes. People wonder why the economy hasn't grown during the Obama administration and since the great recession of 2008. One reason is because of the huge tax burden and because of the regulatory burdens it imposed on small businesses, which are the primary engine of job growth in the country, and ObamaCare has been part of the reason for that.

To my mind, this discussion draft does five things.

First, our legislation zeroes in on the unstable individual market.

Under ObamaCare, insurance markets across the country have languished under high costs and taxes, and the result has been that 70 percent of counties nationwide have fewer than two insurers to choose from. Less competition means higher prices because companies don't have to compete for the sale of a policy. In my State, one-third of Texas counties have only one insurance option. That is not exactly a choice; that is a monopoly.

Our legislation will help the collapsing insurance markets that have left millions of people with no options by creating a stabilization fund that will balance premium costs and address the lack of coverage that so many across the country have been experiencing.

I don't care what our critics say, we are not pulling the rug out from anyone. We will continue Federal assistance for healthcare markets through 2021 to make the transition smooth, much unlike our experience with ObamaCare. Ultimately, if we want to encourage a market to lower costs while providing better quality care, we have to get the government out of the way.

The only thing I hear from our Senate Democrats is that they want more

government involvement in your healthcare. That seems to be their default position. Well, we know from the failed experiment of ObamaCare that it doesn't work, at least insofar as the promises that were made when it was sold. So why would they default to a position of more government as opposed to more freedom to let you choose instead of government choosing for you and to punish you with a penalty if you don't buy the product that government orders you to buy?

Our second goal is making healthcare coverage more affordable.

Under ObamaCare, taxes and mandates cost the American economy \$1 trillion—I mentioned that a moment ago—which, as our constituents felt firsthand, was ultimately paid by patients through higher healthcare cost.

Our friends across the aisle think we can raise taxes by \$1 trillion and it won't have any impact on the consumer. Well, that is just ridiculous. We all know that those expenses get passed on to the consumer and that they get passed on in the form of higher healthcare costs. So when you tax prescriptions, for example, well, it is going to cost more. When you tax health insurance plans, which ObamaCare did, premiums are going to go up. And guess what. Taxing medical devices increases the cost of those devices and leads to job losses because they leave the United States, and they make those lifesaving medical products offshore in order to avoid the medical device taxes.

These taxes and mandates have crippled our economy, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle recognize that as well. That is why our healthcare plan will improve affordability by addressing ObamaCare's taxes, which have hurt American families directly by making their healthcare less affordable. This framework provides a long-term State innovation fund that encourages States to assist high-cost and low-income individuals, making healthcare more affordable.

We are also encouraging tax credits to help defray the cost of purchasing insurance, adjusted for age, geographical location, and income, so that those who need financial assistance get the help they need.

Health savings accounts will also be expanded under our draft, giving Americans the choice of buying a hospitalization plan which covers major medical costs—not if they choose not to buy a comprehensive health insurance policy but, rather, to save money in a health savings account to be used for healthcare if they need it, and if they don't need it, they can use it for their savings. We give them that option, which they don't currently have under ObamaCare.

The third principle is something our Democratic colleagues can certainly agree with us on, I assume, unless their reflexive action is to disagree with us on everything regardless of the facts,

which sometimes seems to be the case, and that is, we should protect those with preexisting conditions. No American should worry about their ability to be covered when they move from job to job.

Our draft legislation also allows children to stay on their parents' policies through age 26.

There are no changes to healthcare for veterans, for Medicare, or changes to Social Security.

Our fourth point of action is safeguarding Medicaid, which I addressed a little earlier, by giving States more flexibility. As we know, Medicaid is paid for by both a State and a Federal share, but the Federal Government sets the conditions by which that money can be spent on healthcare in the State as part of a low-income safety net. Bureaucrats in Washington, DC, shouldn't decide how Medicaid is applied in Texas. I don't know what rationale exists there. Why should the Federal Government tell a State how to spend its own money under Medicaid?

I believe States know how to handle this best because they are closest to the problem and they can design healthcare programs that meet the needs of those States. I dare say, the healthcare needs in Texas are much different from States like Vermont, Idaho, or other States—smaller States, certainly, with a more homogenous population. We have a very diverse State. We have a large number of non-citizens in my State. So why not send the money to the States and give them the flexibility to design programs to deal with the needs of their people? That is why our draft allows States to choose between a block grant and a per capita support for the Medicaid population starting in 2020.

We have done our dead-level best to make sure our draft doesn't leave anyone out, to ensure that the most vulnerable have protection—including children with medically complex disabilities.

Perhaps most importantly is the fundamental goal of this legislation to free the American family from ObamaCare mandates that have hit them where it hurts the most. We are giving Americans back their freedom of choice when it comes to healthcare, which has so long been denied them under the command-and-control regime of ObamaCare.

Our healthcare plan empowers families to make their own choices. It repeals the individual mandate which punishes you if you don't buy the government-approved policy and the employer mandate that has resulted from people going from full-time work to part-time work because employers have sought to avoid that penalty. Finally, no longer will folks be forced to buy plans they don't need at a price they can't afford.

I believe this is the framework for better care. But we are going to continue to discuss this plan and talk to anybody who is willing to talk to us

and work with us. If there is a way the bill can be strengthened, I am open to it. But the status quo isn't working, and our Democratic colleagues know it.

This morning, I likened it as happening upon a terrible accident on the highway. We know people have been injured, and we have two choices: We can either stop and render aid—which is what we are trying to do for people hurt by the failures of ObamaCare—or you can drive right on by.

Unfortunately, our Democratic colleagues have simply chosen to look the other way and drive on by. But before them is a real solution, one that has a chance to change the lives of millions of Americans for the better. So we hope they will reconsider and join us.

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. KAINE. 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. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the healthcare bill that is currently pending before us. Now that I have had a chance to look at it a little bit, I can see why there has been a lot of secrecy surrounding this process.

Before talking about how I think this bill would hurt Virginians, let me talk about the process itself and how flawed I think it is. But the good news is that it is a process that can be fixed.

This morning, when the bill was first described on the floor, I was interested when my friend the senior Senator from Texas, the majority whip, said we were doing it this way, through a budget reconciliation process, because Democrats didn't want to work together. I took offense at that comment.

As the Presiding Officer knows, I am a member with him on the committee. I was just added to the committee in January. I have been in the Senate for 4 years. I have had great committees, but this is the committee I always wanted to be on because, as a former mayor and Governor, the two biggest line items in the budget I have had to deal with have been education and health. So, finally, I am on the committee I most want to be on.

I believe this session of the Senate started on January 3. That was my first day on the committee. I have a letter I wrote on January 5. I had been a committee member for 2 days, and I wrote a letter to my chairman, whom I hold in the highest regard, Senator ALEXANDER; the Senate majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL; and the chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator HATCH, which has jurisdiction over Medicaid and Medicare issues. I wrote a letter on January 5, and I got 13 Democrats, including me, to sign this letter.

The gist of the letter is this: We would like to work with you. We would like to work with you to find solutions that would improve our healthcare system, whether that be within the Affordable Care Act or, more broadly, Medicare, Medicaid, and Medicare Part D. We want to work together.

That was on January 5, 2 days after I had been added to the committee. As a member of the committee, I have been given no opportunity—not one—to work on this bill.

The committee we serve on works productively. We work productively on pharmaceutical issues. We work productively on educational issues. In the committee the Presiding Officer and I serve on, we have passed legislation through our committee and sent it to the floor. Some of the legislation we have sent has already gone off the floor to the House. This is a committee that has a great bipartisan track record, and I am convinced that bipartisan track record is going to continue. But there has been one topic which has been taboo, and that has been to allow meaningful bipartisan discussion about this healthcare bill.

When the House bill passed—now a number of weeks ago—it was our expectation that we would have hearings in the HELP Committee and in the Finance Committee about the bill. We haven't. The Democrats on the HELP Committee got a little riled up one day. We were having a hearing about something else, and a lot of us said: Wait a minute. We are not talking about the biggest topic in domestic politics in the country right now, which is this House health bill. We should be doing that in this committee. If we are not doing it in this committee, we are really not doing it.

Why does it matter to have hearings in the committee? It is the committee hearing process where you put witnesses at a table and ask them questions. We would have patients, we would have hospitals, we would have doctors, we would have nurses, and we would have pharmaceutical companies and insurance companies, and we would ask them: What is good and what is bad about this bill? What is good and what is bad, and what needs to be fixed about healthcare in this country? That is what you do in hearings, but we haven't had one hearing, and the Finance Committee hasn't had one hearing either.

We haven't had hearings in the committee on the House bill. We have had no willingness to hold hearings on the Senate substitute that was revealed today. The effort to draft the bill was closed-door. The notion that Democrats wouldn't participate—we weren't invited to the meetings. We didn't know where they were. We didn't know when they were. We had no chance to participate. Now we are being told that this bill described this morning—and we thought we were reading it online—no, that is a discussion draft, not the bill itself. So I don't know whether the

bill is going to be different, or is it the same? The notion is to rush it to the floor and then essentially to close off debate with a very meager amendment process.

The Presiding Officer knows this, but I just want to explain for the public. By not having committee hearings where you can talk to witnesses and hear from the public and then discuss and propose amendments, this is what it will be on the floor: 20 hours of debate about the most important topic in anybody's life—their health. Twenty hours and then you finish the debate.

Then, the majority leader indicates there is an unlimited amendment process, but the amendment process under budget reconciliation is as follows: An amendment will be considered, and there will be 1 minute of debate allowed for each side—1 minute.

We are talking about healthcare. We are talking about life and death. I have a number of bills I filed that I want to offer as amendments, but for us to truly debate it and for the American public to truly understand it, 1 minute is ridiculous. But that is apparently going to be the rule for us next week.

I think it is an outrage for a body that is known as the greatest deliberative body in the world to take up such an important topic and be told that it is in such a constrained way. So I just want to object to the characterization of the process this morning, that Democrats refuse to work together. I have evidence to the contrary. Within 48 hours of being put on this committee, I asked for an opportunity to participate in this debate. I think I am entitled to respect as an elected Member of this body and a member of the HELP Committee to be engaged on matters dealing with healthcare. But thus far, I have not had this opportunity, and that is so out of character for the HELP Committee, I might add.

I am going to be discussing this bill tomorrow with stakeholders in Richmond, where I live. Let me tell you what I see that really troubles me about the Senate bill. I think this bill hurts Virginians—especially seniors, children, people with disabilities, and working families—and it hurts them all to deliver giant tax breaks, largely to the wealthiest Americans. It also shifts costs from the Federal budget to the States, and as a former Governor, that worries me.

This bill would slash traditional Medicaid, which is a program that more than 1 million Virginians rely on. It is really important to point out that, when you are cutting Medicaid by potentially more than \$1.3 trillion over 10 years, that is what the House bill cut out in Medicaid—the House bill plus President Trump's proposed budget, \$1.3 trillion in cuts to Medicaid—and this bill could cut Medicaid even deeper by our reading of it.

You have to ask yourself, you cut Medicaid by that much—who are Medicaid recipients? In Virginia, nearly 60

percent of Medicaid recipients are children. Kids who are in public schools receiving special education, many of their services are paid for by Medicaid. A youngster undergoing a cancer operation at Children's Hospital of King's Daughters in Norfolk, a lot of that is being paid for by Medicaid.

A kid who has autism and is getting a couple of hours of autism-related services to help them be successful in school is paid by Medicaid. A child in a dangerous household who might have to get institutionalized—not because the child is doing something wrong but because there aren't parents in the household who are helping the household stay together, they are in danger of being institutionalized—Medicaid can send services a few hours a week into the household to stabilize the family so the child doesn't have to be institutionalized, and that is being paid by Medicaid.

When you cut Medicaid, that is whom you are affecting; 60 percent are children, 15 to 20 percent are people with disabilities. That is who is on Medicaid in Virginia; 10 to 15 percent are parents and grandparents in nursing homes and pregnant women. That is who is on Medicaid in Virginia.

The Medicaid cuts in this bill are even steeper, even more significant than the cuts in the House bill. The bill would continue to allow something that I think is very challenging and that was a carryover from the House bill and may even be worse, which is the ability to charge older adults in the 55- to 64-year-old age range as much as five times higher than younger enrollees in the marketplace.

When most people are in the 55- to 64-year-old range, they are not necessarily at the peak of their earnings. Their earnings are often starting to come down a little bit. If you let their rates rise that dramatically, you are really hurting people who can't easily go back and reenter the marketplace and the workforce at the same level they could have when they were younger.

This is a bill that will hurt 22,000 Virginians who rely on Planned Parenthood for lifesaving healthcare. That is how many women in Virginia use Planned Parenthood as their primary doctor, as their primary physician—22,000, and this bill would hurt it.

This bill would weaken health benefits by reducing the essential health benefits contained in the Affordable Care Act, and that affects pregnancy, that affects mental health, that affects opioid treatment programs, and it would force States to make very difficult budget choices.

If you cut Medicaid by that much, you are going to make Governors and mayors decide: Wow. OK. Whom do I cut? Do I cut the kids? Do I cut the disabled? Do I cut the elderly? Do I cut all three or do I raise taxes? You are just pushing this off on the shoulders of States.

There is good news. I want to finish with good news. I always try to finish

or find some good news. There is good news. We can do this right. We don't have to do this wrong. It is actually really simple. When the Senate bill is truly ready, and it is not just a discussion draft but a real bill and it is put on the floor, all we have to do is refer the bill to the two committees—the Finance Committee and the HELP Committee.

Let the committees hear from the public, from providers, patients, doctors and nurses, and hospitals. Let members of the committee—Republicans and Democrats—ask questions. Let us propose amendments. Let us improve it.

This doesn't have to be a complete up-or-down. Why can't we have a meaningful discussion and ask questions and propose amendments in a deliberative way and improve the bill? It is not as if the Democratic minority can just roll over you. We are the minority in this body, and we are the minority on both the HELP and Finance Committees. Unless I can put an amendment on the table and convince some Republicans it is a good idea, my amendment is going to be voted down. If I can't convince somebody around the table this is a good idea, I will take it, and my amendment will be voted down. At least, let's have a meaningful discussion about the most important expenditure anybody ever makes in their life and the largest sector of the American economy.

What would be wrong, what could be wrong in letting the HELP Committee take a look at the healthcare bill? What would be wrong, what could be wrong with letting the Finance Committee take a look at a bill that affects Medicaid and Medicare, which is in their jurisdiction?

What would be wrong, what could be wrong with allowing public witnesses to come to these committees and testify what they like and what they don't like? I may learn some things about the bill that I like after listening to some witnesses. What would be wrong, what could be wrong with allowing this to happen in this great deliberative body?

I guarantee it would improve the outcome. It would improve the product. More minds looking at this and debating and in dialogue will improve it, if what we want is an improved healthcare system. Maybe that is not what we want. Maybe doing our best job is not what we want. Maybe what we want is the ability to put something through only with votes from one party and with the other party completely shut out of it.

What I think we should want is to do the best job for the most people when it comes to the most important thing in their lives, their health.

I will conclude and say that we can get this right. We can take advantage of the work product of the Republicans, who have been working on this draft by putting it in the HELP and Finance Committees and allowing the body to

treat it as any other piece of legislation and improve it before we are forced to vote for it in a rush vote on the floor.

With that, 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. SCHATZ. 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. SCHATZ. Mr. President, there are two things Americans need to know about this Republican healthcare plan. The first is that it is going to make insurance more expensive, and the second is that it is going to make it harder to get healthcare in the first place. That is the bottom line of this bill: higher costs for less care—and all for a tax cut for the rich. That is what we are doing.

We are taking about \$800 billion worth of revenue, eviscerating it, eliminating it. Those tax revenues were basically tax increases passed under the Affordable Care Act. They were tax increases on the wealthiest among us. What we are doing is getting rid of all those tax increases in order to cut Medicaid. That is what this bill does. That is not what Americans had in mind when they said on a bipartisan basis, on a majority basis—when they asked Congress to fix healthcare. When you read the fine print, you see that it gets worse every moment, and you realize how bad this plan is.

The Senate version did something extraordinary: It actually moved to the right. And that is a real legislative achievement. Look at Medicaid. This is a program that helps one out of every five Americans, two out of every five children in the United States. It helps one out of every two families who have a newborn baby. And it covers three out of every four long-term nursing home residents.

This program literally saves lives—nursing home patients; people struggling with opioid addiction; people who are working two jobs but still don't make enough to cover their own healthcare insurance—but with this bill, Medicaid as we know it will be destroyed, all so that people at the top of the food chain can pay less in taxes.

This bill actually has a certain symmetry to it. There are at least \$800 billion worth of cuts to Medicaid—probably more but at least \$800 billion—and it just so happens that there are also around \$800 billion worth of tax cuts for the wealthy. So insurance executives will be OK. Don't worry about them. What we should worry about is women who need Medicaid for maternal health services. We should worry about seniors and people with disabilities.

Activists for disability rights are appropriately freaked out about this bill. People in wheelchairs protested outside of a Senate office earlier today,

and some of them said that they would literally die if this bill passes. It was an intense protest. And we hope everybody is OK, but it is intense because these are intense issues.

These are personal issues. These are healthcare issues. People are worried—not about some abstract public policy or political debate; they are worried about their own lives. And they are not wrong. Because of Medicaid, people now have access to physical therapy and immunizations. They can see a counselor for mental health problems and opioid addiction. They can afford the medication they need instead of relying on free samples from clinics. Medicaid has changed everything for them.

This is not just good for patients, it is also good for taxpayers. By giving preventive care, we save money. And if TrumpCare becomes law, those services will go away, thanks to \$800 billion in cuts.

This bill also lets insurance companies opt out of covering essential health benefits. I want to be very clear about this. This is a term of art. It is a piece of jargon. I am going to go slowly here and not assume that if you are not in politics, you would understand what an essential health benefit is.

Basically, if you are getting a healthcare plan, there are 10 things that, under Federal law, a healthcare plan has to cover. It just makes sense. I will list them. They are ambulatory patient services; emergency services, so ER visits; hospitalization—if you have to stay overnight in the hospital, it has to be covered in your healthcare plan; maternity and newborn care; mental health and substance abuse services, including behavioral health treatment; prescription drugs; rehab; laboratory services; preventive wellness and wellness services; chronic disease management; and pediatric services.

So I want you to imagine a world where you can get an insurance plan—a so-called insurance plan—but under the law, they can tell you: By the way, we don't cover hospitalization. By the way, we have this great insurance plan, but if you need any prescription drugs, those are out-of-pocket—not a copay; you have to pay all of it. By the way, we will give you an insurance plan, but if you have mental illness, you are on your own. By the way, if you get pregnant, we don't cover that.

It is a healthcare plan, which is why we have a statute, a Federal law, that says ambulatory patient services, emergency services, hospitalization, maternity and newborn care, mental health and substance abuse services, prescription drugs, rehab, lab services, preventive and wellness services, and pediatric services have to be covered. Otherwise, it is not insurance. Every one of these benefits is covered full stop under the current law, but what the proposal does is it eviscerates essential health benefits.

I don't know what the CBO is going to say, because they got rid of the individual mandate, and it is going to be unclear. There is a real possibility that there will actually be an increase in the number of people who are covered, but that coverage is going to be nonsense. Can you imagine having a health insurance plan that doesn't cover maternity care? Can you imagine—especially nowadays, when half the time when you go to the doctor, they give you a prescription—so you go to the doctor, and they say you need this, and you say OK, and then you have to pay out-of-pocket? What is the point of insurance if none of the things you need are covered by the insurance? That is what this bill does.

I am also worried about the distractions in this bill. It defunds Planned Parenthood and doesn't provide nearly enough for opioid addiction programs. I want to be clear about what I mean by "distraction." It is my supposition—I don't know for sure that these things were intentionally either omitted from the bill or put in the bill to allow some of my Republican colleagues to get well legislatively. What do I mean by that? Opioid treatment was tens of billions of dollars in the House version. They brought it down to less than \$1 billion. That puts somebody on this side of the aisle in a position to say: Even though I am for \$800 billion of Medicaid cuts, which will eviscerate opioid treatment across the country, I am going to introduce an amendment and we are going to increase opioid treatment. Once we get a "yes" vote, well, you know, I was really concerned, but with my amendment, we have more money for opioid treatment.

Don't fall for that trick. It is a trick. The way to fund opioid treatment is to fund opioid treatment. Medicaid is both the best way to do it clinically and the best way to do it fiscally. So I am afraid they intentionally left that out so somebody can go in and be the hero on the other side, while not actually solving the problem—likewise with Planned Parenthood. The way you fund opioid treatment is through Medicaid.

We had 13 men working in secret without input from any women or Democrats or experts or advocates.

Part of the thing about healthcare, as the President says, is nobody knew it was so complicated. But you really need hearings. You really need to understand how all of the parts of a system interact with each other. Let me give an example. You cut Medicaid, and somebody who is Medicaid-eligible but also a veteran—you don't know for sure whether, if Medicaid services are not available, they are going to go back into the VA system and cost the VA system more money. If you cut preventive treatment, you don't know if you are going to end up having to pay on the back end with more ER services. So the reason you have hearings is you have to have some rather technical expertise in the room to say: Hey, if you

do this, this might happen. If you do that, this might happen. If you do this, we are not quite sure what might happen.

But the idea that 13 men with very little expertise in healthcare policy—they are not unintelligent, they are not unqualified to be public policy makers, but the whole thing about being in the Senate is that, for the most part, we are supposed to be, as they say—Jack or Jane—Jack of all trades, master of none. We are supposed to be pretty good at receiving information, kind of distilling it, asking the right kinds of questions, listening to our constituents, and then crystallizing all of that into a bill.

The problem with this process is they did about one-third of that. They talked to each other, and they talked to Republican lobbyists, but they didn't talk to the people back home. They didn't talk to people who run community health centers. They didn't talk to mental health advocates.

We have people who come from Hawaii and across the country who advocate for every specific disease treatment and disease research. These people usually are touched personally by their issues. They come in, and most of us receive them and talk to them and think about how to get them more funding or more reimbursements through NIH or CDC or the Department of Defense or wherever we can find resources for them.

That is the process of being in a legislative context if you are not personally an expert on healthcare policy. If you do it in the dark of night, if you do it literally without any women, if you do it literally without any people from the other party, you are going to get a bad product. They knew they were going to get a bad product, but they made a judgment. They made a judgment.

They decided that the longer this bill sees the light of day, the lower the chances it has of passing, and I think they are right. I mean, if this thing is subjected to real sunshine, it will just wither. That is just a fact. This is why they didn't have any hearings in the House, this is why they are not only not having any hearings in the Senate, but they are going to allow for I think it is 20 hours of debate under this silly vote-arama procedure.

What they will do is, I think, yield back a lot of their time. What does that mean? That means 20 hours will become 10 hours because they don't want to defend their bill.

They are absolutely happy to trash the Affordable Care Act and say it has a series of problems and all the rest of it. You know what, the Affordable Care Act has a series of problems. No doubt about it. I will tell you it is way better than this. I will also tell you it is way better than the situation we had before the act was passed.

The No. 1 cause of bankruptcy in the United States was getting sick. Think about that. Before this act, people

would not be just afraid for themselves when they got sick, when something catastrophic happened to them, either a chronic disease or something that imperiled their lives or an accident, but you would have dual anxieties, right? You wondered whether you were going to be OK, but you also wondered whether you were going to be able to make it financially.

So we are sort of beyond that, and now we have a law that has been on the books that does need fixing. I know the Presiding Officer and the Senator from Missouri, who is waiting to speak, would be pleased—really would be pleased to participate in a bipartisan process.

I think about the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, one of the best statesmen in the U.S. Senate, LAMAR ALEXANDER, a Republican with whom I disagree on a lot, but he and PATTY MURRAY did a bill on public education that got—I don't know—84 votes or something. Liberal PATTY MURRAY and conservative LAMAR ALEXANDER did a deal. ORRIN HATCH, President pro tempore of the Senate, is someone who worked with my predecessor, who worked with Teddy Kennedy, who did bills and did deals.

So I understand we are kind of in this squabble about whether there is good faith or there was good faith. Our view of this is you went into the reconciliation process before even, in any serious way, pursuing bipartisan legislation. You decided you wanted 51 votes, not 60 votes, and that was sort of poisonous fruit from the tree. Fine. That is our view. Your view is that you seriously tried to reach out to us, and we have rebuffed your overtures. I have my view; the Republicans have their view.

Right now, you are about to walk one-sixth of the American economy off a cliff, and you are also about to harm tens of millions of individuals in all of our home States—not Republicans or Democrats or Greens or Independents or Libertarians or people who don't vote or whoever it may be, but people are going to really be hurt by this bill. People are really going to be hurt by this bill.

Forgetting the politics, I think we have an opportunity to avert the harm. If this bill does come crashing down, then I think we have an opportunity to work together on healthcare. I, for one, pledge that if we are in a position to sit down on a bipartisan basis and come up with improvements to the existing statute, I will be the first person to say yes to that kind of process. It is not too late. All we need are three Republicans to say: Let's slow down. Let's have a hearing. Let's work with Democrats. Let's do this the right way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, since the current healthcare bill—the bill usually called ObamaCare—passed, every

year Missouri families have had to worry about whether their healthcare plans would be canceled, whether their options and access would be taken away, whether they could have the same doctors next year that they have this year, whether they could go to the same hospital next year that they could go to this year, whether their premiums would be going up, but if they were worried about whether their premiums were going to be going up, that was a worry that everybody else in every State had because premiums went up everywhere.

In fact, this situation has gotten so bad that in one-third of America's counties today, only one company in one-third of the counties today will even offer insurance. So the options are to buy from one company or to pay the penalty because your only choice is that one company. That one company gets to file a rate that the State regulator gets to agree to, if the one company is going to stay. In fact, I think this week the State of Iowa that has only one company providing individual insurance for the whole State, that one company said they would stay again next year, and then they filed an increase of over 40 percent on those policies for next year.

In Missouri, where I live, 25 counties will not have a provider next year, and it could be higher than that. One company has already said they will not be there next year. Twenty-five of the counties they sold policies in only had one company providing policies. We now know that at least 40 percent of all Missouri counties will not have—I mean, 40 percent of all U.S. counties will not have anybody even willing to offer these plans. This is a significant problem, and it just didn't occur when this President was sworn in or this Congress took over.

Premiums in your State, Mr. President, have gone up 123 percent since 2013. In my State, in Missouri, they have gone up 145 percent; in Alabama, 223 percent; in Alaska, 203 percent; in Oklahoma, 201 percent since this plan went into effect, and that was just 2013. This is not 30 years ago. This is 4 years ago.

The average increase for American individuals and families for getting policies under ObamaCare is 105 percent. Now, remember, this was the plan that was supposed to ensure that your costs would go down per family at least \$2,500. The “at least \$2,500 number” was close to right, but what was close to right about it is that your plan probably increased at least \$2,500 if you had that kind of plan. The status quo just simply will not work.

The draft legislation, as it stands right now, preserves access to care for people with preexisting conditions, it strengthens the future of Medicaid, it does not change Medicare in any way, and it gives people more health insurance choices than they otherwise have as States exercise their options under the law. It allows people to stay on

their family insurance until they are 26. That, along with preexisting condition coverage, is usually seen as the two most popular things in the law as it stands now. They would still be in the law.

Now, Members of both parties—and the reason I say “as it stands today” is Members of both parties will have an opportunity to amend this bill. In fact, we will have a vote probably the night before we take the final vote on the bill, where every Member can make amendment after amendment after amendment on this bill. There will be plenty of chances to change this bill on a topic that the Members of the Senate probably know more about, and, by the way, because it is such a big Federal obligation and responsibility, should know more about than virtually anything else we deal with in a level of specificity that is higher than anything else we deal with.

Believe me, anybody who wants to read that bill—and I will, you will, and others will, some will not—anybody who wants to read that bill will have plenty of time to read it and plenty of opportunity to amend it, but it will be amended, so we need to be sure we understand the final product might not be exactly what we have before us today.

I am going to carefully look at the final legislation. I am going to carefully look at how this addresses problems of Missourians. I think one thing that is absolutely clear is that Missouri families need a more reliable and affordable healthcare system. This bill is an important first step in that direction. The status quo cannot continue to be the status quo.

By the way, there were plenty of opportunities over the last 7 years to make the kind of incremental changes that all of our friends on the other side said they would love to make, and they were in charge.

We had a bill over here that Senator COLLINS, I believe, was the principal sponsor of that said: Well, let's change that 30 hour requirement; that if you work 30 hours, you have to have insurance to 40 hours. Now, that is not a very big change, but it is a very big change if you have a 28-hour-a-week job, and the reason that you have that 28-hour-a-week job is the law told your employer, if you hire somebody for 30 hours, you have to provide health insurance for that person.

Now, the employers by the way—nobody is better in America today than employers to provide health insurance and there is no better place to get your health insurance than at work, but we have almost forgotten the tragedy of the workplace where because of ObamaCare so many people worked two part-time jobs because the law said you don't have to pay health insurance if they work less than 30 hours.

Well, we tried to figure out a way to get more people to work at a full-time job, not a very big change. Our friends on the other side were in control for year after year after year after that

bill was introduced. Nobody stepped up and said: Let's do that. Let's make that change. Let's get more people in full-time jobs.

These insurance markets were collapsing. I don't think there was any proposal on the other side to do anything about it. One of the difficulties we find ourselves in now is we are trying to save a critically important system—the American healthcare system—while that system is collapsing around us. That means it is not going to look as good as it would have looked if we could have gone back 7 years and done the things you and I wanted to do when we were House Members—giving more people more chances to buy more policies, having more transparency, being sure, if you didn't pay taxes on insurance you got at work, you also didn't pay taxes on money you spent for insurance if you had to buy it as an individual. There were lots of things that could have been done that were proposed. We can still go back and do that. This is clearly a first step.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services has over 1,400 places where that person's two predecessors defined what the law was supposed to mean. So earlier this week, Secretary Tom Price said he was going to look and his staff was going to look at every one of those 1,400-plus places and figure out if there is a way to define the law better so it doesn't have the impact on family economies or family access to healthcare that it currently has. That is an important step too.

This first step matters as well. I say to the Presiding Officer, nobody has been a more vigorous advocate of this debate than you have. We have an opportunity to continue this debate over the next several days. I look forward to it, and it will be interesting to try to remove the fact from the fiction when we talk about all the things that supposedly could have happened up until now. The fact is, they didn't happen.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUNT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. UDALL. Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you for the recognition.

All across my home State of New Mexico, thousands of hard-working people owe their healthcare and in some cases their lives to the Affordable Care Act. Since early January, I have received over 10,000 letters, emails, and calls from New Mexicans pleading with me to help save their access to healthcare. Over 96 percent of my constituents who have contacted me about healthcare oppose TrumpCare.

Let me say that again because I think it is a very important number.

Over 96 percent of New Mexicans who have contacted me about healthcare over the past 6 months are opposed to TrumpCare, and they are opposed to the effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

The TrumpCare bill is a disgrace and a disaster. It is a disgrace that Senate Republicans are trying to force an extremely unpopular bill on the country in 1 week, and they are doing this even though this bill affects one-sixth of our economy and even though it would cost hundreds of thousands of people in New Mexico and millions of Americans to lose access to healthcare, prescription drugs, drug addiction counseling, and other lifesaving services.

The Republican plan raids Medicaid, it strips away protections that prevent insurance companies from canceling your policy for getting sick, and it reduces the services your insurer has to provide. It does all this to pay for massive tax cuts for the wealthy.

This bill is a disaster because it would be devastating for older New Mexicans, families who are struggling to make ends meet, women, people with preexisting conditions, and New Mexicans in rural areas.

Our rural areas would be particularly hard hit. In some cases, it would do very severe damage to healthcare in rural areas. Hospital administrators in rural counties like Guadalupe County and Socorro County in my home State have told me that losing Medicaid reimbursements could break their budgets, and that could force the small, rural hospitals to limit services or even to close. You know, the last thing you want to have happen in a small, rural community is to have the hospital close. We all know what happens after that: The hospital closes, and then a diminution in services takes place, and it is very hard for communities to stay alive in that situation.

It is no wonder the American people don't want this bill. They don't want TrumpCare.

I suppose it is no surprise that the Republicans have kept it hidden—without letting anyone see it. I want to talk about that for a moment. That is not just a talking point for Democrats. If this bill passes and becomes law, many people will suffer, and it has been kept a total secret.

I wish I could read on the Senate floor every story I have gotten from my constituents who are concerned. If I could, I could hold the record for the longest floor speech. I have shared several in the past, but today I would like to read just one, which is from Elena from Albuquerque.

This is a picture of Elena from Albuquerque, NM. She has a very moving story that she wrote me about. In this story, I think you see the story of the Affordable Care Act and the good it does.

Elena is 31 years old.

Earlier this week, I told some of Elena's story in a speech on the Senate floor, but today I want to tell Elena's full story.

Elena graduated last year from the University of New Mexico Law School—my alma mater—and she is quite determined and motivated, as you will hear. She wrote her story in a Facebook post to friends and gave me permission to share it with the American people and with my colleagues here in the Senate. Here is her story. This is Elena's story in Elena's words:

For the past 18 months, I have been carrying around a big secret. I felt really guilty for not sharing it, yet, try as I might, I could not work up the nerve to tell you all. Lucky for me, Senator Udall has helped me to rip off the Band-Aid.

In the spring of 2016, I found out that I have a BRCA-1 mutation, which puts me at a very high risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer. Women with a BRCA-1 mutation tend to get breast and/or ovarian cancer very young, sometimes even in their 20s or 30s.

When you have a BRCA-1 mutation, you have two options: One, you can get breast screenings every six months and yearly ovarian screenings and keep your fingers crossed that nothing pops up. Or two, you can get your breasts and ovaries removed and significantly decrease the odds of getting cancer.

Needless to say, there's not really a "right" decision. A woman's choice just comes down to what she feels is right for her body and life.

In the past 18 months, I've gotten to check a whole lot of things off my "absolutely not on my bucket list" bucket list.

In April 2016, I had my first breast MRI, which revealed a lump that my doctor thought might be breast cancer. I then had my first mammogram, my first breast ultrasound, and my first breast biopsy. These tests thankfully revealed that I didn't have breast cancer. They also helped me to make the difficult decision to have a prophylactic mastectomy and significantly reduce my chances of getting breast cancer.

In August 2016, I had a prophylactic mastectomy. And in October and February of this year, I had follow-up surgeries to have my breasts reconstructed.

Since February, I've been focusing on healing, and I feel great. Obviously, this isn't the end of the road. Doctors suggest that women with a BRCA-1 mutation get their ovaries removed around age 40. And of course screening will continue to be important. But for now, I feel at peace knowing that I'm doing what I can to protect myself.

As Senator UDALL mentioned, at the time that all of this health stuff came up, I had health insurance thanks to Medicaid Expansion through the ACA/ObamaCare.

I first enrolled in Medicaid about three years ago when I was a law student at UNM School of Law. UNM had just given qualifying students the opportunity to enroll in Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. I was a healthy 29-year-old with no preexisting conditions, and doubted I would ever use my health insurance. Little did I know, completing the Medicaid application would be one of the most important decisions I ever made.

So, a truly genuine #thanksObama to President Obama, his staff and all our elected leaders who worked to make the ACA happen and are fighting to keep it alive.

I am so grateful that I qualified for Medicaid at a time in my life when I unexpectedly needed health insurance more than I could have ever anticipated. I am so thankful the drafters of the ACA understood that allowing me to get the preventive care I needed was better for my health, and also

more financially sound. The ease with which I have received my medical coverage has allowed me to focus on my recovery.

While it has been a challenging year and a half, knowing that I could trust my health insurance made it so much easier than I'd imagined it would be.

I am so relieved that now I can focus on my future instead of figuring out how to pay off insurmountable medical debt.

I am fully recovered from my surgeries and am working on moving my life and career forward. I look forward to paying taxes (I swear, I really do) to support programs like Medicaid so that I can do my part to assist other Americans in staying healthy. If you had told me when I signed up for Medicaid that I would make such extensive use of it, I wouldn't have believed it. At times, I have felt guilty for having to utilize Medicaid at a time in my life that has proven to be so medically and financially complicated.

Friends and family have been good enough to remind me that this is what Medicaid is about: ensuring that Americans can afford to take care of their health, regardless of their financial state, when an issue strikes. The Affordable Care Act has made this a reality for more people than ever before; I am so grateful to be one of them.

I am very scared for what the future will bring for those many individuals who have received insurance thanks to the ACA. I worry that if the [Affordable Care Act] is destroyed, my preexisting condition will make it financially impossible for me and many others to get health insurance.

I worry for people who couldn't get insurance through their work and were finally able to get it through the Exchange. I worry that those who suffer from ailments that constantly affect their health won't be able to afford the care they need. I worry about the millions of Americans who are about to lose so much.

I understand that the ACA is not perfect. It needs some work, especially for people on the exchange who are paying premiums that are way too high. But the replacement plan that is being proposed is going to make it incredibly difficult for all of us to get quality, affordable coverage.

There are no words to adequately express my gratitude to all those who worked so tirelessly to make the Affordable Care Act happen. I am so hopeful that instead of destroying the ACA, our leaders will work to make it stronger so that all Americans can get the healthcare that they deserve.

Those are the words Elena posted on her Facebook page, very, very moving words. Before her surgery, Elena had an 87-percent chance of developing breast cancer, and now it is less than 10 percent, less than that of the average woman.

I commit to Elena and to every New Mexican and American that I will work to make the ACA stronger so that all Americans will get the healthcare they rightly deserve. But the Senate Republicans cannot claim the same. Their bill, drafted in secret behind closed doors, hurts people like Elena who have preexisting conditions. It hurts people in her situation who have complicated healthcare needs with high medical costs and those who benefit from Medicaid, from the Medicaid expansion.

Americans support the Medicaid Program. They understand that even if they don't need Medicaid, neighbors, friends, family may need it. And they

understand that they may need it unexpectedly in the future, as Elena did.

Medicaid expansion has meant that over 265,000 New Mexicans have healthcare coverage that they didn't have before. It is a pretty remarkable thing. In 6 short years in New Mexico, after the passage of the Affordable Care Act, we had people who didn't have any healthcare, and now 265,000 have Medicaid coverage. They could be in a situation just like Elena's. Many of these are hard-working families—families living in rural New Mexico and Native American families living in New Mexico.

The Senate Republican bill, like the House Republican bill, will end Medicaid expansion in New Mexico for people like Elena.

I want everyone listening to hear: This bill cuts Medicaid overall more deeply—more deeply—than the House version. And when President Trump said that the House version was a mean bill, this is a meaner bill. They are not necessary; these cuts are meaner, and they are not necessary to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They will hurt millions of Americans.

They are also devastating to our State economies. New Mexico can't afford to pick up the tab for those cuts, so the State will be forced to cut services and reduce payments to doctors. Hospitals might close, and that would mean healthcare jobs will dry up.

Elena's story is one of millions. Every Senator has hundreds of thousands of constituents with these stories. We all need healthcare at some point in our lives.

I urge, I implore my fellow Senators across the aisle to reject the McConnell TrumpCare bill. Work with Democrats on a bipartisan basis to improve America's healthcare system so that every American has access to affordable healthcare.

Don't do this. Don't gut our healthcare system.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar Nos. 120 through 152 and all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy, with the exception of COL Darius Gallegos in Calendar No. 140; that the nominations be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in

order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army Medical Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624 and 3064:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Ronald J. Place

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. William C. Greene

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. William S. Dillon

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Karl O. Thomas

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Jay B. Silveria

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Samuel J. Paparo, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Gregory N. Harris

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. John P. Lawlor, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Dion B. Moten

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Bowlman T. Bowles, III

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (1h) Daniel J. MacDonnell

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Daniel B. Hendrickson
Rear Adm. (lh) Thomas W. Marotta
Rear Adm. (lh) Matthew A. Zirkle

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Jacquelyn McClelland

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. James M. Butler

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Eugene A. Burcher
Capt. Rodney P. Dewalt
Capt. Joey B. Dodgen
Capt. Andrew J. Mueller
Capt. Richard A. Rodriguez

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Keith M. Jones

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Bret C. Batchelder

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. DeAnna M. Burt

IN THE ARMY

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Stephen R. Hogan

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Janson D. Boyles

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grades indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Steven W. Ainsworth
Brig. Gen. Bruce E. Hackett
Brig. Gen. Michael C. O'Guinn
Brig. Gen. Miyako N. Schanely

To be brigadier general

Col. John W. Aarsen
Col. Kris A. Belanger
Col. Douglas A. Cherry
Col. Ellen S. Clark
Col. Robert S. Cooley, Jr.
Col. Dianne M. Del Rosso

Col. William B. Dyer, III
Col. Joseph A. Edwards, II
Col. Howard-Charles W. Geck
Col. Michael T. Harvey
Col. Martin F. Klein
Col. William S. Lynn
Col. Joseph A. Marsiglia
Col. Robert F. Pleczkowski
Col. Dustin A. Shultz
Col. Mark A. Towne
Col. Irene M. Zoppi

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Gregory L. Kennedy
Brig. Gen. Andrew P. Schafer, Jr.

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Christopher P. Callahan

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. James P. Begley, III
Brig. Gen. Sylvester Cannon
Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Carden, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Richard H. Dahlman
Brig. Gen. Wendul G. Hagler, II
Brig. Gen. Robert T. Herbert
Brig. Gen. Jon A. Jensen
Brig. Gen. John F. King
Brig. Gen. Dirk R. Kloss
Brig. Gen. Francis M. McGinn
Brig. Gen. Walter L. Mercer
Brig. Gen. Paul D. Rogers
Brig. Gen. Sean A. Ryan
Brig. Gen. Michael A. Stone
Brig. Gen. Michael C. Thompson
Brig. Gen. Giselle M. Wilz
Brig. Gen. Gary S. Yaple

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Ann M. Burkhardt

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Scott A. Howell

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. James C. Vechery

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Thomas A. Horlander

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade

indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Andrew L. Lewis

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Matthew J. Kohler

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Vice Adm. Kevin M. Donegan

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert F. Hedelund

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Vice Adm. James G. Foggo, III

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN496 AIR FORCE nomination of Jered N. Fry, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN497 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning CHRISTOPHER R. BONEY, and ending DANIEL D. REYES, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN498 AIR FORCE nominations of Jeffrey A. Garrett, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN499 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning ROGER A. LEE, and ending JEFFREY R. ROSENBERRY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN500 AIR FORCE nomination of Theodore L. Wilson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN501 AIR FORCE nomination of Jason S. Cross, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN504 AIR FORCE nomination of Angela M. Mike, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN535 AIR FORCE nominations (4) beginning MATTHEW V. CHAUVIERE, and ending LAUREN A. MAY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN536 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning MICHAEL E. BRUHN, and ending VICTOR D. WEEDEN, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN537 AIR FORCE nominations (31) beginning JEFFREY W. DRAKE, and ending JACK VILARDI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN539 AIR FORCE nominations (36) beginning MEGAN E. ANDERSON, and ending

RAJEEV S. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN544 AIR FORCE nomination of Jose G. Bal, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

IN THE ARMY

PN159 ARMY nominations (81) beginning JENNIFER M. BAGER, and ending RAMEY L. WILSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 27, 2017.

PN160 ARMY nominations (12) beginning ALFRED C. ANDERSON, and ending KELLEY TOMSETT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 27, 2017.

PN483 ARMY nomination of William F. McClintock, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN484 ARMY nominations (9) beginning DAVID S. ALLEN, and ending BARRY K. VINCENT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN485 ARMY nomination of Jeffrey L. Washington, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN545 ARMY nomination of Joseph B. Dore, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN546 ARMY nominations (2) beginning CHRISTOPHER M. CHUNG, and ending HEATH D. HOLT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN547 ARMY nominations (2) beginning DEVIN G. MCCANE, and ending SHARRI L. ORMSBEE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN548 ARMY nomination of Janna X. Gaddy, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN549 ARMY nominations (2) beginning BRADLEY H. STEPHENS, and ending AMILYN M. TAPLIN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN550 ARMY nomination of Terry Kim, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN551 ARMY nominations (16) beginning JEFF A. BURCHFIELD, and ending BRIAN D. WIECK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN488 MARINE CORPS nomination of Jason K. Fettig, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

IN THE NAVY

PN395 NAVY nominations (6) beginning JUANITO F. BOYDON, JR., and ending SURESH K. THADHANI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN396 NAVY nominations (3) beginning ANTHONY L. BAYUNGAN, and ending MICHAEL A. LEACHMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN397 NAVY nominations (17) beginning TODD M. BOLAND, and ending KAIL C. SWINDLE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN398 NAVY nominations (64) beginning JAMES G. ADAMS, and ending CHARLES C.

WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN399 NAVY nominations (2) beginning SHAWN G. DENIHAN, and ending CHAD A. RUNYON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN400 NAVY nominations (2) beginning KELVIN J. ASKEW, and ending ERIKA L. BERRY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN401 NAVY nominations (2) beginning KATHLEEN A. ALLEN, and ending CHRISTOPHER FRYE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN419 NAVY nomination of Bruce E. Osborne, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN420 NAVY nominations (2) beginning COLETTE M. MURPHY, and ending JOHN A. ROBINSON, III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN421 NAVY nominations (14) beginning NATHAN R. ANDERSON, and ending JODIE M.C. YIM, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN422 NAVY nomination of Adria R. Schneck, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN423 NAVY nominations (2) beginning MARY A. PONCE, and ending BRIAN K. REED, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN424 NAVY nominations (2) beginning RYAN K. MAHELONA, and ending PHILIP L. NOTZ, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN425 NAVY nominations (14) beginning JOSEPH T. BAILEY, and ending JONPAUL STEFANI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN426 NAVY nomination of David W. Shaieb, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN427 NAVY nominations (15) beginning LEE A. AXTELL, and ending MARK S. WINWARD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN428 NAVY nominations (13) beginning THOMAS M. BESTAFKA, and ending FRANCIS J. STAVISH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN429 NAVY nomination of Danny W. King, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN431 NAVY nominations (30) beginning BABAK A. BARAKAT, and ending STEPHEN M. WILSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN432 NAVY nominations (26) beginning MICHAEL J. ALLANSON, and ending GERARD J. WHITE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN433 NAVY nominations (16) beginning MATTHEW L. BERAN, and ending IAN S. WEXLER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN434 NAVY nominations (21) beginning GARLAND H. ANDREWS, and ending MEREDITH L. YEAGER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN435 NAVY nominations (50) beginning OLADAPO A. AKINTONDE, and ending SEAN R. WISE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN436 NAVY nominations (16) beginning JEFF A. BLEILE, and ending JEFFREY G. ZELLER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN438 NAVY nominations (5) beginning GRADY G. DUFFEY, JR., and ending DAVID A. VONDRAK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN439 NAVY nominations (4) beginning WILLIAM M. KAFKA, and ending WILLIAM R. URBAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN440 NAVY nominations (6) beginning DANIEL E. FILLION, and ending JASON D. WEDDLE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN441 NAVY nominations (5) beginning DAMON B. DIXON, and ending JONATHAN J. VORRATH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN442 NAVY nominations (11) beginning JAMES W. ADKISSON, III, and ending SHERRI R. ZIMMERMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN443 NAVY nominations (7) beginning CORY S. BRUMMETT, and ending DAVID J. WHITE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN444 NAVY nominations (18) beginning JULIE M. ALFIERI, and ending BRETT A. WISE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN445 NAVY nominations (9) beginning MATTHEW E. ARNOLD, and ending ANTHONY C. TARANTO, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN446 NAVY nominations (11) beginning PETER A. ARROBIO, and ending KEVIN J. WATKINS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN447 NAVY nominations (18) beginning JOHN A. ANDERSON, and ending JAY A. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN448 NAVY nominations (3) beginning LAWRENCE H. KENNEDY, and ending TRACIE A. SEVERSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN449 NAVY nominations (5) beginning JOSE G. HERNANDEZ, and ending DEREK A. VESTAL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN450 NAVY nominations (173) beginning DAVID A. ABERNATHY, and ending JESSE J. ZIMBAUER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN486 NAVY nomination of Kenneth M. King, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN487 NAVY nomination of Garry P. Closas, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN502 NAVY nominations (2) beginning PAUL D. MELVEY and ending ALEXANDER WOLDEMARIAM, which nominations were

received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN503 NAVY nominations (13) beginning WILLIAM J. BAILEY, JR., and ending CHRISTOPHER D. TUCKER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN504 NAVY nominations (21) beginning GINA A. BUONO, and ending SANDRA F. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN505 NAVY nominations (6) beginning DAVID J. ALLEN, and ending TRACIE M. ZIELINSKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN506 NAVY nominations (5) beginning DAVID M. BUZZETTI, and ending ERIC R. VETTER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN507 NAVY nominations (11) beginning DAVID E. BAILEY, and ending CHRISTOPHER J. STEWART, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN508 NAVY nominations (8) beginning JOHN R. ADAMS, and ending MARY C. WISE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN509 NAVY nominations (7) beginning SEAN A. COX, and ending LUIS A. PEREZ, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN510 NAVY nominations (13) beginning ELIZABETH W. BUNDT, and ending MICHAEL G. WATSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN552 NAVY nomination of Miguel A. Santiesteban, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MAUREEN RILEY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a remarkable leader in the airport industry, Maureen Riley, who is retiring on June 30. Maureen is not only an accomplished businesswoman, but also a well-respected collaborator who had the vision and tenacity to get a \$3.1 billion airport redevelopment program off the ground at Salt Lake City International Airport.

For more than 30 years, Maureen's professional life has been marked by many significant achievements in the airport industry. She has distinguished herself as a trusted consultant for numerous airports across the country. She has also served as deputy executive

director at Orlando International Airport and, most recently, as executive director for the Salt Lake City Department of Airports.

Maureen believes in collaboration and sharing information to create better operating results. She has served in top leadership positions for the Airports Council International-North America, ACI-NA, a trade association of airports around the globe. She also served as a member of the ACI World Board of Directors for 4 years.

I first met Maureen after she took over the helm at Salt Lake City's Department of Airports, a position she has served in for more than a decade. During this time, Maureen guided the airport through the planning, financing, and now construction of the \$3.1 billion airport redevelopment program.

Maureen is an exceptional manager who can be credited with gaining approval from the airlines to construct the new airport, which is paramount to the success of Utah's economy. She has the unique ability to bring people together and has been able to persuade the airlines, architects, financiers, and construction teams to get the construction program off the ground. Maureen never backs away from a challenge and does what is necessary to keep a project on track and on budget. She is well respected by her colleagues and is known as being a tough negotiator. As one airline executive once told Maureen, "It is hard to resist your reasonableness."

Maureen is passionate about providing excellent customer service to airport passengers. She is committed to seeing that a project is done right the first time and is not afraid of saying no when a project or proposal does not make sense. Maureen is also committed to promoting women in the workforce and encourages the use of gender-neutral language in meetings by contractors, consultants, and staff.

Maureen has been the driving force to ensure the airport redevelopment program leaves a positive lasting impression on passengers and meets Salt Lake City's passenger growth well into the future.

Maureen Riley is leaving a lasting legacy as she steps down from her position with the Salt Lake City Department of Airports. I want to wish Maureen well in her retirement and send my best wishes to her and her family on this momentous occasion.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, the Senate recently passed the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act. This legislation is intended to improve the VA by strengthening the process of holding nonperforming VA employees accountable, but it does this by removing certain due process protections that are currently in place to protect VA employees from unlawful discrimi-

nation or retaliation. Dr. David Shulkin, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, asked for this authority to reform the personnel system, and the Senate obliged his request.

In Hawaii we have a much different and more pressing problem that this legislation does not address, and that is the challenge we face with recruitment and retention of VA leaders and filling vacant positions at the VA.

Nowhere is this challenge more evident than in the VA's yearlong search to recruit a new executive director for the Pacific Island Health Care System in Honolulu. During this time, six executive directors from six different VA healthcare systems on the mainland rotated through Hawaii on an interim basis. The VA said that its search dragged on for so long because it faced a shortage of individuals with the right skills to fill these medical director positions, but that is no excuse. The VA should have been doing more to develop a pool of qualified people to fill vacant medical director positions. Failure to find long-term, stable leadership undermines accountability not only at the highest level, but across the entire healthcare system.

I am also bothered by the decision to rotate medical directors in from other healthcare systems, even on an interim basis. This stopgap measure failed to ensure the proper leadership required to provide long-term direction for the Pacific Island Health Care System and to make sure that there was someone to hold accountable for the delivery of services to the more than 120,000 veterans that the VA is responsible for in the Pacific. Those veterans and their families deserve better.

Leadership recruitment is not the only staffing issue we face. In its September 2016 report on the Pacific Island Health Care System, the VA's Office of the Inspector General specifically noted that recruitment and retention of staff is an ongoing challenge across our neighbor islands, in large part due to cost of living, distance, and physical isolation. At the time of its report, the OIG noted that there were 75 unfilled positions at community-based outpatient clinics across Hawaii. These are vacant positions at clinics that directly affect veterans' access to healthcare.

I worry that removing important due process protections for VA employees will only make this problem worse, because, where there are already issues in physician recruitment and retention, the VA could compete through the promise of a stable job, in an environment free from unlawful discrimination or retaliation. Knowing that those protections are in place is not only helpful to attracting recruits, but it is helpful to promoting a culture free of inequity and intimidation because people know they will be held to account for their actions. That kind of culture is critical to recruitment and retention because the last thing the VA wants is hard-working employees to search for

jobs that offer better working conditions elsewhere.

At our recent subcommittee hearing on military construction and veteran affairs appropriations, Secretary Shulkin acknowledged that the VA has seen cases of documented whistleblower retaliation, and that is important, because it means that Secretary Shulkin is going to have to be vigilant so that this new legislation is not abused. In his mind, he is not seeking this legislation so that the VA can fire employees without any reason or to allow supervisors to abuse them, and I hope that is how this plays out in practice across the country, but there is going to be more risk for a workforce of 360,000 that is decentralized, where decisions are made locally, and so we will be vigilant with him and will hold Secretary Shulkin accountable for any wrongdoing.

We are still left grappling with the challenge of recruitment and retention, and unfortunately, this legislation does not address it, and it may make addressing it even harder. With nearly 50,000 vacant positions across the VA workforce, Congress needs to get a handle on this issue because these vacancies risk undermining the delivery of services and care to our veterans who rely on the VA. We can and need to do better by them.

Thank you.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE IDAHO NATIONAL LABORATORY'S ADVANCED TEST REACTOR

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, my colleague Senator JIM RISCH joins me today in recognizing the Idaho National Laboratory's achievements in 50 years of operation of the advanced test reactor. The success of the scientific mission of the advanced test reactor is a pride of Idaho and of the entire American nuclear science community.

The advanced test reactor is a unique system designed to support multiple different experiments simultaneously. It can serve as a nuclear "time machine" by testing the stresses of nuclear power 20 times faster than conventional systems. It is currently involved in research to convert weapons-grade nuclear material to reactor fuel. This will strengthen American energy independence.

The U.S. Navy's nuclear propulsion program is a key customer of advanced test reactor research. It is one of many ways in which Idahoans contribute to our national security. The advanced test reactor is also the only American source for a particular isotope known as Cobalt-60. Cobalt-60 is vital for its use in modern brain cancer treatments and is saving the lives of Americans every day.

Beyond these good works, the advanced test reactor is available to our universities. Our next generation of

scientists has access to this unique system on the condition that their research be published for the benefit of the American public. Through this and other efforts, the Idaho National Laboratory works to support current and future generations.

Congratulations to the dedicated men and women of the Idaho National Laboratory. They are the embodiment of American scientific achievement and leadership in nuclear research.●

RECOGNIZING TONGUE RIVER WINERY

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the distinct honor of recognizing the team at the Tongue River Winery, in Custer County, for having the skill, patience, and dedication required to produce quality wines on the high plains of eastern Montana. Despite a difficult growing climate, this humble, family-run operation has successfully combined vineyard and winery functions and has received numerous awards and recognition for their efforts.

The married couple of Bob and Marilyn Thaden, along with their son Josh, are the team that makes the Tongue River Winery successful; 2017 marks the fifth consecutive year that the Tongue River Winery has won the Granite Peak Award. This award is presented to the top Montana winery at the Northwest Wine Summit.

For Bob, this year marks his 50th anniversary making wine. It has also been about 50 years since he met his wife, Marilyn, so it comes as no surprise that, when asked about winemaking, he compares the process of selecting good grapes to courtship. Bob reflected, "it's like courtship, plant the wrong one and you will regret it for a long time; take your time, choose carefully, so not to be disappointed later on." Bob has selected wisely in both endeavors. His advice on being thoughtful and patient can be applied to many other areas of life.

In the years ahead, I wish Bob, Marilyn, and Josh all the best as they continue to cultivate and create uniquely Montana wines. For their efforts, I raise my glass to the team at the Tongue River Winery.●

225TH ANNIVERSARY OF BUCKSPORT, MAINE

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 225th anniversary of Bucksport, ME, an active town set along the banks of the Penobscot River. The town has a long and proud history dating back to the late 1700s, and I am pleased to join with Mayor David Keene, town officials, members of the Bucksport Historical Society, and residents as they gather for a founder's day celebration to honor the town's history.

First settled in 1763, Bucksport was incorporated in 1792 and named for its original surveyor, Colonel Jonathan

Buck. However, Bucksport's history begins long before the 18th century. The town's first known inhabitants were the prehistoric "Red Paint People" who were discovered through an archaeological dig in the late 19th century. Originally known as the territory of the Penobscot Abenaki Native Peoples, the town of Bucksport today encompasses an area surveyed by Colonel Buck in 1762. After returning in 1763, Colonel Buck built the first sawmill, store, and home, and by 1775, there were a total of 21 families living there. During the Penobscot Expedition in 1779—notably one of the greatest defeats in American naval history—the British overtook and burned the town. As a result, in 1783, the town was resettled and named Buckstown Plantation, later changed to Buckstown, and finally renamed Bucksport in 1817.

Bucksport's history is deeply engrained in the papermaking industry. In 1930, Bucksport's Maine Seaboard Paper Company opened its doors as the first paper mill on the Penobscot River. The mill and the town have experienced significant changes as the paper industry has declined, with the paper mill finally closing its doors in 2014. Despite these hardships, the town of Bucksport has opened new doors both through creative uses of the former mill site, as well as by capitalizing on the town's deepwater port, rail service, and location at the intersection of two loops of the "three Ring Binder" broadband network. The resiliency of the town is a testament to its residents' hard work, innovation, and commitment to Maine.

Bucksport is home to nearly 5,000 people and continues to grow. Bucksport is centrally located 18 miles from three major employment centers and is also home to numerous cultural and arts organizations like Northeast Historic Film, the Alamo Theater, and the Lighthouse Arts Studio. The town also features the Downeast Waterfront Walkway, a mile-long walkway along the Penobscot River with views of Fort Knox and informational panels that detail Bucksport's important past, as well as its potential for the future. I am proud to commemorate 225 years since the incorporation of Bucksport, a town that has greatly contributed to Maine's economic prosperity and a community known for providing the unique Maine experience.●

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF UTICA, MICHIGAN

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 200th anniversary of the city of Utica, MI. The bicentennial celebration is a historical benchmark for Utica, as well as the State of Michigan.

Located in Macomb County and often referred to as a small town with city amenities, Utica residents have always prided themselves on their high level of community involvement, rich heritage, and family-oriented values. After 200

years of change and growth, the city remains embodied in that local spirit.

Founded by Canadian pioneer Thomas Squire in 1817 and formally incorporated in 1838, Utica has a rich history. In the early pioneer days, settlers and farmers from across the United States traveled to Utica due to its close proximity to the Clinton River. At the time, Utica was known by various names, including McDougalville, Hog Hollow, and Harlow. It was not until 1829 when Americans from New York State began moving to the area and changed the name to Utica, after their home city. Utica gained the status of village in 1838 and was among one of the first towns in Michigan to do so.

The flourishing village experienced great economic growth from the agricultural industry, as well as the construction of the Detroit United Railway, Wildcat Bank of Utica, and Clinton-Kalamazoo Canal. Tragically, in both 1904 and 1905, fires erupted across the village and destroyed many businesses, residences, and the renowned Exchange Hotel. However, Utica residents demonstrated their love and commitment to the city by building waterworks in 1926, gas mains in 1930, and sewers in 1937. It was the same year, 1937, that Utica officially became a recognized city. It is testament to the longevity and vibrancy of the community that the Utica United Methodist Church, which was built in 1839 by two of the first settlers, Nathaniel and Jemima Squires, still stands today.

Today Utica is a vibrant community covering 1,114 acres of land, with affordable, safe housing, successful family-owned shops, and nationally recognized community schools. The city offers its residents a wide range of comprehensive and efficient services from festivals and 5K races, to senior nutrition programs and pinochle tournaments. Utica's fire and police department work hard to protect the city and its residents, as well as enhance the quality of life. In short, Utica is a great place to live, work, and play.

The city of Utica has a rich history, dynamic present, and bright future. As Utica celebrates this milestone, I ask all my colleagues to join me in congratulating its residents, elected officials, and businesses as they celebrate their rich history. I wish the city continued growth and prosperity in the years ahead.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations

which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1282. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Acquisition Review Board in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1873. An act to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to enhance the reliability of the electricity grid and reduce the threat of wildfires to and from electric transmission and distribution facilities on Federal lands by facilitating vegetation management on such lands.

H.R. 2131. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Chief Human Capital Officer of the Department of Homeland Security to improve consistency regarding discipline and adverse actions in the Department's workforce, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, June 22, 2017, he has signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 1094. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1282. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Acquisition Review Board in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1873. An act to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to enhance the reliability of the electricity grid and reduce the threat of wildfires to and from electric transmission and distribution facilities on Federal lands by facilitating vegetation management on such lands; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2131. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Chief Human Capital Officer of the Department of Homeland Security to improve consistency regarding discipline and adverse actions in the Department's workforce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, June 22, 2017, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1094. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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-2024. A communication from the Secretary of the Senate, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the receipts and expenditures of the Senate for the period from October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 12, 2017; ordered to lie on the table.

EC-2025. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to violations of the Antideficiency Act that involved fiscal years 2009-2014 Operation and Maintenance, Army (OMA), funds, and was assigned case number 16-01; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-2026. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to violations of the Antideficiency Act that involved fiscal year 2009 Operation and Maintenance, Army (OMA), funds, and was assigned case number 16-03; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-2027. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General John E. Wissler, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2028. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Trade Monitoring Procedures for Fishery Products; International Trade in Seafood; Permit Requirements for Importers and Exporters" (RIN0648-AX63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 15, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2029. A communication from the Deputy Chief Counsel, National Technical Information Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Certification Program for Access to the Death Master File" (RIN0692-AA21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 15, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2030. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 107-243) and the Authorization for the Use of Force Against Iraq Resolution of 1991 (P.L. 102-1) for the February 7, 2017-April 8, 2017 reporting period; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2031. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2017-0100-2017-0112); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2032. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual reports of the Attorney General relative to

enforcement actions taken by the Department of Justice under the Lobbying Disclosure Act for the period from January 1, 2016, through June 30, 2016, and July 1, 2016, through December 31, 2016; to the Committees on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; and the Judiciary.

EC-2033. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-70, "Early Learning Equity in Funding Amendment Act of 2017"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2034. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-71, "Child Development Facilities Regulations Amendment Act of 2017"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2035. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-72, "Child Care Study Act of 2017"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2036. A communication from the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Housing and Urban Development Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2016, through March 31, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2037. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary/Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 14, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2038. 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 73.622(i), Post-Transition Table DTV Allotments, Television Broadcast Stations (Augusta, Georgia)" ((MB Docket No. 11-54) (DA 17-510)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 16, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2039. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rural Health Care Support Mechanism" ((WC Docket No. 02-60) (FCC 17-71)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 19, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 733. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-116).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

Report to accompany S. 131, A bill to provide for the exchange of certain National Forest System land and non-Federal land in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-117).

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. THUNE (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. BLUNT, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 1405. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1406. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for the issuance of Green Bonds and to establish the United States Green Bank, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 1407. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance tax incentives for manufacturing in the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. ERNST (for herself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 1408. A bill to enhance effective prosecution and defense in courts-martial, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 1409. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the credit for residential energy efficient property, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 1410. A bill to further the development of unmanned aircraft system technology through investing in additional research, building a trained workforce, and establishing working groups to address near-term and long-term challenges, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 1411. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension of the payment of the special survivor indemnity allowance under the Survivor Benefit Plan; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDALL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. HASSAN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1412. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for a percentage of student loan forgiveness for public service employment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. REED):

S. 1413. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to establish teacher leader development programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. STRANGE, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1414. A bill to state the policy of the United States on the minimum number of available battle force ships; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 1415. A bill to terminate the prohibitions on the exportation and importation of natural gas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 1416. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to redefine the eastern and middle judicial districts of North Carolina; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 1417. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to develop a categorical exclusion for covered vegetative management activities carried out to establish or improve habitat for greater sage-grouse and mule deer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 1418. A bill to establish protections for passengers in air transportation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1419. A bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. KAINE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 1420. A bill to direct the Secretary of State to review the termination characterization of former members of the Department of State who were fired by reason of the sexual orientation of the official, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 1421. A bill to support educational entities in fully implementing title IX and reducing and preventing sex discrimination in all areas of education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 1422. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain farming business machinery and equipment as 5-year property for purposes of depreciation; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr.

MARKEY, Mr. FRANKEN, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 1423. A bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to modify the final rule relating to flightcrew member duty and rest requirements for passenger operations of air carriers to apply to all-cargo operations of air carriers to apply to all-cargo operations of air carriers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1424. A bill to apply the provisions of title 5, United States Code, related to veterans' preference to the Federal Aviation Administration personnel management system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 1425. A bill to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1426. A bill to amend the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act to expand the purposes of the corporation, to designate the United States Center for Safe Sport, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. HEINRICH, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. Res. 199. A resolution designating June 2017 as "Great Outdoors Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. REED, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. INHOPE, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. Res. 200. A resolution welcoming the President of the Republic of Korea on his official visit to the United States and celebrating the United States-Republic of Korea relationship, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. Res. 201. A resolution affirming the importance of title IX, applauding the increase in educational opportunities available to women and girls, and recognizing the tremendous amount of work left to be done to

further increase those opportunities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. REED, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. KING):

S. Con. Res. 18. A concurrent resolution honoring David Americo Ortiz Arias, the 3-time World Series Champion Major League Baseball player who played for the Minnesota Twins and the Boston Red Sox for a combined 20 seasons; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 203

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency may not regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes.

S. 256

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 256, a bill to establish the Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond to Health and Wellness Training pilot program to address human trafficking in the health care system.

S. 298

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 298, a bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

S. 424

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 424, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to include certain Federal positions within the definition of law enforcement officer for retirement purposes, and for other purposes.

S. 474

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 474, a bill to condition assistance to the West Bank and Gaza on steps by the Palestinian Authority to end violence and terrorism against Israeli citizens.

S. 540

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 540, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 584

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 584, a bill to amend chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Regulatory Flexibility Act), to ensure complete analysis of potential impacts on small entities of rules, and for other purposes.

S. 622

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 622, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

S. 804

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to improve the provision of health care for women veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 856

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 856, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual assault, and for other purposes.

S. 976

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 976, a bill to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes.

S. 1024

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1024, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1050

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1050, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese-American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

S. 1104

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1104, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to establish a methodology for the collection by the Commission of information about commercial mobile service and commercial mobile data service, and for other purposes.

S. 1196

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) were added as cosponsors of S. 1196, a bill to expand the capacity and capability of the ballistic missile defense system of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1296

At the request of Mrs. McCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1296, a bill to amend the Uniform Code of Military Justice to prohibit the wrongful broadcast or distribution of intimate visual images.

S. 1303

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1303, a bill to prohibit discrimination in adoption or foster care placements based on the sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of any prospective adoptive or foster parent, or the sexual orientation or gender identity of the child involved.

S. 1311

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1311, a bill to provide assistance in abolishing human trafficking in the United States.

S. 1313

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1313, a bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1315

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1315, a bill to require the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to amend its regulations relating to qualified mortgages, and for other purposes.

S. 1343

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1343, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to extend and modify certain charitable tax provisions.

S. 1350

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1350, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the timing of elections and pre-election hearings and the identification of pre-election issues, and to require that lists of employees eligible to vote in organizing elections be provided to the National Labor Relations Board.

S. 1366

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1366, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1368

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Louisiana

(Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1368, a bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1369

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1369, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish an excise tax on certain prescription drugs which have been subject to a price spike, and for other purposes.

S. 1377

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1377, a bill to remove the limitation on certain amounts for which large non-rural hospitals may be reimbursed under the Healthcare Connect Fund of the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes.

S. 1379

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1379, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit fellowship and stipend compensation to be saved in an individual retirement account.

S. 1389

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1389, a bill to allow the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to provide greater protection to servicemembers.

S. 1393

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1393, a bill to streamline the process by which active duty military, reservists, and veterans receive commercial driver's licenses.

S. CON. RES. 7

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 7, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that tax-exempt fraternal benefit societies have historically provided and continue to provide critical benefits to the people and communities of the United States.

S. CON. RES. 12

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 12, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that those who served in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, should be presumed to have served in the Republic of Vietnam for all purposes under the Agent Orange Act of 1991.

S. RES. 102

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from California

(Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 102, a resolution reaffirming the strategic partnership between the United States and Mexico, and recognizing bilateral cooperation that advances the national security and national interests of both countries.

S. RES. 195

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 195, a resolution recognizing June 20, 2017, as "World Refugee Day".

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1419. A bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, four years ago, a narrow majority of the Supreme Court struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act in *Shelby County v. Holder*. That 5 to 4 decision crippled the Federal government's ability to protect minority, elderly, and disadvantaged voters across the country. The impact of this disastrous ruling has been even worse than imagined.

Before the ink even dried on the Court's opinion, Republican officials in several States rushed to enact laws making it harder for minorities to vote. Prior to *Shelby County*, the Federal government had the ability to prevent racial discriminatory voting changes from taking effect before those changes occur. Proposed laws and new voting procedures would first have been reviewed by the Federal courts or the Department of Justice to ensure that voting rights would not be harmed if the changes went into effect. But without the full protections of the Voting Rights Act after *Shelby County*, discriminatory laws quickly passed Republican legislatures in several States.

Chief Justice Roberts's majority opinion in *Shelby County* noted several

times that the protections of the Voting Rights Act are no longer appropriate because our “Country has changed.” It is true that our Nation has changed—we have made progress. But there is no question that the scourge of racial discrimination still exists. There are still those within our society intent on suppressing the right to vote and keeping minorities from exercising their constitutional right to participate in our democracy. Since the Shelby County ruling—and now emboldened by the Trump Administration—these forces are more concerning than they have been in decades.

Unfortunately, what has transpired in the aftermath of the Shelby County decision makes the need for the full protections of the Voting Rights Act unmistakably clear. Voter suppression efforts have found renewed life in numerous jurisdictions across the country. Thankfully, in some cases the courts have been able to provide a backstop. Based on strong evidence that hundreds of thousands of minority voters have been disproportionately prevented or discouraged from voting by Republican-enacted voting restrictions, Federal courts have blocked or rolled back many of these laws. Importantly, Federal courts have repeatedly found that these States enacted laws with the intention to discriminate.

Just last month, the Supreme Court left in place the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that blocked North Carolina’s harsh voting restrictions, including a strict photo identification law. The Fourth Circuit concluded that the Republican legislature had passed the law with the intent to racially discriminate against African Americans, and found that “the new provisions target African Americans with almost surgical precision.”

In April of this year, Federal district court ruled for a second time that Texas’s photo ID law was enacted with the intent to racially discriminate and had a racially discriminatory effect on Hispanic and Black voters. This ruling came after the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reaffirmed that the Texas law should be struck down because of its discriminatory effect on minority voters. But just weeks ago, the Republican-led Texas legislature and Governor enacted a new law in an attempt to escape the court’s rulings.

Federal courts in Kansas and North Dakota have also acted as a bulwark against attempts by Republican officials to disenfranchise minority voters. In Kansas, courts have issued rulings rejecting repeated attempts by Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach from making voter registration more difficult. In North Dakota, a Federal district court held that the State’s strict photo ID law disproportionately burdened Native Americans and blocked its implementation in the 2016 election.

These decisions are only the tip of the iceberg of what has transpired since Shelby County. While our courts are acting to guard against attempts to

block minorities from accessing the ballot box, each of these cases requires years of litigation, money, and resources. And these are just the voting changes Republicans are enacting at the State level. Many of the efforts at the local level have gone unnoticed but have equally devastating effects on the voting rights of minorities.

The original Voting Rights Act would have prevented many of these discriminatory laws. But the Supreme Court’s decision has taken this country back to an era before the Civil Rights movement—a bad time in our history where some states openly discriminated against minority voters. We are constantly reminded how costly the fight for voting and civil rights has been in this country. Just yesterday, we marked the 53rd anniversary of three civil rights activists who were killed in Mississippi for registering minorities to vote. James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman gave their lives in 1964 when they were murdered while fighting in Mississippi for racial equality and free access to the ballot box. Their example, and the example of generations of civil rights activists who gave their sweat, blood, and sometimes their lives must inspire us and drive us to do more. It is now imperative for us to do everything in our power to correct the Shelby County decision and reinstate the full protections of the Voting Rights Act for the next generation.

The legislation I am introducing today would restore and update the Voting Rights Act. The Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2017 not only modernizes the Voting Rights Act in response to Shelby County, it also modernizes the law to provide tools to combat current forms of voter discrimination. This bill responds to calls from community leaders and grassroots activists working in communities whose voting rights have been threatened or suppressed. It responds to voting rights experts and civil rights leader who have called for strong legislation to counter the voter intimidation and patently discriminatory efforts that were unleashed after the Shelby County ruling.

I am proud to introduce this bill with forty-six original cosponsors, nearly every single member of the Democratic caucus. I am also proud to be joined by Senator Durbin, who worked with me to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act in 2006. In addition, the House of Representatives is today introducing a companion bill led by Congresswoman Terri Sewell, Congresswoman Judy Chu, Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham, my friend Congressman John Lewis, and over 175 members of the House Democratic caucus.

We are all joining together to introduce this bill today because we will not let systematic and persistent efforts to suppress Americans’ right to vote go unchecked. We will not stand idly by while this country reverts to a bygone era where it was acceptable to dis-

enfranchise our own citizens because they were Black, Hispanic, or disadvantaged. These unconstitutional and discriminatory efforts deserve a strong response.

Protecting Americans’ constitutional right to vote is not a partisan exercise. The original enactment and every reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act has always been bipartisan. When we last reauthorized the Voting Rights Act in 2006, I worked closely with the Republican chairmen of the Senate and House Judiciary Committees—former Senator Arlen Specter and Representative Jim Sensenbrenner. And past reauthorizations of the Voting Rights Act have been signed into law by Republican presidents.

But now, the Republican majority—in both the House and the Senate—refuses to protect the right to vote, restore the Voting Rights Act, or address other critical civil rights issues. Since the Shelby County decision, Republicans at every level of our government have acted to make it harder to vote. This has become the legacy of today’s Republican Party. They should think seriously about reversing course, rather than trying to reverse the gains we have made in history. One significant step would be to join with us to pass the Voting Rights Advancement Act to restore the historic and critically-needed protections of this landmark civil rights law.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 199—DESIGNATING JUNE 2017 AS “GREAT OUTDOORS MONTH”

Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. HEINRICH, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. RES. 199

Whereas hundreds of millions of people in the United States participate in outdoor recreation annually;

Whereas Congress enacted the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act of 2016 (Public Law 114-249; 130 Stat. 999) to assess and analyze the outdoor recreation economy of the United States and the effects attributable to the outdoor recreation economy on the overall economy of the United States;

Whereas regular outdoor recreation is associated with positive health outcomes and better quality of life;

Whereas outdoor recreation is part of the national heritage of the United States; and

Whereas June 2017 is an appropriate month to designate as “Great Outdoors Month” to provide an opportunity to celebrate the importance of the great outdoors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates June 2017 as “Great Outdoors Month”; and

(2) encourages all people of the United States to recreate in the great outdoors in June 2017 and year-round.

SENATE RESOLUTION 200—WELCOMING THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA ON HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES AND CELEBRATING THE UNITED STATES-REPUBLIC OF KOREA RELATIONSHIP, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. REED, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 200

Whereas the Government and people of the United States and of the Republic of Korea share a comprehensive alliance, a dynamic partnership, and a personal friendship rooted in the common values of freedom, democracy, and a free market economy;

Whereas the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea is a linchpin of regional stability in Asia, including against the threats posed by the regime in Pyongyang;

Whereas cooperation between our nations spans across the economic, energy, diplomatic, security, and cultural spheres;

Whereas the relationship between the people of the United States and of the Republic of Korea stretches back to Korea's Chosun Dynasty, when the United States and Korea established diplomatic relations under the 1882 Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation;

Whereas the United States-Republic of Korea alliance was forged in blood, with military casualties of the United States during the Korean War of approximately 36,574 deaths and more than 103,284 wounded, and casualties of the Republic of Korea of more than 217,000 soldiers killed, more than 291,000 wounded, and over 1,000,000 civilians killed or missing;

Whereas the Korean War Veterans Recognition Act (Public Law 111-41) was enacted on July 27, 2009, and President Barack Obama issued a proclamation to designate the date as the National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day and called upon the people of the United States to display flags at half-staff in memory of the Korean War veterans;

Whereas the Republic of Korea and the United States have also stood alongside each other in the 4 major wars the United States has fought outside Korea since World War II—in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq;

Whereas, since the 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea, done at Washington October 1, 1953, and ratified by the Senate on January 26, 1954, United States military personnel have maintained a continuous presence on the Korean Peninsula, and currently there are approximately 28,500 United States troops assigned in the Republic of Korea;

Whereas, in January 2014, the United States and the Republic of Korea agreed upon a new 5-year Special Measures Agree-

ment (referred to in this preamble as “SMA”), establishing the framework for Republic of Korea contributions to offset the costs associated with the stationing of United States Forces Korea (referred to in this preamble as “USFK”) on the Korean Peninsula;

Whereas the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues its dangerous incitements, including political assassinations, conventional military provocations, ballistic missile tests and the advancement of its nuclear programs;

Whereas the United States continues to deploy advanced military capabilities to the land, air and waters of South Korea, including the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (referred to in this preamble as “THAAD”) to defend against the growing threat from the ballistic missile and nuclear weapons programs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and will continue to closely coordinate with the Government of the Republic of Korea when evaluating the full range of necessary defensive military policies;

Whereas the new Government of the Republic of Korea has announced that it has no intention to reverse commitments made in the spirit of the United States-Republic of Korea alliance, while it plans to implement the domestic procedures to uphold democratic, legal, and procedural legitimacy and transparency;

Whereas the People's Republic of China has engaged in an unprecedented campaign of economic pressure on the Republic of Korea in retaliation for the decision by the United States-Republic of Korea alliance to deploy THAAD, with the goal of undermining the United States-Republic of Korea alliance and causing significant damage to the South Korean economy and South Korean people;

Whereas the Government and people of the United States and of the Republic of Korea share a deep commitment to addressing the continued suffering of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea due to the appalling human rights abuses and repression of the regime in Pyongyang;

Whereas, on March 15, 2012, the United States-Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement entered into force, which both countries have committed to fully implement;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is the United States sixth-largest trade partner, with United States goods and exports to Korea reaching a level of \$63,800,000,000 in 2016;

Whereas United States foreign direct investment (referred to in this preamble as “FDI”) in Korea (in stock) was \$34,600,000,000 in 2015, a 3.3 percent increase from 2014 and Korea's FDI in the United States (in stock) was \$40,100,000,000 in 2015, up 0.5 percent from 2014;

Whereas, the Republic of Korea spends 2.6 percent of its gross domestic product (referred to in this preamble as “GDP”) on defense and carries a significant portion of United States operating costs for forces in South Korea;

Whereas President Moon Jae-in has expressed his desire to increase this spending to 3 percent of GDP during his tenure;

Whereas the United States, the Republic of Korea, and the Government of Japan have made great strides in promoting trilateral cooperation and defense partnership, including ministerial meetings, information sharing, and cooperation on ballistic missile defense exercises to counter North Korean provocations;

Whereas, on May 7, 2013, the United States and the Republic of Korea signed a Joint Declaration in Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Alliance Between the Republic of Korea and the United States;

Whereas President Moon Jae-in stated during his inaugural address on May 10, 2017: “I will do everything in my power to bring peace to the peninsula”;

Whereas there are deep cultural and personal ties between the people of the United States and of the Republic of Korea, as exemplified by the large flow of visitors and exchanges each year between the 2 countries, including Korean students studying in United States colleges and universities;

Whereas Korean-Americans have made invaluable contributions to the security, prosperity, and diversity of our Nation;

Whereas, from June 28, 2017, through July 1, 2017, President Moon Jae-in will visit Washington for his first official visit to the United States since his election as President; and

Whereas the United States Government looks forward to continuing to deepen our enduring partnership with the Republic of Korea on economic, security, and cultural issues, as well as embracing new opportunities for new partnership and cooperation on emerging regional and global challenges: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) welcomes His Excellency Moon Jae-in, the President of the Republic of Korea, on his first official visit to the United States;

(2) reaffirms the importance of—

(A) the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea, as enshrined in the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953, which is vital to peace and security in Northeast Asia, and the entire Asia-Pacific region; and

(B) the commitment of the United States to defend the Republic of Korea under Article III of the Mutual Defense Treaty;

(3) reinforces longstanding United States commitments to provide extended deterrence, guaranteed by the full spectrum of United States defense capabilities, to the Republic of Korea;

(4) welcomes opportunities to strengthen security consultation, cooperation, and partnership between the United States and the Republic of Korea on matters such as space, cyber, and missile defense;

(5) supports ongoing efforts—

(A) to strengthen the United States-Republic of Korea alliance;

(B) to protect the approximately 28,500 members of the United States Armed Forces stationed on the Korean Peninsula; and

(C) to defend the alliance against any and all provocations committed by the regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(6) urges the United States and the Republic of Korea to work together with members of the United Nations Security Council and other Member States to fully and effectively enforce existing sanctions and consider the need to take immediate action to pass additional and meaningful new measures under Article 41 of the United Nations Charter;

(7) supports efforts by the United States and the Republic of Korea to peacefully achieve a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons through a diplomatic process;

(8) urges the United States and the Republic of Korea to work together to fully and fairly implement all aspects of the United States-Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement; and

(9) encourages the United States Government and the Government of the Republic of Korea to continue to broaden and deepen the alliance by enhancing cooperation and building new partnerships in the security, economic, energy, scientific, health, education, and cultural spheres.

SENATE RESOLUTION 201—AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF TITLE IX, APPLAUDING THE INCREASE IN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO WOMEN AND GIRLS, AND RECOGNIZING THE TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF WORK LEFT TO BE DONE TO FURTHER INCREASE THOSE OPPORTUNITIES

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 201

Whereas in 1972 President Richard M. Nixon signed into law title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.) (referred to in this preamble as “title IX”);

Whereas in 2002 Congress passed a joint resolution establishing that title IX may be cited as the “Patsy Takemoto Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act”;

Whereas title IX prohibits any institution that receives Federal education funding from discriminating against students or employees on the basis of sex;

Whereas sex discrimination includes—

- (1) gender-based violence;
- (2) sexual harassment and assault;
- (3) dating violence; and
- (4) domestic violence;

Whereas title IX guarantees—

(1) equal educational opportunities for all students, including pregnant or parenting students and gender non-conforming students; and

(2) protection for students from discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity;

Whereas, since 1972, the United States has made great progress in providing educational opportunities to women and girls, and in 2015 women earned the majority of doctoral, master's, baccalaureate, and associate degrees;

Whereas, since 1972, the participation of women and girls in sports has increased by 1000 percent in high school and greater than 500 percent in college, providing women and girls with the opportunity—

(1) to develop leadership and teamwork skills;

(2) to earn athletic scholarships to help finance a college degree; and

(3) to become successful professional athletes;

Whereas, despite the progress that has been made in higher education and athletics, women, girls, pregnant or parenting students, and gender non-conforming students in the United States are still frequently denied equal educational opportunities;

Whereas the number of baccalaureate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math earned by women has decreased over the past decade, and women earn only—

- (1) 39 percent of physical science degrees;
- (2) 18 percent of computing degrees;

- (3) 19 percent of engineering degrees; and
- (4) 43 percent of mathematics degrees;

Whereas women of color earn only 6 percent of computing degrees and 3 percent of engineering degrees at the baccalaureate level;

Whereas, despite representing 56 percent of all those enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States, women hold almost 2 percent of all outstanding student debt, and the average of student debt owed by women following the completion of a baccalaureate degree is \$1,500 more than the average of student debt owed by men;

Whereas there are approximately 64,000 fewer opportunities for women to participate in college sports compared to men, and in 2015, women made up only 37 of the 313 athletic directors in Division I sports;

Whereas multiple studies have confirmed that 1 in 5 women are sexually assaulted on college campuses and approximately 20 percent of girls have been the victims of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault while in high school;

Whereas more than 50 percent of girls in grades 7 through 12 experience sexual harassment and 10 percent of high school students experience dating violence each year, which can—

(1) lead to symptoms of depression and anxiety and unhealthy and antisocial behaviors; and

(2) negatively impact academic achievement;

Whereas men still hold the vast majority of school leadership positions, and women make up approximately—

(1) 35 percent of full professors at degree-granting postsecondary institutions;

(2) 26 percent of college and university presidents; and

(3) 27 percent of school district superintendents;

Whereas pregnant and parenting students are more likely to drop out of high school compared to other students, and only 51 percent of mothers under the age of 20 earn a high school diploma by the age of 22, leading to decreased opportunities for continuing education and employment;

Whereas students face pervasive discrimination and harassment in school, on college campuses, and in the workforce on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, which—

(1) impedes the ability of the students to fully access the educational opportunities to which the students are entitled; and

(2) constitutes sex discrimination; and

Whereas between 2011 and 2016, investigations by the Office for Civil Rights at the Department of Education into reports of sexual and dating violence and discrimination against transgender students have helped to identify and respond to systemic issues of discrimination against students that otherwise would have gone unrecognized, yet recent actions from the Office for Civil Rights indicate there will be fewer resources and less attention focused on these issues moving forward; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) applauds the tremendous increase in educational opportunities for women and girls, including in sports, since the passage of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.);

(2) encourages the Department of Education and the Department of Justice to protect the rights of students to have safe learning environments by working to ensure schools prevent and respond to discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, including—

- (A) sexual assault;
- (B) harassment;
- (C) domestic and dating violence;

(D) discrimination or harassment on the basis of pregnancy;

(E) sex stereotyping; and

(F) discrimination or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity; and

(3) recognizes the work that still remains to be done to secure the promise of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.) that no federally funded educational institution shall discriminate against any person on the basis of sex.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 18—HONORING DAVID AMERICO ORTIZ ARIAS, THE 3-TIME WORLD SERIES CHAMPION MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYER WHO PLAYED FOR THE MINNESOTA TWINS AND THE BOSTON RED SOX FOR A COMBINED 20 SEASONS

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. REED, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. KING) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. CON. RES. 18

Whereas David Américo Ortiz Arias, known to fans as “Big Papi”, was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on November 18, 1975;

Whereas after graduating from Estudia Espaillet High School in the Dominican Republic in 1992, David Ortiz was signed by the Seattle Mariners;

Whereas on September 2, 1997, David Ortiz made his Major League Baseball (in this preamble referred to as “MLB”) debut for the Minnesota Twins at age 21;

Whereas on January 22, 2003, David Ortiz signed a free-agent contract with the Boston Red Sox;

Whereas David Ortiz has created numerous iconic moments in Boston sports history, including—

(1) on October 18, 2004, hitting a walk-off home run in the 12th inning of Game 4 of the 2004 American League Championship Series against the New York Yankees to spark the Boston Red Sox's improbable comeback from a 3 games-to-none series deficit, the only time in MLB history a team has ever made such a comeback;

(2) on October 19, 2004, hitting a walk-off single in the 14th inning of Game 5 of the 2004 American League Championship Series against the New York Yankees to continue the Boston Red Sox's comeback; and

(3) on October 13, 2013, hitting a grand slam to right-center field to tie Game 2 of the 2013 American League Championship Series against the Detroit Tigers;

Whereas David Ortiz was instrumental in helping the Boston Red Sox snap an 86-year World Series drought;

Whereas David Ortiz played a crucial role in the Boston Red Sox winning the World Series in 2007 and 2013;

Whereas David Ortiz has won numerous awards for his baseball prowess, including—

(1) the Edgar Martinez Outstanding Designated Hitter Award from MLB in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011, and 2013;

(2) the League Championship Series Most Valuable Player Award from MLB in 2004;

(3) the Thomas A. Yawkey Most Valuable Player Award from the Boston Red Sox in 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2013;

(4) the Silver Slugger Award as a designated hitter from MLB in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011, and 2013;

(5) the designation of “All-Star” from MLB in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2016;

(6) the Hank Aaron Award from MLB in 2005;

(7) the Roberto Clemente Award from MLB in 2011;

(8) the Babe Ruth Award from MLB in 2013; and

(9) the World Series Most Valuable Player Award in 2013;

Whereas David Ortiz’s “Why not us?” attitude in 2004 transformed the baseball culture of the city of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and “Red Sox Nation” from one of near misses to one of champions;

Whereas David Ortiz founded the David Ortiz Children’s Fund in 2007;

Whereas the David Ortiz Children’s Fund has provided millions of dollars of financial assistance to more than 500 children for life-saving surgeries;

Whereas on June 11, 2008, David Ortiz was sworn in as a citizen of the United States along with 226 other immigrants at the John F. Kennedy Library in Dorchester, Massachusetts;

Whereas David Ortiz instilled hope and pride in the city of Boston in the days following the bombings at the Boston Marathon in 2013;

Whereas on April 20, 2013, David Ortiz gave a rousing and inspirational speech after the Boston Marathon bombings, reminding Boston and the country that “nobody is going to dictate our freedom”;

Whereas David Ortiz comforted the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings, visiting them in the hospital and giving them tickets to games throughout the 2013 MLB season;

Whereas the city of Boston has honored David Ortiz for his impact on the city by naming a bridge and a street after him;

Whereas the love and respect for David Ortiz felt by the city of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and Red Sox Nation is unparalleled; and

Whereas David Ortiz played his final MLB game on October 10, 2016: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) honors the legendary career of David Americo Ortiz Arias, whose character, leadership, and selflessness have helped define the identity of the city of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and all of Red Sox Nation; and

(2) wishes David Ortiz a fulfilling retirement as he bids farewell to the baseball diamond.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to Stephanie DeLuca of my staff and to her service dog Carra.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Kimberly Koops-Wrabek, Alexander Floyd, Jeremy Jones, and Justin Abbasi be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the

Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 4 p.m., Monday, June 26; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Svinicki nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator WYDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, it has been a rough day at the office for the Senate Republican healthcare plan, and my take is that it is going to be even tougher over the next few days. There will be a lot of Senate Democrats home, meeting with folks in open meetings. We will see if any Senate Republicans have the courage to do that as well.

Earlier this morning, the whole Senate had its first opportunity to look at this bill in the light of day. The debate that unfolded on the floor made it clear that our colleagues are committed to a partisan scheme to jam this bill through at any cost. There isn’t going to be a full debate. There isn’t going to be any bipartisan input.

If you read through the fine print in this destructive proposal, as the American people have had the chance to do over the last several hours, it becomes clear why my colleagues on the other side have kept this bill hidden and want to jam it through as quickly as possible.

This proposal is stunning in its sameness to the cruel House bill that the American people have rejected outright—in fact, rejected, according to polls, by really eye-popping numbers. So I want to begin by warning against anybody’s buying into the sales job that is inevitably going to unfold in the days ahead. This bill may change, but Senate Republicans will only be putting lipstick on a devastating blow to the healthcare of the American people.

This is a plan to raise costs, slash Medicaid, and cut millions of people off of their healthcare to pay for tax breaks for the fortunate few.

My colleagues on the other side have spent the last month telling every reporter and constituent who would listen that they were throwing out the House bill and they would be starting anew with a fresher and kinder bill.

That has turned out to be fiction. Republicans are going to keep telling Americans that they are fixing their healthcare right up until the second it gets taken away.

This bill doubles down on the meanness that even the President described in the bill from the other body. The Senate Republican plan doesn’t fix the problems with people’s healthcare. It creates a bunch of new ones.

After a day of pouring over this bill—and the Finance Committee Democratic staff has been looking at this in detail—I would like to lay out, as we close up this afternoon, some of the most devastating effects this bill will have.

First, Senate Republicans are so committed to slashing Medicaid that their bill cuts it even deeper than the House. Today, Medicaid comes with a guarantee to the most vulnerable Americans and their families who walk an economic tightrope every day. Today, if you get sick or suffer an injury, you will get the care you need. The Senate Republican plan ends that guarantee for good. It ends the Medicaid program as our country knows it for good.

People shouldn’t be distracted by date changes or sweeteners for people already enrolled. This is a radical plan plucked from the wish list of the far right, and it is cloaked in the complicated language of inflation rates and dollar figures. When you talk about slashing Medicaid by hundreds of billions of dollars, you are not simply talking about the lingo of healthcare policymakers, like bending the cost curve. You are talking about people’s lives.

Medicaid helps to pick up the bill for two out of three seniors in America’s nursing homes. These are the people who have done everything right. They are our older parents, our grandmothers, our grandfathers. They scrimped, they saved, and they worked hard. But it is pretty clear: It is really expensive to grow old in America. So Medicaid is there to support them and cover the cost of nursing home care when savings run out.

The Senate Republican plan slashes Medicaid so deeply that States are going to be forced to cut benefits, and the guarantee of nursing home care will be in danger. This is one of the greatest threats seniors have ever faced, and it is being imposed on them by an act of Congress.

I don’t make that statement lightly. My background is working with the older people of Oregon and our country. I was director of the Oregon Gray Panthers for 7 years and ran the legal aid office for the elderly before I was elected to Congress. I will say point-blank, having worked in this field now for more than three decades, that this is an extraordinary threat to the well-being of the Nation’s older people, who shouldn’t have to worry about winding up living in squalor or on the street.

Families shouldn’t have to worry about where they will find the money

to cover the cost of a nursing home. That is \$90,000 a year—\$90,000 a year, on average, for nursing home care. Independence, safety, and a reasonably comfortable old age should not become a privilege reserved just for the wealthy in our country.

Second, the age tax in the Senate Republican bill is going to hit older Americans between 55 and 64 like a wrecking ball. They are going to be forced to pay several times as much as a younger person for health insurance. You are going to see older people desperately hoping and praying that they can hold on to their health until they make it to 65 and enroll in Medicare. I would like to hear somebody try to explain what healthcare problem that is fixing or why it is a good approach to healthcare policy.

Third, Senate Republicans have now cooked up a scheme to decimate the value of middle-class tax cuts for healthcare and send deductibles into the stratosphere. Here is how that is going to work. A whole lot of families in the middle class are going to lose their tax benefits outright.

As the ranking member on the Senate Finance Committee that has jurisdiction over tax policy, I have seen that. Then, as if that is not enough harm, this plan cheapens the value of the tax benefits that were created under the Affordable Care Act. It is a scheme to force people into bargain basement insurance plans with sky-high deductibles. It also risks kicking off a death spiral in States where the private insurance markets are stable and competitive today.

Fourth, Republicans have twisted a part of the Affordable Care Act I wrote to promote State innovation, and they are using it to give insurance companies the power to run roughshod over individual Americans. What we are talking about here is what are called section 1332 waivers. What was done in 2009, in the Senate Finance Committee—it came out of my original bipartisan bill, the Healthy Americans Act—we told States that the Affordable Care Act was going to set a new bar for insurance in terms of coverage and affordability. We said to the States—the laboratories of democracy—if you believe you can do even better, you can get a waiver so you can go test an innovative, new approach. We did build in protections, basic protections, so people would get decent coverage, and their lives would be protected.

The Republican plan wipes those protections out, wipes out the consumer protections. It tells States: OK. If you want to do worse, go right ahead. In fact, the Senate Republican plan offers States a bribe to end basic health protections and lower the bar for insurance. You will see insurance companies given a green light to cut essential benefits out of the plans they sell on the open market.

For example, take maternity care. The Affordable Care Act banned the

practice of price-gouging women just because of their gender, but the Republican plan takes the side of the big insurance companies in this debate.

On a fundamental level, this plan says that health insurance in America ought to be based on what men need and what women need ought to cost extra. Services like maternity care would be an add-on item, and that means women are going to face higher costs just because they are women.

Fifth, this proposal attacks Planned Parenthood and deprives hundreds of thousands of women of the right to see the doctor of their choosing.

I want to come back to what that really means. Women in America ought to be able to see the doctor of their choice, the doctor they trust, the doctor, in their own judgment, is the best doctor for them. This provision keeps them from doing that. Never mind that there is already an air-tight ban on taxpayer dollars funding abortions. Never mind that Planned Parenthood doesn't get a single dime of Federal funding above what is available to other Medicaid providers. Never mind that Planned Parenthood is where millions of women get routine medical care from doctors they know and trust—services such as basic checkups, cancer screenings, preventive care, HIV tests. The Senate Republican bill continues this ideological crusade against Planned Parenthood, and it is going to cost women across this country the right that I see as so fundamental—the right of women to be able to choose to go to the doctor they trust.

Sixth, at a time when the opioid epidemic is ripping apart communities from one corner of this Nation to another, this bill would be a devastating setback in the fight against opioid abuse. No community has been spared from this crisis, and I would wager that virtually every Senator has come to the floor at some point and spoken about the impact it has had on their State.

By the way, it would be hard to forget the parade of Presidential candidates in 2015 and 2016 that went through State after State claiming they had the very best plan to end the opioid crisis, but now the Senate Republican healthcare bill makes the crisis worse.

Medicaid is the only lifeline that thousands and thousands of people across America have in their struggle to try to put their lives back together after falling victim to opioids. For thousands and thousands of people, over the last few years, the treatment they have gotten through Medicaid has been their escape, their path out of a downward spiral that too often leads to heroin abuse and overdose deaths. The Republican plan takes this lifeline away.

Some on the other side have proposed creating a separate pool of money, a separate slush fund to replace the loss of treatment through Medicaid. In my view, this is a very serious mistake be-

cause it is based on a complete misunderstanding of the opioid crisis, and it is not going to work.

The opioid epidemic is a public health crisis, and fighting it means making sure people can get the healthcare they need. That means treating substance abuse disorders the same way you treat other diseases. Our country doesn't pay for heart surgery through grant programs. We don't pay for chemotherapy through congressional appropriations. If you are sick and you have healthcare coverage, you get the care you need. Anything less when it comes to opioid addiction treatment is going to fail.

Finally, when you listen to that parade of horrors—all the harm this bill is going to do to generations of Americans across the country—you have to wonder why my colleagues on the other side would push this bill forward.

People have been asking me this all day. There is a simple answer for it. This bill takes healthcare away from millions of Americans and raises costs for millions more for one reason—to give tax breaks to the fortunate few in America. This isn't a debate about two competing visions of healthcare—one liberal and one conservative. One side in this debate wants to protect Americans' healthcare coverage, make sure they can go to the doctors they trust and afford the medical care they need. The other side in this debate has a plan to take away healthcare coverage and raise the cost of care for the vulnerable, the middle class, families struggling to get by—all to pay for tax breaks for the wealthiest few. This is an out-and-out attack on millions of Americans' health and well-being.

In the debate that played out on the Senate floor this morning, it was suggested several times that Democrats turned down a chance to participate in the process. This is completely, entirely 100 percent false.

I am the ranking member of the committee that is responsible for healthcare. I have not once been asked by a single Republican to work on this bill or discuss fixes to the Affordable Care Act. I was stunned this morning when I heard the Democrats had been given an offer to work on these fixes; that Democrats aren't interested in being bipartisan.

I have made the center of my time in public service working in a bipartisan way on healthcare. I have written healthcare legislation that has been signed into law that has been bipartisan. It was based on principles that both sides of the aisle could agree on. Certainly, if there had been any interest in a process that would actually give both sides the opportunity to do the kind of give-and-take that you do with a bill—not through this partisan “my way or the highway” reconciliation—I would have been very interested in it, and I know Senate Finance Democrats would have been very interested in it. That wasn't on offer. The claim the Democrats have refused to

work in a bipartisan way is fiction, a gross fiction.

It is clear now that the only way to bring this partisan process to a halt is for Americans to stand up and speak out. I am going to close with two points. Ever since those Gray Panther days, I have always thought healthcare was the most important issue because if Americans and their loved ones don't have their health, then pretty much everything goes by the board. You can't go to the game. You can't spend time with family. It is hard to do much of anything.

It is very clear that healthcare, as a result of this proposal for millions of Americans and for our country, is going to be at risk. What is at risk is the prospect that the Senate will turn back the clock to the days when healthcare was basically for the healthy and wealthy. We shouldn't go there.

In the past, Democrats and Republicans have agreed we shouldn't go there. With the bill I wrote—seven Democratic Senators, seven Republican Senators—that was the centerpiece of it. By the way, several Senate Republicans who are here in this body were cosponsors of that legislation. We shouldn't go back to those days when healthcare was basically for the healthy and wealthy.

For all those who are paying attention to these proceedings, my view is, the only way you are going to end a partisan process and make policy the way it ought to be made is not through something Washington lingo calls reconciliation—it is just partisan—but through the give-and-take of Democrats and Republicans finding good ideas that the other side can agree on. The only way we are going to do that is for Americans to stand up and speak out.

Political change does not start in government buildings and then trickle down to the people. It is not trickle-down. It is almost always bottom-up, starting from communities where we are going to hear people speaking out over the next few days.

I am going to close by way of saying that over the next few days, this is one of the most important times for Americans to make their voices heard. As we wrap up the first day of actually seeing what the draft Republican proposal is all about, I hope Americans will weigh in, that we will see that grassroots juggernaut develop, and we will defeat a partisan plan and set about the task of doing healthcare policy again in a bipartisan way—where you find common ground that is sustainable rather than just a partisan approach, which continues the gridlock and the polarization on an issue that is the most important issue of our time.

I yield the floor. I believe there are no other speakers.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
JUNE 26, 2017, AT 4 P.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 4 p.m. on Monday.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6 p.m., adjourned until Monday, June 26, 2017, at 4 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. WILLIAM C. MAYVILLE, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601 AND FOR APPOINTMENT AS A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE MILITARY STAFF COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 711:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. RICHARD D. CLARKE

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate June 22, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

MARSHALL BILLINGSLEA, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR TERRORIST FINANCING, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. RONALD J. PLACE

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. WILLIAM C. GREENE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. WILLIAM S. DILLON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. KARL O. THOMAS

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JAY B. SILVERIA

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. SAMUEL J. PAPARO, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. GREGORY N. HARRIS

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. JOHN P. LAWLOR, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. DION B. MOTEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. BOWLMAN T. BOWLES III

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) DANIEL J. MACDONNELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) DANIEL B. HENDRICKSON

REAR ADM. (LH) THOMAS W. MAROTTA

REAR ADM. (LH) MATTHEW A. ZIRKLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. JACQUELYN MCCLELLAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. JAMES M. BUTLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. EUGENE A. BURCHER

CAPT. RODNEY P. DEWALT

CAPT. JOEY B. DODGEN

CAPT. ANDREW J. MUELLER

CAPT. RICHARD A. RODRIGUEZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) KEITH M. JONES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) BRET C. BATCHELDER

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. DEANNA M. BURT

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. STEPHEN R. HOGAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JANSON D. BOYLES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADES INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. STEVEN W. AINSWORTH

BRIG. GEN. BRUCE E. HACKETT

BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL C. O'GUINN

BRIG. GEN. MIYAKO N. SCHANELY

To be brigadier general

COL. JOHN W. AARSEN

COL. KRIS A. BELANGER

COL. DOUGLAS A. CHERRY

COL. ELLEN S. CLARK

COL. ROBERT S. COOLEY, JR.

COL. DIANNE M. DEL ROSSO

COL. WILLIAM B. DYER III

COL. JOSEPH A. EDWARDS II

COL. HOWARD-CHARLES W. GECK
COL. MICHAEL T. HARVEY
COL. MARTIN F. KLEIN
COL. WILLIAM S. LYNN
COL. JOSEPH A. MARSIGLIA
COL. ROBERT F. PLECZKOWSKI
COL. DUSTIN A. SHULTZ
COL. MARK A. TOWNE
COL. IRENE M. ZOPPI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. GREGORY L. KENNEDY
BRIG. GEN. ANDREW P. SCHAFER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER P. CALLAHAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JAMES P. BEGLEY III
BRIG. GEN. SYLVESTER CANNON
BRIG. GEN. THOMAS M. CARDEN, JR.
BRIG. GEN. RICHARD H. DAHLMAN
BRIG. GEN. WENDUL G. HAGLER II
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT T. HERBERT
BRIG. GEN. JON A. JENSEN
BRIG. GEN. JOHN F. KING
BRIG. GEN. DIRK R. KLOSS
BRIG. GEN. FRANCIS M. MCGINN
BRIG. GEN. WALTER L. MERCER
BRIG. GEN. PAUL D. ROGERS
BRIG. GEN. SEAN A. RYAN
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL A. STONE
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL C. THOMPSON
BRIG. GEN. GISELLE M. WILZ
BRIG. GEN. GARY S. YAPLE

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) ANN M. BURKHARDT

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. SCOTT A. HOWELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JAMES C. VECHERY

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. THOMAS A. HORLANDER

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. ANDREW L. LEWIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. MATTHEW J. KOHLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. KEVIN M. DONEGAN

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

TANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ROBERT F. HEDELUND
IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. JAMES G. FOGGO III

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JERED N. FRY, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER R. BONEY AND ENDING WITH DANIEL D. REYES, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JEFFREY A. GARRETT, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROGER A. LEE AND ENDING WITH JEFFREY R. ROSENBERRY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF THEODORE L. WILSON, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JASON S. CROSS, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF ANGELA M. MIKE, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW V. CHAUVIERE AND ENDING WITH LAUREN A. MAY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL E. BRUHN AND ENDING WITH VICTOR D. WEEDEN, JR., WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFFREY W. DRAKE AND ENDING WITH JACK VILARDI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MEGAN E. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH RAJEEV S. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JOSE G. BAL, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JENNIFER M. BAGER AND ENDING WITH RAMEY L. WILSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 27, 2017.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ALFRED C. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH KELLEY TOMSETT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 27, 2017.

ARMY NOMINATION OF WILLIAM F. MCCLINTOCK, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID S. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH BARRY K. VINCENT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 18, 2017.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JEFFREY L. WASHINGTON, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JOSEPH B. DORE, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER M. CHUNG AND ENDING WITH HEATH D. HOLT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DEVIN G. MCCANE AND ENDING WITH SHARRI L. ORMSBEE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JANNA X. GADDY, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRADLEY H. STEPHENS AND ENDING WITH AMILYN M. TAPLIN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

ARMY NOMINATION OF TERRY KIM, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFF A. BURCHFIELD AND ENDING WITH BRIAN D. WIECK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 5, 2017.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JASON K. FETTIG, TO BE COLONEL.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JUANITO F. BOYDON, JR. AND ENDING WITH SURESH K. THADHANI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 8, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ANTHONY L. BAYUNGAN AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL A. LEACHMAN,

WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 8, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TODD M. BOLAND AND ENDING WITH KAIL C. SWINDLE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 8, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JAMES G. ADAMS AND ENDING WITH CHARLES C. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 8, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SHAWN G. DENIHAN AND ENDING WITH CHAD A. RUNYON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 8, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KELVIN J. ASKEW AND ENDING WITH ERIKA L. BERRY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 8, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KATHLEEN A. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER FRYE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 8, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATION OF BRUCE E. OSBORNE, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH COLETTE M. MURPHY AND ENDING WITH JOHN A. ROBINSON III, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH NATHAN R. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH JODIE M. C. YIM, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATION OF ADRIA R. SCHNECK, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARY A. PONCE AND ENDING WITH BRIAN K. REED, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RYAN K. MAHELONA AND ENDING WITH PHILIP L. NOTZ, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSEPH T. BAILEY AND ENDING WITH JONPAUL STEFANI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATION OF DAVID W. SHAIEB, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LEE A. AXTELL AND ENDING WITH MARK S. WINWARD, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH THOMAS M. BESTAFKA AND ENDING WITH FRANCIS J. STAVISH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATION OF DANNY W. KING, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BARAK A. BARAKAT AND ENDING WITH STEPHEN M. WILSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL J. ALLANSON AND ENDING WITH GERARD J. WHITE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW L. BERAN AND ENDING WITH IAN S. WEXLER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GARLAND H. ANDREWS AND ENDING WITH MEREDITH L. YEAGER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH OLADAPO A. AKINTONDE AND ENDING WITH SEAN R. WISE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFF A. BLEILE AND ENDING WITH JEFFREY G. ZELLER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GRADY G. DUFFEY, JR. AND ENDING WITH DAVID A. VONDRAK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH WILLIAM M. KAFKA AND ENDING WITH WILLIAM R. URBAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DANIEL E. FILLION AND ENDING WITH JASON D. WEDDLE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAMON B. DIXON AND ENDING WITH JONATHAN J. VORRATH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JAMES W. ADKISSON III AND ENDING WITH SHERRI R. ZIMMERMAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CORY S. BRUMMETT AND ENDING WITH DAVID J. WHITE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JULIE M. ALFIERI AND ENDING WITH BRETT A. WISE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW E. ARNOLD AND ENDING WITH ANTHONY C. TARANTO, JR., WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH PETER A. ARROBIO AND ENDING WITH KEVIN J. WATKINS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOHN A. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH JAY A. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LAWRENCE H. KENNEDY AND ENDING WITH TRACIE A. SEVERSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSE G. HERMANDEZ AND ENDING WITH DEREK A. VESTAL, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID A. ABERNATHY AND ENDING WITH JESSE J. ZIMBAUER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 10, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATION OF KENNETH M. KING, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF GARRY P. CLOSAS, TO BE COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH PAUL D. MELVEY AND ENDING WITH ALEXANDER WOLDEMARIAM, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH WILLIAM J. BAILEY, JR. AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER D. TUCKER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GINA A. BUONO AND ENDING WITH SANDRA F. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID J. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH TRACIE M. ZIELINSKI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID M. BUZZETTI AND ENDING WITH ERIC R. VETTER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID E. BAILEY AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER J. STEWART, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOHN R. ADAMS AND ENDING WITH MARY C. WISE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SEAN A. COX AND ENDING WITH LUIS A. PEREZ, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ELIZABETH W. BUNDT AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL G. WATSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MAY 22, 2017.

NAVY NOMINATION OF MIGUEL A. SANTIESTEBAN, TO BE COMMANDER.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF LOUISA BRINSON

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Louisa Brinson, a federal employee who is retiring after more than thirty-seven years of service at the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Ms. Brinson began work at SSA in 1979 as a Summer Aide in the Las Vegas, Nevada, field office. Shortly thereafter, she was promoted to be a Claims Development Clerk. In 1985, she was detailed to Baltimore Headquarters where she joined the Operations team in the Modular District Office. After the detail, she joined the Alexandria, Virginia, field office complex where she received all of her promotions, beginning with Service Representative, Claims Representative, Management Support Specialist, Operations Supervisor, and since 2007, the District Manager of the Arlington, Virginia, field office.

With her high level of energy and enthusiasm, Ms. Brinson has made significant contributions to SSA during her career. Her ability to envision and adapt to change was evident in her leadership. She has shared her wisdom and knowledge of how important it is to have trust with the public SSA serves, as well as the employees she managed. Her devotion to the important mission of the Social Security Administration has been characterized by a commitment to excellence and to providing the highest level of support to her staff and management team.

Ms. Brinson is not only a dedicated federal employee who has helped untold numbers of my constituents in Virginia's 8th Congressional District; she also is one of my constituents. Today I salute Louisa Brinson for her leadership, her compassion, and her years of service to our country. We here in Northern Virginia are fortunate to have her as a public servant and as a friend and neighbor.

IZZABELLE ALLEN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Izzabelle Allen for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Izzabelle Allen is a student at Arvada K-8 School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Izzabelle Allen is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels

strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Izzabelle Allen for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP CHRISTIAN BROTHERS ACADEMY LACROSSE TEAM

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victory of the Christian Brothers Academy Lacrosse Team in the New York State Public High School Association Class D Championship on June 10, 2017. The CBA Brothers defeated the Westlake Wildcats 12-5 to secure the Brothers' first state title in program history.

The Brothers, finishing the season 18-5, were determined to win the program's first state title. Senior Alex Calkins, the game MVP, scored five goals to lead the Brothers to victory. Other members of the state championship include Michael Adornato, Joey Akl, Wyatt Auyer, Augustus Bonacci, Sam Bonacci, Peyton Bowler, Matt Buck, Francis Cannizzo, Tommie Caputo, CJ Carbone, Michael Catalano, Doug DeMarche, Zach Eber, Will Fallon, Ian Henderson, Malcolm Jackson, Colin Kelly, Lewes Kunda, Sam Lubinga, Matt Luddington, Ryan MacKenzie, Joey Matheson, Michael Matheson, Ben McCreary, Patrick O'Brien, Dan Polhemus, Lynch Raby, ZJ Shahn, Preston Taylor, Matt Vavonese, Gabe Vinal, Eli Weiss, Gregory Wells, and Jace Whelan. The team is coached by Ric Beardsley.

I am honored to recognize the teamwork displayed by the CBA Brothers and to congratulate the members of the team, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Christian Brothers Academy. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROL SHEA-PORTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, due to a very long flight delay, I regret that I was unable to make votes on June 20, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 309 and Roll Call No. 310.

COMMEMORATING CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in commemoration of Caribbean American Heritage Month, which celebrates and recognizes the significant contributions made by Caribbean Americans that have strengthened our country and made it better.

This month also marks the 55th anniversaries of independence for the Caribbean nations of Jamaica and of Trinidad and Tobago.

Although a half century has passed since they gained their independence, the struggle they waged to win their freedom still stands as a testament to the ideals of our own great nation.

I am privileged to represent a large segment of Houston, Texas, which is home to more than 300,000 Americans of Caribbean heritage, making it one of the largest, most diverse, and vibrant Caribbean-American communities in the nation.

Mr. Speaker, Americans of Caribbean heritage have made a positive impact on virtually every aspect of American life, including the arts, science, business, education, athletics, military, and government.

For example, in the area of government and public affairs America has benefitted from the contributions of Colin Powell, a former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice; former Members of Congress Mervyn Dymally of California, and Shirley Chisholm of New York, and current Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE of New York; and KAMALA HARRIS, the Attorney General of California.

Caribbean Americans have enriched American art and culture with the legendary performances of Sidney Poitier, Harry Belafonte, Cicely Tyson, Nia Long, and Cuba Gooding, Jr.; the writings of authors W.E.B. DuBois and Malcolm Gladwell; the music of Beyonce Knowles, Lenny Kravitz, Rihanna, and Wyclef Jean; and the prowess of great athletes like Carl Lewis, Tim Duncan, Patrick Ewing, Sandra Richards-Ross, and Ndamukong Suh.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that in October, in the city of Houston, will be venue of the 6th annual Caribbean American Heritage Month Festival, which celebrates the rich culture of the Caribbean with a showcase of beautiful costumes, music, food, and enjoyment for all.

I also wish to recognize the leadership of the Caribbean American Heritage Foundation of Texas, which works to assist Texas Caribbean Organizations achieve their goals and to advocate on behalf of the peoples of Caribbean descent.

I congratulate the Caribbean American Heritage Foundation of Texas, the Caribbean Heritage Organization in my home city of Houston, and the many community organizations

• 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.

and volunteers across the nation for their efforts in making Caribbean American Heritage Month the success that it is.

During this month I hope all Americans will join with me in celebrating the remarkable history, culture, and contributions of Caribbean Americans to our nation's past and future.

IN RECOGNITION OF TOM
PELLEGRINI, FOR FORTY YEARS
OF SERVICE AT NEPA ALLIANCE

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Tom Pellegrini on the occasion of his retirement from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance after forty years of service. NEPA Alliance is a regional community and economic development agency that assists businesses and organizations with financial and non-financial resources and solutions to help them grow and succeed. NEPA Alliance's work in Northeastern Pennsylvania has been invaluable.

Tom is a graduate of King's College, holding a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Government and Politics, and he also completed additional coursework in Business Administration. He has been the driving force behind hundreds of grants during his time at the NEPA Alliance. Tom's work has aided numerous economic development agencies, non-profits, colleges, and universities.

Over his stellar career, Tom has been a member of the Luzerne County Business Incubator Center Advisory Board, the Scranton/Lackawanna Labor Management Council Board, and has served as the Campaign Coordinator for the United Way.

Tom resides in Exeter with his wife. He has three children and is also a grandfather. Tom is an avid sports fan and has enjoyed coaching in a number of student basketball leagues as well as the Exeter Lions Little League.

On behalf of the entire political leadership of Northeastern Pennsylvania, I recognize Tom for his years of service working with government agencies to secure funding for key projects in the region. Tom has been a great resource to the community; he will be missed in a well-deserved retirement, and we all wish him the best.

HALIMA BANGURA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Halima Bangura for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Halima Bangura is a student at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Halima Bangura is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all

levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Halima Bangura for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical emergency involving another passenger, my flight from Los Angeles, California to Washington, D.C. was forced to land mid-flight in Kansas City, Missouri. The flight was grounded for an hour before we were able to continue on to our final destination. Unfortunately, we were unable to make up enough time and I missed the votes on the House Floor scheduled for June 20, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on H.R. 2847, and YES on H.R. 2866.

RECOGNIZING THE FAYETTEVILLE-MANLIUS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP RELAY TEAM

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victory of the Fayetteville-Manlius 3,200 Meter Relay Team in the New York State Public High School Association Class AA Championship on June 10, 2017.

Christy Berge, Palmer Madsen, Sophie Ryan, Rebecca Walters, Phoebe White, and Claire Walters of the Fayetteville-Manlius Hornets took home the state title in the 3,200 meter relay with a time of 8:56.41. The team is coached by Bill Aris.

I am honored to recognize the teamwork displayed by the Fayetteville-Manlius Hornets and to congratulate the members of the team, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Fayetteville-Manlius High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

HONORING KATE CLINTON

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Kate Clinton, who has, for 36 years, offered unique and original insights as a political humorist and served as an important leader in the fight for justice and equality. She has made millions of people laugh and see truth in new ways, and in doing

so, has changed hearts and minds so as to strongly impact America's long fight to secure equal rights for all of our citizens.

Kate Clinton's books, columns, essays, video blogs, and performances have affirmed the lives of LGBT people and all who have been marginalized, and her work has shed light on all manner of injustice. As she has invited people to see things differently, particularly through her special brand of gentle but pointed humor, she has provided joy and recognition to millions of people in her audience and beyond. Her commitment to equality and social justice is unwavering, not only as seen through her comedic craft, but also through her other important activist work as a feminist, lesbian, and American artist who understands that true equality can only exist when we all enjoy it.

For nearly four decades, Kate Clinton has built and used her unique platform to advance progressive causes—most notably women's rights and LGBT equality—and has used humor to build critical bridges of understanding between communities.

During this time when voices for progress are threatened, and when humor is sometimes the only salve for the weariness felt by so many Americans who are fighting a better future for our country and world, the work of artists like Kate Clinton is vital to building solidarity; providing inspiration, insight and levity; and generating courage to continue the arduous work of pursuing justice.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Kate Clinton for her many accomplishments, and wishing her continued success in making us laugh, and sustaining our resolve, in the years to come.

HONORING YEOMAN 3RD CLASS
SHINGO ALEXANDER DOUGLASS

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Yeoman 3rd Class Shingo Alexander Douglass from Oceanside who died serving his country aboard the USS *Fitzgerald*. Shingo was a fine young sailor who proudly served his country. For such a young man he had accomplished so much. I know no words can describe the overwhelming grief of his family and friends at this time. The only consolation we here can offer is the thanks of the grateful nation he served and our pledge to support his and all other military families across our country. Shingo remains a hero whose memory will continue to provide strength, courage and inspiration to the others. I thank him for the sacrifice he made to protect our country and to help those who long for peace and freedom. I would also like to commend the crew of the USS *Fitzgerald* for all their efforts to save lives and their ship. I would like to extend my deepest condolences to his loved ones and his fellow sailors. This unimaginable tragedy reminds us all to cherish those who serve.

JOHN MOORE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud John Moore for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

John Moore is a student at Pomona High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by John Moore is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to John Moore for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP LIVERPOOL BASEBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victory of the Liverpool Baseball Team in the New York State Public High School Association Class AA Championship on June 10, 2017. The Liverpool Warriors defeated the Massapequa Chiefs 4-1 to secure the Warriors' first title in program history.

The Warriors, finishing the season 23-3, were determined to win the program's first state title. Members of the championship team include Nick Antonello, Peter Belgrader, Thomas Bianchi, Jordan Brown, Joel Ciccarella, Jeff Destefano, Jake Evans, Brandon Exner, Jonah Harder, Andre Leatherwood, Devan Mederios, Gerard Mouton, Zach Pieklik, Matt Rioux, Nikolas Saunders, Zach Scannell, Zach Scharett, Jacob Sisto, Owen Valentine, and Joe Zywicki. The team is coached by Fred Terzini.

I am honored to recognize the teamwork displayed by the Liverpool Warriors and to congratulate the members of the team, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Liverpool High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

IN RECOGNITION OF CLAGUE MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR BEING DESIGNATED A "SCHOOL TO WATCH"

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Clague Middle School for being

designated a "School to Watch" by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform. This honor underscores the school's commitment academic excellence and the dedication of its students, educators and staff.

Originally founded in 1972, Clague Middle School serves over 700 students in the Ann Arbor area as part of the Ann Arbor Schools system. The school provides a culturally unique and diverse learning environment, with its students speaking over 25 different languages and coming from a variety of different backgrounds. In addition, the school hosts many enrichment and academic opportunities for its students, including a student-run newspaper, a nationally-ranked Academic Games team, as well as involvement in community events like an annual Week of Service to maintain the campus and surrounding area. Due to these efforts, Clague Middle School has been able to effectively meet the needs of each individual student in the school while serving the Ann Arbor community at large.

As a result of the school's superior record of achievement, Clague Middle School was named a "School to Watch" by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, one of only 12 schools in Michigan to earn this designation. In order to earn this honor, schools must meet the criteria of academic excellence, individualized attention to students, social equity, and organizational resilience to maintain these high standards. This national recognition highlights the unique learning environment that exists at Clague as a result of the hard work of its educators and staff. The school's students are provided the resources and support they need to excel, and it is my hope that Clague Middle School is able to continue to build on its success in the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the students and staff of Clague Middle School for earning the designation of "School to Watch" by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform. Clague provides high-quality education and enrichment opportunities.

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION URGING CHINA, SOUTH KOREA, VIETNAM, THAILAND, THE PHILIPPINES, INDONESIA, CAMBODIA, LAOS, INDIA, AND ALL NATIONS TO OUTLAW THE DOG AND CAT MEAT TRADE AND TO ENFORCE EXISTING LAWS AGAINST THE TRADE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bipartisan resolution urging China, South Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, India, and all nations to outlaw the dog and cat meat trade and to enforce existing laws against the trade. It might surprise you to learn that an estimated 30,000,000 dogs and a great number of cats die annually across Asia for the dog and cat meat trade.

This resolution would urge nations that have a dog and cat meat trade to adopt and en-

force anti-cruelty laws, urge those nations to increase efforts to prevent leather and fur by-products from entering international markets, and encourage those nations to enforce their food safety laws to crack down on the sale of dog and cat meat.

It is my sincere hope that this resolution will send a strong message to countries where the dog and cat meat trade still exist, and continue the animal protection movement that is already rapidly growing across Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this body will expeditiously pass this measure. Doing so will reaffirm America's commitment to the humane treatment of our most beloved companions.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA REGION OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Eastern North Carolina Region of the American Red Cross and their commitment to aiding our communities for 100 years. The Eastern North Carolina Region is comprised of the Cape Fear, Central North Carolina, Northeastern North Carolina, Sandhills, and Triangle Area Chapters of the American Red Cross.

This particular region of the American Red Cross was founded in Raleigh, North Carolina back during World War I, when 28 women convened with the goal of determining how they could best assist the war effort. Following this historic meeting, this resourceful group formally established the Eastern North Carolina Chapter of the Red Cross. On March 12, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson officially granted the Charter to the Wake County Chapter of the American Red Cross. These volunteers assisted wounded soldiers at nearby Camp Polk throughout World War I, in addition to running feeding stations and the soldiers' Bath House near the railroad station in Raleigh. From these small beginnings a century ago, the Eastern North Carolina Region now serves 53 counties and more than 4.6 million North Carolinians.

Established in our darkest hour, the Eastern North Carolina Region of the American Red Cross has stood the test of time—through two World Wars, the Great Depression and many other trials in our state's history. This incredible nonprofit organization has been a continued success story because of the strong men and women who have volunteered their time, energy, and efforts over the past century. I hope this organization thrives for yet another century of helping those in their greatest hour of need.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in honoring the Eastern North Carolina Region of the American Red Cross on their monumental 100th Anniversary accomplishment.

JOSEPH NGUYEN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Joseph Nguyen for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Joseph Nguyen is a student at Mandalay Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Joseph Nguyen is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Joseph Nguyen for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING WILLIAM BRYAN FISH OF PENNSYLVANIA FOR EARNING THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA WILLIAM T. HORNADAY SILVER MEDAL

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I offer my sincere congratulations to my constituent, William Bryan Fish, on earning the Boy Scouts of America William T. Hornaday Silver Medal, its highest honor given for conservation work.

Described by the Boy Scouts as the "Olympic Medal Bestowed by the Earth," this award recognizes truly outstanding efforts by Scouts that have contributed to environmental protection and conservation. Mr. Fish is one of only 1,200 Scouts to have earned this award since it was created in 1914.

To earn this award, Mr. Fish: installed hundreds of storm drain markers and information packets advising of the dangers of polluting waterways that connect to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed; organized an even-sided public debate on hydraulic fracturing; cleaned up two miles of a local creek; and organized a battery recycling program for his local school district.

Mr. Fish's character, perseverance and leadership earned this Award and mark him as a future leader in our community and sets the standard for others to follow.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's Fourth-Congressional District, I congratulate William Bryan Fish on earning the Boy Scouts of America William T. Hornaday Silver Medal, and wish him continued great success in his future adventures.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Holy Cross College. This institution has been a pillar of the northern Indiana community for a half century, and I have no doubt the next 50 years will be just as meaningful for students, faculty, alumni, and the northern Indiana community.

Holy Cross College was founded in 1966 to advance the apostolic mission of the Brothers of Holy Cross. From the beginning, the college has been dedicated not only to fostering intellectual growth and discovery, but also to cultivating global citizens who are passionate, faithful, and courageous.

Today, with more than 500 students from over 30 states and 18 different countries, Holy Cross College is putting its values of global diversity and integration into action, no doubt enriching the lives of each and every student. The prestigious faculty and hardworking staff at Holy Cross are committed to providing an engaging and transformative college experience, offering enlightenment in numerous areas of study, and instilling the values of knowledge, faith, and personal growth.

Students at Holy Cross have vast opportunities to get involved on campus and in the community. The college has played a positive role in making northern Indiana a better place to live, learn, and grow. I applaud the selfless efforts students past and present have taken to give back to those in need.

It is a privilege to represent the Holy Cross community in Congress. I am grateful for the passion, integrity, and intellectual spirit that resonates both on and off campus. On behalf of 2nd District Hoosiers, I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations on celebrating 50 years, and I am excited to learn of all the amazing things that are sure to come.

RECOGNIZING ALEXANDRIA PAYNE, STATE PENTATHLON CHAMPION

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alexandria Payne of the Jamesville-DeWitt Red Rams for taking home the state pentathlon title in the New York State Public High School Association Class A Championship on June 10, 2017.

Payne set a District III record for amassing 3,351 points during the two days of competition. She is coached by Jim Lawton.

I am honored to recognize the hard work displayed by Alexandria Payne and the rest of the team, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Jamesville-DeWitt High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

A TRIBUTE TO RYAN COLLINS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ryan Collins, a graduate of East Union High School in Afton, Iowa. Ryan was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 30, 2017.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic achievement. Not only are recipients academically gifted, but the selected students are also those who have had success in extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Ryan in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him for utilizing his talents to reach his goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating him on receiving this esteemed designation, and in wishing him nothing but the best.

ISAIIH NGUYEN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Isaih Nguyen for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Isaih Nguyen is a student at North Arvada Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Isaih Nguyen is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Isaih Nguyen for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HAMPTON JAZZ FESTIVAL

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Hampton Jazz Festival on its 50th Anniversary.

The idea for a jazz festival emerged after a visit between friends—the President of Hampton Institute Jerome Holland and jazz entrepreneur and promoter George Wein, who was

noted for his festivals in Newport, Rhode Island, New York, California, and New Orleans.

This first festival was in 1968 when Hampton Institute—present day Hampton University—celebrated its 100th birthday with a musical night filled with jazz. This celebration took place on Hampton's campus at Armstrong Field. Artists that performed at the original festival included Dizzy Gillespie, Ramsay Lewis, Herbie Mann Quintet, Nina Simone and her Trio, Muddy Waters and his Blues Band, and many more. It was supposed to be just a one-time event, but the attendees loved it and wanted more. In 1970, the City of Hampton became the third partner when the festival moved from Hampton Institute to the newly built Hampton Coliseum due to growing crowds; it went on for three days and has been a tradition in Hampton Roads ever since.

The Hampton Roads community welcomes fans who travel from all over for the weekend long Jazz Festival each year. Many think of it as more than just a few concerts. The festival is a celebration of jazz, pop, blues, soul, and R&B music and artists. It is a time for fans and artists to celebrate the culture and the life of jazz. It is a terrific opportunity for the community to come together for a great time listening to great music. As a result, many events surround the dates of the festival, including parties, family reunions, class reunions and other gatherings.

There are fans who have attended the festival since its beginnings, and enjoy it just as much as they did when they were younger. And I count myself as one of those fans, as I attended the very first festival at Armstrong Field and have attended virtually every festival since. Because jazz is such a unique genre of music that crosses so many ethnic and cultural barriers, the festival is a way for different generations and diverse groups of people to come together and share in their love of jazz.

I commend Hampton University and the City of Hampton for their ongoing partnership to bring well-loved and critically acclaimed artists and musicians to Hampton Roads for this annual event. A record was set in 2011 for the festival when all three shows, featuring the artists Charlie Wilson, Kem, Jonathan Butler, Chaka Khan, Boyz II Men, and Maze featuring Frankie Beverly, sold out.

Last year's festival included Babyface, New Edition, Gladys Knight, and many more. Hampton strives to make the festival better and better each year with more artists and vendors, and I know this 50th Anniversary festival will be no different.

The remarkable success of the Jazz Festival has helped the City of Hampton build up the reputation of the Hampton Coliseum as a premier venue for the region. Thanks in part to the high profile acts that performed at the Jazz Festival, the Hampton Coliseum has been able to attract many popular artists and other events. As the Festival has grown in popularity, annual attendance is usually around 25,000 fans in recent years.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to mention a few names who have been instrumental to the success of the festival over the years—Dr. William Harvey, Joe Santangelo, John Scott, Joe Tsao, George Wallace, and Lucius Wyatt.

The 50th Anniversary of the Hampton Jazz Festival is to take place as it always does during the last full weekend in June and will include many fan favorites, including Jill Scott, Kem, Brian Culbertson, the O'Jays, Patti Labelle, and Maze featuring Frankie Beverly.

Mr. Speaker, as a fan of jazz and a regular attendee, I congratulate Hampton University and the City of Hampton as the Hampton Jazz Festival celebrates its 50th Anniversary. I look forward to a great weekend listening to some of my favorite artists knowing that this Hampton Roads tradition will continue for many years to come.

IZABELLA SMITH

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Izabella Smith for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Izabella Smith is a student at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Izabella Smith is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Izabella Smith for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING BROOKE RAUBER,
THE STATE CHAMPION STEEPLE-
CHASER

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victory of Brooke Rauber of the Tully Black Knights for taking home the state steeplechase title in track and field in the New York State Public High School Association Class C-1 Championship on June 10, 2017.

With a time of 7:01.26, Brooke Rauber took home the state title in the steeplechase. She was coached by Michelle Franklin-Rauber.

I am honored to recognize the hard work displayed by Brooke Rauber and the rest of the team, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Tully Junior-Senior High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF SPENCERTOWN
FIRE COMPANY

HON. JOHN J. FASO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the Spencertown Fire Company, which

is celebrating 100 years of service to our communities in Columbia County, New York. Twenty-four hours a day and 365 days a year for the past century, this fire company has served with pride and courage.

I express my gratitude for the past and present volunteers of this organization who have made great sacrifices and performed heroic acts to protect their neighbors.

Upon recognizing the need for organized fire protection, a group of 10 men came together and drew up the Articles of Incorporation for Spencertown Fire Company on November 6, 2017.

Their names were: John W. Hartmann, George S. Barden, George W. Demler, George Whiteman, Alfred Taylor, T. F. Niles, L. Harvey, Ray Barden, Erie Chace, and Elvin Barden.

Today, 38 individuals make up the team at Spencertown Fire Company. Two thirds of this group are active, highly skilled volunteer firefighters.

Mr. Speaker, the members of Spencertown Fire Company: Alan Silvernale, Jeffrey Prack, Steven Ulmer, Brian Geel Sr., Brian Collins, David Page, Daniel Howes, Mathew Verenazi, Henry Barens, Lorin Brink, John Daval, Mark Dempf, Joel Dyslin, Kendall Eckstrom, Jay Engel, Russell Gauthier, David Harrison, Jr., Robin Howes, Evan Kerr, Guy Madsen, Donald McComb, Paul Mesick, Rich Nesbitt, Jr., Timothy Newton, Stephen Oleynek, Eric Pilkington, Bill Rogers, Chrissy Rundell, Chris Rundell, Dan Rundell, Josh VanAlstyne, Greg Verenazi, Edward Walsh, Arthur Welch, George Wenk, Gary Williams, Shaun Williams, and Gary Wood.

Their commitment to Spencertown and its neighboring communities does not stop at fire safety: Every year since 1985 they have awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to a college-bound high school graduate chosen from within their service area.

I thank Spencertown Fire Company President Alan Silvernale; Austerlitz Fire Chief Eric Pilkington; and the entire Spencertown Fire Company which, in the great tradition of New York fire companies, continues to raise the standard in ensuring and furthering the well-being of our local communities.

HONORING TOM NUNES, SR.

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tom Nunes, Sr., this year's recipient of the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California's E.E. "Gene" Harden Award for Lifetime Achievement in Central Coast Agriculture. Tom has devoted his entire career to farming the fertile ground of the Salinas Valley, contributing to the economic lifeblood of this region known as the "Salad Bowl of the World." Tom was born and raised in the heart of the Valley by a farming family in Chualar, CA. After graduating from Salinas High School, Tom attended Saint Mary's College on a football scholarship and later transferred to Stanford University, where he graduated with a degree in Economics.

After college, Tom immediately went to work in the Salinas Valley agricultural industry. He

started a farming venture with his father where he worked for several years before partners approached him with the idea to start a grower-shipper company in the mid-1950's, they named this venture Growers Exchange Inc. In 1966, Tom and his brother Bob decided to start their own venture, and founded Nunes Bros. of California Inc., a grower-shipper of iceberg lettuce. This venture achieved enormous success, and the Nunes brothers ultimately sold their company to United Brands/Chiquita. The brothers were also one of six western vegetable grower-shippers that formed Inter-Harvest, the largest vegetable grower-shipper organization in the country at the time. Tom and Bob Nunes briefly ran Inter-Harvest before retiring in 1970. In the fall of 1976, Tom and Bob came out of retirement to launch The Nunes Company, Inc., whose core values of honesty, integrity, trust, and attention to detail have fostered a culture that continues to this day.

Through his long and distinguished career, Tom has spanned the transition of harvests in the Salinas Valley from sugar beets and white beans to the modern specialty crop era. He has been an instrumental figure in the conversion how we farm, harvest, cool and market our fresh produce in the Salinas Valley that feeds people all across this country, and around the world. What started as 400 acres of iceberg lettuce on the central coast of California in the 1950's has grown into more than 22,000 acres of vegetable crops spanning five states.

Aside from his business success, Tom is also an invaluable member of our community. Tom has served as the President and Chairman of the Board for the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, worked with the Western Growers Board, was a charter member of the Palma High School Foundation, served on the Palma High School Board, and the National Steinbeck Center inducted him into the Valley of the World Hall of Fame. His friends and family know him as a passionate, powerful and intelligent man. In true farmer fashion, he is a man of action and few words. The Nunes Company has created opportunity for hundreds of residents, and three generations of the Nunes family continue to operate the company to this day. The strong work ethic that Tom has passed down to future generations is evident in the tradition of innovation and pride in stewardship of the land that his successors carry out at every level of this business to this day. I am proud to add my name to this chorus of thanks and congratulations to Mr. Tom Nunes, Sr. for his enormous contributions to our community, and our country.

JACOB TALLEY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jacob Talley for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Jacob Talley is a student at Pomona High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jacob Talley is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jacob Talley for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

A TRIBUTE TO SAVANNA JOHNSON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Savanna Johnson, a graduate of West Central Valley High in Stuart, Iowa. Savanna was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 30, 2017.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic achievement. Not only are recipients academically gifted, but the selected students are also those who have had success in extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Savanna in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her for utilizing her talents to reach her goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and in wishing her nothing but the best.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAMP SHELBY

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend one of the many fine military institutions in Mississippi that has had a profound impact on its history and continues to play a positive, vital role in its present and future, training the elite military men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

One hundred years ago, in 1917, the largest state owned training facility in the nation, Camp Shelby, was established in Mississippi on United States Highway 49. With its North Gate located at the southern boundary of Hattiesburg, Camp Shelby encompasses over 525 square kilometers and more than 134,000 acres of both Perry and Forrest Counties.

Camp Shelby was named for Governor Isaac Shelby, the first Governor of Kentucky and a renowned soldier who served as a Colonel in the Virginia militia during the Revolutionary War as a militiaman in the Kentucky and Indiana territories. As Governor and lead-

er of the Kentucky militia during the War of 1812, Governor Shelby helped solidify victory for his American troops at the Battle of the Thames in Canada in 1813.

When Camp Shelby was established in 1917, the first commanding officer was Major General William Hamden Sage. Major General Sage was awarded the Medal of Honor for his valor, bravery and fortitude at the Battle of Zapote River during the Philippine Insurrection in 1899.

During wartime, Camp Shelby's mission is to serve as a major independent mobilization station of the United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM). Camp Shelby's 134,000 acres allow for battalion-level maneuver training, Gunnery Table 8-12, field artillery firing points and a wide range of support facilities, while also being utilized by units across the country for its ability to support numerous different missions.

Camp Shelby serves as the training ground for the Abrams M1 and the Paladin Howitzer Tanks. It is home to the 177th Training Support Brigade and is the annual training location for National Guard and Reserve units based in Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee. Additionally, the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team and the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment conduct their gunnery training at Camp Shelby and store the bulk of their combat equipment in the Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site (MATES) on base.

During World War II, Camp Shelby was the training site for the famous Japanese-American 100th Battalion 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Women's Army Corps. It even housed a prisoner of war camp for detained soldiers from the German Africa Corps from 1941-1943.

On June 6, 2004, Camp Shelby was federalized as a FORSCOM Mobilization Center, and since that time several Regimental and Brigade Combat Teams have mobilized through the camp, including the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment (Tennessee Army National Guard); the 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team (MS ARNG); the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division (PA ARNG); the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division (PA ARNG); the 53rd Brigade Combat Team (FL ARNG); the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division (MN ARNG); the 41st Brigade Combat Team (OR ARNG); the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (LA ARNG); the 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team (ID ARNG); the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (NY ARNG); and the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (GA ARNG).

In addition to fulfilling its obligations as a FORSCOM Mobilization Center, Camp Shelby is the field training exercise site for the United States Navy Seabees mobilized from the Naval Construction Battalion in Gulfport and is home to the Youth Challenge Academy, the only militarily-structured GED and high school diploma program in the state.

I have personally been deployed to Camp Shelby in support of the Global War on Terror and continue to drill there as part of my service in the Mississippi National Guard. I can attest that this is truly a national asset and a special part of the State of Mississippi.

I hereby recognize and honor the remarkable feats of Camp Shelby upon the auspicious occasion of its 100th Anniversary and express best wishes for its success and growth in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SKANEATELES GIRLS LACROSSE TEAM

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victory of the Skaneateles Girls Lacrosse Team in the New York State Public High School Association Class D Championship on June 10, 2017. The Skaneateles Lakers defeated the Bronxville Broncos 12–11 in double overtime.

The Lakers, finishing the season 18–4, overcame a six goal deficit in the championship game to secure the program's second title in four years. Members of the championship team include Hope Allyn, Sarah Bailey, Emily Baldwin, Riley Brogan, Christiana Ciaccio, Olivia Dabrowsky, Grace Dower, Emma Goodell, Taylor Hill, Abby Kuhns, Grace Kush, Sophie Kush, Abby Logan, Mae McGlynn, Mary McNeil, Olivia Navaroli, Maggie Newton, Olivia Nye, Jessica Patalino, Rachel Pinney, Kyla Sears, Mikaela Terhune, and Gaby Welch. The team is coached by Bridget Marquardt.

I am honored to recognize the teamwork displayed by the Skaneateles Lakers and to congratulate the members of the team, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Skaneateles High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

HARLEY THERIOT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Harley Theriot for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Harley Theriot is a student at Pomona High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Harley Theriot is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Harley Theriot for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARK KEMMER FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED CAREER WITH GENERAL MOTORS

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Mark Kemmer for his career and accomplishments with General Motors. Mr. Kemmer has been a steadfast public policy advocate for the automotive industry throughout his 36 years with the company.

Mr. Kemmer began his career with GM in Detroit in 1974, where he worked with GM's Energy Management division to serve the energy needs of the automaker's factories and manufacturing facilities. He then moved to GM's Washington, DC office after four years, and served as a Washington Representative and Liaison Engineer for the organization's Industry-Government Relations staff until 2002. In this position, Mr. Kemmer worked with federal, state and local partners on behalf of GM and its customers. He was then named the Director of Federal Affairs for the GM Public Policy Center, where he was responsible for formulating the company's policies addressing a variety of issues, including energy and safety, fuel economy standards for research, and advanced technology. As a result of Mr. Kemmer's leadership, GM has achieved excellence in a variety of emerging technologies and is well-positioned for the future.

Mr. Kemmer's work with General Motors has been critical to the evolution of the company. Under Mr. Kemmer's leadership, GM has made advancements in sustainability, driven improvements in its manufacturing processes through public-private partnerships, and helped it earn a reputation as a world-class organization that both serves its customers and the communities in which it operates. Mr. Kemmer's decades of expertise, relationships with key stakeholders and knowledge of the automotive industry have been important in facilitating these improvements, and he will be missed as he moves on from his current position.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Mark Kemmer for his outstanding career with General Motors. Mr. Kemmer's impactful leadership has helped GM evolve to meet new challenges in a rapidly evolving industry.

HONORING PENNDEL POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Pennel Police Department upon the dedication of their new headquarters building, named in honor of the Department's first Chief, Fred C. Dunkley, who served in the position for more than thirty years. The members of this Department are uniformly loved and respected within the community in which they live and serve. Their mission, to affirmatively promote, preserve, and provide a feeling

of security and safety among all persons within their jurisdiction, has brought the community together in a time when many communities grow further apart. They set an example from which all of us can learn, and we thank them for their incredible service. To the members of the Pennel Police Department, past, present, and future, we say thank you.

RECOGNIZING THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SOLVAY SOFTBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victory of the Solvay Softball Team in the New York State Public High School Association Class B Championship on June 10, 2017. The Solvay Bearcats defeated the Depew Wildcats 1–0 to secure the Bearcats' first program title since 1986.

The Bearcats, finishing the season 23–2, were determined to win the state title. Members of the championship team include Jordan Bamba, Sidney Chaffee, Althea Davies, Nadea Davies, Sam Farruggio, Lauren Hurd, Izzy Lambert, Hannah Martineau, Caitlin McCann, Lauren Nichols, Gabriella Petralito, Hope Riviera, Delana Thomas, and Aleah Yaizzo. The team is coached by Phil Merrill.

I am honored to recognize the teamwork displayed by the Solvay Bearcats and to congratulate the members of the team, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Solvay High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

IN HONOR OF LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' 1600 METER RELAY TEAM

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Lexington High School boys track team for winning the 1600 meter event at the Ohio High School Division II State Track and Field Tournament.

An achievement such as this certainly deserves recognition. The Ohio High School Athletic Association has enabled talented teams and individuals to earn state titles since its founding in 1907. Throughout this time, the champions of OHSA state level competitions have represented the highest achieving and most talented athletes in Ohio. Each year these elite competitors join the long ranks of those who embody Ohio's proud history of athletic success.

The Lexington High School boys 1600 meter relay team's victory caps a tremendous season. This sort of achievement is earned only through many hours of practice, perspiration and hard work. They have set a new standard for future athletes to reach. Everyone at Lexington High School can be extremely proud of their performance.

On behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 12th Congressional District, I congratulate Hunter Biddle, Tony Gerrell, Forest Volz and Mason Kearns on their state championship. I wish them continued success in both their athletic and academic endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO TAYLOR PASHEK

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Taylor Pashek, a graduate of Winterset High School in Winterset, Iowa. Taylor was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 30, 2017.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic achievement. Not only are recipients academically gifted, but the selected students are also those who have had success in extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Taylor in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her for utilizing her talents to reach her goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and in wishing her nothing but the best.

JORGE TORRES-MARCHAND

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jorge Torres-Marchand for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Jorge Torres-Marchand is a student at Wheat Ridge High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jorge Torres-Marchand is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jorge Torres-Marchand for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE SKANEATELES LAKERS STATE TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONS

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mia Grasso, Kaitlyn Neal, Katherine Carlile, Maddie Peterson, Shannon Roberts, and Olivia Gage of the Skaneateles Lakers for taking home state titles in their respective events at the New York State Public High School Association Class B-1 Championship on June 10, 2017.

The Skaneateles Lakers' Mia Grasso placed first in the 400 low hurdles with a time of 1:07.72, Kaitlyn Neal placed first in the 3000 meters with a time of 10:37.26, Katherine Carlile in the discus throw with a distance of 83-10. Carlile and Grasso were also members of the 1600 meter relay team with Maddie Peterson and Olivia Gage with a time of 4:15.26. The team was coached by Rob Tuttle.

I am honored to recognize the hard work displayed by the Skaneateles Lakers, their families, the coaching staff, and teachers at Skaneateles High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

OPPOSING THE SENATE VERSION OF THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to Trumpcare and the shameful, secret process Senate Republicans are using to pass this destructive legislation.

Last month, I proudly voted against Trumpcare, a bill that guts the Affordable Care Act, raises costs while providing less coverage, and gives tax cuts to the 400 wealthiest American families.

Mr. Speaker, the version of Trumpcare that passed the House is so bad, the President himself called it "mean".

A bill so mean it raises healthcare costs for hard-working families.

A bill so mean it makes millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions uninsurable.

A bill so mean it forces states to cut benefits and kick millions of people off Medicaid.

The American people deserve better—they deserve transparency; they deserve openness; they deserve the chance to read the bill; and, Mr. Speaker, they deserve affordable healthcare.

SUPPORTING H.R. 1871

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1871, the Property Tax Re-

duction Act, which is essential legislation to give our counties and taxpayers desperately needed fiscal relief and to help bring New York's Medicaid costs under control.

Under current federal law, states are allowed to impose a portion of their state Medicaid funding responsibility onto local municipalities. My state, New York, chose to take advantage of this in an extreme sense. In 2015, for example, New York transferred more than \$7.2 billion of its non-federal Medicaid burden to counties. The burden New York has placed on its counties is greater than any other state in our country. The other 49 states combined only burden their counties with about \$2.3 billion in Medicaid costs. This means that New York counties pay three times more for Medicaid than all other counties in the country combined. My home county, Suffolk, pays, on average, approximately a quarter billion dollars per year to the state for Medicaid, with \$243,470,248, for example, being spent in 2015. Protecting our most vulnerable population is essential, and ensuring adequate funding for Medicaid programs is vital; however, New York's program has dangerously exploded.

Our county governments around New York are in dire need of the fiscal relief provided through this legislation. There is no reason New York State cannot identify and achieve the \$2.3 billion amount of efficiency necessary and available in the state Medicaid system, while at the same time making it clear that this can be achieved without harming any low income residents in need of coverage. If the state needs any advice on how to accomplish this, I am here to help. The state's conversion to Managed Long Term Care, gross overbilling of Medicaid into the hundreds of millions of dollars by some entities, eight and nine figure at a time handouts to 1199 SEIU to curry political favor, and many other issues result in a major problem that must be immediately confronted head on. Not only does New York State spend more money on Medicaid than Illinois, Texas and Florida combined, but it spends just about the same amount on Medicaid costs that Florida spends on its entire state budget despite having an almost identical sized population.

H.R. 1871 would single handedly flip Suffolk County's recurring massive nine-figure budget deficits into budget surpluses. For residents of my district, this is a dream scenario that lifts our county out of a very dire annual budget crisis. If this bill became law, you could eliminate Suffolk's \$50 million annual property tax levy completely, eliminate Suffolk's \$150 million structural deficit, and have \$50 million left over for combating the heroin and opioid epidemic, improving infrastructure, public works programs, environmental preservation and coastal erosion programs, upgraded and improved sewerage or for some other purpose that county residents deems necessary.

Passage of this bill is critical to providing necessary relief not only for Suffolk County, but many counties across New York. I urge all my colleagues to support this important measure, I thank Congressmen CHRIS COLLINS and JOHN FASO for this proposal, and I look forward to getting this bill across the finish line.

JIMMY TRAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jimmy Tran for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Jimmy Tran is a student at Jefferson High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jimmy Tran is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jimmy Tran for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

A TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH
FULLER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Elizabeth Fuller, a graduate of Southwest Valley High School in Corning, Iowa. Elizabeth was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 30, 2017.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic achievement. Not only are recipients academically gifted, but the selected students are also those who have had success in extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Elizabeth in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her for utilizing her talents to reach her goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and in wishing her nothing but the best.

RECOGNIZING BUTCH CORDA

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Butch Corda for his work as Chair of the Board of the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California. In my home district on the central coast of California, agriculture is the engine that drives our local economy, and

creates opportunity for the citizens who reside there. The Grower-Shipper Association plays a central role in bringing the region's vegetables and berries to tables around the world. Under Mr. Corda's leadership as Chair, the Grower-Shipper Association continued to expand upon its rich tradition of addressing the complex and evolving issues facing the agricultural industry, such as food safety, pest prevention, research and education, and much more.

A native son of the fertile Salinas Valley, Mr. Corda was born and raised in Gonzales. After attending Gonzales High School, Hartnell College and San Jose State, he returned home and has been working in the agricultural industry for over 35 years. Most recently, he has served as the General Manager of Ippolito International, known for being North America's largest supplier of Brussels sprouts, among many other mixed and specialty vegetables. He has raised his family in Salinas, where his wife and daughter also work in the industry. His immense experience, ingenuity and creativity gained from a long and distinguished career served him well during his tenure as the chair of the Grower-Shipper Association.

Mr. Speaker, I was particularly impressed by Mr. Corda's implementation of the Association's "Future Leaders Program." Through this program, the Board of Directors paid special attention to developing the next generation of leadership in the industry through mentorship, participation in board meetings, and many other educational events. This exposed a new generation of agriculture professionals to issues facing the industry as a whole, beyond what they manage in the day-to-day duties of their respective jobs, and empowered them to bring new and creative ideas to the table to solve these pressing concerns. Also during Mr. Corda's tenure, the Association premiered the documentary film "Historical Narratives of Salinas Valley Agriculture," a collaborative project that engaged and educated the public on the important and often overlooked stories of the people who have built Salinas Valley agriculture into what it is today. Under the leadership of Mr. Corda, the Association assisted in providing a place for industry leaders to come together to make progress on a number of important issues, particularly pesticide safety and water conservation.

While Mr. Corda's tenure as Chair of the Board has ended, I am certain his contribution to this vital industry in my home district will continue. It is my pleasure to add my name to the chorus of thanks and congratulations to the outgoing Chairman and look forward to continued collaboration to champion bold, productive, and creative solutions to address the needs of the industry, its workers, and the American families who enjoy the harvests that we produce here every day.

RECOGNIZING JEREMIAH WILLIS,
THE LONG JUMP AND TRIPLE
JUMP STATE CHAMPION

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the victory of Jeremiah Willis of the Cicero-North Syracuse Northstars Track & Field Team in two individual track and field

events at the New York State Public High School Association Class AA Championship on June 10, 2017.

With a leap of 23 feet and one inch, Jeremiah Willis took first place in the federation long jump. Willis also took first place in the federation triple jump in 46-05.25. He was coached by Greg Boton.

I am honored to recognize the hard work displayed by Jeremiah Willis and his coaching staff and teachers at Cicero-North Syracuse High School. This is a historic win for Central New York and I am confident that the positive experiences from the 2017 season will yield continued success in both athletics and academics.

RECOGNIZING IMMIGRANT
HERITAGE MONTH IN JUNE

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reflect on the historical and cultural impact immigrants have had—and continue to have—on our great nation, as we recognize Immigrant Heritage Month this June.

Throughout its history, America has shone as a beacon of opportunity to millions of people seeking refuge from prejudice, political instability, or extreme hardship in their homeland. Our willingness to welcome those escaping persecution and seeking economic opportunity has only fortified our strength as a country, and it will continue to do so. The United States is ripe with opportunity for fiscal and personal prosperity, both of which have appealed to those who have arrived on our shores looking for a new life for themselves and their families. The resulting mixture of ethnicities and cultures has only served to embolden the unique American way of life and experience.

The foundation of our nation is built on immigrants, and as the descendant of German, English, and Irish immigrants, I am thankful for a chance to reflect on the importance of immigration to this country's historical narrative.

SUPPORTING THE VOTING RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT ACT

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of a critical piece of legislation, the Voting Rights Advancement Act. I am proud to sponsor this legislation and to be joined by my colleagues, Representatives JUDY CHU, MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, and JOHN LEWIS.

In March of 2015, I, alongside former Presidents Barack Obama and George Bush, both Republican and Democrat Members of Congress, and thousands of people from across the world marched over Edmund Pettus Bridge to commemorate the 50th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday". We honored great Americans like Jimmie Lee Jackson, who was brutally murdered for attempting to vote. Ms.

Amelia Boynton Robinson and our fellow Congressman JOHN LEWIS, who were both bludgeoned for marching for their right to vote. Their sacrifices and courage paved the path for Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965 with overwhelming bipartisan support.

As we reach the fourth anniversary of *Shelby v. Holder*, the landmark case that overturned and gutted a vital part of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, it is clear that Americans' right to vote is under attack now more than ever. While people of color are no longer subject to irrational literacy tests, arbitrary grandfather clauses, or high poll taxes, the reversal of Section 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act once again subjugates minorities to voter discrimination tactics. This section provided preclearance measures for states where voter discrimination has occurred. Section 4(b) required any changes of voting laws to first be cleared by the court in the determined states. Since *Shelby v. Holder* nullified this crucial part of the Voting Rights Act, 10 states have passed laws requiring photo identification to vote, and several more states now require government issued identification in order to cast a ballot. These identification laws have been proven to negatively affect minority and low-income voters disproportionately time and time again.

Moreover, instead of working to enhance the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and working to protect the voting rights of all Americans, the Trump Administration is wasting valuable time and resources creating a commission to investigate the groundless claim that millions of people voted illegally in the last election. The creation of this commission demonstrates a clear disregard for the millions of disenfranchised minorities across America.

My legislation, the Voting Rights Advancement Act, will effectively create a new coverage formula and provide updated preclearance procedures for states that have had 15 or more voting violations within the past 25 years. With the addition of this new formula, 13 states including Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia, 9 of which have already passed discriminatory voter identification laws, would be subject to federal oversight. The Voting Rights Advancement Act presents a clear solution to the problem of voter discrimination and helps ensure Americans of all races and socioeconomic statuses are able to exercise their constitutionally protected right to vote.

Just as in 1965, we remain at a pivotal crossroads—the choice to give every American equal access to the ballot or to continue marginalizing and disenfranchising minorities and low-income communities. I urge my colleagues to take action and support the Voting Rights Advancement Act and not to let the bipartisan effort of previous Congresses be in vain. Congress must pass the Voting Rights Advancement Act and restore the right to vote to every American citizen.

IN HONOR OF SPECIAL AGENTS
CRYSTAL GRINER AND DAVID
BAILEY AND THEIR COURAGEOUS
ACTS OF VALOR IN SAVING
LIVES

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the selfless acts of courage displayed by Special Agents Crystal Griner and David Bailey of The United States Capitol Police saving the lives of numerous members of Congress and their staffs. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of the wounded and Congressman Steve Scalise and Matt Mika and their families who are fighting for their lives. I include in the RECORD this poem penned by Albert Carey Caswell.

NOT ON MY WATCH

They awake on each new day
With a hug and kiss
saying goodbye to their loved ones out on
their way
As to themselves "Not on My Watch" they
say
No one is going to hurt you this day
Putting on a bullet proof vest
while strapping a holster and gun to their
chest

To watch over all of us to bless
moving out to serve and protect
Not knowing what evil to expect
Or if this will be their last day, yet
Who while all in the midst of hell
must find the strength to make their souls
swell

Living by a noble code and creed
to watch over us . . . you and me
It's all in a Police Officer's day
Saying, "Not on My Watch" all at speed
To vanquish evil's darkest of all needs
Ready to lay down their own lives if need be
Standing on that thin blue line
where death lies so close all the time
When, who lives and dies
And see's another sunrise
So all depends on you
relies

And on that fateful morning in June
When two Capitol Police Officers went deep
stood true
Who against all odds
just like Gods kept their oath through and
through

Out gunned
who from the face of death would not run
All in their stride stood tall in the morning
sun

Until, they vanquished what this dark evil
had begun

Thank you
Officers Griner and Bailey as you have
blessed each and everyone
But, "hate is hard . . . and it makes me
cry"

When, I see those tears in those wounded
loved ones eyes

But remember
the darkness is no match for the light
The kind that which on this day
burned in Griner's and Bailey's hearts so
bright

Goodness
Evil
Darkness
Light
Those Brave Hearts Who Evil Must Fight
Who Bring The Light
Together Enjoined
As We Battle On

Into The Darkest of Nights
"Not On My Watch"
Those Brave Hearts Who Evil Must Fight
You Bring The Light

IN HONOR OF JOE ELLIS

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joe Ellis for winning the high jump event in the Ohio High School Division I State Track and Field Tournament.

An achievement such as this certainly deserves recognition. The Ohio High School Athletic Association has enabled talented teams and individuals to earn state titles since its founding in 1907. Throughout this time, the champions of OHSA state level competitions have represented the highest achieving and most talented athletes in Ohio. Each year these elite competitors join the long ranks of those who embody Ohio's proud history of athletic success.

Joe Ellis' victory caps a tremendous season. This sort of achievement is earned only through many hours of practice, perspiration and hard work. You have set a new standard for future athletes to reach. Everyone at Mansfield Senior High School can be extremely proud of your performance.

On behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 12th Congressional District, I congratulate Joe Ellis on his state championship. I wish him continued success in both his athletic and academic endeavors.

TRUMPCARE WILL ABANDON
AMERICANS SUFFERING FROM
ADDICTION AND OVERDOSE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, our country is in the midst of a drug overdose epidemic that's devastating families and communities nationwide. Each day, 144 people die from drug overdose. Opioids kill more people than car accidents, and heroin kills more than all gun-related homicides.

Recently, President Trump stated the opioid crisis "is a crippling problem throughout the United States" and vowed to "expand treatment for those who have become so badly addicted." After promising the American people that he would take action to alleviate this suffering, he endorsed a GOP health reform bill that would decimate mental health and substance abuse treatment for those most in need.

Now, we all know about TrumpCare. We know the House version of the bill would cut more than \$800 billion to Medicaid, cause 23 million Americans to lose their health insurance, and disproportionately hurt the same low- and middle-class voters in rural areas who helped elect him in order to give a massive tax cut to the wealthiest Americans. And the Senate version, released today, is expected to have largely similar effects.

Today, I want to focus on one particularly harsh way TrumpCare harms Americans and their families: It severely reduces access to critical mental health and substance abuse services for victims of this public health crisis, especially the 62 million Americans living in rural areas.

Folks living in rural areas, including many of my constituents in Alabama, are older and sicker than the average American and have higher rates of premature death, which is largely driven by drug overdoses. More than one third of Alabamians live in rural areas and report poor mental health. What's worse, for every 11,000 of my constituents living in Wilcox County, there is only one mental health provider. Wilcox County is only one example of the mental health provider shortage in rural America.

While the ACA didn't solve all of these problems, it made real progress towards increasing access to affordable and high-quality mental health and substance abuse services. It ensured that all individual and employer health plans covered therapist appointments, hospital visits, and medications. It banned lifetime and annual limits on the amount that health insurance companies would pay for critical mental health and substance abuse services. It capped out-of-pocket costs for these services, and finally, it ensured that no one would be discriminated against because they had pre-existing mental health or substance abuse conditions. Together, these reforms gave Americans suffering from this drug epidemic hope for lasting recovery.

TrumpCare, rather than building on the successes of the ACA and strengthening treatment for the 22 million Americans suffering from mental health and substance abuse disorders, wipe out access to life-saving health services for the families that need it most. The House version of the bill would allow states to eliminate requirements that health plans cover mental health and substance abuse services, and it would allow insurance companies to inflate prices for Americans who suffer from pre-existing conditions in certain states. As a result, the independent Congressional Budget Office has projected that individuals with a mental health or substance abuse history could be charged "thousands" more under TrumpCare than under the ACA. In addition to affecting the 175,000 Alabamians who purchased health insurance on the ACA marketplace, these cost hikes could extend to 1.6 million Alabamians with employer-sponsored health insurance.

Republican "solutions" to these problems are drastically underfunded, partly in an effort to reduce the total cost of TrumpCare in order to fund tax breaks for the wealthiest executives and heirs in our country. As a demonstration of my Republican colleagues' priorities, they vetoed an introduced TrumpCare amendment that would mandate coverage for mental health and substance abuse services.

To put it simply, more people will die from drug overdose if TrumpCare is passed. Instead of helping the rural voters who helped President Trump get into office, he betrayed them by supporting legislation that wipes out life-saving mental health and substance abuse treatments in order to cut taxes for Americans like him. TrumpCare will lead to more families torn apart by addiction, more out-of-home placements for children whose parents are suffering from this epidemic, and a larger bur-

den on child welfare and foster care systems already at capacity.

We have made real progress in combatting the opioid crisis in recent years, but our fight is not over. Regardless of partisan affiliation, we must ensure affordable and comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services for all Americans. Those who do not will have to answer to the grief-stricken families whose loved ones fall victim to this drug overdose epidemic.

HONORING THE TYLER JUNIOR COLLEGE APACHES, 2017 NJCAA DIVISION III WORLD BASEBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, residents of east Texas are no strangers to bringing home championship trophies. Yet it is still a thrilling moment to welcome home a team after winning a national championship title. Even more so when they bring home a second national title the following year, and rarer still when the team then wins a third national championship. But it is truly unprecedented in NJCAA history for a team to win four straight national titles in a row. What an exceptional privilege it is to stand today to congratulate the Tyler Junior College Apaches baseball team for its fourth straight 2017 NJCAA Division III World Series victory, the 56th national title in the history of TJC.

The Apaches finished 4-0 in the World Series held in Greeneville, Tennessee, securing an historic fourth consecutive championship with a 5-1 victory over the Niagara County (New York) Thunder Wolves. The team won their final eleven games of the 2017 season with an impressive overall record of 41-20.

This remarkable accomplishment cannot be possible without the determination and hard work of every team member, along with the skill and experience of a dedicated coaching staff led by Head Baseball Coach Doug Wren, who has escorted the Apaches to six World Series appearances in eight years as Head Coach. Assisting Coach Wren are Assistant Coaches Chad Sherman and Garrett McMullen; Student Managers Colter Dosch and Cody Jamison; Student Trainers Justin Smith and Chase Day; Assistant Athletic Trainer Travis Gray, and Head Athletic Trainer Eddy McGuire.

My most enthusiastic praise and congratulations goes to national champions Braden Wise, Jarrod Wells, Payton Adams, Matt Mikusek, Travis French, Justin Roach, Taylor Broadway, Corben Henry, Ryan Lawhon, Blaze Beason, James Kuykendall, Jarel McDade, Austin Cernosek, Tyler Abney, John Gillett, Chase Evans, Garin Shelton, Beau Buesing, Colton Whitehouse, AbeRee Hiebert, Blake Maddox, Cameron Carver, Mason Whitmarsh, Daniel Priddy, Luke Boyd, J.P. Gorby, Austin Tambellini, Marco Gutierrez, Daniel Bogue, Jordan Trahan, Trevor Parker, Andrew Nichols, and Eric Bullock.

Tyler Junior College has been a beacon of academic excellence for more than ninety years. So it comes as no surprise the warrior spirit of pride and achievement extends to its

athletic accomplishments under the leadership of TJC President Dr. Michael Metke, Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Juan Mejia, Assistant VP/Athletics and Student Life Dr. Tim Drain, Assistant Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Kelsi Weeks, Associate Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Chuck Smith, and Administrative Assistant of Intercollegiate Athletics Sherry Harwood.

These exceptional student athletes have added a spectacular chapter to the legacy of Tyler Junior College. No matter how talented and committed the team, the path to a national championship would be much more challenging if not for the enthusiastic support of a fiercely loyal network of players' families, faculty, staff members, alumni, and community.

May God continue to bless these young people, along with their families, friends and neighbors in east Texas and beyond. It is a tremendous honor to recognize the 2017 NJCAA World Series Baseball Champions, the Tyler Junior College Apaches.

HONORING THE U.S.-INDIA RELATIONSHIP AND INDIAN AMERICANS

HON. DAVID SCHWEIKERT

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, as President Trump prepares to welcome Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi next week, there is much to celebrate in our country's relationship with India, the world's largest democracy, and in the enormous contributions that Indian Americans make in our country.

There are four million Indian-Americans in the U.S., according to the Census Bureau. In 2010, Pew reported that 87.2 percent of adult Indian Americans were foreign-born and that Indian Americans are highly educated and highly successful.

U.S. relations with India are critical to both countries. Our annual bilateral trade in goods and services could reach \$500 billion by 2024, a five-fold increase since 2013, according to the Congressional Research Service.

The role of Indian Americans in government is profound. In recent months, former Governor Nikki Haley was confirmed as Ambassador to the United Nations; Ajit Pai was made chairman of the Federal Communications Commission; Seema Verma was named Administrator of the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services; four Indian Americans took their seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and one in the Senate; and countless more serve in state legislatures, local governments, the judicial branch and beyond.

Indian Americans have deeply enriched our nation's arts and culture, and Indian media in the U.S. is surging to meet demand. Cable, satellite and radio offer a growing array of Hindu and Indian content. Global Hindi programmer ZEE TV's U.S. programming is viewed in nearly a million households.

Politically and militarily, our two countries are united in a commitment to fight terrorism and promote world peace. Last year, the U.S. and India signed a historic defense agreement that paves the way for greater strategic and regional cooperation.

Please join me in acknowledging the immense contribution Indian Americans make to the United States, and in recognizing the importance of continuing to strengthen ties between our two nations.

RECOGNIZING THE SISTERS OF
MERCY OF THE AMERICAS CON-
GREGATIONAL CHAPTER MEET-
ING IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK
JUNE 19–JUNE 29, 2017

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas as they have gathered in my hometown of Buffalo, New York for their Congregational Chapter meeting from June 19–June 29. More than 300 Sisters of Mercy from various parts of the continental United States as well as from the Philippines, Guam and Latin America will elect an Institute president and leadership team, determine priorities, renew their vision and respond to the changing needs in their mission during this two-week summit.

Inspired by the life of Jesus and its founder Catherine McAuley, the Sisters of Mercy are women of faith who have committed their lives to God and use their resources to serve, advocate and pray for those in need throughout the world. Arriving from Ireland at the invitation of the Bishop of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1843, the women originally dedicated themselves to the service of people who were poor, sick, and uneducated. As membership grew throughout the United States, the organization's influence expanded to issues in education, health care, and social services.

The work of the Sisters of Mercy is inherently woven into the historic fabric of the growth of Buffalo and Western New York as these devoted women taught in numerous Catholic schools. They opened, led and cared for others in our Catholic hospitals as well as being highly engaged in numerous charitable organizations. The Sisters' profound influence on those they taught, those they tended to who were suffering physically, mentally, spiritually, those they helped bring into this world, and those they comforted as the end drew near has deepened across generations.

Today, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas operate under the core values of Spirituality, Community, Service, and Social Justice focusing on the critical concerns of the earth, immigration, nonviolence, anti-racism, and women. They sponsor or co-sponsor 77 schools from early childhood education to the collegiate level and partnered with the Global Catholic Climate Movement to urge world leaders to commit to climate action.

This commitment to action on climate change is one I strongly share and support. For decades, the United States set the world's public policy standard on critical environmental issues; a tradition that ended when this Administration backed away from the Paris Climate Accord—a pledge joined by more than 190 countries to reduce emissions toward the goal of cleaner air and a healthy planet. This reversal does not demonstrate the leadership that is characteristic of America, nor does it

protect the health and safety of people today or those for generations to come.

In solidarity with the communities in which they minister, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' commitment to everyone's right to clean water will take another strong, steady and significant step forward; actually many hundreds of steps forward, as the Sisters will participate in a Contemplative Walk down Main Street to Canalside, the center of Buffalo's resurgent waterfront, where the Buffalo River flows into Lake Erie. The "Walk for Water" on Friday, June 23 will be led by representatives from the Native American community who will add their voices and vital historical perspective to the urgent need to protect and preserve our natural environment.

As the Congressional Representative who secured the funding for the infrastructure needed to make public access at our water's edge a reality, this ceremony is especially significant as we find ourselves, inexplicably, fighting to ensure the federal dollars used to restore our Great Lakes remains in place.

The Great Lakes contain 95 percent of America's fresh surface water and drinking water supply to more than 40 million people in North America. Currently under threat of drastic cuts, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) is a joint effort between the U.S. and Canada to restore the Great Lakes by cleaning up pollution, promoting shoreline health, combating invasive species and protecting fish and wildlife. Over the last decade the federal government has invested \$32.38 million in Great Lakes funding in and around the Buffalo River Area of Concern and is credited with the ecological and economic turnaround of the Buffalo River.

Now more than ever, we need to demonstrate the value both environmentally and economically of Great Lakes investments, and come together to fight for the continuation of this program and others that enhance the quality of life for this and future generations. And so, joined by the Interfaith Climate Justice Community, Climate Justice Coalition and like-minded public officials, the Sisters will add water from their regions to one container. This blended water will be sprinkled over the Sisters, over the land and then poured out into Lake Erie.

Once again, with humility and humanity, these valiant women are leading by example. This symbolic mixing of waters from lands served by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas represents active and unified engagement in this crucial crusade to protect, promote and preserve our natural assets for all people. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas for adding another historic milestone to the legacy of the Buffalo waterfront. And to extend immeasurable gratitude for all they have sacrificed, shared and stood for in the past, and for all they will continue to stand up for today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

A TRIBUTE TO TESSA SHIELDS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Tessa

Shields, a graduate of Mount Ayr High School in Mount Ayr, Iowa. Tessa was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 30, 2017.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic achievement. Not only are recipients academically gifted, but the selected students are also those who have had success in extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Tessa in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her for utilizing her talents to reach her goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and in wishing her nothing but the best.

HONORING COLONEL JAMES C.
BRENNAN III, USMC

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to honor Colonel James C. Brennan III, for his thirty-three years of selfless service to our nation in the United States Marine Corps.

Colonel Brennan's extensive career started in 1984 with the completion of entry level training at Parris Island, South Carolina. He received his commission through the Platoon Leaders Class in 1988 after graduating from Lynchburg College.

Colonel Brennan began as a field artillery officer serving with the 10th, 11th and 12th Marine Regiments. He held every major position from forward observer to battalion commander. His command of the 2nd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, however, is particularly noteworthy. During this time, he deployed his artillery battalion as a civil affairs group in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in al Anbar province, finally completing the efforts that Marines had started over five years earlier. His efforts resulted in the smooth transition of civil works projects, education projects and local governance over to the Iraqi people.

As a field grade officer, Colonel Brennan served in diverse ways, including multiple tours of duty outside his primary field. In 1998, he was assigned to Officer Candidate School, where his efforts resulted in the first complete revision of the school's curriculum in over a decade, as well as material changes, which reduced injuries significantly. In 2001, he first served outside of the Marine Corps as the Deputy Liaison Officer to the U.S. House of Representatives during both the 107th and 108th Congresses. In 2004, he was assigned to Marine Forces Pacific where he served as a planner while simultaneously serving the U.S. Pacific Command as a crisis action planner. During this time, he was successful in planning operations in support of crises across the Pacific Rim from the Philippines to Indonesia, and all across the Indian Ocean. He was later deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a planner for Multi-National

Force—West, where he was responsible for planning the first national election and constitutional referendum in Iraq's history. His efforts allowed every voter to cast their vote in a safe and secure environment.

In 2009, Colonel Brennan was promoted to Colonel, and served as the Commanding Officer of Headquarters and Service Battalion at Quantico, Virginia. This battalion has the distinction of being the largest battalion level formation in the Marine Corps with over 3,200 members. His efforts ensured that each of the 26 major commands he led received the same consistency of form and effort in managing their training, education, administration and legal matters to allow them to focus on their primary missions.

A few years later, in 2013, Colonel Brennan again moved outside the Marine Corps to support operations at the combatant command level. He was assigned to the U.S. Northern Command as its liaison to the U.S. Southern Command. During this period, he was assigned to support the training and execution of domestic disaster relief operations in the great states of Washington, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Mississippi and New York. His knowledge and expertise in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations assisted each state's joint task force in smoothly incorporating the active military forces within the legal constraints for operations on domestic soil.

During his decades of service, Colonel Brennan served with distinction in support of anti-terrorism operations, including Operation Provide Comfort, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Freedom's Sentinel. He aided in support of crisis response missions around the globe including tsunami relief operations in Thailand, Indonesia and the Maldives, Haitian refugee operations, and multiple typhoon relief operations in the Philippines, as well as in the United States. He commanded at all levels, the battery, battalion and regimental, and has supported operations both domestically and overseas.

Colonel Brennan's career is distinguished by his willingness and desire to serve our nation, the Marine Corps, and the brave marines and sailors he has had the privilege to lead each and every day. He is a man who served faithfully and to the best of his abilities in all positions to which he was assigned, which has made him invaluable to the Marine Corps and to our nation. He successfully used his skills as a commander, leader and mentor, both in the field and in garrison. It is likely that much of Colonel Brennan's service will never fully be recognized, but his leadership will be remembered for years to come.

In addition, over the three and a half decades Colonel Brennan served our nation, Mrs. Laura Brennan, his wife, has been avidly dedicated to serving the people of the United States. Noted as a counselor and leader, Mrs. Brennan serves as an assistant town attorney for the Town of Islip in New York, while maintaining a private practice. She is also active in the fight for autism awareness, both in her community and at the national level. Her greatest professional accomplishment has been helping advocate for military children on the spectrum to gain better access to appropriate care.

Mrs. Brennan continues to be involved in a multitude of organizations in West Islip, NY area while also raising their two school-aged children. I am fortunate to have known the

Brennan family since 2001, and I am extraordinarily proud of the work they have done for our nation and will continue to do in the future.

On behalf of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I would like to recognize Colonel Brennan's outstanding accomplishments, courageous attitude, and his past and present devotion to our nation. I want to congratulate him, his wife Laura, and their children, Caroline and Charlotte on the completion of a long and highly distinguished career.

In closing, may God continue to bless the Brennans and may they have "fair winds and a following sea" as they embark on a new journey of service to our beloved nation.

Semper Fidelis.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, on June 21, 2017, I was not present for the recorded votes on Roll Call Nos. 311, 312, 313, 314, and 315. Had I been present, I would have voted: NAY on the motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair; NAY on the motion on ordering the previous question on the rule for providing consideration of both H.R. 1873 and H.R. 1654; NO on agreeing to the resolution providing for consideration of H.R. 1873; AYE on agreeing to the Carbajal of California Part A Amendment and; NO on the passage of the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act.

COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BABCOCK & WILCOX

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Babcock & Wilcox, a power generation company which employs hundreds of Ohioans in Ohio's 16th District. B&W celebrates its 150th Anniversary on June 22, 2017, and since its founding, it has become a global leader in energy and environmental technologies, as well as services for power and industrial markets.

In its 150 years, B&W produced a number of historic firsts. It supplied energy for the first electric street lights. It powered New York's first subway. It built components for the USS *Nautilus*, the world's first nuclear-powered sub. It also pioneered emissions control technologies that allowed utilities to comply with the Clean Air Act.

As B&W celebrates 150 years in business, I would like to congratulate them on their storied achievements and wish them success in their next 150.

HONORING J. MICHAEL GILLILAND

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize J. Michael Gilliland. Michael is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 692, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Michael has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Michael has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Michael has led his troop as the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, earned the rank of Brave in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, and become a member of the Order of the Arrow. Michael has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Michael constructed a round rail fence around an underground shelter at the Rotary Youth Camp in Lee's Summit, Missouri, making it safer for wheel-chair bound campers to access the shelter in an emergency situation.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending J. Michael Gilliland for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING MS. LYNN BUSH

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of a tireless public servant in Bucks County. Ms. Lynn Bush, the Executive Director of the Bucks County Planning Commission and Chief Clerk of the County, retired last week after more than eighteen years serving her friends and neighbors. The work Ms. Bush has done throughout her career has helped the businesses of Bucks County to flourish, and oversaw the preservation of Bucks County's 200th farm, as part of her passionate work protecting open space in the county. Her service stands as a reminder that we make a life by what we give others.

A TRIBUTE TO LIVY GREEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Livy Green, a graduate of Nodaway Valley High School in Greenfield, Iowa. Livy was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 30, 2017.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School

Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic achievement. Not only are recipients academically gifted, but the selected students are also those who have had success in extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Livy in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her for utilizing her talents to reach her goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and in wishing her nothing but the best.

HONORING CHIEF STEVE
WESTERMANN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the outstanding achievements of Chief Steve Westermann. Chief Westermann is one of the most respected fire district chiefs and is retiring from the Central Jackson County Fire Protection District. I join with his family, fellow firefighters, and the citizens of the central Jackson County in congratulating Chief Westermann on his many years of success, contributions to the community and retirement.

Chief Westermann started his career as a volunteer in 1972 while in high school. In 1977, he was hired as a Fire Inspector with CJC, creating the Fire Prevention Bureau and beginning the first in-school education programs. In 1979, he was promoted to assistant chief, and in 1981 left to take a position as the Assistant Chief / Fire Marshall in Chesterfield MO. In 1985 he returned to CJC as a fire apparatus engineer and was soon promoted to deputy chief. In 1988, Chief Westermann was appointed Chief Fire Executive (CFE), the fourth in CJC's history. Along the way, Chief Westermann has also been elected or appointed to serve in leadership and executive positions on countless local, state, and national organizations and committees, dedicated to making the communities we serve, and the fire service as a whole, stronger and safer.

While serving as CFE, Chief Westermann moved CJC forward in all areas and created an organization that is recognized and respected across the country. CJC grew from 18 to 133 career staff, assumed complete responsibility for emergency medical services, achieved an Insurance Services Office rating of 2, significantly expanded fire and EMS training, added Station 5 and a state of the art training facility.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and the rest of the community, family and firefighters in applauding Chief Steve Westermann's outstanding achievements and contributions to the community, and the State of Missouri. We wish Chief Westermann and his family the very best in years to come.

HONORING THE CENTENNIAL OF
THE AMERICAN RED CROSS OF
THE CALIFORNIA NORTHWEST

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague Congressman MIKE THOMPSON to recognize the 100th anniversary of the American Red Cross of the California Northwest (Northwest Chapter), as it celebrates the occasion on June 22, 2017.

Chartered in 1917, the American Red Cross of the California Northwest was originally comprised of eleven chapters from Sonoma to Del Norte Counties. These chapters provided necessary support and emergency services to United States Armed Forces and their families stationed in the area, as the country entered the First World War.

Throughout the years, the Northwest Chapter's purpose has evolved to meet the region's growing population and increasingly diverse needs. Now covering six counties with a combined population of 941,000 people, the Northwest Chapter has provided emergency services, training programs, and continued support to Military personnel and their families throughout the region.

This has led to critical emergency support during times of disaster both big and small. From the 1964 earthquake that devastated Crescent City to the Russian River Floods of 1955, 1982, 1995, and 2007, the Northwest Chapter has repeatedly answered the call for assistance with trained volunteers and broader emergency support. The Northwest Chapter responds to an average of 100 local disasters and assists an average 280 families each year through the efforts of its volunteer disaster workers.

Mr. Speaker, the American Red Cross of the California Northwest has been a critical partner in providing local emergency support and preparation during times of crisis. It is, therefore, fitting to congratulate and thank the Northwest Chapter for a century of exceptional volunteer citizenship and community support.

HONORING GREENBRIER MIDDLE
SCHOOL

HON. J. FRENCH HILL

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Greenbrier Middle School on being named one of 465 Schools to Watch by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform in 2017.

By establishing organizational norms, structures, and arrangements, Schools to Watch achieve academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, and social equity.

Those three characteristics are paramount to middle-grade success and young adolescent development.

I am encouraged to hear of Greenbrier Middle School's unyielding sense of purpose and dedication to the success of their students; and, I am excited to personally congratulate their outstanding efforts during their visit to Washington this month.

Our youth are our future, so I look forward to further Arkansas schools joining Greenbrier in the pursuit of excellence.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIRING
TEACHERS AT INTER-LAKES
HIGH SCHOOL IN MEREDITH,
NEW HAMPSHIRE

HON. CAROL SHEA-PORTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, all teachers are special, but educators who stay way beyond normal retirement dates deserve extra credit. In my district, I have four educators from the same high school, Inter-Lakes High School in Meredith, NH, who are retiring after a combined 150 years in education. That is truly remarkable, and I join with their community to thank them for their service to the children and the community.

Vice Principal William Athans has been working in education for 51 years, which is simply incredible. Guidance counselor Christina Gribben has been assisting students and helping them reach their full potential for 43 years. World languages teacher Nancy Stetson has been teaching for 35 years, and science teacher Joyce Warburton has been expanding minds and preparing students for 21 years.

These educators have played a tremendous role in the lives of so many New Hampshire students. They have planted knowledge and wisdom in young minds and prepared their students for success. I hope our newly minted retirees enjoy a long and happy retirement. They certainly have earned it.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF MARK
SCOTT

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor Mark Scott, who passed away in May, 2017.

A native of Eureka, Illinois, Mark Scott attended Worsham College of Mortuary Science and later served as a funeral director for 20 years. As a servant of the community, he was found helping families in their greatest time of need at Otto-Argo Funeral Home in Eureka, Davis-Fulton in Peoria, and Irwin Chapel in Granite City. Later, Mark began his career as a financial agent, working for Country Companies in Eureka for the past fifteen years.

Mark continued his service and devotion in the community as an accomplished Eagle Scout with Masonic Lodge Triple 835 and as president of the Eureka Rotary Club. In addition, Mark was a member of the Eureka Business Association and served on the board at the Heart House. In his spare time, he was known as an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed outdoor projects and birdwatching, as well as a family man who was fond of vacations and game nights with his wonderful wife, Andrea, and children, Alyssa and Derek. Furthermore, Mark was a man of faith, serving as a deacon

and President of the Board of Central Christian Church.

Mark Scott made his community a better place. He will always be in the hearts and minds of friends and family throughout the Eureka community. May he rest peacefully in heaven.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE TOWN OF
CONWAY, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize the town of Conway, Massachusetts as they celebrate their 250th anniversary. Since its establishment in 1767, Conway has continued to flourish as a rich agricultural community located in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains.

The town of Conway was first established as the southwest portion of the town of Deerfield, Massachusetts. After the end of the French and Indian Wars, the area was divided and the town Conway was official established in 1767. Named after General Henry Seymour Conway, a leader in the British House of Commons, the town was known for its sheep farming along with other agricultural pursuits. The first settlers of Conway were able to build gristmills and sawmills to harness the power of the many waterways that flowed through the town. As the Industrial Revolution began in the United States, Conway was no exception to the rise of the manufacturing industry. Factories began to emerge in Conway along the South River, where power could be readily accessible from the mills. Everything from textiles and hats, to washing machines and furniture were manufactured in these factories. As Conway transitioned into the 20th century, their manufacturing industry began to suffer as a result of the high cost of transporting goods from the town. The town has transitioned back to a farming community and the remnants of the old factory buildings serve as reminders of the town's history.

Today, Conway is a quiet, beautiful town with much to offer. Bardwell's Ferry Bridge still stands as a treasured historical landmark, stretching across the Deerfield River and connecting Conway to the nearby town of Shelburne Falls. Every fall, the annual Festival of the Hills serves as a way for the community to come together to celebrate the town's long and distinguished history. The events of the festival include a pancake breakfast, live music, as well as various family activities. All the proceeds raised from the festival go towards scholarships for local high school students, as a way for the town to continue its legacy as a hardworking community dedicated to supporting its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the town of Conway is an important piece in Massachusetts history and I

am honored to represent it. I wish them all the best as the town continues to preserve their rich history and community involvement that has been the legacy of Conway for these past 250 years.

RECOGNIZING STEVE KAWA

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Steve Kawa for his 25 years of service to the city and county of San Francisco. Steve Kawa is no ordinary staff member. He is an exceptional public servant who has served three mayors of San Francisco in a wide variety of positions.

Most San Franciscans have never heard Kawa's name—and he prefers it that way—but they have certainly felt the impact of his work. He helped guide the City through the aftermath of 9/11 and the Great Recession. He played a key role in achieving marriage equality and universal health care access, and he oversaw unprecedented investments in affordable housing and infrastructure projects. His bosses have called him a cautious, shrewd negotiator, a driving force behind policy decisions and one of the best Chiefs of Staff a mayor could have. His effectiveness and style have also earned him nicknames such as the enforcer, the shadow mayor, the sphinx and the man behind the curtain.

Steve Kawa was born in Dracut, Massachusetts as the fifth son out of six children of Edward and Janet Kawa and grew up in a Polish-Irish American Catholic family. Mrs. Kawa was a school bus driver. Mr. Kawa was a construction worker. Steve credits his mother with his interest in politics. She loved the Kennedys and was fascinated with the Watergate hearings. Steve grew up watching the hearings on TV and says the inner workings of government mesmerized him.

Steve was the first member of his family to attend a four-year college and graduate from Merrimack College with a bachelor's degree in political science in 1983. To pay for school he worked four jobs as a bartender at the Polish American Veterans Club, as a dishwasher in a nursing home, as a florist's delivery man and as a security guard working the night shift. While attending law school at Suffolk University, he served as a legislative aide in Boston's State House at night. He graduated in 1989.

Two years later at the age of 30, Steve traveled to San Francisco for the first time and decided to make it his home. Within a month he found his first job working as a legislative aide to Supervisor Tom Hsieh. In November 1995, Willie Brown was elected Mayor and hired Steve as liaison to the Board of Supervisors. He promoted him to Director of Legislative Af-

fairs and then Acting Director of the Mayor's Budget Office and then Deputy Chief of Staff. The next mayor, Gavin Newsom, hired Steve as his Chief of Staff in 2003. In 2011, Mayor Ed Lee did the same and Steve remained Chief of Staff until he recently decided to retire from his career at city hall.

Steve is the ultimate public servant. He is still mesmerized with the inner workings of government, just as he was when he was watching the Watergate hearings with his mother. He recently told the San Francisco Chronicle, "There is so much cynicism about government and politics, and when I'm here I don't see the cynicism. I just see people working really hard for other people." There is no question that Steve is one of the hardest working people working for others.

Wherever his well-deserved retirement will take Steve Kawa, I am confident he will be effective and hope he will have more time to spend with his husband Dan Henkle and their two children Michael and Katherine.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to recognize an exemplary public servant who would rather stay out of the limelight and get things done. Steve Kawa's absence at San Francisco City Hall will be deeply felt, but his contributions will remain part of the fabric of our beloved city by the bay.

A TRIBUTE TO JACOB HITZ

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jacob Hitz, a graduate of Creston High School in Creston, Iowa. Jacob was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 30, 2017.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic achievement. Not only are recipients academically gifted, but the selected students are also those who have had success in extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent leaders like Jacob in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him for utilizing his talents to reach his goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating him on receiving this esteemed designation, and in wishing him nothing but the best.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S3697–S3741

Measures Introduced: Twenty-two bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1405–1426, S. Res. 199–201, and S. Con. Res. 18.

Pages S3731–32

Measures Reported:

S. 733, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting. (S. Rept. No. 115–116)

Report to accompany S. 131, to provide for the exchange of certain National Forest System land and non-Federal land in the State of Alaska. (S. Rept. No. 115–117)

Page S3731

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 65 yeas to 35 nays (Vote No. EX. 152), Marshall Billingslea, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing, Department of the Treasury.

Pages S3698–S3713

4 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

48 Army nominations in the rank of general.

1 Marine Corps nomination in the rank of general.

23 Navy nominations in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy.

Pages S3725–28, S3739–41

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

2 Army nominations in the rank of general.

Page S3739

Messages from the House:

Page S3730

Measures Referred:

Page S3730

Enrolled Bills Presented:

Page S3730

Executive Communications:

Pages S3730–31

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages S3732–33

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:

Pages S3733–37

Additional Statements:

Pages S3729–30

Authorities for Committees to Meet:

Page S3712

Privileges of the Floor:

Page S3737

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—153)

Pages S3712–13

Svinicki Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Kristine L. Svinicki, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Pages S3713–25

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 89 yeas to 10 nays (Vote No. 153), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination.

Page S3713

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that notwithstanding Rule XXII, the post-cloture time on the nomination not expire until 5:30 p.m., on Monday, June 26, 2017.

Page S3707

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Senate resume consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, at approximately 4:00 p.m., on Monday, June 26, 2017.

Page S3737

Adjournment: Senate convened at 11 a.m. and adjourned at 6 p.m., until 4 p.m. on Monday, June 26, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S3737.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATION

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of J. Christopher Giancarlo, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

APPROPRIATIONS: NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2018 for the National Institutes of Health, after receiving testimony from Francis S. Collins, Director, Douglas Lowy, Acting

Director, National Cancer Institute, Gary Gibbons, Director, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, Anthony Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Richard Hodes, Director, National Institute on Aging, Nora Volkow, Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse, and Joshua Gordon, Director, National Institute of Mental Health, all of the National Institutes of Health.

REGULATOR PERSPECTIVE ON FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine fostering economic growth, focusing on regulator perspective, including S. 366, to require the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies to take risk profiles and business models of institutions into account

when taking regulatory actions, after receiving testimony from Jerome H. Powell, Member, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System; Martin J. Gruenberg, Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; J. Mark McWatters, Acting Board Chairman, National Credit Union Administration; Keith A. Noreika, Acting Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury; and Charles G. Cooper, Texas Department of Banking, Austin, on behalf of the Conference of State Bank Supervisors.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY BUDGET

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2018 for the Department of Energy, after receiving testimony from Rick Perry, Secretary of Energy.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 36 public bills, H.R. 2995–3030; and 5 resolutions, H.J. Res. 106; and H. Res. 400–403, were introduced.

Pages H5108–09

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages H5111–12

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H.R. 2998, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–188).

Page H5108

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Carter (GA) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today.

Page H5051

Recess: The House recessed at 10:41 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon.

Page H5055

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Kevin Kitrell Ross, Unity of Sacramento, Sacramento, CA.

Pages H5055–56

Accelerating Individuals into the Workforce Act—Rule for Consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 396, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2842) to provide for the conduct of demonstration projects to test the effectiveness of subsidized employment for TANF recipients, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, by a recorded vote of 233 ayes to 179 noes, Roll No. 317, after the previous question was or-

dered by a yea-and-nay vote of 226 yeas to 184 nays, Roll No. 316.

Pages H5059–67

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act: H.R. 2353, amended, to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

Pages H5067–82

Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act: The House passed H.R. 1654, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate Federal and State permitting processes related to the construction of new surface water storage projects on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to designate the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for permit processing, by a recorded vote of 233 ayes to 180 noes, Roll No. 319.

Pages H5082–95

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule.

Page H5087

Agreed to:

LaMalfa amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–186) that aligns H.R. 1654 with WIIN Act (S. 612 of the 114th Congress) provisions enhancing federal cooperation in planning and construction of State-led water storage projects by ensuring such projects are eligible for permit streamlining under this bill.

Pages H5088–89

Rejected:

Lowenthal amendment (No. 2 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–186) that sought to exempt any dam projects from being fast-tracked by the bill if it could harm commercial fisheries (by a recorded vote of 179 ayes to 232 noes, Roll No. 318).

Pages H5089–94

H. Res. 392, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1873) and (H.R. 1654) was agreed to yesterday, June 21st.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and three recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5065–66, H5066–67, H5093–94, and H5095. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Committee Meetings

THE NEXT FARM BILL: UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “The Next Farm Bill: University Research”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Readiness held a markup on H.R. 2810, the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018”. H.R. 2810 was forwarded to the full committee, as amended.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a markup on H.R. 2810, the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018”. H.R. 2810 was forwarded to the full committee, as amended.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Personnel held a markup on H.R. 2810, the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018”. H.R. 2810 was forwarded to the full committee, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a markup on H.R. 2810, the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018”. H.R. 2810 was forwarded to the full committee, as amended.

STUDENT SAFETY IN THE JOB CORPS PROGRAM

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Student Safety in the Job Corps Program”. Testimony was heard from Cindy Brown Barnes, Director, Education Workforce and Income Security, Government Accountability Office; Larry Turner, Deputy Inspector General, Department of Labor; and a public witness.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy held a markup on legislation on Hydropower Policy Modernization Act of 2017; legislation on Enhancing State Energy Security Planning and Emergency Preparedness Act; H.R. 2786, to amend the Federal Power Act with respect to the criteria and process to qualify a qualifying conduit hydropower facility; H.R. 2883, the “Promoting Cross-Border Energy Infrastructure Act”; and H.R. 2910, the “Promoting Interagency Coordination for Review of Natural Gas Pipelines Act”. Hydropower Policy Modernization Act of 2017, Enhancing State Energy Security Planning and Emergency Preparedness Act, H.R. 2883, and H.R. 2910 were forwarded to the full committee, without amendment. H.R. 2786 was forwarded to the full committee, as amended.

JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM IN THE MODERN ERA

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Juvenile Justice Reform in the Modern Era”. Testimony was heard from Joe Vignati, Assistant Commissioner, Chief of Staff, Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice; Devon McDonald, Chief of Staff, General Counsel, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR’S SPENDING PRIORITIES AND THE PRESIDENT’S FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Examining the Department of the Interior’s Spending Priorities and the President’s Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Proposal”. Testimony was heard from Ryan Zinke, Secretary, Department of the Interior.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 218, the “King Cove Road Land Exchange Act”; H.R. 289, the “Guides and Outfitters Act”; H.R. 597, the “Lytton Rancheria Homelands Act of 2017”; H.R. 954, to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham

County, Virginia, and for other purposes; H.R. 1107, the “Pershing County Economic Development and Conservation Act”; H.R. 1306, the “Western Oregon Tribal Fairness Act”; H.R. 1397, to authorize, direct, facilitate, and expedite the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land, and for other purposes; H.R. 1399, the “American Soda Ash Competitiveness Act”; H.R. 1404, the “Pascua Yaqui Tribe Land Conveyance Act”; H.R. 1541, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain property related to the Fort Scott National Historic Site in Fort Scott, Kansas, and for other purposes; H.R. 1719, the “John Muir National Historic Site Expansion Act”; H.R. 1731, the “RECLAIM Act of 2017”; H.R. 1913, the “Clear Creek National Recreation Area and Conservation Act”; H.R. 1927, the “African American Civil Rights Network Act of 2017”; H.R. 2053, the “Mining School Enhancement Act”; H.R. 2156, the “Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Act”; H.R. 2370, the “Escambia County Land Conveyance Act”; H.R. 2425, the “Public Lands Telecommunications Act”; H.R. 2936, the “Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017”; H.R. 2937, the “Community Reclamation Partnerships Act”; H.R. 2939, the “Water Rights Protection Act of 2017”; and S. 249, to provide that the pueblo of Santa Clara may lease for 99 years certain restricted land, and for other purposes.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 2763, the “Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Improvements Act of 2017”. H.R. 2763 was ordered reported, as amended.

IMPROVING BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT: SOLUTIONS FOR RURAL AMERICA

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy, and Trade, hearing entitled “Improving Broadband Deployment: Solutions for Rural America”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials held a hearing entitled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Challenges and Opportunities for Intercity Passenger Rail Service”. Testimony was heard from Paul Nissenbaum, Associate Administrator, Railroad Policy and Development, Federal Railroad Administration; Dan Rich-

ard, Chair, California High-Speed Rail Authority; and public witnesses.

FY 2018 DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled “FY 2018 Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for the Veterans Health Administration”. Testimony was heard from Poonam Alaigh M.D., Acting Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

U.S. TRADE POLICY AGENDA

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “U.S. Trade Policy Agenda”. Testimony was heard from Robert E. Lighthizer, United States Trade Representative, Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ONGOING INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES: FY 18 BUDGET REQUEST

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats held a hearing entitled “Ongoing Intelligence Activities: FY 18 Budget Request”. This hearing was closed.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, mark up on Appropriations Bill, FY 2018, 10 a.m., HT-2 Capitol.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled “Examining the Extension of Safety Net Health Programs”, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance, hearing entitled “The Exploitation of Cultural Property: Examining Illicit Activity in the Antiquities and Art Trade”, 9:15 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice, hearing entitled “Examining Ethical Responsibilities Regarding Attorney Advertising”, 9:30 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

4 p.m., Monday, June 26

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Kristine L. Svinicki, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, post-cloture, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, June 23

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.R. 2842—Accelerating Individuals into the Workforce Act.

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