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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. CHABOT).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 12, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE CHABOT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 8, 2018, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

OBSERVING HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

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 on Holocaust Remembrance Day to honor the memory of those who were murdered during the Holocaust.

The Holocaust was the systematic, government-sponsored persecution and murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

We honor the resilience of survivors, and we rededicate ourselves to uphold the promise of "Never Again."

This week marks the Days of Remembrance for the Holocaust. Congress established the Days of Remembrance as the Nation's annual commemoration. Each year, State and local governments, military bases, workplaces, schools, religious organizations, and civic centers host observances and remembrance activities for their communities.

These events occur during the Week of Remembrance, which began Sunday, April 8, and runs through Sunday, April 15.

The events and results of the Holocaust were so devastating and so extreme that we can barely imagine how such a horrendous event can even take place.

But we remember because it is an unthinkable scar on humanity. We not only remember, but, more importantly, we say: Never again.

Today, we mourn the lives of those we lost, and we celebrate those who saved them, and we honor those who survived.

The Holocaust was a tremendous blight on the history of humanity, but also a time when we honor those who were brave enough to put an end to it; those who stood in the face of such evil and refused to turn a blind eye.

Our American soldiers were fighting to win World War II and liberated concentration camps and the horror that ensued there. It was an incredible task carried out by members of the Greatest Generation.

By looking back, we can understand how important it is to defend those who are defenseless. We recognize the sufferings that took place and the lives that were shattered, but also the efforts that were made to put an end to such destruction and suffering.

We have seen such hatred and genocide occur again in places like Bosnia,

Rwanda, Darfur, and Syria. There are still millions of people being persecuted because of their ethnicity, because of who they are.

We must eradicate hatred and never become indifferent to the sufferings of others. On the Day of Remembrance, the most important thing to remember is the humanity that exists in all of us. May we always remember and always pledge: Never again.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

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

Ms. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust to commemorate National Minority Health Month and to challenge Congress to take bold action to end health disparities that continue to plague our communities.

Mr. Speaker, it is a sad fact that in America your race, class, and ZIP Code very much determine how long you will live and how healthy you will be; whether you will die of a heart attack in your forties or develop type 2 diabetes and lose a limb.

These three factors speak volumes about your life and health. That is just wrong, and it is up to us to change that.

From cradle to grave, and at every stage in between, people of color, low-income people, rural Americans, Native Americans, and first-generation Americans are sicker, receive less care, have less access to care, and, tragically, die sooner.

In 2010, we took a major leap forward with the passage of the Affordable Care Act. This law has started to reduce these disparities by increasing access to care, ensuring mental healthcare, expanding research, and creating a

□ 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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pipeline of doctors and medical professionals from underrepresented communities.

A major result of the ACA has been to cut the excessive risk of cancer death in half for African-American men. The same risk factor for Black women was reduced by seven points, according to the American Cancer Society's 2017 report.

They clearly state: "Increasing access to care as a result of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act may contribute to a further narrowing of the racial gap across all population groups."

However, the ACA is not just fighting cancer. It is improving other aspects of care and increasing access to care.

While the Affordable Care Act has made major strides, disparities remain deeply entrenched in our society and our healthcare system today.

Today, I would like to talk about several of them. The first and most entrenched is access to care. Far too often, the sickest among our neighbors are those with the least access to the care they need. They cannot see a provider because they can't afford it, can't get the time off work, can't find transportation; or there is simply no care available in their community.

Let's work together to make sure that everyone can get the care they need, no matter where they live, whether in a city, the suburbs, or on a farm.

This Minority Health Month, we must also address the challenge of mental health being stigmatized in communities of color.

We know that African Americans are 20 percent more likely to report serious psychological distress than their White counterparts, but just 25 percent will seek care, compared to 40 percent of White Americans.

Thankfully, there are some great organizations, like New York City's First Lady Chirlane McCray's Cities Thrive Coalition, working to deconstruct the stigma and improve access to care, but much work remains.

Just like with mental health, another health subset, maternal health, shows stark differences between different demographic groups.

Mr. Speaker, it is a shame and a tragedy that America is the only developed nation where women die from childbirth now more than they did in the recent past.

Despite technology and innovation, it is becoming more dangerous to have a child, especially for women of color. Growing your family shouldn't mean putting your life on the line.

In the coming weeks, I will be introducing comprehensive legislation to start pushing these numbers down.

Another public health crisis that affects some groups more than others is the issue of gun violence.

Last month, hundreds of thousands of young people and supporters came to Washington, D.C., to challenge Congress to act and save lives. Millions

more marched in their own cities with the same message.

Like all public health issues, people of color, women, and rural Americans are far more impacted by gun violence. In fact, it remains the leading cause of death for African-American men from birth to 44.

We are also tragically seeing spikes in rural and veteran suicides by guns, another public health issue that this House has ignored.

Despite these calls for action and the cold, hard facts, this House has yet to act to save lives.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just spoke extensively about many problems and challenges facing the health of Americans, but I want to close by highlighting some recent successes to end health disparities.

First, this February, this House passed my Action for Dental Health Act, a bill that will better target existing resources to more effectively deliver oral and dental healthcare to underserved communities and populations.

And finally, I want to praise the new leaders in the medical, research, and advocacy professions who are working to end these deeply entrenched disparities.

Next week, I will honor the National Minority Quality Forum's 40 Under 40, young leaders in the healthcare field who are working to support and empower minority communities to live longer, healthier lives.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to challenge this House to follow the example of these young people and come together to improve the health of all Americans, especially those who have been forgotten for far too long.

REMEMBERING ZELL MILLER, GEORGIA'S GOVERNOR

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Georgia's legend in many ways, Zell Miller, who spent the last few years of his life, as he spent all of his life, in Young Harris in my district.

Zell Miller helped shape Georgia into one of the strongest States in the Union. He was a national giant from northeast Georgia, and I looked up to him as a leader who never blinked in the face of a challenge or let politics eclipse his principles.

I will always remember the ways he encouraged me and supported me through many seasons. My family knew and admired and will miss Zell as a true man of the mountains.

In 1932, Zell Bryan Miller was born to a mother who single-handedly built her family's first home with rocks from a nearby stream, which he lived in until his passing.

Zell attended both Young Harris College and Emory University. He put his education on hold in order to enlist in the United States Marine Corps in 1953.

One year after he joined the Marines, he married Shirley Carver, and they had two sons, Murphy and Matthew.

A few years later, Zell enrolled at the University of Georgia, where he graduated with bachelor's and master's degrees in history. His education earned him a teaching position back home at Young Harris College in 1959, and in the same year, the town elected him as their mayor.

After one mayoral term, residents sent him to the Gold Dome as their State senator. In the years following, he worked for Georgia's Governor Maddox, Georgia's Democratic Party, the State Board of Pardons and Paroles, and, in 1975, he became Georgia's Lieutenant Governor.

In 1990, Zell became the Governor of Georgia, and his positive influence on our State's education system has characterized his tenure.

His vision for brighter futures came to life when voters ratified the State lottery on the 1992 ballot, creating a new fund to support the State's education needs. One year later, the H.O.P.E. Scholarship was created, making higher education accessible for nearly 2 million Georgia students.

In 1999, Georgia Senator Paul Coverdell passed away while in office, and then-Governor Barnes appointed Zell to fill the vacant seat, and Zell came to Washington.

Georgians will remember Zell Miller as one of the State's strongest advocates, a leader who never chose ideology over his duty to the people who elected him, and, in this time of loss, our prayers are focused on his loved ones and the millions of people whom he served.

Zell Miller was an example of a true man of the mountains who was willing to take stands, many times not popular, but he was always willing to take a stand for those that mattered.

Zell Miller will be someone who is missed, whether it be in Atlanta, whether it be in Washington, D.C., all across this country, or basically back home in the Ninth District of Georgia. Zell Miller is someone who we all can look up to and respect. He led in a way that we can try to lead as well.

CELEBRATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE RESERVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I today rise to recognize the 70th anniversary of the United States Air Force Reserve, created by President Truman on April 14, 1948.

As a member of the Air Force Reserve, I have been privileged to minister and work with airmen since 2002. I can attest to the courage exhibited by my fellow airmen both here at home and while serving abroad in Iraq together.

Since our country's founding, citizens have awaited and answered the call of duty, accomplishing each mission with valor.

Air Force reservists, known as Reserve Citizen Airmen, perform leading roles in military operations, humanitarian crises, and disaster relief across

the globe. The distinguished group of more than 69,000 Citizen Airmen consists of enlisted military troops, officers, and civil servants tasked by law to support our Armed Forces in the defense of our freedom.

The Air Force Reserve traces its roots back to the aeronautical division of the United States Army's Office of the Chief Signal Officer, which took charge of military balloons and air machines in 1907. Ten years later, the first two Air Force Reserve units were deployed to France, as the United States entered World War I, providing the war effort with around 10,000 trained pilots.

With 1,500 Reserve pilots and 1,300 nonrated officers and 400 enlisted airmen, reservists later played a critical role in World War II. The legendary Jimmy Doolittle was among the soldiers in this force and, in response to Pearl Harbor, went on to lead the Doolittle Raid, the first bombing attack on the Japanese mainland.

In wars and in combat operations that followed, Citizen Airmen have supported the core function of the United States Air Force, as well as providing for disaster relief after events like hurricanes and wildfires.

When terrorists attacked our country on September 11, 2001, Air Force reservists responded in full force to protect American cities and assist in the security efforts.

Spanning seven decades, the Air Force Reserve has fulfilled the promise of the early air pioneers and exceeded their expectations. I want to join all of my fellow Citizen Airmen, past and present, in celebrating the 70th anniversary of the United States Air Force Reserve.

No matter where you go in the world, you will find an Air Force reservist and the flag flying high and the sound of freedom in the air.

□ 1015

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is so poignant that PAUL RYAN announces his retirement the same week that the Republicans bring to the floor the so-called balanced budget amendment, which signals surrender. Republicans can't budget responsibly.

After the largest transfer of wealth in American history with their tax bill that was so flawed they could not even risk having a hearing on it, it was literally being written while we were in work session in the committee. They changed provisions by the hour in a mad scramble for votes and special-interest support.

RYAN leaves as his legacy—a guy who on the Budget Committee railed about deficits, deficit spending, who tried slashing social spending—he leaves as his legacy trillion dollar deficits for as

far as the eye can see, and providing with this balanced budget amendment an excuse to slash spending on programs that matter most to Americans: Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid, even ultimately, it would threaten defense itself.

The balanced budget amendment that the Republicans are going to bring to the floor is a classic example of bait and switch. Republicans have the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. If they wanted to actually produce a balanced budget, there is nothing stopping them from doing it now. But instead, they came forward with the omnibus bill that explodes spending and adds to the deficit even further.

So what do they do now? They are offering this proposal as a fig leaf. The balanced budget amendment that they would freeze into the Constitution would force somebody 4 years, 5 years, 8 years in the future to do what Republicans either will not, cannot, or are afraid to do today.

My senior Senator for years was Mark Hatfield, a principled Republican, and even though I am a Democrat, I was proud to help him in his last campaign when he was under some severe pressure.

Mark Hatfield was principled. He chaired the Appropriations Committee in the Senate. When the Republicans brought forth the balanced budget amendment in 1995, it failed by one vote in the Senate. That one vote, and the only Republican vote against it, was Mark Hatfield because he refused to handcuff the United States into the future and be part of a charade, because he knew as chair of the Appropriations Committee, they controlled the budget strings and they could reduce spending if they wanted. He knew the irony that some of the very people who were touting the balanced budget amendment would turn to him asking for increased spending for their pet projects.

Today, Republicans pretend themselves to be outraged over the Obama-era deficits which were incurred when we were trying to protect the economy from global collapse. All of the independent experts agree that that money was important. It was spent on infrastructure. It was spent on medical research. It was spent on providing a safety net for struggling families.

What is the excuse today for a trillion dollar deficit? I mean, after all of that hard work, the economy has stabilized. It is not growing dramatically, but it is growing. The unemployment rate is low. What is the excuse for a trillion dollar deficit and massive tax giveaways? They are feeling the heat.

Now, they are going to try and deflect responsibility for their trillion dollar deficits in a time of relative prosperity and low unemployment as a result of the hard work that the Republicans opposed.

Republicans and PAUL RYAN have made a shambles out of the Tax Code;

a mockery out of tax fairness. They are not cutting spending or raising revenues. They just want to put that off for somebody in the future and pretend all of a sudden they are fiscally responsible.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is going to work.

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS OF THOSE WITH DOWN SYNDROME

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today I stand to honor and celebrate the achievements of my constituents with Down syndrome and the worldwide Down syndrome community. I also want to recognize all of their families and loved ones who witness the tremendous struggles individuals with Down syndrome face and the wonderful victories they achieve every day.

This past month, on March 21, marked World Down Syndrome Day. On this day, people with Down syndrome, and those who live and work with them throughout the world, organized and participated in activities and events to raise public awareness and create a single global voice for advocating for their rights, rights such as inclusive education, access to quality and affordable healthcare, meaningful employment, and protection of their civil rights.

On March 21, we celebrated the contributions of individuals with Down syndrome in our communities and the meaningful work of organizations and individuals who dedicate their personal and professional time to ensure individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities achieve their optimal abilities.

Every year, this day is a time for education, increased community awareness, and giving thanks. When individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities are included, we all benefit. Our goal as a society is to prepare today's children for tomorrow's leaders, including those with Down syndrome and other disabilities.

Enabling individuals with Down syndrome to live, work, and participate with confidence and autonomy, fully included in society alongside of their friends and peers, is our duty as a Nation. I personally have seen the hard work of constituents in ensuring individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities have the same educational, financial, civil rights, and opportunities afforded to others, as well as access to services that help them achieve their full potential.

I am appreciative of the work of the Pennsylvania Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition, the Montgomery County Down Syndrome Interest Group, the Bucks County Down Syndrome Interest Group, The Arc of Pennsylvania, The Arc Alliance, the National Down Syndrome Congress, and other national organizations that are collaborating on

behalf of the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities.

I ask all of my colleagues to commit to working with us in bringing the concerns and needs of the Down syndrome and disability communities to the bipartisan discussions occurring within Congress.

The special needs community are the most special among us, Mr. Speaker. We need to be here for them.

TARIFFS ARE HARMING FARMERS AND RANCHERS

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

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about a very important issue to my constituents in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District and, frankly, millions of farmers and ranchers all across this great country.

Recently, President Donald Trump announced his intention to place a \$50 billion—that is billion with a “B”—in tariffs against Chinese goods, claiming that China has been taking advantage of the United States for too long. I wish that someone in the White House, someone on the staff had cautioned the President on the negative impact his launching of a trade war would have on this country. This unvetted decision has and will continue to cause significant harm to many of my constituents and to rural Americans throughout the heartland.

Following President Trump's announcement of his intended tariffs, predictively, the Chinese responded with \$50 billion in proposed tariffs of their own. These tariffs, which would be as high as 25 percent, would target 128 American products such as pork, beef, cotton, soybeans, corn, specific types of vehicles, and airplanes.

First, I want to talk about soybeans. Last year, the United States exported \$14 billion worth of soybeans to China. In Missouri, my home State, soybeans are the number one cash crop, contributing \$7.7 billion in total output and supporting more than 20,000 jobs in our State.

One out of every three rows of soybeans grown in Missouri goes to China, and one in every four rows grown in the United States goes to China. The day the Chinese announcement was made, soybean futures on the stock market were down almost \$0.40 a bushel. This was only after the tariffs were announced. Can you imagine the kind of losses soybean farmers would face if they were actually implemented?

Now, how about pork? Over the past 10 years, the United States has been, on average, the top exporter of pork in the world. Last year alone, nearly \$6.5 billion in pork was exported from the United States with \$1 billion of that being exported to China. Pork exports help to support about 550,000 jobs.

Midwest States like Missouri dominate hog production and exports. Missouri is ranked seventh, and our next-door neighbor, Kansas, is ranked tenth.

The Chinese have announced that they will also target U.S. corn, which will negatively impact the corn-based ethanol plant in my district, Mid-Missouri Energy. The plant is located in a little town, Malta Bend, and probably to some people that is not important, but it is a major economic stabilizer in that town and the entire area.

Economic losses to that plant or even closure of the plant would have rippling effects throughout the surrounding area.

Now, I know Mr. President is a real estate man, so he might not understand how business works on a farm, but these people work on razor-thin margins. In any given year, a bad crop, lack of demand, or Mother Nature's wrath can cause an economic downturn that leaves them struggling. American farmers have enough unknown variables they have to deal with. These reckless threats of tariffs on one of our biggest trading partners do not need to be added to that list.

If this so-called war continues, we can expect Boeing plants, such as the one in St. Louis, Missouri, down the street from us in Kansas City, to hit China, and then China may back away from ordering some 7,000 planes that would strengthen and inject over \$1 trillion into our State's economy.

The President is correct, the Chinese do steal U.S. intellectual property and, yes, there is a trade imbalance in this relationship. Nevertheless, even with only one class in economics, I understand clearly that trade wars are not good. No one wins.

President Trump promised to negotiate new and improved trade deals, but his negotiating skills are falling far short and our farmers and ranchers will pay the price. I encourage President Trump to reconsider his short-sighted approach to trade and to offer him my help in finding other solutions to address our problems with China.

HONORING HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR FRED HILSENDRATH

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Holocaust Days of Remembrance to recognize a constituent from my district and a Holocaust survivor, Mr. Fred Hilsenrath, of Fairfield Bay, Arkansas.

I was introduced to Fred by the outstanding mayor of Fairfield Bay, Paul Wellenberger. My staff and I had the opportunity to host Fred and his wife, Eleanor, for dinner and listen to their incredible story.

Fred was only 4 years old when Adolph Hitler took over as chancellor of Germany and the Nazi regime initiated his systematic extermination of the Jewish people of Central Europe. In 1940, after Poland had been raided, the Hilsenrath family found themselves stuck between Nazi Germany and Russia. Soon they were assembled in the

town square, along with other Jewish families, to be shipped to concentration camps in Romania. After spending years in the camps throughout Romania, facing death and witnessing some of the most heinous and grotesque atrocities the world has seen, the Hilsenrath family was finally rescued by a Jewish Russian soldier.

□ 1030

Fred and his family then walked from Romania to France to reunite with their long-separated father. While in France, Mr. Hilsenrath finished high school.

In April of 1949, Fred moved to the United States. He had \$40 to his name and knew no English. He studied electrical engineering at the City College of New York and obtained long careers with well-known companies such as Lockheed Martin, IBM, and Ampex.

After meeting his wife, Fred moved from San Francisco to Fairfield Bay, Arkansas. Here he retired to enjoy the slower pace of life in the Ozarks in The Natural State.

As a man currently in his late eighties, Mr. Hilsenrath has turned his horribly painful childhood memories of the trials he faced and that so many other Jews faced and experienced during the Holocaust into an educational moment.

In a letter he wrote to me, Fred mentioned a lesson that he wants to give to our Arkansas students. He says:

Not only can we use education as a way to rationally think of our Nation's involvement in the future of our country as well as the world, but also to recognize the seed in their own heart; each of the students has a dream, they must find it now, not later, so that they can focus their lives on their future.

Mr. Hilsenrath understands the deep need for education and how it plays a part in our moments of history.

It is an honor for me and my staff not only to have met such an inspirational person, but to also represent him in the people's House.

CONGRATULATING DUSHUN SCARBROUGH ON
MARTIN LUTHER KING REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend DuShun Scarbrough, director of the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission, for being awarded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drum Major Innovation Service Award.

The MLK, Jr. Drum Major Innovation Service award, given to only 20 individuals nationwide, is awarded to volunteers who perform extraordinary everyday acts of service.

DuShun's leadership at the commission has proved to be invaluable toward its mission to promote understanding and acceptance of nonviolence, human equality, and community building among all Arkansans.

Last week, my office was honored to welcome members of the commission, including Arkansas treasure and civil rights icon, Annie Abrams, along with former Wrightsville, Arkansas, Mayor Pat Ward while we commemorated and

mourned the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. However, we continue to honor Dr. King's vision for our great Nation.

DuShun and the commission continue to remind us of how far we have come and how we need to continue to uphold the legacy of the civil rights movement and embrace Dr. King's teaching of compassion, nonviolence, and democracy.

I would like to extend my congratulations to Mr. Scarbrough and the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission for representing Arkansas on the national stage and for his receiving this important recognition.

He, along with Reverend Jesse Turner, a site coordinator for the National Alliance of Faith and Justice in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, who also received this award, have represented our State with honor and dignity.

I encourage our citizens in Arkansas and across the country to remember the inspiring words of Dr. King and spend time in service to their neighbors and all of our communities.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday morning, the FBI's raid of Donald Trump's personal attorney triggered another Trump meltdown. He ranted that this move, approved by senior Justice Department officials and a Federal court, was an attack on our country and a witch hunt; and, once again, he mused publicly about firing Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

Let's be clear. Firing the special counsel or any chain of firings to interfere with the special counsel's investigation would spark a constitutional crisis and unleash a public uproar like we have never seen. Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM summed it up by saying that it would be the beginning of the end of the Trump Presidency.

The American people deserve answers. What are Trump and his Russia-connected cronies hiding? What are they so afraid of us finding out? The only way we are going to get these answers is by protecting Mueller's investigation and allowing him to do his job.

Now, if President Trump crosses the red line and declares himself above the law, millions of Americans all over this country are ready to take to the streets to defend our democracy and the rule of law.

So, Mr. Trump, whatever you are hiding, you won't get away with it, and we won't let you tear down American democracy in a desperate attempt to hide the truth.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COMER). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

RUSHING TO WAR

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, in the days leading up to the congressional vote on whether to go to war in Iraq years ago, *Fortune* magazine had an article headlined: "We Win—What Then?" The article said that a prolonged war in Iraq would make American soldiers "sitting ducks for Islamic terrorists."

Another national magazine at that time, *U.S. News & World Report*, had an article headlined: "Why the Rush to War?" Now that war has been frequently referred to as possibly the greatest foreign policy mistake in U.S. history.

The night before the Iraq war vote, a television station in Knoxville ran a poll showing 74 percent in favor of the war, 9 percent against, and 17 percent undecided. I was one of six Republicans who voted against going to war. For 3 or 4 years, that was certainly the most unpopular vote I ever cast. But slowly, slowly, it ended up being the most popular vote I ever cast.

We were basically conned into that war by a group of neocons, so-called neoconservatives, whom George Will once described as being "magnificently misnamed" because they were really the "most radical people" in this city, meaning Washington.

In addition to our disaster in Iraq, we have now been at war in Afghanistan for 17 years, seemingly permanent, forever wars that have cost us trillions of dollars and caused many thousands of Americans to be killed or maimed. What a waste.

President Reagan once said that we should never go to war unless there were no other reasonable alternatives, and then only as a very last resort.

We have had too many leaders who never went to war themselves, such as the new National Security Advisor, John Bolton, who seem far too eager for others to go to war so these chicken hawks can feel more important or think of themselves as modern-day Winston Churchills.

Now we seem to be rushing into another war in Syria. I am thankful that conservatives like Tucker Carlson and Pat Buchanan are questioning this new rush to war. At some point, with a \$21 trillion national debt, we have to realize there are limits to American power.

Civil wars and really terrible things are happening all over the world—in Africa, in the Middle East, and in other places—all the time. As President Kennedy said at the University of Washington in one of his most famous speeches, with only 4 percent of the world's population, "we cannot right every wrong or reverse each adversity—and that therefore there cannot be an American solution to every world problem."

Most of the time, a military solution is the worst solution. There are many other ways we can help people who

have been harmed: through humanitarian, religious, or charitable organizations, or through the United Nations.

Pat Buchanan wrote that President Trump is being "goaded into war" and that Congress should "debate our objectives in this new war and how many new casualties and years will be required to defeat the coalition of Syria, Russia, Hezbollah, Iran, and the allied Shiite militias from the Near East."

Tucker Carlson said that we need to ask some skeptical questions now, at least in part, because Secretary Mattis said in February that we have absolutely no proof that Assad used the chemical weapons he was accused of using last year. He added that there is no real proof Assad did chemical attacks this time because such an attack would really help only the rebels fighting Assad, and they also have chemical weapons, and they have been described as Islamic terrorists, although we are supporting them. Mr. Carlson pointed out that Assad had every reason or incentive not to use chemical weapons in a civil war his government basically had already won.

President Trump was elected in large part because he promised to get us out of these very unnecessary wars in the Middle East. Almost everything we have done in the Middle East over the last many years has been wrong. There has been fighting going on there for several thousand years. Throughout history, other wars have been started over incidents or information that turned out to be false or greatly exaggerated.

We do not need nor can we afford to get into another trillion-dollar war in the Middle East without first making absolutely certain that it is in America's interest to do so and that it will not make the Middle East even more messed up and chaotic than it already is.

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL AND "THE WALL THAT HEALS" EXHIBIT

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the importance that Vietnam war memorials have in our Nation's remembrance and commemoration of Vietnam veterans and their distinguished devotion to duty and country.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a symbol of honor, recognition, and remembrance of the more than 58,000 military servicemembers who sacrificed their lives or remain missing to this day and the over 8.7 million brave men and women who served over the course of the Vietnam war. More than 5.6 million people visit the memorial each year.

Not long after the memorial opened, it became clear that families across the country, not just those visiting

Washington, D.C., greatly desired the opportunity to remember those we have lost and pay their respects to the approximately 7.3 million Vietnam war veterans living today.

To accommodate, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund built an iconic replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. This replica travels across the country as part of The Wall That Heals exhibit, stopping in approximately 39 communities each year. The replica is 375 feet in length, 7.5 feet high at its tallest point, and includes 140 panels, each engraved with the names of fallen United States Armed Forces servicemembers who served during the Vietnam war. It has been displayed at almost 600 communities nationwide.

There are roughly 7,500 Vietnam veterans living in my district, the 43rd Congressional District, alone, and over 570,000 in the State of California. California is home to more veterans than any other State—almost 2 million. The residents of my district and the State of California deserve the opportunity to say thank you to some of the bravest Americans who have ever lived and remember those they may have lost.

I worked with the city of Gardena and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund for 2 years to bring the replica to my district, and I am so happy to say that we recently succeeded. This past weekend, The Wall That Heals arrived in one of my cities, the city of Gardena, California, to a welcoming crowd of hundreds who came to pay their respects and honor Vietnam veterans.

In my opinion, full and appropriate recognition of our Vietnam veterans is long overdue. The war often separated friends and families, both physically and politically, and created divisions which have taken years to heal. Many veterans have spoken about how difficult this was and how much harder this made the healing process.

No matter what you may have felt about the war, we should all honor the sacrifice made by our veterans who answered their country's call, who served, and who sacrificed.

This country should be and is honored to acknowledge and express appreciation for the sacrifices Vietnam veterans and their families made, both during their service and over the many years since. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, The Wall That Heals, and the dozens of local museums and memorials allow us to pay proper respect to and commemorate our Vietnam veterans.

I have just introduced a resolution in recognition of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, its traveling replica, which is one part of The Wall That Heals exhibit, and the Vietnam veterans for their devotion to neighbor, community, and country.

I say once again: Welcome home, Vietnam veterans.

□ 1045

HONORING MASTER SERGEANT WILLIAM R. POSCH

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

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Master Sergeant William R. "Bill" Posch, who died on March 15, 2018, while serving his country in Iraq.

His dedication to this Nation and its freedom will never be forgotten. Master Sergeant Posch spent his life helping others. As a teenager, he worked as a lifeguard for Jacksonville Beach Ocean Rescue, where he developed his passion for search-and-rescue missions. At the age of 15, he saved the life of a surfer who was drowning after having a seizure in the water. After this experience, he knew he wanted to join the military after he graduated from Fletcher High School.

When he was just 17, he told the local newspaper that after graduation he was going to enlist with the intent of becoming a rescue swimmer. And he did just that. Master Sergeant Posch was an Air Force Reserve pararescueman assigned to the 308th Rescue Squadron, known as the Guardian Angel Airmen, at Patrick Air Force Base. This squadron is one of the most deployed in the Air Force Reserve, and this was reflected in the important missions that Master Sergeant Posch carried out.

In his time with the Air Force, Master Sergeant Posch completed 143 combat missions, led a crisis evacuation of more than 126 Americans from the U.S. Embassy in South Sudan, and assisted with the rescue mission in Texas in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. The Air Force awarded him many medals, including the Air Medal with silver oak leaf cluster, the Aerial Achievement Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal of Valor, and he was also named one of the Air Force's 12 outstanding airmen of 2014.

He courageously served our Nation for 18 years, and we in northeast Florida will always be proud to call him one of our own. I salute Master Sergeant William R. Posch on his years of service and sacrifice to our country. He will forever be remembered as an American hero. May God bless him and our Nation.

RECOGNIZING MALIA DOMINGO FOR HER SELECTION AS A FLORIDA OUTSTANDING SCHOOL VOLUNTEER

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Malia Domingo of Yulee, Florida. Malia was recently named one of Florida's outstanding school volunteers for 2017 and 2018 by the Florida Department of Education.

She began her volunteer work in the sixth grade, earning 350 volunteer hours over the course of that school year. Malia first started volunteering at Yulee Primary School, working in four different kindergarten classrooms, aiding students with the accelerated reader program.

In addition to this, Malia has worked with students who have special needs, spending hours with many students one-on-one to increase their learning. Malia also dedicated her time in the summer to the students with special needs by volunteering in an extended school year program.

Malia is now in the 11th grade at Yulee High School, and in addition to being named one of the State's outstanding school volunteers, she was recently honored by Nassau County as the youth volunteer of the year.

I want to congratulate Malia Domingo for her 6 years of community service and her dedication to improving the lives of all those she helps. Malia is a great role model for her fellow students, and she has made the Fourth District of Florida very proud.

HONORING AND THANKING THE PATRIOT GUARD RIDERS

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

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and thank the Patriot Guard Riders, who live on Long Island and all across our country. The Patriot Guard Riders, a nonprofit organization, consists of a diverse group of motorcycle enthusiasts and patriots who share a deep appreciation and commitment to honoring our U.S. servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

Rooted in their unwavering patriotism and respect for our Nation's military men and women, the Patriot Guard Riders go above and beyond daily to ensure everyone, from our Nation's veterans to our communities' first responders and their families, receive the appreciation they deserve.

When a veteran arrives at Calverton National Cemetery for burial in my district, the Patriot Guard Riders are there. On Veterans Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and 9/11 events, the Patriot Guard Riders are there. When our communities' veterans are returning from their Honor Flight trips to Washington, D.C., our Patriot Guard Riders are there. No matter rain or shine or snow, whether it is freezing cold or scorching hot, the Patriot Guard Riders are there.

Last month, our Nation lost seven airmen in the line of duty, four of whom were from the 106th Rescue Wing on Long Island. As their families gathered at Gabreski Air National Guard Base to receive their sons, brothers, husbands, and our heroes, several dozen Patriot Guard Riders gathered to escort these fallen airmen from the base. It is in these moments, the most difficult moments in the lives of the families of these fallen airmen, when the Patriot Guard Riders, as detailed in their motto, stand for those who stood for us.

The family members of these fallen servicemembers may not know the names of these Patriot Guard Riders, but recognition is not what drives

them. As these fallen airmen were escorted from the base, a sea of American flags rose up to flank their caskets. As their families prepared to say their final good-byes, an unquestionable, unwavering sense of patriotism swelled, carried on the backs of the Patriot Guard Riders' bikes.

They have especially made our Nation's heroes their priority when others have neglected to show their appreciation. Time after time, when a veteran of World War II, Korea, Vietnam has been buried without family or friends, you can count on the Patriot Guard Riders to have been there. We need more Pete Jepsens in our world, who is the senior ride captain for all of Suffolk County. There's Mary-Ann, LW, Wayne, John, Eugene, Susan, Nancy, Marc, Dennis, Richard, Warren, Karen, and so many others who would drop everything at a moment's notice to stand for those who stood for us.

The Patriot Guard Riders are made up of hundreds of thousands of everyday people all across America. With the inspiration that consumes us whenever we see them in action, we should all aspire to the ideals and dedication each and every one of them embody. To our Patriot Guard Riders, thank you for your service to our great country.

CONGRATULATING COACH JERREMIAS JOHNSON AND ASSISTANT COACH BRETT BARTA ON THEIR COACH OF THE YEAR AWARDS

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, many years ago, an outstanding coach from my home State of Minnesota once said, "I learned early on that you do not put greatness into people but somehow try to pull it out." That coach was Herb Brooks, who led Team USA to victory at the 1980 Olympics. Minnesota is home to many outstanding coaches who carry on the legacy of Coach Brooks every day.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two of my district's incredible coaches for receiving awards from the Minnesota Hockey Coaches Association. St. Michael-Albertville High School's Jeremiah Johnson achieved the AA John Mariucci coach of the year award, and Andover High School's Brett Barta received the assistant head coach of the year award.

In Minnesota, we treat the sport of hockey as a lifestyle, and our youth coaches spend a lot of time with our young people. I am proud that coaches like Coach Johnson and Coach Barta are carrying on the legacy of Minnesota legends like John Mariucci and Herb Brooks and pulling the greatness out of our young athletes every day.

Thank you, Jeremiah and Brett, for passing on lessons in perseverance, integrity, and the great game of hockey to the next generation.

CELEBRATING THE ST. MICHAEL-ALBERTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the St. Michael-Albertville High School wrestling team for winning their first-ever undisputed Class 3A State title. The young men on this team came close to winning in 2013. Due to a tie, however, they had to share the title with another team. But not this year. This year, the St. Michael-Albertville High School wrestling team finished what they started.

Congratulations to the wrestlers of St. Michael-Albertville High School for your first State championship. We expect many more.

RECOGNIZING TAMMY OVESON FOR BEING NAMED NATIONAL CHILDCARE PROVIDER OF THE MONTH

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tammy Oveson of Waite Park, Minnesota. Tammy is an outstanding childcare provider in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District. She operates Learn 'n Play Preschool and was recently named National Childcare Provider of the Month for her dedication to early childhood development and learning techniques.

Mr. Speaker, right now in Minnesota, at this moment, Tammy and her assistant, Karla, are working with young children who will one day grow up to be great citizens and, hopefully, leaders of this great Nation. Tammy and Karla's work keeps Minnesota and our Nation moving forward. I am grateful for them and all of our childcare providers, teachers, counselors, and educators who are fostering future generations of Americans across the country.

I am honored to recognize Tammy today and thank and congratulate her on the incredible work she does for young Minnesotans.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF VIETNAM VETERAN LEO K. THORSNESS

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Vietnam veterans, to remember the heroes who served our great Nation during the most expansive war in American history. To those who have passed and those still living, we offer our humble and eternal thank you. While you may not have always received a warm welcome or the gratitude you deserve, we honor your sacrifice to this Nation, now and forever.

The great State of Minnesota is home to many of these incredible heroes, and today I am proud to honor the life and legacy of Leo K. Thorsness, who was recently interred at Arlington National Cemetery. Leo was Minnesota's last living recipient of the Medal of Honor. He deserved that great honor and distinction for the incredible courage he displayed in the Vietnam war.

During his time in Vietnam, Leo was captured and imprisoned for 6 years, spending one full year in solitary confinement. In honor of brave men like Leo, I rise today to say thank you. Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your willingness to put your life on the line and fight to preserve America's values.

RECOGNIZING ANOKA COUNTY SPECIAL DEPUTY VERN WALDNER

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vern Waldner of Anoka County, Minnesota. After serving for 26 years as special deputy with the Anoka County Sheriff's Office reserve program, Vern is retiring.

Local communities are made better by people like Vern who are willing to give their time and service to help others. Simply put, he made Anoka a safer place to live.

For nearly three decades, Vern ensured the safety of families during each annual Anoka Halloween Parade, an event so large and so widely attended, it has earned Anoka the title "Halloween Capital of the World." Vern was at that parade every year, dedicated to protecting his neighbors and friends.

As a community, we are grateful for Vern and congratulate him on being the second longest serving reserve deputy in Anoka County history. Thank you, Vern. We wish you a long and happy retirement.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, here we are, 4 legislative days after passing a \$1.3 trillion omnibus bill that is going to blow the deficit through the roof. And what are we going to do today? Oh, don't worry. We are going to fix it all. We are going to vote for the balanced budget amendment. That is right. This is going to tie our hands. This balanced budget amendment will cure everything that ails Congress. It is going to balance the budget. It is going to make us balance the budget.

Mr. Speaker, there is a dictionary over here in the House of Representatives, 30 feet from me. I suggest we go in there and rewrite the definition of "audacity," because it is that quality of Congress that leads them to believe that 4 legislative days after they blow the budget they can pass a balanced budget amendment and think that will convince America that they are serious about balancing the budget. That is the definition of audacity.

Look, this is an unserious vote. We know this balanced budget amendment is going nowhere in the Senate. But this is a very serious topic. This is the Constitution we are talking about amending. This is the document we swore an oath to uphold, support, defend. Our Founding Fathers died for it.

What is wrong with this balanced budget amendment? Well, first of all, let me tell you, it has got a loophole you could drive a truck through. Section 1, the very first part of this balanced budget amendment, says, if three-fifths of the whole number of each House of Congress pass a budget that is unbalanced, that is fine, but you have got to get three-fifths vote. Okay. Higher threshold. That will cause us to balance the budget. Three-fifths is hard to get, isn't it?

How many? What is three-fifths? Sixty percent. How many Members of Congress voted for that omnibus bill 4 legislative days ago? 60.5 percent in the House. How many in the Senate? More than that.

□ 1100

This balanced budget amendment wouldn't have stopped the omnibus bill. There is something worse in this balanced budget amendment. Any year that we are at war, it does not apply. Let's think about that.

The first day of Congress, we elect the Speaker. We are going to elect a new one this time. We elect the Speaker. We adopt the rules. The third order of business will be to declare war so we don't have to follow the balanced budget amendment. That is a loophole right there, but it is a dangerous one.

Some people say: Well, at least we will start declaring wars. We haven't declared a war since World War II. Maybe it will get Congress to do its job, its constitutional duty.

Well, I don't think so. We have been at war in Afghanistan for 17 years, and this article in the balanced budget amendment says: Well, you don't have to be at war as long as there is a conflict with our national security at stake. Oh, you can forget the balanced budget amendment.

What does that mean? For the last 17 years, this balanced budget amendment wouldn't apply to the war in Afghanistan or Iraq, where we have racked up trillions of dollars of debt. The balanced budget amendment would do nothing to stop that.

Look, I am not against the concept of an amendment to the Constitution that limits the growth of government. This government is so much bigger than it was when our Founders started this country, and for many years thereafter, but that is not what this balanced budget amendment does. It is not carefully crafted.

The thought that our Founders put into the Constitution has not been put into this document. It has not even been debated in a committee. Yet, today, we are going to vote on it. How ridiculous is that?

So here is what I think we need to do. Instead of having a balanced budget amendment that encourages you to go to war, that is toothless, that encourages you to raise taxes instead of cut spending, we need a balanced budget amendment that somehow limits the growth of government. Frankly, what we need are people here that are serious about balancing the budget, not another document, not an unserious proposal.

So I would just say this. I know this is a popular concept to have a balanced budget amendment. I am not going to urge a "yes" vote or a "no" vote or a "present" vote. I am going to vote "no" because it is an unserious approach to a serious topic, and it should be called "the CYA," not "the BBA," but I just want my colleagues to think deeply and long about this amendment.

Please read it. Please read it before you vote on it. It is right here. It is only three pages. Please read it. Think deeply before you cast your vote to alter this sacred document.

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 11 o'clock and 2 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

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Gracious and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

You bring forth blessings from just deeds. Listen to our prayers for the Members of this people's House. Give them the wisdom to meditate upon Your revelation, Your law. Help them find confidence in Your love, especially in times of difficulty.

May their efforts reflect the mindset and gracious manner revealed in Your loving commands, and may their work contain the depth of justice and the expansive embrace of human goodness that You reveal to Your people.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

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.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. ROBY 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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE HONORING THOSE KILLED OR WOUNDED IN SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

The SPEAKER. The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in honor of those who have been killed or wounded in service to our country and all those who serve and their families.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

DAIRY FARMERS ARE FACING A CRISIS

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

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the urgent crisis facing dairy farmers across my district.

The low price of milk, labor shortages, and dwindling access to new markets are just some of the many challenges faced by the hardworking family farms in my district. Additionally, the Margin Protection Program has failed North Country dairy farmers by providing little to no return on our farmers' buy-in.

Recently, I was pleased to support the Bipartisan Budget Act, which contained many urgent reforms to this program, such as raising catastrophic coverage for the first tier of covered production for all farmers, reducing premium rates to help farmers buy coverage, and waiving costly administrative fees for underserved farms.

Agriculture is truly the backbone of our North Country economy, and generations of farmers have helped make dairy production a way of life for many families that I represent.

In Congress, I will keep fighting every day to strengthen our family farms for future generations.

CONGRESS DOES NOT NEED A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO DO ITS JOB HONORABLY

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans recently voted to add \$2.5 trillion to the national debt over the next decade. That is more debt in the shortest period of time by any one political party, the

Republican Party, in American history. Their debt will exceed the entire American economy in 10 years.

The moral horror of passing this debt on to your kids and grandkids now belongs to you. You own it and they owe it.

To now offer a balanced budget amendment is transparently cowardly and egregious. Congress does not need a constitutional amendment to do its job honorably. The Constitution already gives Congress that authority. What is missing is the intestinal fortitude to do that which the Constitution calls on you to do honorably.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SERGEANT JACK COLEMAN COOK

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sergeant Jack Coleman Cook of Hot Springs, Arkansas, for his heroic actions in World War II. Sergeant Cook was a ball turret gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress named the Challenger.

On February 3, 1945, the 384th Bomb Group participated in a mission over Berlin. During the mission, the Challenger was hit by flak, damaging multiple engines, gas tanks, and the fuselage, but left the crew unharmed.

On the return journey home, the plane began losing altitude and crash-landed in the frigid North Sea. The crewmembers abandoned the aircraft and boarded two life rafts but became separated.

Navigator Edward Field, a crewmember who stayed in the water, began to push his raft towards the other raft but became numb and said that he could no longer hold on. Sergeant Cook got into the water so the crew's navigator could get out of the cold sea and take his spot in the raft. The sergeant then swam for 45 minutes until they reached the second raft. Shortly afterward, air-sea rescue located the crew, but Sergeant Cook had little life left in him, and he passed away on the boat.

It is with great gratitude and respect that I honor Jack Coleman Cook. Sergeant Cook is a true American hero. He selflessly gave his life for his fellow man, and for this, we remember him more than 70 years later.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SERGEANT JACK COLEMAN COOK

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, like Mr. WESTERMAN, I rise today to recognize the heroic actions taken by 384th Bomb Group ball turret gunner Jack Coleman Cook of Hot Springs, Arkansas, during a World War II mission.

Selflessly, Sergeant Cook gave his life to save the life of his fellow air-

men, including my constituent, First Lieutenant Edward Field, a veteran and poet from Brooklyn, New York. On February 3, 1945, in a bombing mission over Berlin, Sergeant Cook showed us what true heroism looks like.

After their B-17 bomber crashed into the North Sea, the crewmembers were forced to inflate two life rafts. Unfortunately, only one raft was able to fully inflate, leaving two men, Lieutenant Field and another crewmember, in the frigid water.

After they had spent about 30 minutes in the water, Sergeant Cook gave up his spot in the raft for Lieutenant Field, who had become numb. Sergeant Cook then swam in the freezing water to the other raft, which was only partially inflated. Unfortunately, he died before a British vessel could come and rescue them.

In his poem, "World War II," Lieutenant Field honored the incredible sacrifice made by Sergeant Cook, recognizing that his survival is entwined with the spirit born from another hero's sacrifice.

It is my distinct honor today to commemorate the American heroes who bravely served our country, in this case, Sergeant Jack Coleman Cook and First Lieutenant Edward Field.

RECOGNIZING DEPUTY ANDREW JENKINS FOR BEING AWARDED CONGRESSIONAL BADGE OF BRAVERY

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Deputy Andrew Jenkins of the Eaton County Sheriff's Department for being awarded the Congressional Badge of Bravery. He is only the second law enforcement officer from Michigan to ever receive this high honor.

On the evening of December 20, 2016, Deputy Jenkins was the first emergency responder to a Delta Township residence which was already in flames. Although he had no protective clothing or equipment, he immediately entered the home, finding three family members, two of whom were disabled and unable to walk.

He subsequently rescued all three occupants, carrying the disabled individuals to safety as the fire continued to spread, putting himself in great danger. All three residents and Deputy Jenkins were hospitalized and treated for smoke inhalation, and one person was subsequently treated at the University of Michigan burn unit.

If Deputy Jenkins had not acted so quickly that night, three lives may have been lost. His heroism and selfless actions that night clearly established why Deputy Jenkins is so deserving of the Congressional Badge of Bravery.

MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE IS A SERIOUS HEALTH CRISIS

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a serious health crisis in America: the maternal mortality rate in the country is worse than in the rest of the developed world.

In fact, the United States is the only industrialized nation where the number of pregnancy-related deaths is on the rise. This is particularly true for Black women, who are nearly four times more likely to die from pregnancy complications than White women.

Additionally, The New York Times reported yesterday that Black infants are now more than twice as likely to die as White infants, a disparity which is larger now than it was in 1850.

Black Maternal Health Week started yesterday. Today, I stand before Congress not only to raise awareness, but to encourage my colleagues to take swift action and fund maternal healthcare clinics in 2019.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF JIM MOYER

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jim Moyer, associate dean of research at Washington State University, and to congratulate him on his retirement. Jim graduated from Washington State in 1971 and went on to pursue several higher degrees and academic achievements.

He is prominently renowned as a plant pathologist, having served as the president of the American Phytopathological Society, and his research contributions have earned him both national and international recognition. He received the USDA Agricultural Research Service's Morrison Medal before he returned to Pullman to serve as the associate dean of research for WSU's College of Agriculture, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences.

In this position, he advocated for agriculture stakeholders and supported research in Washington State and across the country. He testified before the House Agriculture Committee and has led WSU to be number one in USDA research and development expenditures in fiscal year 2016.

Jim and I have worked closely together since I came to Congress, and I am grateful for all he has done for my alma mater. I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating his successful career, and I wish him the best in his retirement.

Go, Cougars.

RECOGNIZING BAY COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF MIKE CLANCY

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

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bay County Deputy Sheriff Mike Clancy for his heroic efforts in

saving the life of a 6-year-old boy in Panama City Beach.

Deputy Clancy recently responded to a drowning call at a hotel to find an unresponsive child. He immediately took action, and his quick thinking and response saved young Jaxon's life.

Deputy Clancy said in his own words that he is not a hero, but to Jaxon and to his family, he is a hero.

Deputy Clancy attributes his skills to 22 years in the U.S. Army and training at the Bay County Sheriff's Office.

Every day, despite great personal risks, law enforcement officers across the country put on their uniforms and carry out their duties to protect and serve. Mr. Speaker, I thank Deputy Clancy and all who wear the badge. Their actions reflect great credit on the Bay County Sheriff's Office and exemplify the best in the American people.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN MEN'S SWIMMING AND DIVING TEAM

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to bring attention to the outstanding achievements of the University of Texas at Austin men's swimming and diving team. For the fourth consecutive year, this team took home the NCAA title.

College athletes from around the country dream about competing at the NCAA championships. As student-athletes, this could also mark the peak of their athletic career.

In addition to these incredible athletes, I would like to congratulate their coach, Eddie Reese. Coach Reese has the most wins in this sport's history. After 40 seasons at the University of Texas, he has trained athletes to win 14 national titles.

Coaches like this don't come around often, and I would like to thank Coach Reese for his dedication to this great university.

I would also like to take this time to identify UT seniors on the team: Jonathan Roberts, Brett Ringgold, and Joseph Schooling. As they leave their college days behind, they will always remember this moment, and they will remember this team.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the University of Texas on these impressive accomplishments and simply say: Hook 'em.

In God we trust.

□ 1215

RECOGNIZING NINTH ANNUAL DREAM MAKERS' GALA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the ninth an-

nual Dream Makers' Gala hosted by Debbie's Dream Foundation.

On April 21, friends, family, healthcare advocates, and community leaders from throughout our south Florida area will gather together to raise awareness and mobilize efforts to fight stomach cancer.

This year's event is especially meaningful to all of the staff, volunteers, and supporters of Debbie's Dream Foundation. Why? Because, sadly, we recently lost Debbie Zelman. Nearly a decade ago, Debbie was diagnosed with stage IV stomach cancer. But rather than give in, she decided to take action. She started Debbie's Dream Foundation to fund stomach cancer research and fight this dreadful disease.

In 2018, more than 26,000 people will be newly diagnosed with stomach cancer in our great country. That is why this event and this organization are so important to defeat stomach cancer once and for all.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Debbie's wonderful parents who carry on this fight, her family members, and all of the advocates for their lifesaving efforts and tireless commitment to fulfilling Debbie's dream.

Let us make this night a celebration of Debbie's determination, perseverance, and, most importantly, Debbie's amazing life.

HONORING FORT RUCKER AND MAXWELL-GUNTER AIR FORCE BASE

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

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, with Congress out of session for the recent Easter district work period, I had the opportunity to visit Fort Rucker and Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, two outstanding military installations in Alabama's Second District. It is so important that I stay up to date with the needs and priorities of our military bases, and I appreciate those who took the opportunity to meet with me recently.

As a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, properly funding our military is one of my top priorities. I will always work to ensure that Fort Rucker and Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base remain strong components in our national defense infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, over the last year, I have appreciated working alongside the administration that has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to rebuilding our military after years of damaging cuts. I am proud to serve in a congressional district that is home to two of our Nation's finest military installations, and I will continue to provide the brave men and women of our military with the best possible resources to ensure that they are well-prepared for whatever challenges they may face as they work to keep us safe.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by wishing Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base a happy 100th birthday. This past Saturday, Maxwell celebrated 100 years of dedicated service. I speak for the entire Second District in saying that we appreciate all that these men and women do for our country, and our community, and I know that our region looks forward to many more years of partnership.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to be an advocate for Fort Rucker and Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base here in Congress, and I take this responsibility very seriously.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a balanced budget amendment which should be one of several steps that we take in Congress to control spending.

As a State senator, I worked with Governors Mitch Daniels and MIKE PENCE to balance Indiana's budget every single year, while lowering taxes and investing in key priorities. Today, Indiana has a \$1.8 billion rainy-day fund and a AAA credit rating. Sadly, Washington, D.C., has not followed Indiana's example.

According to the latest estimates from the CBO, the Federal Government is set to run \$82 trillion in deficits over the next 30 years. This is simply unsustainable. We cannot allow this crippling debt that will burden our children and grandchildren to continue growing.

In the short term, I applaud the Trump administration's decision to use the rescission tool to rein in Federal spending. The legislation that we are considering today, which would force Congress to balance the budget, should be part of a comprehensive effort to address spending and get America's finances back in order.

This amendment will ensure Congress has no excuses and reforms the broken congressional budget process. Hoosier families know how to live within their means and follow a budget, and Washington ought to do the same.

REBUILDING EFFORTS IN THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, the rebuilding efforts of the U.S. Virgin Islands will require an extraordinary level of coordination and cooperation between the local government and the Federal Government. We have, in this moment, both the opportunity and the responsibility to ensure that the greatest good emerges from the calamity to our Virgin Islands.

Yesterday, HUD awarded \$1.6 billion to help the Virgin Islands to recover after the hurricanes. These recovery funds awarded were provided through HUD's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program and are a part of the hard-fought battle here in Congress to appropriate funding, specifically to the territories.

The Virgin Islands normally receives a mere \$1 million from this fund. This crucial funding will help us to address the disaster-related deficiencies in housing, public service, and infrastructure as determined by local officials with citizen input.

I am imploring our local government to engage the community and have strategic plans in this. Building more resilient infrastructure in the Virgin Islands is critical to future economic stability. We must rebuild the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico the right way.

Our children are presently in schools in the Virgin Islands 4 hours per day as they share space because of the tremendous loss of infrastructure. The negligence leading to inadequate care and oversight of our loved ones is unacceptable. The stress of hurricanes does not need to be exacerbated by inefficient evacuation protocols and lack of transparency.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Congress and others to do what is necessary, to support the Virgin Islands and others in rebuilding.

HIGHLIGHTING THE GIVE SEVEN DAYS CHALLENGE

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the Give Seven Days challenge that began in my district in Kansas this week, an outreach program founded by a woman named Mindy Corporon.

Mindy tragically lost both her father, William, and her 14-year-old son, Reat, in the horrific shooting at the Jewish Community Center and Village Shalom in Overland Park back in April of 2014.

Who among us would have questioned Mindy if she slipped into despair after such a loss? Losing a parent is difficult enough, and losing your child on the same day is something no person should ever have to endure. But instead of despair, Mindy has chosen love, faith, kindness, and remembrance.

She founded Give Seven Days, which challenges young and old to embrace diversity across race, religion, and culture. It also honors the memory of William, Reat, and Terri LaManno, the third victim of the attack.

Mr. Speaker, let's all follow Mindy's example. Let's remember those we have lost and, in their memory, create a wave of positive change for the future.

Let's make a ripple and change the world.

COMMENDING BENSALEM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a group of thoughtful and innovative students in my district from Bensalem, Pennsylvania.

Six students at Bensalem High School have been working in their industrial design class to build a snow sled for the blind. Working with students from Villanova University to make their prototype as strong as possible, they came up with a design that included a backrest and steering handles, and they also enhanced this device with sensors that vibrate the handles when obstacles are detected.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the hard work of students Jonathan Champagne-Cox, Brandon Gomez, Jakub Hajduk, Tom Kelly, Eric Rosenberg, and Michael Wible. I would also like to commend Bensalem curriculum coordinator Dan Lubacz for his guidance and for teaching his students that their gifts and talents could be used in compassionate ways.

REGULAR ORDER IN THE REGULATORY RELIEF PROCESS

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

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, the regulatory relief bill that passed the Senate just a few short weeks ago was crafted to get past the 60-vote cloture threshold. Our Senate colleagues are now asking the House to pass that deal without amendment because they don't have an interest in voting on the measure again.

That is not the legislative process envisioned by the Framers of the Constitution and demonstrates a disregard for the policy work of the people's House.

The House Financial Services Committee has worked tirelessly to pass bipartisan bills that will provide necessary regulatory relief to Main Street America.

Chairman HENSARLING has identified 15 commonsense bills that passed out of the Financial Services Committee with broad bipartisan support and have the support of the ranking member. Yet some in the Senate continue to insist that any amendment to legislation is inadmissible.

While I support the goal of providing much-needed relief to our community banks and credit unions, I believe we should take a more thoughtful and inclusive approach that considers the will of the people as represented in this body.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the leadership in the House, as well as Chairman HENSARLING, for fighting for

the bipartisan policy initiatives of the Members of this Chamber in the regulatory relief process.

HONORING NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

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

Mr. HURD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Library Week to recognize the importance of our Nation's libraries to local communities.

Our local libraries cultivate lifelong learning and reading and a profound sense of community across south and west Texas. They serve as community gathering places and local epicenters of educational innovation.

At our libraries, folks of all ages can learn about their community's history, while accessing technological tools that lead us into the future.

In many towns in the 23rd District of Texas, our public libraries go far beyond providing books and serve as the primary provider of literacy programming, especially in underserved rural areas. This is why I have taken advantage of an important program within the Library of Congress that allows Members of Congress to donate books to local libraries across their districts.

For National Library Week, I would like to express gratitude for all the local librarians who provide these priceless services.

CONGRATULATING LADY ROCK LIONS ON THEIR WIN

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Lady Rock Lions basketball team for winning the 2018 National Association of Christian Athletes Division 2 women's tournament.

These young women from The Rock School in Gainesville played through a grueling season to earn their spot in the tournament this past February. Their dedication paid off, and the Lady Rock Lions were named national champions.

Their hard work, discipline, and unbreakable spirit have earned them the right to stand among the greats of high school basketball. I am confident in their ability to continue to succeed both athletically and academically, and I look forward to watching these young women bring more honor, pride, and success to not just their lives, but to our district.

Go Lady Rock Lions and, yes, you do rock.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote

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

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

PROPOSING A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 2) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 2

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission for ratification:

“ARTICLE—

“SECTION 1. Total outlays for any fiscal year shall not exceed total receipts for that fiscal year, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House of Congress shall provide by law for a specific excess of outlays over receipts by a rollcall vote.

“SECTION 2. The limit on the debt of the United States held by the public shall not be increased, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House shall provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote.

“SECTION 3. Prior to each fiscal year, the President shall transmit to the Congress a proposed budget for the United States Government for that fiscal year in which total outlays do not exceed total receipts.

“SECTION 4. No bill to increase revenue shall become law unless approved by a majority of the whole number of each House by a rollcall vote.

“SECTION 5. The Congress may waive the provisions of this article for any fiscal year in which a declaration of war is in effect. The provisions of this article may be waived for any fiscal year in which the United States is engaged in military conflict which causes an imminent and serious military threat to national security and is so declared by a joint resolution, adopted by a majority of the whole number of each House, which becomes law. Any such waiver must identify and be limited to the specific excess or increase for that fiscal year made necessary by the identified military conflict.

“SECTION 6. The Congress shall enforce and implement this article by appropriate legislation, which may rely on estimates of outlays and receipts.

“SECTION 7. Total receipts shall include all receipts of the United States Government except those derived from borrowing. Total outlays shall include all outlays of the United States Government except for those for repayment of debt principal.

“SECTION 8. This article shall take effect beginning with the fifth fiscal year beginning after its ratification.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 811, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from

New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 2 hours.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

□ 1230

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.J. Res. 2, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

March 2, 1995, was a pivotal day in the history of our country. On that day, the United States Senate failed by one vote to send a balanced budget constitutional amendment to the States for ratification. The amendment had passed the House by the required two-thirds majority, and the Senate vote was the last legislative hurdle before ratification by the States.

If Congress had listened to the American people and sent that amendment to the States for ratification, we would not be facing the fiscal crisis we are today. Rather, balancing the Federal budget would have been the norm, instead of the exception, over the past 20 years, and we would have nothing like the annual deficits and skyrocketing debt we currently face.

In 1995, when the balanced budget amendment came within one vote of passing, the gross Federal debt stood at \$4.9 trillion. Today, it stands at over \$20 trillion. The Federal debt held by the public is rising as well and is increasing rapidly as a percentage of the country's economic output. Unlike the past, when the debt spiked to pay for wars of finite duration and then was reduced gradually after hostilities ended, more recently, the debt has risen as a result of having to pay for entitlement programs that are of indefinite duration and difficult to reduce over time.

As John Cogan of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University wrote: “All of the increase in Federal spending relative to GDP over the past seven decades is attributable to entitlement spending. Since the late 1940s, entitlement claims on the Nation's output of goods and services have risen from less than 4 percent to 14 percent. Surprising as it may seem, the share of GDP that is spent on national defense and non-defense discretionary programs combined is no higher today than it was seven decades ago.”

As the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has observed, such high and rising debt will have serious negative consequences. Interest rates will increase considerably, productivity and wages will be lower, and high debt increases the risk of a financial crisis.

What is particularly troubling is that the debts we are incurring under enti-

tlement programs will burden multiple future generations. Indeed, a few years ago, a cross-national study found that the United States ranked worst among 29 advanced countries in the degree to which it imposes unfair debt burdens on future generations.

University of Virginia philosophy professor Loren Lomasky has written that theorists have devoted considerable attention to injustices committed across lines of race and gender. Far less attended are concerns of intergenerational fairness. That omission is serious. Measures that have done very well by the baby boomers are much less generous to their children and worse still for their grandchildren. The single greatest unsolved problem of justice in the developed world today is transgenerational plunder.

It is time for Congress to stop saddling future generations with the burden of crushing debts to pay for current spending. We should not pass on to our children and grandchildren the bleak fiscal future that our unsustainable spending is creating.

The only way to ensure that Congress acts with fiscal restraint over the longterm is to pass a balanced budget amendment. Experience has proved time and again that Congress cannot for any significant length of time rein in excessive spending. Annual deficits and the resulting debt continue to grow due to political pressures that the Constitution's structure no longer serves to restrain.

In order for Congress to be able to consistently make the tough decisions necessary to sustain fiscal responsibility, Congress must have the external pressure of a balanced budget requirement to force it to do so. Constitutional principle will prevail where political promises have not.

The Framers of the Constitution were familiar with the need for constitutional restrictions on deficit spending. When the Constitution was ratified, it was the States that had exhibited out-of-control fiscal mismanagement by issuing bills of credit to effectively print money to pay for projects and service debt. As a result of that lack of fiscal discipline, Article I, section 10 of the Constitution specifically deprives States of the power to issue bills of credit. Over 200 years later, it is the Federal Government that has proved its inability to adopt sound fiscal policies, and it is now time to adopt a constitutional restraint on Federal fiscal mismanagement.

Several versions of the balanced budget amendment have been introduced this Congress, including two I introduced this Congress, as I have every Congress for the last decade. H.J. Res. 2, the version we are debating today, is nearly identical to the text that passed the House in 1995 and failed in the Senate by one vote. It requires that total annual outlays not exceed total annual receipts. It also requires a true majority of each Chamber to pass tax increases and a three-fifths majority to raise the debt limit.

Today is the day we can turn proposals into legislative action. Our extraordinary fiscal crisis demands an extraordinary solution. We must rise above partisanship and join together to send a balanced budget amendment to the States for ratification.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment and in freeing our children and grandchildren from the burden of a crippling debt they had no hand in creating so they can be free to chart their own futures for themselves and for their own posterity.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the proposed balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Specifically, the resolution prohibits total outlays from exceeding total receipts for each fiscal year unless a three-fifths supermajority of the whole membership of each House of Congress votes to override the prohibition. The resolution also requires a three-fifths supermajority of each House in order to raise the Federal debt limit.

There are only two conclusions one can reach about this legislation. Either it is fundamentally unserious—a facade designed to pretend that Republicans, on the heels of a massive Republican tax giveaway to corporations and the very rich that will increase the deficit by at least \$1.5 trillion over the next decade, have a shred of credibility when it comes to claims of fiscal responsibility; or it is deadly serious—the first step toward their ultimate goal of slashing Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and other critical elements of the social safety net—because you cannot have these enormous tax cuts and balance the budget without slashing spending programs that most Americans depend on.

Understand the context in which we are considering this legislation. White House Budget Director Mick Mulvaney recently admitted that the Republican tax windfall for the rich would cost the Federal Government \$1.8 trillion in revenue over the next decade.

In the wake of their budget-busting tax scam, House Republicans have the nerve to now seek to have us vote on this balanced budget amendment because they want to maintain the illusion that they care about fiscal responsibility. This is the height of hypocrisy.

But if we assume that Republicans actually intend to pass this legislation, we should recognize the catastrophic consequences it would have on senior citizens or the disabled and on low-income people. That is because it would require radical spending cuts to achieve balance, with the principal targets being social safety net programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid that millions of Americans depend on.

I want to commend Mr. GOODLATTE for his honesty. He has spent part of

his speech talking about how we have to cut entitlements.

What are the chief entitlements? Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

He talks about the lower percentage of expenditures that went for entitlement programs years ago before Medicare and Medicaid were enacted. Of course, we spend more on entitlements now that we have Medicare and Medicaid.

But what is really causing deficits is not Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. It is the Republican tax cuts. In the 1980s, when Ronald Reagan was elected, the total Federal national debt from George Washington through Jimmy Carter was under \$800 billion. Then we had the Reagan tax cuts, and when George Bush left office 12 years later, the national debt had skyrocketed from \$800 billion to \$4.3 trillion. Then we had President Clinton, a Democratic Congress, and Newt Gingrich, who deserves some credit for it too, and we had 3 years of balanced budgets in the late 1990s. In 2000, the projection was for \$5.65 trillion Federal surplus over the next 10 years.

Alan Greenspan, testifying in favor of the Bush tax cuts, said that we have to pass these tax cuts because otherwise we will totally pay off the national debt, and that is a bad thing for various reasons. So we passed the Bush tax cuts—the Republicans did—and between that and funding the Iraq and Afghanistan wars without a tax increase off the credit card, we greatly increased the national debt again.

So the Democrats have come in and cleaned up the messes that Republicans have left on the national debt by their huge tax cuts for the rich, and now they tell us we can't afford Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid because we must keep these tax cuts for the rich going.

This legislation would also undermine the Federal Government's ability to respond to an economic crisis. When the Nation's economy weakens, incomes of individuals and businesses decrease because of job and business losses because of unemployment increasing, which in turn automatically results in reduced tax revenues.

Meanwhile, spending on programs like unemployment insurance benefits and food stamps automatically increases as more people lack jobs and rely on unemployment benefits and food stamps to stay afloat. These programs also help overcome a downward spiral in the economy as they help stabilize the decline in consumer purchasing power and prevent a recession from turning into a depression.

But by requiring a balanced budget, this constitutional amendment would effectively prohibit the government from drawing on these critical stabilizers.

Although the resolution allows Congress to override the amendment's balanced budget mandate, it requires a nearly insurmountable three-fifths supermajority of the entire member-

ship of the House in both Houses. By the time Congress could react to an economic crisis, it would have greatly delayed the stimulating effect of the stabilizers. This legislation would almost guarantee that a recession would become a depression. Meanwhile, millions of Americans who depend on these vital programs for food, shelter, and rent would go without assistance.

In addition to making it harder to avoid an economic crisis, this resolution could actually help to precipitate one. By requiring a three-fifths supermajority vote of each House of Congress to raise the debt limit, H.J. Res. 2 increases the probability that the government will default on its obligations and cause the Nation to spiral into a financial and economic crisis.

Beyond its devastating economic and social consequences, this resolution is also anti-democratic. To the extent that it requires a supermajority to undertake certain steps, such as waiving the balanced budget requirement or raising the debt limit, it shifts power away from the elected Representatives of a majority of the American people to a determined minority that can thwart the majority's will.

Moreover, this bill inappropriately seeks to enshrine into the Constitution one particular economic view that would bind future generations and future Congresses that they elect.

Whatever anyone may think about economic policy and government financing, those kinds of policies should be enacted as legislation that can be modified, amended, or repealed by future majorities, not enshrined in the Constitution to bind future generations to the opinions of this generation. That is fundamentally undemocratic and tyrannical.

Finally, this resolution suffers from a fundamental flaw to its construction. There is no enforcement mechanism, and it is not clear what would happen if Congress ignored it and passed an unbalanced budget without the required supermajority. Presumably, it would somehow be resolved in the Federal courts. We would see judges ordering tax increases, or cuts in Social Security, or revising the transportation budget, you name it, without any legislative guidance, and on what basis they would make such decisions is anyone's guess.

We should not have judges determining inherently political questions regarding budgetary decisions, upending the principle of separation of powers and generating massive litigation over questions ranging from who has the standing to sue, to what remedies a court can impose if it found a violation.

This legislation is ill-conceived and deeply problematic. As I stated earlier, this resolution is either a farce—just for show and a few well-timed press releases—or it is a Trojan horse—an innocuous looking resolution that is really designed to enable the long-held Republican dream of dismantling Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid,

a goal they could never achieve politically but might achieve with a constitutional amendment on the balanced budget. Either way, this resolution is not worthy of this House.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose H.J. Res. 2, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1245

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), a member of the Judiciary Committee and chairman of the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, the reason we have a big deficit is not due to a lack of tax revenue; it is due to the fact that Congress spends too much money.

Now, let me repeat that. The deficit and the debt are not caused by a lack of tax revenue. It is because there is too much money that is authorized and spent right here in the Congress of the United States.

This proposed constitutional amendment will give us the discipline that we have not had, as we have sat and watched the deficit go up and up and up and up and away. It is the responsibility of Presidents of both political parties that this has happened, and maybe it is time for us to tell colleagues now and in the future and Presidents now and in the future that the time to put things on the cuff is at an end.

I would say that doing what we have done, which means spending money on ourselves and sending the bill plus interest to the next generations, is bad economics. But it is also immoral.

Now, I have a grandson who is a little bit more than a year old, and unless Congress stops doing this, he is going to end up having a debt that will boggle the mind that he and his contemporaries are going to have difficulty meeting.

So what do we need to do?

Number one, we need to stop passing bloated omnibus bills. I voted “no” proudly on the omnibus bill, which busted the budget and added to the debt.

We need to start getting honest about the fact that entitlement programs are spiraling out of control. And that doesn’t mean cutting entitlement programs for existing people; it means slowing down their growth rate.

But that is something that nice people aren’t supposed to talk about, particularly here in Congress. But it is something that is necessary if those entitlement programs are going to be worth anything for future generations when they may need them rather than dealing with the present generation.

Now, I know we can all count up votes, and people vote now and we are not going to be running in the future. But the time has come to think about the future, and that is why this constitutional amendment ought to be passed.

Congress can’t discipline itself. The only thing that can discipline us is saying what Congress can’t do in the United States Constitution, just like the First and Second Amendments.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, the so-called balanced budget amendment is nothing but a phony, fraudulent, and fake effort to promote fiscal responsibility.

I am perplexed by the notion that my good friends on the other side of the aisle would come to the House floor to lecture the American people about the budget when their actions are primarily responsible for the situation in which we find ourselves.

How did we arrive at a moment where, in this country, we confront a crippling \$20 trillion debt when the Clinton administration handed the Bush administration a budget surplus?

I am glad you asked that question.

Number one, a failed war in Iraq, brought to us by a Republican administration;

Number two, an unnecessarily prolonged conflict in Afghanistan, brought to us by a Republican administration;

Number three, the Bush tax giveaways of 2001, brought to us by a Republican House, a Republican Senate, and a Republican President;

Number four, the 2003 Bush tax giveaway, brought to us by a Republican House, a Republican Senate, and a Republican President;

Number five, the collapse of the economy in 2008, brought to us by Republican-inspired financial deregulation;

Number six, the Republican tax scam of 2017 that will explode our debt by an additional \$2 trillion.

Republicans burn down our fiscal house and then show up with a so-called balanced budget amendment and act like the volunteer fire department.

I am from Brooklyn. I know a hustle when I see one. We will not allow anyone to balance the budget on the backs of working families, middle class folks, senior citizens, the poor, the sick, the afflicted, veterans, and rural America. We will not allow anyone to devastate Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

The American people deserve a better deal.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), a member of the Judiciary Committee and chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I thank the gentleman from Virginia, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for yielding me time and also for his tireless efforts over the years to pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives votes to protect future generations from our debilitating debt.

Thomas Jefferson believed that “the public debt is the greatest of dangers to be feared.” He wished “it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution taking from the Federal Government the power of borrowing.”

It is past time that we listen to Jefferson’s commonsense advice. American families balance their checkbooks. States and local governments balance their budgets. So should the Federal Government.

The last balanced budget occurred in the 1990s. The previous balanced budget was during the Eisenhower administration. Surely it is not too much to ask that we take a major step towards having a balanced budget in our future.

Mr. Speaker, only a balanced budget amendment will guarantee that the Federal Government puts its fiscal house in order and keeps it that way.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. DELANEY).

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the balanced budget amendment, which, in my judgment, is one of the worst pieces of legislation I have seen since I have been in the Congress.

First, it will act as a doomsday machine, destroying critical programs like Social Security, Medicare, investments in our infrastructure, investments in science and research, and investments in our military.

Second, it represents wrongheaded economics. To manage the country with a zero deficit is not smart economic policy.

Third, it is being presented to the American people in a deceitful manner. To compare fiscal planning of the U.S. Government to how hardworking families in this country should manage their own personal finances is misrepresenting how we should think about our government.

And fourth, it is being done entirely for political reasons: to direct attention away from tax legislation that has materially increased the deficit of this country.

If we wanted to have an honest conversation about the fiscal situation of this country, which is terrible and projected to be worse, we would focus on three numbers: The first number we would focus on, or the first percentage, is our debt as a percentage of our economy; the second ratio we would focus on is how much we think our economy could grow each year; and the third number we would focus on is the percentage of our deficit as expressed relative to our economy.

If we actually wanted to work together, if the majority and the minority wanted to work together and put together a fiscal plan for this country that was responsible, that represented smart economics, allowed us to invest in our country, and put us on a trajectory where the debt, as a percentage of our economy, would go down over time and return to normal levels, then we

would be talking about how do we come up with a budget that had deficits on an annual basis of minus 1.5 to 2 percent.

That wouldn't put us in a position where we have to slash so many important government programs because this government has insufficient tax revenues. In fact, our tax revenues are the lowest as a percentage of our economy that they have been in 50 years.

But if we actually wanted to have a real conversation about putting this country on an appropriate kind of long-term fiscal trajectory, we would work towards 2 percent deficits. Because if, in fact, our economy could grow at 2.5 percent a year, then, by definition, the debt as a percentage of our economy would go down; and it would go down by setting realistic goals that don't represent inappropriate cuts to core government programs like Medicare and Social Security and our defense spending and our investment in our country, in our kids, in our infrastructure, and in our research.

That would be a conversation that represents smart economic policy. It would be an honest conversation with the American people. It wouldn't be done for political reasons, and it would materially improve the fiscal trajectory of this country.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I first want to thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. GOODLATTE, for leading on this constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. We have fought this out in past years and brought this to the floor a couple of times that I can remember here.

But I would like to dial back your memory, Mr. Speaker, to 1998, when the House of Representatives did pass a balanced budget amendment to our United States Constitution and sent it over to the United States Senate. And late in the year of 1998, after a hard-fought whip team pulled the votes together, they put together the two-thirds votes necessary in the Senate to pass that constitutional amendment for a balanced budget off to the States for ratification in three-quarters of the States.

They had the votes, and at the last minute, one Senator walked down and, in dramatic fashion, voted "no" when he was on the whip card expected to vote "yes." And that is what blocked a balanced budget amendment in 1998, within one vote, because I think all of us here are confident that the States would have ratified a balanced budget amendment, and then we would be living under the balanced budget amendment from sometime, probably pretty near the turn of the millennium, around the year 2000.

Think what a difference it would be today. This Nation might have a little debt left, but it would be a shrinking

debt because, whenever you balance the budget, if it's balanced, you are always going to end up with a little black because the pencil doesn't work quite that precisely.

We missed that window. We have the window now in this year, in our time, and we have an obligation to pass this balanced budget amendment.

When I came here in 2003, we were at balance as far as the spending was concerned, but not with the budget that was approved. I asked the Budget Committee chairman: Where is our balanced budget amendment?

He said: We can't balance the budget. We are at war. We have been attacked in New York and in the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania, and we have to set up TSA and spend all this money, and it is impossible to balance the budget.

I said: It can't be impossible.

I set about writing a balanced budget myself, as a freshman, in the first weeks here. I wasn't prepared to do that at that time. But had we gotten that done, had we tightened our belt, had we implemented the kind of discipline this constitutional amendment before us today will bring about, we wouldn't be talking about debt and deficit. We wouldn't be talking about 107 million Americans not in the workforce because they are of age but they are being tempted to stay home on the couch with more than 70 different means-tested Federal welfare programs.

We haven't demonstrated the discipline. If interest should increase by 1 percent, that is \$200 billion a year. And if that goes up and up, we are, pretty soon, collapsed in an untenable situation with our spending. We need to make this decision in our time, force this discipline on this Congress, and we need to focus, also, on what failed the last time in 1998.

One vote has now accumulated to over \$20 trillion in national debt, falling short one vote in the United States Senate. Let's not fall short here today. Let's send this over to the Senate. Let's send the message to America.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE).

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding me this time.

Last week when I saw the vote calendar for this week and I saw on it was a schedule to vote on the balanced budget amendment, I actually laughed out loud. I assumed that it was surely a joke, because there is no way the Republican majority, just a few months after voting for a \$1.9 trillion tax cut that would add more to the national debt than any other single vote in my lifetime, surely they wouldn't have the nerve to come back a few months later and, with a straight face, be pushing a balanced budget amendment. Yet it turns out it wasn't a joke. Here we are.

□ 1300

Mr. Speaker, my fellow Americans, this is part of a two-pronged attack.

Part one of that two-pronged attack was the \$1.9 trillion tax cut—83 percent of which goes to the richest 1 percent. Part two is to stand up here and say: Oh, my goodness, we suddenly have a debt problem. It must be because we are spending too much. And part two calls for pushing through a draconian bill that would mandate trillions of dollars of cuts to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, veterans programs, and other critical spending.

Here are the statistics. Under this legislation, by 2028, \$2.6 trillion would be cut from Social Security; \$1.7 trillion cut from Medicare; \$1.2 trillion cut from Medicaid, CHIP and the ACA; and finally, \$250 billion cut from veterans disability.

We cannot afford these draconian cuts. We must stand up and reject this laughable attempt to simply push through the largest cuts in American history. We must say "no."

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

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the constitutional balanced budget amendment. My constituents sent me to Washington to lower taxes, strengthen our economy, and to cut Federal spending. We have made some progress on the first two, but we have a lot of work to do on the third.

We have passed historic tax cut legislation, which is stimulating job creation and economic growth, raising wages, and allowing the American people to keep more of what is in their paycheck. The unemployment rate has remained low, and over 200,000 new manufacturing jobs have been created in the past 15 months. That is all good news for America's future.

Unfortunately, Washington has an addiction to spending money that it doesn't have, accumulating a national debt of now more than \$20 trillion. That is four times more debt than in 1995 when Washington fell one vote short of passing a balanced budget amendment. Politicians in Washington told the American people that Congress could balance the budget on their own and they didn't need a constitutional amendment. That was flat out wrong.

Unless Washington is forced to rein in spending through the discipline of a constitutional amendment, it will never balance the budget. If there is any doubt, simply look at last month's omnibus spending bill, which I voted against. That bill is exhibit A in the case for a balanced budget amendment.

Our national debt undermines our economy and our national security. Washington has a moral obligation to balance its budget. Our amendment gives Washington the discipline that it lacks by ensuring that Congress cannot spend more money than it takes in.

This resolution asks Congress to make the same tough questions and decisions about its budget that the American households and small businesses make every single day. We owe it to

our children and our grandchildren, so let's pass this resolution as a first step toward financial discipline.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed bureaucratic approach of the balanced budget amendment says nothing about our national priorities, about what to do about massive and growing economic inequality, about addressing the impact of globalization on the American people.

It says nothing about infrastructure for sustainable energy, water, transportation, communication, health, education, housing, the opioid epidemic, climate change, or Social Security. It says nothing about addressing the great inequities facing women, African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, the LGBTQ community, the disabled, or the homeless.

The balanced budget amendment would wipe out trillions of dollars of Social Security, Medicare, military and civil service retirement trust funds, and the FDIC and Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation trust funds.

At a time when our Nation may be heading for a constitutional crisis because Congress is unable to find a simple majority for legislative guarantees, guaranteeing that no one man is above the law, a balanced budget amendment would create an ongoing scenario of endless potential constitutional crises should Congress be unable to find supermajorities to resolve budget shortfalls, creating the threat of political extortion by a congressional minority. The balanced budget amendment is a direct attack on our citizens and our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, let us end this facade of reality and vote down this assault on real government.

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

(Mr. BARTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Speaker, almost 34 years ago, in January 1995, I stood right over there, held up my right hand with my 2-year-old daughter, Kristin, took an oath to defend this country and this Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. And as soon as I had taken the oath of office to be a Member of the House of Representatives, I walked over to the hopper and put in the Barton tax limitation balanced budget amendment. It was H.J. Res. 33, I believe. That was almost 34 years ago.

At that time, the national debt was less than \$2 trillion. Today, it is over \$20 trillion. In the time that I have been in the House, we have had three or four balanced budgets on a cash flow

basis, so that means we have had 30 unbalanced budgets. We have piled almost \$19 trillion on our children and our grandchildren's backs with no hope to ever repay.

The balanced budget constitutional amendment is not a panacea. It doesn't solve all of our problems, but it is a step in the right direction.

I have a few issues with this particular balanced budget amendment. It is not as strong as I would like it to be, but I commend the chairman of the Judiciary Committee for bringing it to the floor for a vote. It is a positive first step.

It is not compassionate, Mr. Speaker, to spend money we don't have and keep adding deficits that we will never repay. There is always an inexhaustible demand for more Federal dollars. At some point in time, we have to start the process of living within our means and, believe it or not, repaying what we have already borrowed.

This constitutional amendment, again, it is not perfect, but it is a step in the right direction. I urge its passage by a two-thirds vote to send it to the Senate, hopefully, for a similar two-thirds vote.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES).

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition of the so-called balanced budget amendment. Like so many Americans who have been following the budget process, I am too very disappointed with this Congress. The budget is the value statement by which we govern America.

The amendment before us and the recent massive cuts passed by Republicans are far from a reflection of those values. That tax bill added yet another \$1 trillion of debt to our children's pocketbooks. And for what? So millionaires could get a tax cut 70 times larger than what the middle class received? The vote we take today will pay for that tax cut by cutting programs the middle class depends on.

As a mother and grandmother, I have to ask: What kind of future are we leaving for our families? You cannot hand millions of dollars to millionaires and corporations one day while pretending to be concerned about our budget deficit the next. That doesn't make you a fiscal hawk.

That is why the Congressional Hispanic Caucus has been working on a plan to get us back on track, and I am proud to help lead those efforts as the chair of the Budget Task Force. In this role, I am pushing for solutions that promote the well-being and strength of our local communities. Sure, we all want a balanced budget. This vote today is not a solution. It is an attack on the middle class families we represent.

As a former mayor and a State legislator, I know firsthand the difference between a true balanced budget and what that means for securing the resources and services our States and cit-

ies need. It has long been my priority to ensure healthcare remains accessible for everyone, especially the most vulnerable in our communities. We can't do that if we are making enormous cuts to Medicare, to Medicaid, to Social Security programs our very low-income families, individuals with disabilities, seniors, and veterans depend on for their livelihoods.

More than 50 million Americans depend on Medicare. Many of them make less than \$24,000 a year. The Nation's seniors have worked their whole lives and contributed to the Social Security program. It is not a gift to them.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), a member of the Judiciary Committee and chairman of the Small Business Committee.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GOODLATTE for his long-time commitment to this very, very important issue, passing a balanced budget amendment for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, with the national debt exceeding \$20 trillion, it is long past time that we take necessary steps to restore fiscal responsibility to the budget process. Too often, spending bills are passed by adding to the deficit rather than balancing the budget and helping to pay down our national debt. It is time to reverse that mentality.

One of the greatest disappointments that I have experienced in my 22 years in Congress happened when we passed a balanced budget amendment in the House by the required two-thirds votes, but the effort failed in the Senate by just one vote, and a number of Members from the House went down to the Senate to personally watch that vote and stare those Senators in the eye, and it was such a disappointment because we all knew then how important this was to our country.

And here we are, 20-plus years later, and the debt has gone up far more than any of us thought even possible at that time. Had the balanced budget amendment passed back then, our debt today certainly would be lower, much lower.

The American people sent us here to make the difficult decisions necessary to balance the budget and to live within our means. Just as the American people have to do, every family has to balance their budget every week or every month, and they can't spend more than they take in or they end up going bankrupt. Our Federal Government is basically bankrupt, but since we print money here, we are able to go on. But that harms the American people. It harms our economy. We have got to do something about it.

We cannot continue to just hope that we pass a balanced budget. It has become increasingly obvious over the years that the only way to ensure a balanced budget is to mandate, to require that Congress pass one, and that is what we are considering today.

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Passage of the balanced budget amendment is the only thing that we

can do to make certain that we, and future Congresses, rein in the out-of-control spending and restore fiscal sanity to Washington.

The resolution offered by Chairman GOODLATTE today takes the necessary steps to ensure that for any fiscal year, total outlays—what we spend—do not exceed total receipts—what we take in. Our Nation cannot continue to spend money that it doesn't have.

Let's end the borrow-and-spend mentality that created our staggering national debt—over \$20 trillion—and put our Nation on a sustainable path by requiring that a balanced budget be enacted every year.

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations and a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I think it is important for those of us who have served here that we are down this frivolous route again: this unconstitutional effort to remedy the disaster that has been perpetrated by the Republican tax scam.

Let me tell you what the CBO Director said, who is known to be the bipartisan, nonpartisan arbiter of the work that the Congress does.

First of all, they say the tax cut will create deficits of historic proportions. Not Medicaid or Medicare or Social Security. An \$800 billion deficit in 2018, \$1 trillion in 2019, and \$1 trillion in 2020. That is what the Republicans have created.

Now, in this false and ridiculous, possibly unconstitutional effort, here we go again with a balanced budget amendment that will, in fact, deny and implode the needs of those who need Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid.

This balanced budget amendment is antidemocratic in that it requires a supermajority in Congress to increase the debt limit, deficit spending, or raise revenue. All would have been unnecessary if we had not passed the tax scam. Remember, we gave the corporate tax relief a 21 percent number, instead of 25 percent, coming from 33 percent, when they didn't ask for it.

It is antidemocratic because it enshrines one particular economic theory into the Constitution: depriving future voters and future Congresses of the ability to adopt other economic approaches. That is our responsibility as leaders giving oversight to the needs of the American people, to the needs of the Pentagon, and to the needs of domestic spending.

By the way, this deficit will be more than domestic spending and defense spending. It raises separation of powers concerns because it would open the door to allowing Federal courts to make budget policy decisions. It is eco-

nomically harmful because it would hamper the ability of Congress to respond to economic downturns and other emergencies.

Were anyone here in 2007 and 2008, particularly when the Secretary of the Treasury under the Bush administration came and told this Democratic Congress, of which I was a Member of, that America, as we knew it, was getting ready to end, that we saw the demise of Lehman Brothers and the collapse of the market, it wasn't Democrats who did that, it was Republicans. It is economically harmful because it would hamper the ability again for us to deal with those kinds of downturns.

It jeopardizes funding of Social Security and the military and civil service retirement system, and it undermines the Nation's financial system, including deposit insurance. It is unnecessary because Congress was able to achieve a balanced budget in the 1990s, of which I was here through the existing political process, and created the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Therefore, this balanced budget amendment is an amendment that creates havoc. What we should do is to undo the tax scam, repeal it, start again, and not implode Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. To the seniors who are living there: don't buy into a balanced budget amendment which is unconstitutional, buy into repealing the tax scam and standing for the American people.

I conclude by saying many national groups oppose this.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 2, the so-called Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which properly should be called the "Cut, Cap, and End Medicare and Destroy Social Security Act" because this is exactly what will happen if this amendment is passed by Congress and ratified by three-fourths of the several states.

A balanced budget amendment is a perennial gimmick periodically dusted off by House Republicans to divert attention from their manifest inability to govern competently or to manage the nation's finances.

H.J. Res. 2 is no exception coming as it does on the heels of the report by the Congressional Budget Office documenting that the Trump/GOP budget deficit continues to climb and is projected to exceed \$800 billion this year and to top \$1 trillion next year and to remain at that level for foreseeable future.

Moreover, the CBO report confirms that the GOP TaxScam passed last year by this Republican Congress on a party-line vote will not pay for itself and is in fact the major cause of the rising the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, if our friends across the aisle really want to shrink the deficit, reduce the national debt, practice fiscal responsibility, and bring about sustained economic growth and prosperity, there is a much better, easier, and more certain way to achieve these goals than by tampering with the U.S. Constitution.

The easier and better way is for the American people to put a Democrat in the White House and Democratic majorities in the House and Senate.

In the 1990s under the leadership of President Clinton the budget was balanced for four

consecutive years, the national debt was paid down, the national debt, 23 million new jobs were created, and projected surpluses exceeded \$5 trillion.

Under President Obama the financial crisis and economic meltdown inherited from his Republican predecessor was ended, the annual deficit was reduced by 67 percent, the auto industry was saved from collapse, and 15 million jobs were created.

In contrast, under every Republican administration since President Reagan the size of the deficit bequeathed to his successor was substantially larger than the one he inherited, a major economic recession occurred, and economic growth was lower than the.

Turning to the joint resolution before us, I strongly oppose this latest gimmick for the following reasons:

1. it is anti-democratic in that it requires a supermajority in Congress to increase the debt limit, deficit spending, or raise revenue;

2. it is anti-democratic because it enshrines one particular economic theory into the Constitution, depriving future voters and future Congresses of the ability to adopt other economic approaches;

3. it raises separation of powers concerns because it would open the door to allowing federal courts to make budget policy decisions;

4. it is economically harmful because it would hamper the ability of Congress to respond to economic downturns and other emergencies;

5. it jeopardizes funding for Social Security and military and civil service retirement systems;

6. it undermines the nation's financial system, including deposit insurance; and

7. it is unnecessary because Congress was able to achieve balanced budgets in the 1990's through the existing political process.

It is for these reasons that numerous outside groups committed to the economic well-being of the United States as well as organizations concerned with the needs of the elderly, the middle class, children, and other basic needs of national importance strongly opposed a measure in the 112th Congress virtually identical to Chairman GOODLATTE's current H.J. Res. 2, and that measure failed to garner a supermajority as required by the Constitution.

These groups included a coalition of 123 religious, labor, education, civil rights, child advocacy, and other organizations; a coalition of six national environmental organizations representing over one million members and activists; OMB Watch (now the Center for Effective Government); the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO); the Service Employees International Union (SEIU); the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); the National Education Association (NEA); the National Women's Law Center, Committee for Education Funding, and the Coalition on Human Needs.

Although there is a clear need to lower the long-term federal budget deficit, requiring a balanced budget through a constitutional amendment would be disastrous for the U.S. economy.

This Amendment is portrayed as the alternative to our country's deficit issue, but in reality, a Balanced Budget Amendment truly undermines the goal of a balanced budget by

threatening the survival of such critical programs as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid that serve as fundamental safety nets for millions of Americans.

These important social programs face greater demand when federal receipts are in rapid declines.

Requiring a balanced budget would force cuts to these and other important programs or force tax increases.

Either prescription would risk tipping a faltering economy into recession or making recession worse.

Any constitutional balanced budget amendment would limit the ability of the federal government to make important investments in worthy causes, including crucial public safety and homeland security programs.

Even at times of fiscal austerity, we must continue to provide for the country's public safety and homeland security needs.

Any constitutional balanced budget amendment would grossly undermine the ability to protect the lives and well-being of Americans nationwide.

Further, this Amendment will gridlock Congress during an economic downturn.

There has never been such a blatant effort to ransom the American economy in order to extort from the American public.

While I support bipartisan efforts to increase the debt limit and to resolve our differences over budgetary revenue and spending issues, I cannot support a bill that unduly robs average Americans of their economic security and ability to provide for their families, while constraining the ability of the Congress to deal effectively with America's economic, fiscal, and job creation challenges.

We need to change the tone here in the Congress.

There has been a theme in previous Congresses and in this Congress of focusing on cutting programs that benefit those who need it most, while ignoring the need to focus on real and contemporary job creation and economic recovery.

And by real and contemporary job creation, I do not mean Trump's unsubstantiated and impossible promise of coal jobs.

The creation of coal jobs is one of the many myths and false hopes peddled by the current White House.

The promise that jobs in coal are just around the corner is fake news.

Our time could be better spent focusing on ways to increase American jobs, growing our economy, and investing in our people, paying our bills, and resolving our differences.

That is the way you make and keep America great.

A balanced budget is not something that should be mandated in our Constitution, nor is it something that should be required every year, proposing an idea that offers little guarantee of success.

In particular, during economic downturns, the government can stimulate growth by cutting taxes and increasing spending.

And in fact, the cost of many government benefit programs is designed to automatically increase when the economy is down—for example, costs for food stamps (SNAP) and Medicaid increase when more people need to rely upon them.

These countercyclical measures lessen the impact of job losses and economic hardship associated with economic downturns.

The resulting temporary increases in spending could cause deficits that would trigger the balanced budget requirements at the worst possible moment.

A constitutional amendment requiring the Congress to cut spending to match revenue every year would both limit the Congress's ability to respond to changing fiscal conditions and would dramatically impede federal responses to high unemployment as well as federal guarantees for food and medical assistance.

As with the outlay cap that a Balanced Budget Amendment would bring, tying outlays to a percentage of GDP would impose arbitrary limits on government actions to respond to an economic slowdown or recession, when GDP declines.

Cutting spending during a recession could make a recession worse by increasing the number of unemployed, decreasing business investment, and withholding services needed to jump-start the economy.

The proposed Balanced Budget Amendment would render Social Security unconstitutional in its current form due to the Amendment's prohibitive stance on that system of spending.

Capping future spending below Reagan-era levels would force devastating cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Head Start, child care, Pell grants, and many other critical programs.

Because this proposal would make it impossible for the Congress to increase revenues rather than to cut spending, it is virtually a political ploy that reflects the Republican priorities of ending the Medicare guarantee while cutting taxes for millionaires.

The need to raise the debt ceiling has no correlation to whether future budgets are balanced; increases in the debt ceiling reflect past decisions on fiscal policy.

And as demonstrated by current disagreement about whether and when to raise the debt ceiling, Congress does not need to impose further barriers to its consideration.

Treasury has warned that failing to raise the debt ceiling and the resulting government default, which would be unprecedented, would have catastrophic impacts on the economy.

Interest rates would rise, increasing costs for the government and for American businesses and families.

Any cuts made to accommodate a mandated balanced budget would fall most heavily on domestic discretionary programs; the immediate result of a balanced budget amendment would be devastating cuts in education, homeland security, public safety, health care and research, transportation and other vital services.

Under H.J. Res. 2 total funding would be cut for non-defense discretionary programs, including veterans' medical care, most homeland security activities, border protection, and the FBI.

Therefore, these cuts will impact funds to protect our nation's food and water supply, environmental protections, medical research, education, and services for disadvantaged or abused children, frail elderly people, and people with severe disabilities.

The Founders purposely made the Constitutional amendment process a long and arduous one.

It is foolish, reckless, and decidedly not conservative to rush to pass an amendment altering our nation's founding document on such

short notice and without reasonable time for debate.

Republicans who support this proposed amendment to the Constitution have demonstrated, at this critical juncture in American history, that they are profoundly irresponsible when it comes to the integrity of our economy and utterly bereft of sensible solutions for fixing it.

Medicare covers a population with diverse needs and circumstances.

Most people with Medicare live on modest incomes.

While many many beneficiaries enjoy good health, 25 percent or more have serious health problems and live with multiple chronic conditions, including cognitive and functional impairments.

Today, 43 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries are between 65 and 74 years old and 12 percent are 85 or older.

Those who are 85 or older are the fastest-growing age group among elderly Medicare beneficiaries.

With the aging and growth of the population, the number of Medicare beneficiaries more than doubled between 1966 and 2000 and is projected to grow from 45 million today to 79 million in 2030.

For these reasons, I am strongly opposed to despoiling the Constitution by even considering the Republicans' latest Balanced Budget Amendment gimmick.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 2, proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States. And I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for the incredible work he has done on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, families across America have to balance their budgets, and it is time Washington does the same thing. I was the mayor of my local city before I came here: six balanced budgets with surpluses each and every year. Forty-eight States, including my home State of Tennessee, require a balanced budget by law.

What makes Washington any different?

Members of Congress are required to balance their office budgets or pay for any overages themselves. Guess what, Mr. Speaker? 435 balanced budgets.

The rhetoric we hear from the other side is that the reason we have magic budget deficits is tax cuts. Let's talk about an inconvenient truth: revenues collected by the Federal Government have never been higher in the history of this country. Revenue has increased nearly 8 percent annually over the last 7 years. And, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government doesn't need to spend 8 percent more revenue each and every year. What we need to do is rein in our spending. Spending is the problem.

The other point we have heard is that the recent omnibus spending bill is another sign that Congress lacks seriousness about addressing spending. Well, discretionary spending has been growing in at or about 2.4 percent over the last

14 years annualized. That is a lot more than many of us would like, but we basically have held this spending in check.

The problem is our ballooning mandatory programs that account for 70 cents of every dollar we spend annually is a problem. Mandatory spending, which includes pensions, food stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and others is growing at 7½ percent per year. Medicare and Social Security both face a crisis in the not-too-distant future, and Congress has to make hard choices about how to secure these programs for future generations. I am convinced, however, that the only way Congress will make those hard choices is if we are forced to.

Both parties bear responsibility for our annual budget deficits, but people have a choice here today. The last time we had a chance to vote on a similar resolution was 2011, and the only thing that has changed since then is that our debt and deficit have exploded further. It is time that we, in Congress, make the hard decision and require Washington to abide by the same budget before it is too late and we can't right the ship: the same thing that families do every single week and month of the year.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.J. Res. 2, and I encourage all of my colleagues to do the same and help start the process of bringing some fiscal responsibility back to Washington.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, no one in their right mind should be supporting this cynical and hypocritical Republican balanced budget amendment. This resolution has been rushed to the floor today without a single committee hearing.

The don't-tax-but-spend Republicans just exploded the national debt. They exploded this national debt by nearly \$2 trillion with the tax scam-tax cut bill that dished out a \$5.5 trillion gift to big multinational corporations and to the top 1 percent crowd: \$5.5 trillion. Now they come back dumping, like a wheelbarrow full of horse manure, a radical balanced budget amendment onto this House floor today.

The Washington Post said that this is like Donald Trump proposing to lead a campaign to make adultery illegal. I agree with that assessment.

After passing their \$5.5 trillion tax cut, and after passage of the omnibus spending bill that exploded the national debt, the don't-tax-but-spend Republicans are now shamelessly demanding that needy seniors sacrifice their retirement security to pay for the shameful tax giveaway to the greedy.

And that is not all. Just this week, the CBO released a report forecasting annual deficits of \$1 trillion or more every single year that President Trump remains in office.

This Republican hypocrisy has got to stop.

Republican fiscal strategy has three goals: one, cut taxes for the wealthy; two, keep up the charade that they are fiscally responsible; and, three, and above all, they want to cut the social safety net. They want to cut programs like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and food stamps, all to pay for their handouts to those who already have plenty.

Enough is enough.

The American people cannot afford Republicans' fiscal hypocrisy any longer.

Democrats will continue to fight for a better deal for working people in America: policies that create good-paying jobs, reduce the deficit, and grow the economy for everyone. Americans deserve a better deal. They deserve better jobs, better wages, and a better future.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time.

Let's make no mistake today. The only reason that we are here, today, talking about an amendment to the Constitution to force Congress to balance a budget is because of the lack of fiscal responsibility of this body over the past several years.

Throughout the history of the United States, the United States has gone into debt during times of national crisis or war, but both parties understood the danger to our national security and our economy by sustaining a debt and, therefore, worked together to pay off that debt. But not in the modern era of Congress, no. We continue to print money, and we continue to go deeper and deeper into debt.

Make no mistake, the American people understand that this enormous debt that we have accrued in this country of \$21 trillion is a responsibility of Congress, and it is our responsibility to fix this problem. Now, a lot of people don't understand how much money \$21 trillion really is. That is part of the problem. Our debt is so big that no one really understands how big this debt is. Let me put it into perspective.

Regardless of your background or your religious beliefs, if you know what today's date is, you know historically when Jesus was born. If you were to go back to the moment that Jesus was born and put \$17,000 into the bank, and you waited 60 seconds and put another \$17,000 into the bank, you waited another 60 seconds and deposited another \$17,000 into the bank, and you continued to put \$17,000 into the bank every minute since Jesus was born, you still wouldn't have enough money to pay off our national debt today, and that is an atrocity to the American people.

There is one way to fix this. We can either pass this amendment and have it ratified, or we can actually have the fortitude to pass a balanced budget.

The Republican Study Committee will bring to this floor a balanced budget, as we have many times in the past. And if my colleagues who are calling us hypocrites are serious about balancing this budget, then they will come together and vote for a budget that balanced. We have the authority, we have the power to do that, it is just we don't have the fortitude or willingness to do what is hard. We owe it to our grandchildren, and we owe it to our children.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU).

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, after years of irresponsibly adding to our national debt in order to make the rich richer, Republicans are now trying to con the American people with this insidious and insincere balanced budget amendment.

I say insincere because Republicans have been the greatest contributors to our national debt. They eagerly supported and even extended President Bush's 2001 tax cuts, which added more than \$5 trillion to the deficit over 10 years. And at the start of this Congress, they rushed headlong into another \$2.3 trillion tax scam that the Congressional Budget Office says will put our deficit over \$1 trillion within just 2 years.

And what do the American people get for all of that? Very little, if you are not already rich, since 80 percent of that \$2.3 trillion goes straight to the top 1 percent.

□ 1330

Here is why I say this is insidious. First, they pass a Robin Hood tax scam that robs the coffers and gives it to the wealthiest, then they use that debt that they themselves created to justify draconian cuts to the vast majority of Americans who are not millionaires.

In his budget, President Trump proposed cuts of \$1.4 trillion from Medicaid, \$500 billion from Medicare, \$65 billion from Social Security.

Fortunately, Democrats blocked these cuts, but if this amendment passes, look out, America. The programs you depend on will be pillaged to pay for the Republican tax cuts, despite our warnings that it would result in exactly this situation.

In fact, the latest Center on Budget and Policy report said that the cuts mandated by this amendment would result in Social Security being cut by \$325 billion in 2025 alone.

On seeing the CBO's deficit report, Senator BOB CORKER, referencing the tax scam, said: "It could be one of the worst votes I have ever made."

Well, we tried to warn you, but now the American people shouldn't be the ones to pay for the mistake.

If Republicans want to balance the budget, there is nothing stopping them. It is time that we stop the tax scam.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL).

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Michigan requires a balanced annual budget. We actually have

a rainy day fund. A rainy day fund will ensure when tax revenues fall because of the economy, we can pay our costs to run the government.

Every household needs to balance its budget and live within its means. Imagine that. A novel concept. This Federal Government should do the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, the current U.S. national debt has topped \$21 trillion. We could make a big stack of that here. I am not sure we could count that high or have the time to do it today. We are coming to the edge of a fiscal crisis, unless we take aggressive steps to rein in our debt, our spending.

I spent 35 years in business. I full well know that in order to be successful, you can't just spend whatever you think you need and hope it all works out.

I have heard colleagues on the other side of the aisle say, "What? We brought this to the floor without hearings?"

We need to have hearings about not spending more than we have? I can't imagine that. Think about that.

We talk about if we actually reduce our spending, we are going to pillage programs? On the other side of the aisle, they talk about just increase taxes.

I went to the school of economics and public policy. The reality is, look at what has happened in Greece and other countries. You can't, by raising taxes, simply think you are going to get more revenue. In fact, it goes someplace else frequently. The answer is not spend yourself into oblivion and hope to raise taxes.

That is why I stand here today in full support of H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment. I cosponsored it, I support it. It brings needed financial discipline to this Congress, because it is abundantly clear to me in 16 months here, we are unable to control our spending unless someone puts the reins on us, puts us, frankly, in handcuffs, because we find a way to spend more money than we ever hope to have.

It is time to stop. We owe it to the American people, we owe it to our children and grandchildren; otherwise, frankly, we are going to shackle them to debt for their entire lives.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds just to set the record straight.

We did indeed hold a hearing on the balanced budget amendment. I do agree with the gentleman from Michigan that the obvious was stated in that hearing, but a hearing was indeed held.

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I would note that most households do not balance their budgets. They borrow to buy the car, they borrow for the mortgage, and if they didn't do that, they wouldn't have a car or a mortgage.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this balanced budget amendment.

Just a few months ago, Republicans plunged this Nation nearly \$2 trillion deeper into debt with a tax scam bill that gave massive handouts to corporations and the ultra wealthy.

Another trip down memory lane reminds us that Republicans care so much about balancing our budget, that one of the first things that they did upon taking the majority back in 2010 was repealing paygo rules that required Congress to pay for our spending.

What better way to cover up yesterday's fiscal malfeasance than to hide behind a cynical and hypocritical promise to be more fiscally responsible tomorrow?

There are really only two possibilities here: either my Republican colleagues can't do simple math or something more sinister is going on. One thing is clear: Republicans have proven time and again that they don't deserve the benefit of the doubt.

When Republicans preach the virtues of fiscal responsibility, what they really mean is that they want to take away the Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits that millions of Americans have earned. That is not fiscal responsibility; that is moral cruelty.

By creating a massive hole in the deficit with the Republican tax scam, this middle class con was the first step of a scheme to undermine Social Security and Medicare. This disgraceful amendment being considered today is the second step.

We have seen this movie before. Republicans followed the budget-busting Bush tax cuts for the wealthy with an attempt to privatize Social Security and they followed the budget-busting Bush recession with an attempt to voucherize Medicare.

The best way to clean up the fiscal mess made by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is to repeal the Republican tax scam. We do not need to amend the Constitution, and we must not force their fiscal mess to be cleaned up at the cost of our seniors' health and dignity.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the amendment and to keep fighting against the Republicans' perpetual crusade to break the promises we have made to our seniors.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER).

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Chairman GOODLATTE's balanced budget amendment.

Clearly, the status quo here in Congress is failing the American people, and real change is needed. Our budget process is broken, and a balanced budget amendment is exactly the mecha-

nism we need to force the decisions to get our fiscal house in order.

Congress has passed more than 100 continuing resolutions just in the last 20 years. We move from one continuing resolution and one omnibus to the next.

I knew when I came to Congress that the Federal budget process wasn't working as intended. From the outside, it doesn't look good. Now having served on the Budget Committee for more than a year, I can say it doesn't look any better from the inside.

The latest omnibus supported a number of provisions, like funding our military, fighting the opioid epidemic, agricultural reform, school safety measures, measures that I support, but these priorities can and must be achieved in a fiscally responsible manner that doesn't grow the size of the Federal Government.

How do I know we can achieve that? Because we took steps in that direction on the Budget Committee. Last year, the committee passed a budget that would balance in 10 years. It was a fiscally responsible path towards funding critical government programs, but that budget isn't enforceable and no one is accountable.

So I think the first step is to pass this balanced budget amendment here in the House. It is long past time that Congress finally put an end to irresponsible spending, saddling our children and grandchildren with an insurmountable debt.

This amendment would make balancing the budget the norm rather than the exception. It would codify Congress' responsibility to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

There are numerous proposals to reform our Federal budget process, some that I have introduced myself, but I believe this amendment would be the most meaningful budget and spending reform that we could enact. It works for the States, it works in Pennsylvania, and it will work for Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GOODLATTE for his leadership. Every Congress since 2007, he has introduced this amendment to balance our Federal Government. It is an important effort and one that he has led.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the distinguished ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 2, the disgraceful so-called balanced budget amendment.

You know, it has been said again and again on this side of the aisle, but I think it warrants saying it even more. The Republicans passed their tax bill for the wealthiest 1 percent, which blew tremendous holes into the deficit. So coming here now a few months later and purporting to be concerned about

the rising deficit, I mean, the actions are different than the words, because the Republican tax scam blew a hole in the deficit, made it very difficult.

So if you really want to change and you really want to have a balanced budget, the way to do it is to sit down with both sides and try to figure out a way to do it that is equitable, not something that only helps 1 percent and has devastating cuts for the rest of Americans.

So the Republican tax cuts will balloon the Federal deficit by nearly \$2 million over the next decade.

Again, this is not about balancing the budget. This is an attempt to push an extreme agenda that will result in disastrous cuts to vital programs that benefit Americans. Medicare would be cut by \$200 billion by 2025, Medicaid and healthcare subsidies by \$150 billion, Social Security by \$325 billion, and veterans' disability compensation would be cut by up to \$30 billion.

Not only will this hurt the elderly, our veterans, and the sick, but this dangerous amendment will also tie the hands of the Federal Government and make it impossible for Congress to respond to urgent matters of national security, like natural disasters, like international security crises—we on the Foreign Affairs Committee are always worried about that, obviously—or a dramatic turnaround in the economy. We won't be able to react to this.

So this amendment makes future increases in the debt limit nearly impossible, threatening the full faith and credit of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this measure and work together to find responsible solutions to create jobs, reduce the deficit, and take care of the American people.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, when many of us were growing up learning how to use our first spare dollars or our first credit card, our parents and teachers always told us, "Budget your money and don't spend more than you have."

This is a simple, commonsense life lesson we are all taught at some time or another when we are growing up. It is a reality for any individual who wants to have a sustainable future. It is unfortunate, however, that the same rules do not apply for Congress, our Nation's largest and most important spender.

The United States currently faces \$20 trillion in debt, which will lead us to a fiscal crisis if unabated. Year after year, our mandatory spending levels increase, leaving little room for our defense, education, and other spending priorities.

If we continue down this path, it is estimated that by 2040, spending for mandatory programs will make up 81 percent of our annual budget. This trajectory of runaway mandatory spending is skyrocketing our national debt.

It is evident that this Congress has not taken the necessary steps to balance the Federal budget.

It is time that this Congress make the tough decisions necessary to reduce the national debt and practice restrained spending.

Representative GOODLATTE's balanced budget amendment would require the President to submit an annual balanced budget to Congress and mandate that Congress cannot spend more money than it receives in revenue.

The next steps we take to change our Federal spending behavior will impact future generations of this country. We owe it to our children and grandchildren, those who will inherit this great Nation, to address our national debt.

I remain committed to reining in Federal spending and ensuring Americans' tax dollars are spent wisely, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of Representative GOODLATTE's balanced budget amendment.

Let's pass this commonsense measure and finally prioritize fiscal responsibility, and make smarter, more responsible Federal spending choices for the people of this Nation.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in December, Republicans rushed, and I do mean rushed, sped to pass with little thought, debate, or consideration for the long-term impact, a tax overhaul that has since been exposed over and over again for its structural and fiscal flaws.

Contrary to the false bill of goods that they are still marketing to the American people, this scam would shower wealthy households and big corporations with the dollars shaved off of the incomes of working Americans nationwide. It further widens the already gaping divide between the ultra rich and the middle class.

In New Jersey, my constituents will be among those hardest hit as it guts the Federal deduction for State and local taxes, the exact opposite of the cuts and breaks Republicans have given so much lip service to.

□ 1345

Now, months after patting themselves on the back, Republicans are backtracking. It seems that, on second thought, lining the pockets of millionaires and corporations to the tune of \$1.5 trillion isn't a sound fiscal decision, and to fix it, they decided to revive the so-called balanced budget amendment.

To be very clear, this isn't about fiscal responsibility. This is just another scam, hoodwinking working Americans as they cut, slash, and burn away the programs and services that keep families going, that help keep food on the table during rough spells, and that

maintain basic living standards and help people find jobs.

To save the cuts they made for millionaires, they will use this amendment to slash healthcare access and the retirement security of our seniors through cuts to Social Security and Medicare.

To save the cuts they made for millionaires, they will use this amendment to cut employment insurance, early childhood education, and nutrition programs.

To save the cuts they made for millionaires, they will use this amendment to wreak havoc for working families.

Instead of more cuts, we should be focused on investments that will produce jobs and economic growth, building new roads and bridges, ensuring workers make decent wages, and giving our young people the best chance at a good education and a bright future.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this so-called balanced budget amendment and the harm it represents.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. GIANFORTE).

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, and I appreciate his leadership on this critical issue.

Washington doesn't have a revenue problem. Washington has a spending problem, plain and simple, and it is past time we get our fiscal house in order.

The last time the Federal Government ran a budget surplus was about two decades ago. At the time, the economy was growing, unemployment was low, and Republicans controlled Congress. In 1997, Republicans cut spending and taxes, and for the next 4 years, the Federal Government ran a surplus.

Since that time, Washington has failed to live within its means. The national debt stood at \$5.8 trillion in 2001. Since then, it has nearly quadrupled to more than \$21 trillion.

But this issue isn't just about the numbers. Ultimately, our kids and grandkids will pay for the Federal spending we are not willing to pay for today. We shouldn't force future generations to pick up the tab for Washington's voracious spending appetite.

The sobering truth is that, if we fail to make the necessary spending reforms today, we will face a fiscal crisis. The only way out of such a fiscal crisis would be punishing tax increases and drastic cuts to essential government programs.

It is time we take action to bring fiscal discipline to Washington and avert a fiscal crisis. If you are in a hole, the quickest way out is to stop digging. Amending the Constitution to require a balanced budget is how we quit digging. The amendment will force the Federal Government to face the reality that households and small businesses face every day: you can't spend more than you make.

Let's get on the record here. Should the Federal Government balance its

budget? Should it live within its means like hardworking Americans who make tough decisions about how they make ends meet?

The answer is yes, which is why I have cosponsored and will vote for the balanced budget amendment. I encourage my colleagues to vote for this resolution and begin to get our fiscal house in order.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, this morning, at the House Armed Services Committee, Secretary James Mattis applauded the bipartisan collaboration and demonstrated political courage for lifting the spending caps of sequestration so that the military readiness of this country could catch up with the huge demands that are happening in terms of our national security.

I cite that reference this morning because, in looking at this balanced budget constitutional amendment, a FOX News reporter described the effect of this is that "a balanced budget requirement would be sequestration amped up on a cocktail of anabolic steroids and fiscal fentanyl."

If people worried about the U.S. military over the last 4 years since the Budget Control Act was passed because of sequestration, they should not vote for this balanced budget amendment because it is not only a straitjacket, it is a straitjacket with a constitutional lock that would freeze Congress' ability to provide the resources to defend our Nation.

Again, just look at the sequence of what happened in terms of sequestration and the damage it did to our country, and listen to what that FOX News analyst said that it would do to our national defense and to our country's ability to address its basic needs and kill Social Security and Medicare, which will be the target if this ever were to pass.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), chairman of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I also thank him for his friendship, and I thank him for his leadership in fiscal sanity.

Along with Chairman GOODLATTE, I will be leaving Congress at the end of this year. Serving in Congress has been the greatest privilege of my life, but I leave with one great regret, and that regret is my inability to convince my colleagues of the peril of ignoring the debt trajectory this Nation is on. We cannot continue to spend money we do not have.

Mr. Speaker, my iPad is awash—awash—of reports about how our spending trajectory is unsustainable. CBO, OMB, private foundations, they all conclude the same thing: the picture of national bankruptcy is ugly.

It wasn't that many years ago that we saw it in Greece. We saw soup

kitchens, padlocked factories, hospitals that could no longer turn on the lights, college-educated people forced into subsistence agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think America is going to be Greece. I wish I knew it for a fact. But here is what I do know: if we don't quit spending money we don't have, we will become a second-rate economic power, a second-rate military power, and, frankly, a second-rate authority, moral authority, as we become the first generation in America's history to leave the next generation with a lower standard of living. That simply is not unintelligent; that is immoral.

Can we have that stain on our record for generations to come?

Mr. Speaker, frankly, I wish we were debating a spending limit amendment today, which is my preference; but at least the balanced budget amendment is a fair fight so that we at least do not mortgage our children's future, our grandchildren's future.

Again, there is a moral imperative. We know what Churchill once said about us, and that is:

Americans can usually be counted on to do the right thing once they have exhausted every other possibility.

It is a humorous comment for a situation that is not humorous. We cannot wait. This is the most foreseeable crisis in America's future.

Today we can make history. Today we can ensure that we show fidelity to our Founding Fathers and to future generations and, for once, going forward, ensure that it is enshrined in our most sacred document that we balance the budget and do not mortgage our children's future.

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, like some stormy sermon from Trump on the virtues of chastity, I believe these House Republicans today really do deserve a gold medal for hypocrisy.

After approving their budget-busting, trickle-down, trillion-dollar tax break and refusing to pay a dime for their huge increase in military spending, they have the audacity to advance a balanced budget amendment. Choosing words over deeds, they shamelessly preach the gospel of "do what I say, not what I do."

I have already voted for a balanced budget when I voted for not going into an unnecessary war without paying anything for it.

I voted for a balanced budget when I voted to reject the distorted Republican theology that, when it comes to taxes, less always means more. The more tax cut theology has proven wrong over and over and over again. Republicans keep demanding just one more tax cut to drive us ever deeper into debt.

Dripping in red ink, this newest Trump tax bill that he is promoting right now at the White House certainly validates his boast that he is the "King of Debt," and these House Republicans are his supplicants.

Our children and our grandchildren are being saddled with over \$2 trillion in debt just because of this one bill, all so that Trump, his wealthy buddies, and a few multinational corporations, can receive a tax windfall.

For Trump and his congressional enablers, fiscal responsibility is just a hollow political slogan that they use to undermine the vital education, healthcare, and retirement security initiatives, like Medicare, that they have always not truly supported. They would surely let Medicare "with(er) on the vine," to use the words of one the King of Debt's loudest troubadours.

Reject this proposal.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), and I ask unanimous consent that he may control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS).

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 2 and to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for his leadership on this really critically important issue.

Washington is broken. After years of excessive spending and wasteful stimulus projects, our national debt now tops \$21 trillion. That is more than \$60,000 for each and every American. This is unsustainable. But we are here to pass a resolution, the balanced budget amendment. This is a solution to this \$21 trillion debt.

Simply put, this amendment means Washington can't spend more than it takes in. It means Congress has to live within a budget, just like families in West Virginia. Families every day have to make careful choices about how to best spend their money. It is time for the Federal Government to do the same.

I am a proud cosponsor of this resolution and urge my colleagues to vote "yes" later today for a balanced budget amendment. It is time to get our fiscal house in order.

Pass this resolution. Pass the balanced budget amendment. Let's get our fiscal house in order. The American people are depending on us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) will control the time of the gentleman from New York.

There was no objection.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), a scholar and a gentleman.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, there is a word for what we are witnessing today, and that word is "chutzpah."

The majority is proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States just months after passing the Trump tax scheme, which

the Congressional Budget Office warned would increase the deficit by \$1.6 trillion over 10 years. So having broken the bank and spent their way into default, they now want a balanced budget amendment to protect all the rest of us.

□ 1400

Like I said, chutzpah. One would think such devoted Reaganites might have learned the lesson already.

The majority has once again asked the American people to stomach a massive deficit increase on the hope and the prayer that tax decreases will pay for themselves.

That is the same trickle-down narrative we heard in the Reagan years and the Bush years, and it didn't work then, and it is not going to work now.

The 1981 tax cuts were so disastrous, for example, for Federal deficits, that Presidents Regan and Bush, Sr., had to enact legislation to raise taxes to make up for the shortfall in 1982, 1983, 1984, 1987, and 1990.

Other than that, yeah, tax cuts pay for themselves.

When President Obama took office, he inherited a deficit of more than \$1.5 trillion in the depths of the Great Recession that President Bush gave him. That deficit was cut by more than two-thirds in President Obama's tenure in office.

By this time next year, however, the Republican tax policy and President Trump's policies will have doubled the deficit in just the first 2 years.

This level of fiscal irresponsibility could rival that of the Bush years, when we went from a surplus to a deficit, from a \$128 billion surplus to a deficit of \$1.16 trillion.

Trickle-down theories don't work. They are a bad experiment for the American people. I urge rejection on the grounds of intellectual honesty and integrity of this balanced budget amendment.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, as virtually every American now understands, Washington is broken.

For years, Congress has spent irresponsibly and with what seems to be little or no thought for how it might affect future generations.

We are passing along a bill that our children and grandchildren may never be able to pay, and it is as immoral as it is unsustainable.

Meanwhile, our Nation's top military officials have repeatedly warned Congress that the number one threat to our national security is our debt.

We have no choice now but to correct this wrong and institute policies that promote fiscal responsibility.

Currently, our national debt exceeds \$20 trillion, and the number increases every second. Mr. Speaker, when I do townhalls back home, I put the debt clock up on the screen very often and allow our constituents to watch that clock toll. It is frightening.

The last omnibus package, which is a whopping 2,232 pages in length, allocated another \$1.3 trillion. That is about \$582 million of Federal spending per page.

Our government is out of control, and we have to put an end to the dangerous and clearly excessive spending patterns that are coming out of Washington and out of this body.

As I have said on more than one occasion, people all across America sit down at their kitchen tables and create budgets for their families. Small businesses make countless sacrifices to manage their balance sheets. And our government should act no differently.

We cannot continue to spend money we don't have and drive ourselves further into the debt of hostile nations like China, who is the primary creditor in holding all of our debt.

Passing a balanced budget amendment is a commonsense solution that will put us back on the right track and restore fiscal sanity to the Congress.

The balanced budget amendment will ensure our government acts as a good steward of America's tax dollars, not only today, but for all the days in the future. It has the potential to make the bloated budgets of Washington a thing of the past.

Opponents of this amendment will say that passing this will force serious cuts to our budget. And to that we respond and say: Of course it will. We simply cannot get out of the hole that we have created without making tough decisions. But that is our job. That is why we are elected as the duly elected representatives of the people.

Right now, our country faces a point of no return with our debt, and there should be nothing controversial about telling our Federal Government to act within its means. This is simply about aligning and agreeing upon our top priorities.

Thomas Jefferson said that the representatives of a nation should never take on more debt than they themselves can pay in their own lifetime.

We abandoned that principle a long time ago, and, unfortunately, we have already far exceeded that amount in this body and in our lifetime, and it is now our moral obligation to right this wrong.

This is really about who we are as Americans, if you listen to the Founders. That is why I urge my colleagues to support the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, and help restore and preserve the American Dream for our children and for all future generations.

We owe that to the country. Fiscal sanity, responsibility, and good stewardship is why we were sent here, and it is what we must do.

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the Members that my Republican Senator BOB CORKER said that this Congress will go down in history as the worst fiscal Congress in history

for having voted for both the tax scam bill and the big cuts for the wealthy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.J. Res. 2.

We often get distracted by debating the title of a proposed constitutional amendment without getting into serious discussion about whether or not the specific provisions will actually help balance the budget.

If we are ever going to balance the budget, the fact is it is going to require Members to cast some tough votes, and many of these votes will be career-ending votes, and a constitutional amendment calling itself the balanced budget amendment cannot change that reality.

Meaningful deficit reduction is politically difficult, and it is ironic that the Republican majority seems suddenly concerned about the deficit and balancing the budget. They must have forgotten that just 4 months ago they voted for a \$1.5 trillion tax scam that gave massive handouts to big corporations and the wealthiest 1 percent.

They repeatedly claimed that these tax cuts would pay for themselves, but last week the Congressional Budget Office told the truth, estimating that their tax scam will add almost \$2 trillion to our national debt.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most consequential votes I cast early in my career was the 1993 Clinton budget. That budget included tax increases and spending cuts, many of which were very unpopular at the time, but it was the fiscally responsible thing to do. Not one Republican voted for the 1993 Clinton budget.

Needless to say, the 1993 budget was a tough vote, but it helped create over 20 million jobs, the stock market more than tripled, it led to the first balanced budget in a generation, and, by the end of the Clinton administration, it included projected surpluses large enough to have paid off the entire national debt held by the public by 2008.

But it also contributed to 50 House Democrats losing their seats in the next election.

As soon as the Republicans took control of the Federal Government in 2001 with the White House, House, and Senate, they passed massive tax cuts, not paying for them; fought two wars, didn't pay for it; passed a prescription drug benefit, didn't pay for it. So by 2008, instead of zero national debt held by the public, the debt was \$5.8 trillion.

So now we have the balanced budget amendment, and the problem is that the balanced budget amendment will not balance the budget.

The fact is that the major provision in this legislation is the requirement that if a budget is unbalanced, it requires a three-fifths vote, and the fact is that this proposal will actually make it virtually impossible to ever pass a fiscally tough deficit reduction plan similar to the 1993 Clinton budget.

That budget wasn't balanced in the first year, and, under this proposed

amendment, instead of a simple majority, it would require a three-fifths supermajority in the House and the Senate.

The fact is, it should be obvious that any tough deficit reduction plan will be unbalanced in the first year, and so it will be harder to pass by requiring a three-fifths supermajority than a simple majority.

The question is: Will that supermajority make it more likely that we would end up with a fiscally responsible budget or a fiscally irresponsible budget?

Obviously, it is more likely that we would pass a fiscally irresponsible Christmas tree budget where every Member gets a present under the tree than it would be to get enough career-ending votes to meet the three-fifths requirement under this legislation.

And note that this amendment places no limit on how far out of balance the budget can be once you get to three-fifths.

Mr. Speaker, we shouldn't be distracted by the resolution's misleading title. Balancing the budget will require tough votes, not constitutional amendments. My colleagues must seriously consider whether the resolution's actual provisions will help or hurt.

It is obvious it would make it virtually impossible to pass any kind of balanced budget or responsible budget; therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. HANDEL).

Mrs. HANDEL. Mr. Speaker, let me first begin by commending Chairman GOODLATTE and my colleagues on the House Judiciary Committee for their hard work on this important issue.

I have been in Congress just 10 months, but I have already seen firsthand that the budget process is fundamentally broken.

While I supported the funding measures under this broken process, I did so with reluctance. But both parties—both parties—have brought us to this place with the severe fiscal challenges that we face today. But balancing our budget is not, should not be, a partisan issue.

Across the country, virtually every State has a balanced budget requirement, and Governors and legislatures of both parties meet that requirement. Congress should too.

Ultimately, balanced budgets are about accountability. We must hold the Federal Government and Congress accountable and insist that the overall budget be managed in a fiscally responsible way. The status quo, the same old kick-the-can-down-the-road, we-will-get-to-it-next-time approach is simply no longer an option.

Big problems require tough choices. Every day that we continue to borrow and assume more debt, our decisions get all the more difficult, and the solutions all the more catastrophic.

This balanced budget amendment is only a first step, but a much-needed

step, to improving the fiscal state of our Nation.

Our current path is unsustainable. Sooner than most realize, this path will not even allow us to continue to meet the promises already made to the American people.

"Don't spend more than you earn." That is what I was taught. And that is what families across this country do every single day.

It is time for Congress to do the same, Mr. Speaker. I ask my colleagues to support this balanced budget amendment, not for the sake of politics, but rather for the sake of the future of this country and generations to come.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the ranking member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, who is always so generous and kind.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there aren't too many of us here on the floor today who were here in 1996, when I supported a balanced budget amendment. It did pass the House. It failed by one vote in the Senate.

Had it become law, George Bush could not have invaded Iraq and simultaneously cut taxes and blown the projected surplus into a huge deficit and debt.

But here we are today.

Now, this debate was actually scheduled for April 1. You know, April Fools' Day. But the House was on its Easter recess, so this is as soon as they could bring it up on the floor.

But it is an April fool. This is an April fool.

Now, we had one colleague call it chutzpah. I was trying to think of ways to describe it: dissimulation, insincerity, false piousness, hypocrisy.

Not this balanced budget amendment; not at this time.

They have just cut revenues by \$3 trillion. We are projecting a deficit of \$1 trillion in 2 years, and they are saying they want to cut taxes more.

Well, then that means something else has got to go. And Speaker RYAN has already talked about what the something else is. It is Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid. Those are the things that have got to go.

Well, there is a dirty, little secret about Social Security. I was actually using this on 9/11. I will have to get an updated version.

But there actually is a Social Security trust fund, and this is a depository instrument for the Social Security trust fund, and it is here backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the United States of America to be paid to the Federal Old-age and Survivors Insurance Fund.

There are \$3 trillion that have been collected from every working American in the Social Security trust fund.

Now, we have an aging population. There is a problem, but it could be fixed. But the point is, under this amendment, if it was law today, Social Security benefits would be cut today

because, under this amendment, Social Security could only spend its income, which this year was \$40 billion less than its outlays.

□ 1415

What did it do? It cashed in some of its \$3 trillion of assets and they paid full Social Security benefits.

So if this little dream that they have here going passed, every American would have seen their Social Security reduced by \$643 this year, and every year that number would grow, while the \$3 trillion already collected from the American people to pay benefits would never be paid out. Talk about false promises to the American people. That is one heck of a false promise.

I have introduced a balanced budget amendment that makes a little more sense. It can't have these OCO, overseas contingency operation, funds where we shower \$50 billion, \$100 billion on the Pentagon, and it doesn't count. We are borrowing the money. It is creating debt, but it doesn't count. It is off budget. Don't worry about it.

Under my amendment, unless you had a declared war, unless Congress had the guts to declare a war when we have to fight someone overseas, you couldn't have that kind of overseas contingency operation fund and do money off the books.

My balanced budget amendment also would protect the Social Security and Medicare trust funds from those who would rob from that trust fund and begin to immediately reduce benefits for Social Security and Medicare.

This is a ruse. Talk about the most drunken sailor spending money and then, whoa, I have got a wicked headache. Let's pass a balanced budget amendment. Maybe that will cure it. It ain't going to cure it. We need fiscal responsibility around here, and it has got to be a balance of rescinding some of their obscene tax cuts—\$3 trillion worth—which would go a long way toward helping move us toward a balanced budget, and imposing a little fiscal discipline on the Pentagon.

The Pentagon has yet to be audited. The only agency of the Federal Government that cannot be audited happens to get the largest, single discretionary grant of money every year. Once, I did manage to pass an amendment on the floor with Representative FRELINGHUYSEN to require an audit. Guess what? That disappeared in the conference committee because the Pentagon can't be audited, doesn't want to be audited, and they just need more money. Don't worry, they will spend it wisely.

So let's talk about real fiscal discipline around here, real balance, and a real balanced budget amendment that protects the assets of the Social Security trust fund and Medicare.

The people don't care about that. They want to kill it.

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lend my strong support for this balanced budget amendment.

Mr. Speaker, the very first bill I introduced when the 115th Congress kicked off last year was a balanced budget amendment. With the national debt at over \$21 trillion, it is no secret that the Federal Government has a spending issue.

Before coming to Congress, I served in the Alabama State Legislature. Like many States, Alabama is required to pass a budget that does not spend more than we have. We do it each year.

A balanced budget is not some far-flung idea. Families in southwest Alabama and all around the country sit around the kitchen table and figure out how to make ends meet. Small businesses face the exact same challenges. The Federal Government should be required to play by the same rules.

I want to be clear about a few things. First, despite what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle believe, the answer to our debt issue is not to tax the American people more. We do not have a tax problem. We have a spending problem.

Second, the most serious drivers of the national debt are on autopilot. So-called mandatory spending programs must be reined in, and a balanced budget amendment would finally require Congress to tackle those programs head on.

Mr. Speaker, I know passing a balanced budget would be hard, but I didn't run for Congress because I thought the job would be easy. We were elected by our neighbors to make difficult choices and decisions.

We can make a strong step in the right direction by passing this balanced budget amendment, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution today.

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

Mr. Speaker, government is and should be about more than just dollars and cents. Government, and especially democratic government, is about nurturing community, taking care of one another, and defending our common humanity.

H.J. Res. 2, proposing a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget every fiscal year strikes sharply against those core values, as much that we see in government these days does.

A balanced budget amendment undermines our commitment to each other, as expressed through critical social safety-net programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP; Medicare; Medicaid; and Social Security. My constituents in my congressional district of Tennessee and millions of vulnerable Americans nationwide depend on these and other programs to make ends meet in difficult economic circumstances.

Therefore, it concerns me greatly that this Congress, which hypo-

critically passed massive tax giveaways to corporations and the super-wealthy, has chosen to devote its limited time to what is essentially a gimmick to avoid actually making politically difficult decisions about the Federal budget.

Just this week, my Tennessee colleague, respected Senator BOB CORKER, called out his fellow Republicans when he tweeted: "If we were serious about balancing the budget, we would do it. But instead of doing the real work, some will push this symbolic measure so they can feel good when they go home to face voters."

I wear on my lapel the letter "F." That is the grade that BOB CORKER and I give this Congress for its work toward balancing a budget: trillions of dollars of debt with tax giveaways to the wealthiest, trillions of dollars of debt with a budget that gives the Pentagon \$70 billion more than they want.

A balanced budget is nothing but an attempt to shortcut government, and it would impose real harm on millions of Americans. Social safety-net programs would be at particular risk if a balanced budget amendment were to be adopted because they are funded every year by drawing on savings accumulated in prior years.

And let's be real about what is going on. After giving tax breaks to the wealthiest and corporations, after giving away massive budget amounts, particularly to defense, they want a balanced budget amendment. How would they balance the budget? On Medicare, on Social Security, and on Medicaid. On people who are ill and seniors who need money to live on and healthcare to keep their lives going. That is who this cruel Congress would say the balanced budget amendment falls on. They would be on the chopping block.

This funding mechanism ensures that benefits could be paid to those who need them and provides the opportunity to stave off funding shortfalls before they occur.

The state of the Department of Justice is another example, given President Trump's sharp political attacks on General Sessions out of frustration with his recusal from any investigation concerning Russia's interference in our Presidential election. Voter suppression efforts, the resurgence of white nationalists in American politics, and the active efforts to undermine the work of a free press are other meaningful topics worthy of our attention; issues that are important to the American public, not a balanced budget amendment that won't come into existence and will harm the American people.

I strongly oppose the idea of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution because it threatens Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid; it threatens SNAP; it threatens programs that keep people alive and make their existence tolerable. Many constituents of mine depend on these and many in America do.

The House has better things to devote its time to. I strongly oppose H.J. Res. 2, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER), the distinguished chair of our Republican Study Committee.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Our national debt stands at over \$21 trillion. This is not a surprise to anybody. It should frighten us enough to immediately alter the behavior of this House.

Congress approved the largely unpaid \$1.3 trillion omnibus, several supplementals, and exploded 2 years of spending caps all in the last few months. Unsustainable, mandatory, and undisciplined discretionary spending designed decades ago has created a debt monster that is seemingly unstoppable.

Over the last few months, we have heard a great deal with our Democratic friends and their newfound concern about the rising deficits and debt. So my question is: How many would join us in supporting the balanced budget amendment?

Many Democratic Members in the past were willing to vote for what 49 out of 50 States already have, a balanced budget. In fact, in 1996, a balanced budget amendment garnered 72 Democratic votes in the House, including our esteemed colleague across the aisle, Mr. HOYER.

In 2011, the same version we are voting on today got 25 Democrat votes in support. I wonder how many have the courage to support it now. We know what it takes. We should roll back wasteful spending, including rescinding appropriations that aren't needed. We need to reform our entitlement programs, including getting able-bodied adults back to work. This is about hope, not judgment.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment that is our moral obligation to ensure the American Dream remains attainable for our children and for future generations.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

First, the Republicans passed a tax scam that blows a \$2 trillion hole in the budget and gives 83 percent of its tax cuts to the wealthiest among us and corporate CEOs.

Then they offer a budget that would fill that gap by cutting more than \$2 trillion in Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and even programs like Meals on Wheels. And now, they want to amend our Constitution to require a balanced budget.

We know how the Republicans plan to balance the budget—on the backs of seniors. We have seen this movie before—budget after budget that cuts Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid;

budgets that leave seniors without their earned benefits or access to long-term care; budgets that privatize the Veterans Administration and Medicare; providing vouchers and not health benefits; that raise the age of eligibility for Medicare and Social Security; that cap and slash Medicaid, the largest source of long-term care. And no wonder seniors groups are raising the alarm.

Under this resolution, the AARP says: "Social Security and Medicare would cease to provide a predictable source of financial and health security in retirement."

The Alliance for Retired Americans calls it "irresponsible" and "extremely harmful to older Americans."

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare says it "would force severe cuts in Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other vital Federal programs."

The Strengthen Social Security Coalition says: "We regard a vote for the balanced budget amendment as a vote to cut Social Security, as well as Medicare and Medicaid."

When PAUL RYAN announced his retirement yesterday, he said before he leaves, he hopes that he is going to be able to go after these retirements and entitlements and cut them: Social Security and Medicare. This has already been announced. This is the future if we let it happen. We need to vote "no."

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, on my first day serving in this Congress, I introduced a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, and I am honored to be cosponsoring the resolution on the floor today.

As I travel back home in my district, I get this question—as I am sure so many of my colleagues do—I am repeatedly asked, why doesn't Congress manage the national budget the same way businesses manage their budget and families manage their budget? Why doesn't Congress follow the same rules that businesses and families do, that we only spend what we generate in revenues?

And it is a good question, Mr. Speaker, which gets us to the need for a balanced budget amendment. One would think that we would not need to amend the Constitution to do what Members of this body should be doing anyway.

This is common sense, Mr. Speaker. But for decades, we have seen the problem perpetuate, which is the responsibility of both parties. I am convinced this is the only mechanism to force this body to balance the budget. We are \$21 trillion in debt, Mr. Speaker.

To my friends voicing opposition, we need to be honest about what this resolution does. This resolution does not necessitate any cuts of any kind. It simply requires that the budget balance. A commitment to raising revenues through progrowth economic poli-

cies is the answer. And that is what this resolution will force this body to do: raise revenues to offset expenditures on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Mr. Speaker, prior to this Congress, our economy was sluggishly growing at about 1.6 growth in GDP, which is fiscally and financially unsustainable. We are now well over 2 percent, on our way to 3 percent, and we need to get to 4 percent.

As one of only a handful of CPAs in this Congress, I know that economic growth has three essential components: tax reform, regulatory reform, and a balanced budget. When you balance the books, you create jobs, which leads to more revenue, which leads to an expanding economy, making it easier for us to fund our critical priorities, like serving our veterans, protecting our troops, funding public education, and preserving our environment.

Mr. Speaker, that is what this resolution is about. And that is why I am proud to cosponsor this legislation.

This is common sense, Mr. Speaker. The American people want this by overwhelming margins. We need to get this done for them. It is our moral responsibility.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to say, Mr. FITZPATRICK got the award from the American Bar Association for his good work on legal services, and I compliment him on that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

(Mr. NEAL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1430

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for yielding.

The previous speaker said that we really shouldn't have to do this, and the answer is that we don't have to do this. Bill Clinton proved on four occasions that you can balance the budget. It has only been done five times since the end of World War II. So what we really should be calling this legislation that is in front of us today is the "Jesse James Seeks Clemency Act."

We are here because of their tax cuts: Invade Iraq, let's have a tax cut. Invade Afghanistan, let's have a tax cut. The tax cut is the answer to everything.

The last round, let's borrow \$2.3 trillion over 10 years before the Federal Reserve Board, by the way, has a chance to raise interest rates three times this year, as they predicted, for the purpose of providing a tax cut.

Oh, by the way, how about that old song, "Don't Worry Because Tax Cuts Pay for Themselves"? This is what we have heard here, and this is what has put us in this predicament that we are in: \$20 trillion worth of debt.

Now, here is the caveat that they always attach to these arguments, by the way: If there is a Democratic President, you need to balance the budget. If there is a Republican President, you don't need to balance the budget.

Their spending priorities are keen. It is borrowed money to provide tax cuts for people at the very top, further concentrating wealth.

Let me give you some numbers here that I have paid a lot of attention to over the years.

On January 19, 2001, when Bill Clinton said good-bye, we were staring at a \$5.6 trillion surplus, four balanced budgets, and record economic growth, the greatest economic growth spurt in the history of America, and a surplus of, again, \$5.6 trillion.

So what happened? We cut taxes over the objections of many of us in 2001 by \$1.3 trillion. Then we had a recession where we were losing 800,000 jobs a month.

Oh, by the way, in 2003, we came back and cut taxes again here by \$1 trillion, plus the bonus. Then they decided to do a repatriation tax holiday, and now they are here like this.

My father used to have a great line. He used to say: At least Jesse James had enough respect to wear a mask.

This is unbelievable that they would come in with a balanced budget amendment after what they have done repeatedly all of these years to wreck the budgets all under the guise of, if we simply cut taxes, everything will get better.

The reason that this deficit is ballooning is not because of an increase in spending. Revenue as a percent of gross domestic product remains roughly at 17 percent to 18 percent. That is the postwar norm—except for the end of the Bush W. years when revenue as a percent of gross domestic product went to 15 cents on the dollar because of the tax cuts and, by the way, increased spending for Iraq and Afghanistan.

So let me remind our Republican friends of this: the priorities have been wrong. We could have reached an accord on these issues. But today, to do this, to bring forth a balanced budget amendment, we are going to disturb the Constitution of the United States to maybe get them through the next round of congressional elections, because that is all this is about.

So the tax cuts are going to reduce revenue.

Here is the footnote that you might want to pay some attention to: 83 percent of this tax cut that they voted for—without one Democrat, incidentally, in the House supporting it—83 percent of the benefit is going to the top 1 percent of the wage earners in America.

Then they found time, by the way, to double the exemption on the estate tax. So we are taking the estate tax from \$11 million to \$22 million.

Remember this about the estate tax: The estate tax is not a tax on Conrad Hilton. The estate tax is a tax on Paris Hilton. My God, who could be against that?

When you think about how this has been pursued, it is all about concentrating more wealth at the very top for people who have said, "We don't need

it.” There wasn’t anybody beating down our doors in the top percentile of wage earners in America saying, “Cut my taxes.”

We could have reached an accord on the corporate rate. We could have done some things in a bipartisan manner to address some of these issues in making America competitive internationally. But, instead, they chose to do what they always do: Let’s starve the Federal budget, and then say after we starve the Federal budget, “Oh, by the way, we have got to cut Social Security.” Let’s starve the Federal budget of revenue and say, “Oh, by the way, we have to cut Medicare”; and, oh, by the way, let’s starve the Federal budget and say, “We have got to get rid of Medicaid for people who need it.” This is why we find ourselves with a \$20 trillion debt.

I will take the Clinton years and the Obama years compared to what they gave us in terms of Federal revenue forecasts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Massachusetts an additional 1 minute.

Mr. NEAL. CBO accountants came back the other day and said: Let us tell you right now what is wrong. They gave us hardcore numbers about economic growth, and they gave us hardcore numbers about debt and deficits.

Do you know what the answer was? Let’s not believe what they have to say. Let’s not pay any attention to what they have to say because it doesn’t square with the philosophy of tax cuts paying for themselves.

So the last point is, if you voted for the tax cuts and you voted for the omnibus spending bill on the Republican side—because I know no Democrat voted for the tax cut—today, when you come in, you ought to wear a mask when you cast your vote because Jesse James would be honored.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the gentleman openly acknowledge that not a single Democrat voted for the tax cut. I am sure the American people would love to hear that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, everyone knows this is a joke. It is all pretend and never going to become law. It is never going to happen. People are going to support it because voting for a balanced budget amendment is like voting for motherhood and apple pie. But everybody on this floor knows this is all pretend.

The time to deal with spending was 3 weeks ago. Three weeks ago was the time for political courage and some discipline. Some political will was 3 weeks ago, when we got a 2,232-page bill that we had 15 hours to look at. That was when we needed to deal with spending.

Fifteen hours to look at a \$1.3 trillion spending package, the second larg-

est spending package in American history, and we had 15 hours to look at it?

Oh, and guess what. Do you know how long we got to debate it? One hour. On a 3-page bill that is never going to happen, do you know how long we are debating this? Four hours.

The time for political courage was 3 weeks ago. The last vote we took before the Easter recess, \$1.3 trillion of spending, funding things we as Republicans said we would never fund, not funding things we told the voters we were going to fund, and then we go home and we come back, and the first thing we do with 4 hours of debate—not 1, like we had on that bill—is a bill that is never going to happen.

It is no wonder Americans hate this place. It is no wonder they are cynical. I don’t blame them. This ticks me off. There is just no other way to say it. More importantly, it ticks off the American people, and it should.

For the last 24 hours, everyone in this town has been focused on who is going to be the next Speaker. Let me tell you something, a much more important question than who is going to be the next Speaker, who is going to be the Speaker next year, is what are Republicans going to do this year? Are we going to get back to doing what the American people elected us to do on November 8, 2016? Are we going to get back to doing what we told them we were going to do, the mandate of that election, or are we going to keep doing pretend things like this?

Let’s do what we said. We make this so hard. Let’s just do what we said we would do. That will be good politics, and, more importantly, that would be good policy for the hardworking families of this great country.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH), who is the ranking member and future chairman of the Budget Committee.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, just months ago, we were debating the so-called Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. During that debate, I warned that it was the first of the Republicans’ three-step plan to give to the wealthy and make hardworking families pay the price.

Republicans were successful in enacting step one, the tax scam that gave more than 80 percent of the benefits to the top 1 percent. Just one company, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, is now pocketing \$218 million more every week under this new law. They are not alone. These tax cuts are showering big corporations and Wall Street with taxpayer money at an obscene level. That was step one.

Step two, exploding our deficits, was confirmed this week by the Congressional Budget Office. They concluded that the GOP tax cuts will add nearly \$2 trillion to the Federal debt over the next decade.

That brings us to step three. Having provided millionaires and big corpora-

tions with huge tax cuts that do little to grow our economy, the GOP has starved our government of revenues. So, naturally, they are using the resulting deficits as an excuse for massive cuts to programs that millions of Americans rely on, including Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid.

That is what the amendment we are now considering would do. It would put in place a constitutionally mandated process solely designed to impose these extreme cuts. That is because it comes packaged with the GOP’s new religious belief that tax cuts for the rich will save us all. They believe this despite the fact that history and nearly every respected economist will tell you that the only way we can responsibly balance our budget is to include new revenues.

So let’s call this balanced budget amendment what it is: a stunt to give Republicans political cover for their deficit-exploding tax scam. The party of so-called fiscal hawks has become the party of fiscal hypocrites. They know it, and so do the American people.

While this bill may be a political gimmick, it is a dangerous one that will have dire consequences for our economy and American families. To begin with, when in effect, it would require that the entire Federal budget this year be cut by at least 20 percent. That would be not just unprecedented, it would be devastating.

Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, veterans’ healthcare, infrastructure, job training, nutrition assistance, and programs that help make housing affordable and higher education attainable would all be jeopardized.

But that is not all. This amendment would put an intolerable financial strain on every State in this country, forcing them to do more with less. My State of Kentucky relies on Federal funds to cover 37 percent of the Commonwealth’s budget, including 16 percent of education funding and 32 percent of transportation funding. Speaker RYAN’s home State of Wisconsin relies on Federal funds to cover 24 percent of its budget. Chairman GOODLATTE’s home State of Virginia relies on Federal funds to cover 20 percent. All of that is at risk under this amendment.

It would not stop there. This amendment would not only threaten our ability to respond to economic crises, it would likely make them much worse. During economic downturns, Congress can help stimulate the economy by cutting taxes and increasing investments, as we did during the 2008 financial crisis. But if this amendment had been in place then, our economy would have been in serious jeopardy, facing a much higher risk of a full-on, prolonged depression and massive job losses. Should our country face another financial crisis, this amendment would be the worst policy at the worst time.

So, in sum, this amendment would threaten the retirement security of

every senior who relies on Medicare or Social Security and every working American paying into these programs now. It jeopardizes every Federal program that helps our communities grow and hardworking families succeed. It places extreme financial strain on every State in the country, and it would make it much harder for our government to respond to crises or even function effectively. Other than that, it is a great idea.

Mr. Speaker, this is terrible policy that ignores reality and real consequences and is purely intended to save Republicans' political rear ends.

It is not just me making this case. Republican Senator BOB CORKER stated recently: "Republicans control the House, Senate, and White House. If we were serious about balancing the budget, we would do it. But instead of doing the real work, some will push this symbolic measure so they can feel good when they go home to face voters."

Well said, Senator CORKER. If my Republican colleagues truly believe this is a good bill and that it is good for the American people, then it is time for them to go home.

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

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 2, proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

This proposal comes at a critical time for our country. Years of unchecked spending have led to massive deficits. At the same time, threats at home and abroad, crumbling infrastructure, and natural disasters have forced the government to do more. These two parallel situations require tough decisionmaking, but that is what the American people expect us to do.

As I talk to constituents in my district, one of the issues they continually ask about is the ballooning Federal debt that will be passed on to their kids and grandkids.

Hardworking Kansans have to balance their checkbook every month. I served as Kansas State Treasurer where we also had to balance our budget for the State of Kansas. I don't think there is any reason that the Federal Government should get a pass. That is why I am proud to support this resolution, which requires the government to spend within its means.

During the past year, we have accomplished a lot to help families across America. Cutting regulations and passing the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act have helped get government out of the way and our economy growing. Workers are seeing bonuses and larger paychecks. Companies are reinvesting in America. This growth has allowed us to make significant investments in our military, disaster relief, agriculture, and other areas important to Kansans.

□ 1445

However, to build on this progress, we need time to implement policies

that will protect future generations from crippling debt. This proposal is a great start and long overdue.

Let me be clear: this is not a silver bullet. Balancing our budget and reducing our debt will require reforming our entitlement programs and prioritizing our spending. I also believe it will require recisions to the budget, and today I call on the President and the Congress to implement those spending cuts which would work towards our goal of fiscal responsibility and stability. This amendment and recisions are a needed start to that difficult, yet immensely important, task before us. The future of our country depends on it, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the leader, the once and future Speaker.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that Mr. COHEN is a member of the Judiciary Committee. This is a balanced budget amendment, and what is interesting is it is not coming by way of the Budget Committee, as you might suspect; it is coming by way of the Judiciary Committee because it intends to amend the Constitution of the United States. How sad.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, Members of Congress take an oath to support and defend the Constitution. Yet this proposed amendment we are debating does great harm to our sacred founding document. This legislation is a brazen assault on seniors, children, and working families—the American people we were elected to protect.

Make no mistake, this GOP con job has nothing to do with fiscal responsibility. It is not balanced in terms of money because of their GOP tax scam that has placed us in a bad spot fiscally, and it is not balanced in terms of values. To the Republicans, fiscal responsibility just means ransacking Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security and breaking our Nation's sacred promise of dignity and security for seniors and families.

Republicans like to pat themselves on the back and pay lip service to the principle of fiscal responsibility. In fact, the deficit hawks have either become an endangered species or extinct. They don't seem to exist in this Republican House of Representatives. It may be counterintuitive to the public, but Democrats have always been the ones who have fought to put our fiscal house in order. In the 1990s, President Clinton put us on a trajectory of job growth and smaller deficits despite inheriting the massive Reagan/Bush deficits. The last four—some would even say five, but, conservatively speaking, the last four Clinton budgets were either in balance or in surplus. President Clinton handed President George W. Bush a projected \$5.6 trillion, 10-year budget surplus, but Republicans squandered that surplus with massive tax cuts for

the wealthy and two unpaid-for wars. Their spending sprees exploded a vast, new \$5 trillion-plus debt that was an \$11 trillion turnaround from the Democrats' path to surplus.

Under President Obama, then, Democrats restored responsible spending rules. We had pay-as-you-go: Do you want to invest in something? You must cover it. You must offset it or pay for it. That held true for investments as well as for tax cuts. Republicans didn't mind paying for food stamps, but they did mind paying for tax cuts for the rich; that they wanted to have exempted from pay-as-you-go.

But despite President Obama's restoring responsible spending rules and slashing the Bush deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars, this Republican Congress has raced back toward fiscal ruin, recklessly erasing that progress and exploding the debt with their contempt for fiscal responsibility.

Republicans exploded deficits by another \$2 trillion with their GOP tax scam and its massive handouts to corporations and the wealthiest 1 percent. Just this week, the CBO exposed the staggering cost of the Republican special interest agenda, forecasting deficits of nearly \$1 trillion or more every year President Trump remains in office.

Understand this: the Trump trillion-dollar deficit is here for the life of his Presidency. May that be short.

Yet Republicans have the nerve to demand that seniors and little children sacrifice to pay for their tax cuts for the rich and corporate America, for their fiscal recklessness. GOPs have nothing but contempt for the health and security of America's families. The Trump budget slashed half a trillion dollars from Medicare, \$1.4 trillion from Medicaid, and \$72 billion from Social Security disability benefits. Why? So they could give a tax cut of \$1.5 trillion to corporate America. With the interest that it incurred, it would be over a \$2 trillion deficit, paid for by cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

Their legislation priorities add to a mountain of utter, utter derision, disregard, and disdain for hardworking families, from slashing SNAP, food stamps, to gutting consumer protections for seniors and servicemembers, our men and women in uniform, to sabotaging America's affordable, quality healthcare.

And now, with this constitutional amendment, the Republicans found another cynical tool to gut the bedrock guarantees of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. The so-called balanced budget amendment, which is going nowhere—it won't even win the vote on the floor today—this is engineering, budgetary engineering, designed to slash Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

As the AARP warns, the GOP balanced budget amendment, so-called, would subject Social Security and Medicare to deep cuts that would be, in

their words, devastating for millions of Americans. The American people cannot afford Republicans' fiscal hypocrisy and their relentless efforts to gut Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—I can't say it enough—just to enrich the special interests.

Democrats know that investments in the health and strength of the American people are the best ways to reduce the deficit and grow the economy. In fact, nothing brings more money to the treasury than investing in the education of the American people: early childhood, K-12, higher education, post-grad, lifetime learning for our workers.

Democrats will continue to cut the deficit, create good-paying jobs, protect American families with a better deal, better jobs, better pay, a better future for all Americans.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN).

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, the big career spenders here in the House and in the Senate who have only recently found fiscal discipline, well, today they have the chance to join me to vote for, vote "yes" for, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

When I was the Maine State treasurer, Mr. Speaker, I helped make sure that Augusta's books were balanced without gimmicks. Now it is well time that Washington is forced—forced—to live within its means just like every other family and small business in the State of Maine.

Mr. Speaker, 49 States in this country have constitutional amendments at the State level to make sure they spend only what they take in. It is about time Washington has the same discipline. Mr. Speaker, it is not fair and it is not right when career politicians spend every single nickel that they collect from you in taxes and then borrow as much as they want to spend more. The spending in this town, Mr. Speaker, is out of control.

A lot of us have seen enough. That is why I ask every Republican and every Democrat in both the House and in the Senate to pass a commonsense, balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

I am very proud to say, Mr. Speaker, that the first piece of legislation that I cosponsored the day after I was sworn in 3 years ago was a balanced budget amendment. Every big spending bill in this town is loaded with pork. The process is terrible. To force an up-or-down vote in the 11th hour on a bill that is a couple of thousand pages long does not make sense. A balanced budget amendment would finally force Washington to prioritize our spending, like we do for those of us who run businesses or balance a family checkbook. Prioritize our spending, and that will help eliminate waste. And that only will lead to balancing our books and then having the ability to start paying down \$21 trillion in debt.

I look, Mr. Speaker, at these young adults in the gallery. It is immoral to

saddle these great young adults with \$21 trillion in debt, and rising, that they have got to pay. A Federal Government's budget which is legally required to be balanced will force the House and the Senate, even with the Senate's harmful 60-vote filibuster rule, to spend only what we take in.

Mr. Speaker, this is our chance, today, to start running our government more like a business, more like a family budget. It is common sense to spend only what we take in.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest gifts we can give to our kids and grandkids is taking care of this spending and this debt problem so they are not saddled with a mountainload of this stuff. America, today, Mr. Speaker, is watching. Who has got the guts, which Republicans and which Democrats in the House and the Senate? Who has got the guts to stand up and do what is right and pass a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution?

I will. I look forward to it. I ask everyone to join me.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and I ask unanimous consent that he may control that time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker said: Does anybody have the guts to stand up? I am standing up, and I voted against the tax cut bill and against the mammoth budget bill that caused this deficit to go up by \$4 trillion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we absolutely need to address the crisis of our Federal debt. And we do it by coming together in a bipartisan way, having the adult conversation, the difficult conversation, addressing both revenue and spending. This is not rocket science.

A balanced budget amendment would be worthy of consideration if properly crafted to provide flexibility in times of war, recession, or national emergency. In fact, I have cosponsored such a resolution. However, this rigid amendment fails to anticipate these unfortunate but inevitable contingencies.

Instead, this resolution is a cynical attempt to pay for all the enormous costs of the Republican tax bill, the one that we recently passed and the one that was passed under George W.

Bush, enacted to the benefit of special interests and the wealthy—overwhelmingly in their favor—and to clear the way for wholesale cuts to critical programs for children and seniors like Medicare and Medicaid.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has all the legislative tools that it needs to fix the deficit, as we saw during the Clinton years, when they had the adult conversation, when they did the tough work addressing revenue and spending in a bipartisan way. Then the Federal Government ran budget surpluses as far as the eye could see when President Clinton left office.

□ 1500

Now, we simply need to muster the will to enact responsible fiscal policies that address both spending and revenue, and the sooner we do it, the better, but it has to be bipartisan. We have to make the difficult choices on spending and revenue.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to reject this amendment and work with me, work with our colleagues across the aisle in a bipartisan way to enact comprehensive budget solutions that work longterm for all Americans.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment.

As a businessowner for over 40 years, I am well aware of what it takes to balance a budget, make a payroll, and operate within my means—a practice that Washington abandoned long ago, and everyone in this Chamber is responsible for it.

You know, in business, I had tools like a balance sheet, like an income statement, like a cash flow analysis, and a business plan to make decisions on how to spend money and generate revenues. I have never seen a body that operates in a manner where we vote to spend money and we have none of those tools available to us.

In fact, we can't even run ratios on this Federal Government to know if we should even borrow money. In fact, we don't even know if this government is solvent, other than we know that we can continue to borrow money. And we know, for every quarter of a percent—that happened 2 weeks ago—that we borrow, it creates another \$50 billion in mandatory spending. That is what I do know. Let me tell you something else that I know.

I have been out in the district the last 2 weeks, and I have never seen optimism like I have seen since I have been in office, and I have been in office for a very short time. This administration and this Congress' efforts to reduce regulation and tax reform has created tremendous expansion and opportunity, particularly for our small business community. It is growing the economy. We see the effects of it. It is growing jobs and giving Americans the opportunities they deserve.

We know that for every percent this economy grows, it adds \$2 trillion to revenues over 10 years. Yes, we have a spending problem, but don't we want to grow revenues? There are two parts of the balance sheet here.

Mr. Speaker, I have never been part of a body where you spend the money first and then you have to vote to increase the debt after you spent the money. You know, there may be a reason for that in that I don't know that anybody would vote to increase the debt if you did it before you spent the money. You don't do that in business. You know, who has ever heard, in business, of spending the money first, and then going to the bank to borrow the money? It will not happen, and it should not happen here.

The legislation we are voting on today is simple. It requires Congress—and we need this discipline—to not spend more than it receives in revenue. Facing over \$20 trillion in debt in this country, Congress must make a change to address Washington's out-of-control spending habits. This legislation is long past due, and I am proud to vote to finally hold Washington to the same standards that we hold the American people to.

It is common sense to balance our budgets. I would like to thank the House Judiciary Committee for all their hard work in getting this legislation to the House floor, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) will control the time for the minority. There was no objection.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the House Democratic minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise today not so much to oppose this legislation, as to deride it as a sham, as a fraud, as a pretense of fiscal responsibility. If you want to balance the budget, just do it.

I have served here for years and years and years when my Republican colleagues have controlled the House, the Senate, and the Presidency. Just do it. Don't talk about it.

Now, I come here as someone who has voted for balanced budget amendments in the past, but I have become extraordinarily cynical at people who vote to cut the cost of their product way below the price of producing it. That is a formula for bankruptcy in any business any place in the world.

For Republicans to bring a balanced budget amendment to the floor just weeks after adding \$1.8 trillion to deficits and tax breaks for the wealthiest is the epitome of hypocrisy. Nobody—nobody believes anymore that Republicans care about deficit reduction or balancing the budget, let alone their own members.

Now, ladies and gentlemen on the Republican side of the aisle, let me call to

your attention the chair's remarks of your Freedom Caucus. Hear me. I am going to quote MARK MEADOWS. The Freedom Caucus, the most conservative element, supposedly, of Congress, MARK MEADOWS says this: "There is no one on Capitol Hill and certainly no one on Main Street who takes this vote seriously." MARK MEADOWS.

Conservative Republican TOM MASSIE, a Republican, a very conservative Republican, says this: "Audacity, noun: Voting on a constitutional balanced budget amendment only 4 legislative days after ramming through massive deficit spending because you believe this stunt"—MASSIE's word, not mine—"this stunt will convince constituents that you care about balancing the budget."

Not my words. Two of the most conservative Republicans in this House.

And Republican Senator BOB CORKER said this: "Republicans control the House, the Senate, and the White House. If we were serious"—this is the Republican Senator saying—"If we were serious about balancing the budget, we would do it."

We know what it takes to balance budgets, Mr. Speaker. We did it during the Clinton administration 4 years in a row. Now, my Republican colleagues may jump to their feet and say: Yes, but we were in charge of Congress.

That is correct. And President Clinton would not let them cut the price of our product because to do so would have led to bankruptcy. So what did we do? We balanced the budget 4 years in a row—the only time that has been done in the lifetime of any listener to these words.

But what happened? Our Republican colleagues took office, they took the House, the Senate, and the Presidency, and they cut the price of the product, but they didn't cut the cost of the product. And what do we have? We increase the debt by 87 percent in the Bush 8 years.

Democrats instituted paygo rules to pay for what we buy, and they worked, and we balanced the budget. Republicans came into the majority and scrapped those rules. Now we are mired in growing deficits.

The CBO baseline—Congressional Budget Office, nonpartisan—released on Monday shows that accounting for Republican policies passed since President Trump took office just a few months ago, the deficit will reach, this year—

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, since President Trump took office, this year, fiscal year 2018, \$980 billion in deficits; next year, \$1 trillion. Every year thereafter, during the Trump administration, another \$1 trillion of debt. It will total some \$14 trillion.

After Republicans passed their tax law, they knew they would be on the

hook for its enormous deficit price tag, so immediately they said they wanted to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and other safety net programs to do it.

This amendment would essentially write those cuts into the Constitution. Hear me. Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, write those cuts into the Constitution. This is a backdoor effort to gut the programs that help working Americans get ahead.

I said I rose to deride this amendment. It is a fraud, a sham, a pretense, but it is also bad for our country, bad for our people. I urge my colleagues to defeat this silly waste of time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Speaker and I thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee for bringing this measure to the floor today.

I stand in support of H.J. Res. 2, a straightforward, long overdue effort to have a new tool to balance the budget, something my constituents in Arkansas have long talked about.

When Arkansans sent me to Washington, they demanded leadership and accountability and for me to be part of the solution to Washington's top-down one-size-fits-all approach to spending. With just over \$8 trillion, Mr. Speaker, added in debt over the past 8 years, my constituents continue to argue that same point they did when I was elected 3 years ago, that the government is too big, it tries to do too much, and there has been no serious effort, bipartisan or otherwise, to rein that spending in.

Today's vote is something that—like my friend from Maine—is a measure I cosponsored upon arriving at the House. It is a significant step to getting our fiscal House in order and delivering the kind of accountability and transparency that my constituents demand of their Federal Government.

Why? Why now? Why today? And I approach this, Mr. Speaker, without the cynicism of the other side or the condemnation of this effort, because when our debt was only \$5 trillion in 1995, the Senate and the House had a balanced budget amendment before them, and it failed to pass by a single vote in the Senate. So it was a bipartisan effort to get spending under control using a balanced budget amendment, and that maybe led, Mr. Speaker, to the constructive comments that some have argued today about reining in spending on a bipartisan basis, as was the case in the 1990s, combined with economic growth.

Now, with our tax cuts, we have economic growth—economic growth we haven't seen since 2005, according to the CBO, but the national debt is now, because of that \$8 trillion increase, at \$21 trillion, 76 percent of GDP.

I am convinced this amendment is now the tool necessary, because we have tried budget caps, sequester, rescissions, Gramm-Rudman caps, and we are now left with a tactic, a strategy

that all of our States, all but one of our States used, which is some form of a balanced budget amendment, which is why I come here, Mr. Speaker, to support this effort.

It starts that conversation that was as constructive as I hope in the 1990s, that we have a national discussion about spending priorities in this government and how we can return our budget to long-term fiscal health, how we can prioritize the only 30 percent of the budget that we debate on this House floor, discretionary spending, and have long-term strategies for two-thirds of our spending, our mandatory spending.

We want a bright future for our children and grandchildren, and I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

□ 1515

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding.

This phony balanced budget amendment is an old, sad Republican rerun. The only real answer to deficits is responsible budgets. America doesn't need this phony constitutional amendment meant to cover up Presidents' and congressional Republicans' failure to produce a balanced budget, even for 1 year when they hold all the reins of power.

If Republicans actually cared about the national debt, they wouldn't have passed their tax giveaway last year that will add more than \$1.8 trillion to the deficit over the next decade.

Whoa, \$1.8 trillion more debt held by the public will approach 100 percent of gross domestic product by 2028. That is economic roulette. The deficit just rises. It kind of reminds me of President Trump being in the casino business and bankrupting them.

Our country hasn't seen this level of debt since just after World War II, when the debt-to-GDP ratio hit an all-time high. That is 1946; this is 2018.

Couple that with the ballooning U.S. trade deficit, which represents the gap between foreign imports versus U.S. exports, now reaching over half a trillion dollars every year in the red, half of that coming from unfair trade with China.

If this corrosive pattern of financial abandon and foreign borrowing continues, at some point in the near future, foreign interests will view America's financial subservience to them as a strategic victory.

Sadly, the Republican pattern of tax giveaways to the rich while racking up huge Federal deficits is not new. Republican Donald Trump's mammoth deficits remind me of Republican Ronald Reagan's gaping deficits, which Democrat Bill Clinton had to rein in during the 1990s.

Then-Republican President George W. Bush, post-September 11, pulled America into unending wars and never paid those bills. When the terrible fi-

nancial crash of 2008 hit from that Republican abandon, Americans paid an enormous price for that, and our economy was finally pulled out with the rigor of President Obama and Democrats in this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the balanced budget amendment is a ridiculous sham. It is a transparent attempt and a very thin cover for Republicans to protect themselves during the coming midterm elections. The Republican Party is the party of red ink.

I can guarantee you, the American people deserve better, and that change is coming.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the good gentleman from Virginia for yielding me some time today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the balanced budget amendment, offered by my friend and colleague, Congressman GOODLATTE.

Reining in the Federal debt is not a partisan issue. In fact, the majority of Americans are united in consistently supporting a requirement to balance the Federal budget.

Our national debt has surpassed a record \$22 trillion. You have heard that several times today. That is more than \$64,000 for every man, woman, and child in this country. It is more than \$174,000 of debt for every U.S. taxpayer. If we continue to let this number grow, we will continue to dig a deeper hole for our children and our grandchildren.

Since I came to Congress in 2015, I have worked to ensure the government does not spend above its means. I have cosponsored several resolutions in support of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to balance the budget and am proud to be an original cosponsor of this legislation that we consider today.

In the 114th Congress, my colleagues and I offered an amendment to the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to appear before Congress and submit a report with solutions to control the national debt before raising the debt ceiling.

I have also consistently voiced my strong concerns about fiscally irresponsible spending packages, as I did earlier this year with the deal to bust our budget caps and send our Nation further into debt.

Mr. Speaker, we are on a high-speed train heading towards a very large fiscal cliff, and soon it may be too late to slow this train down. This insurmountable debt threatens our Nation's economic and national security, as well as future generations.

The people of this country and of Washington State's Fourth Congressional District demand better and expect their representatives to promote fiscal responsibility.

Over 20 years ago, when the Federal deficit was at \$5 trillion, a balanced budget amendment failed by a single

vote in the U.S. Senate. It is time to put a stop to the Federal Government's out-of-control spending and use our authority in Congress to prioritize spending. This balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution is a great step in the right direction.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

What a profiles in lack of courage this is today exhibited in the House of Representatives. But it does give us an opportunity, however limited the time is, to expose a lot of the myths, like this notion that the other side continues to perpetuate that Social Security and Medicare are entitlements.

News flash: it is the insurance that the American people have paid for.

News flash: 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security.

News flash: the average women in this country, when they retire, get \$14,000 annually from Social Security, and, for more than half of them, that is all they have to live on.

Yet these bastions of courage on the other side would like to cut these programs not by coming to the floor of the House of Representatives and having a vote on it, not by having a discussion in a committee or even the semblance of a hearing, but somehow, as Mr. NEAL said, with a mask on, decide that they are going to introduce an amendment where they will never, ever have to vote on what their constituents actually have to face day in and day out. These are American citizens who have paid through an insurance program, not an entitlement. It is called FICA, the Federal Insurance Contributions Act.

Whose contribution? The American people's contribution.

If you want to vote to take it away, have the courage to bring up a bill and vote on it.

How about we increase the benefits for the people of this country who need it?

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON).

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 2, which proposes a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and I am proud to be a cosponsor.

For too long, the United States Government has overdrawn its checking account, and we must stop or we leave our children, our grandchildren and great-grandchildren saddled with debt.

In Nebraska, we balanced our budget and even have a cash reserve on hand of around \$500 million. This is the Nebraska way, and we need to make it the American way. Our State law forbids the carrying over of a deficit from one year to the next. This has resulted in Nebraska being ranked sixth for best fiscal condition in the Nation.

We need a forcing function that balances the Federal budget like we have in Nebraska. What Nebraska does, so can we with our Federal budget.

While H.J. Res. 2 will require the President to submit a proposed budget to Congress where spending does not exceed receipts, there are some safeguard measures in the event spending would need to exceed revenue. A requirement for a three-fifths vote of both Chambers would be required to raise the debt ceiling, but Congress can waive that three-fifths requirement for any fiscal year the U.S. is engaged in military conflict that causes an imminent and serious military threat to national security and is declared by a joint resolution of both legislative bodies.

If I could balance my checkbook at home, why can't the United States?

If the State of Nebraska can balance their budget and have a cash reserve, why can't the United States?

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.J. Res. 2 to put our great Nation on the path to debt recovery.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I have been hearing a lot from my friends on the other side of the aisle about soul-searching. Now that they have passed a \$2 trillion-plus tax plan, my Republican colleagues say they are doing some soul-searching, particularly some of my friends on the Ways and Means Committee.

When you are searching your soul, you may think you have done a moral wrong. So today, they are making an attempt at repentance. They have spent hours rallying against the dangers of our country's debt, casting a pretty dim picture, if truth be told. But what they forget to say, or perhaps are choosing not to remember, is their out-of-control spending that got us to where we are now in the first place.

It was just, I will remind my colleagues, 112 days ago that they passed a \$2 trillion tax scam, the tax scam that we know is bankrupting America and our middle class. I say "bankrupting" because, now, 3 months later, their real target is coming into focus.

If Republicans really cared about our Nation's debt and our deficits, they wouldn't have spent \$2 trillion on a massive giveaway to corporations and the wealthiest 1 percent.

No, the Republican tax scam was just the opening salvo to undo the critical programs Americans have worked hard to earn: Social Security and Medicare. That is what today's vote is actually all about. They want to enshrine in our Constitution their long-sought goal to gut the benefits working people have earned, under the guise of balancing our budget.

Mr. Speaker, the American people have seen this ruse before. They didn't fall for it then, and they won't fall for it now.

If this so-called balanced budget amendment passed, Social Security and Medicare would be restricted from paying out benefits to those who have earned them—not because they wouldn't have the money to do so, but simply because it would be unconstitutional if this were to become law.

But I will tell you this: We won't stand for the misdirection. This isn't about soul-searching. This isn't about deficits. This is about cutting Social Security. This is about cutting Medicaid. This is about cutting Medicare. This is about balancing our books at the expense of seniors, children, and working Americans, when they just gave out lavish gifts to the wealthiest corporations in the history of mankind and the megarich, and it is shameful.

These programs have worked well for decades. These programs are the reason that the majority of seniors today don't die in poverty, that sick kids can see a doctor, and that families stay healthy so parents can work.

Now, don't get me wrong, we should be cautious about what the government is spending, but the Republican soul-searching that is happening across the aisle is just a little too much for me. It is not as if Republicans didn't know how much their tax scam would cost the American people. They knew. They simply didn't care.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON).

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting the balanced budget amendment. This much-needed constitutional amendment would finally hold Washington accountable to the same standards that every American family faces, and that is a balanced budget.

I stand here in awe today listening to my colleagues from the other side of the aisle stand here and lecture about fiscal responsibility. The gentleman from Maryland, the minority leader, stood in the well and said, if you want to balance a budget, just do it.

Well, the House Budget Committee did it, and do you know what? The number of Democrats who voted for it could stand on this desk in a thimble. There weren't any.

When it comes to the time for fiscal responsibility and having an honest conversation about the meaningful safety net programs that our Nation depends on and values, we don't need the harsh rhetoric down there. Every single Republican and Democrat should have an honest conversation about the future of those programs and where we are, and shame on the other side for using it as a scare tactic.

Without a balanced budget amendment, this body has proven, since 1974, that only four times has it had the foresight and the political courage to put forth a budget and pass appropriations bills, and it has only balanced in just a few of those.

Enough of the rhetoric. It is time to come to the table and have the discussions. If you want to balance the budget, join with us. Don't accuse us of not doing it. Your vote shows that you didn't do it.

Enough is enough. It is time to have an honest conversation. If those programs are so important, then we as a nation need to decide how we are going to pay for those, and we do know that they are.

□ 1530

We can no longer stand here and have the kind of rhetoric and the kind of misinformation that is being spewed out by the other side. It is time to take our fiscal responsibilities serious, pass a balanced budget amendment, because without it, this Nation has been able to hide behind debt, and we have hidden the real cost and the real pain from the American people, and enough is enough.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this legislation. After passing nearly a \$2 trillion tax cut that gives 83 percent of the benefits to the wealthiest 1 percent, it is both shockingly hypocritical and morally indefensible to propose a balanced budget amendment that would force dramatic cuts to the programs that support America's veterans.

In the wake of the GOP's corporate tax cuts, balancing the budget every year would likely require cuts to the Veterans Health Administration, which serves 9 million veterans every year; or cuts to the GI Bill, which is a key recruiting tool to ensure military readiness; or cuts to benefits for disabled veterans who are injured in combat; or cuts to pensions that veterans earn through their service; or cuts to our national cemeteries, which ensure veterans are laid to rest with the dignity they deserve.

This legislation would undoubtedly require cuts to Medicaid, which serves 1.75 million veterans, and it would prevent us from expanding existing programs like caregiver benefits for veterans of all generations.

All of this would happen while the wealthiest people in this country enjoy a tax cut that they did not need.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to our priorities, veterans belong in the front of the line and corporations belong at the back.

The majority believes that we can afford a corporate tax cut that costs \$1.3 trillion, yet we cannot afford to extend caregiver benefits to every veteran, which would only cost \$4 billion.

This vote is, indeed, about a country headed toward bankruptcy, but it is not so much financial bankruptcy as it is moral bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his work on this bill, bringing it forward, as well as his graciousness for letting me speak today.

Mr. Speaker, I will say that what I am hearing from the other side leaves my head spinning. I hear yammering, but I constantly wonder: Did they bother to read this particular balanced budget amendment?

The struggle I have with this balanced budget amendment is not what they say. They say this is going to go directly to spending reductions.

The issue for me is, when I look at it, I see that we make it easier to raise taxes, that is what we make it easier to do, by a 51 percent vote. When I see it, we make it easier to spend like we did in the omnibus, the bipartisan omnibus bill, because that only requires a three-fifths vote to set aside the balanced budget restraints by this administration. That gives me concern, because 61 percent of the vote in the House would have exceeded that just a couple weeks ago with the omnibus bill. In the Senate, it was by more than 60 percent. So that is a bit problematic for me.

I will make one last point here before I continue on to the previous point, and that is we are going to see 7 years, roughly, for the ratification process and then another 5 years after that before this actually is enacted. That is 12 years. That means that we are going to have probably around a \$30 trillion national debt by then.

Now, my friends on the other side who are using scare tactics and saying, "This is going to cause this cut here and this cut in programs there," they don't know that. They are making assertions to do what David Horowitz calls "inspire through fear," and that is what we are seeing here.

I think this bill could be better, significantly better, but I also think that hyperbolic rhetoric does not do this body or the American people good when we are discussing something of this magnitude.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding to me at this time.

Mr. Speaker, this is truly embarrassing. I don't even think "Saturday Night Live" could come up with a skit of this nature.

Here we are today debating a constitutional amendment to balance the budget on the heels of one of the most fiscally reckless tax cuts in this Nation's history, which the Congressional Budget Office just estimated will increase our national debt by over \$2 trillion over the next 10 years.

Eighty-three percent of the benefit is going to the wealthiest 1 percent. What relief is being delivered to working

families disappears in 5 years. This also came on the heels of a 2-year budget that exceeds the current spending caps by over \$300 billion.

Now, don't take my word for it. Consider what Republican Senator BOB CORKER recently said, who was the deciding vote in the Senate on that tax cut:

"If it ends up costing what has been laid out here, it could well be one of the worst votes I've made."

"None of us have covered ourselves in glory. This Congress and this administration likely will go down as one of the most fiscally irresponsible administrations and Congresses that we've had." Republican Senator BOB CORKER.

Now, listen, I have supported a balanced budget amendment in the past, but I have done it primarily as a check against reckless Republican spending. As history has shown, it is typically during Republican administrations when budget deficits explode and during Democratic administrations when they come down.

But why are we making this so difficult on ourselves? We don't need a constitutional amendment. We need to get back to budget rules that we know work.

Pay-as-you-go budgeting worked. We had it in place in the 1990s during the Clinton administration, and it led us to 4 years of budget surpluses and we were paying down the national debt. We had pay-as-you-go budgeting in the early years of the Obama administration, when he inherited a \$1.5 trillion budget deficit from the previous administration, and by the time President Obama left office, that was reduced by over two-thirds.

We don't need a constitutional amendment. We need political courage. We need budget rules that have shown that they work in the past. That is what we should be discussing today.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN).

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

H.J. Res. 2 proposes an amendment to the Constitution prohibiting Congress from spending more money than it takes in every year.

At a time when our national debt is over \$20 trillion and our yearly deficits run in the hundreds of billions of dollars, now, now, now is the time for action.

I came to Congress to make sure that we are leaving a better world for our kids and for our grandkids, for all our kids and all our grandkids, and to do so means controlling Federal spending.

Our national debt is one of the greatest security threats, and it is time to show our constituents and the rest of the world that we are serious about getting our budget under control.

We can't ignore this problem anymore, and the only way we are going to accomplish anything is if we all feel as though we have real skin in the game.

Every individual and business in Michigan's First District has to live within their financial means. There is absolutely no reason that the Federal Government should be an exception to that rule. This constitutional amendment would require Congress do just that: live within our means.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, this much overdue legislation.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this budget amendment.

You know, when the majority forced through their \$2.3 trillion tax cut for corporations and the wealthiest Americans, they did not give a second thought to the deficit. Eighty-three percent, by the way, of the cuts went to the top 1 percent, the richest families in the country, the richest corporations, including President Trump.

Now the majority wants our children, they want seniors, they want working families, middle class families to cover the cost. This amendment would likely decimate Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, education, funds for rebuilding America's infrastructure, veterans' pensions, and, yes, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, by 2028, this amendment could trigger cuts of up to \$1.7 trillion to Medicare and \$2.6 trillion to Social Security.

The Association for the Advancement of Retired Persons, AARP, has said of this amendment: "The lack of a dependable Social Security and Medicare benefit would be devastating for millions of Americans."

This amendment would endanger our economy, it would starve the government of revenues, it ties Congress' hands in a national or economic crisis.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities said this amendment would, "make recessions longer and deeper by forcing spending cuts or tax increases when the economy is weak."

Over 270 service, health, child welfare, labor, environmental, good-government organizations like Paralyzed Veterans of America, AFL-CIO, the NEA, the NAACP oppose this measure. We need to oppose it.

With this amendment, President Trump and my colleagues in the majority want to leave families and workers holding the bag for their \$2.3 trillion gift. The tax cut was a gift to corporations and the richest Americans.

It is a mistaken policy and a cynical gimmick. It is a coverup for completely ignoring the budget busting that they were engaged and involved in with the tax bill.

This amendment is bad for workers, bad for families, bad for our Nation, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). The gentleman from Virginia has 46 minutes remaining. The

gentleman from Maryland has 32 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK).

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, fiscal conservatism means cutting spending where possible and, in turn, spending responsibly. Yes, it is a balance. In our homes, we have to do it; in our businesses, we have to do it. When the economy goes down, you don't spend as much in your business or your home, so you have to be balanced and responsible.

Today's vote is timely. The CBO's recent report confirmed what many of us already know: Washington has a spending problem.

The budget deficit will near \$1 trillion next year, and trillions more are projected indefinitely.

Only a decade ago, the Federal debt held by the public was 39 percent of GDP, maybe even too much at that time, but today it is 75 percent, and it is expected to surpass 96 percent over the next decade. Does anybody think that that is sustainable? At what point does the debt become so severe, that we stall our economic growth?

Maybe we cannot answer that question today, but we all know that point looms on the horizon when we must answer that question.

If we don't act, we or our children, or perhaps, in my case, even our grandchildren, are going to find out the hard way. The burden of our borrowing is going to fall on our future generations, hurting their ability to flourish.

I wonder how many of us want to look our children or our grandchildren or maybe, in some cases, our great-grandchildren in the eye and say: We weren't responsible enough to do that; we are going to leave that burden to you.

I could not, in good faith, support the recent budget cap agreement, nor could I support the most recent omnibus bill. In fact, I voted for the Cut, Cap and Balance Act during my first year in Congress, which would have capped the future spending based on the GDP, and I am very proud of that vote.

□ 1545

That same year, I supported the Budget Control Act, which reined in the years of high level discretionary spending.

Some of my colleagues across the aisle are trying to use this resolution to attack the tax cuts, but tax cuts are not the problem. Our economy needed a jolt, and that is what we did.

In fact, let's just look back a couple of years at what our economic growth was; didn't even make it out of 2 percent. Many quarters we were down at 1.5 percent. We are up at 3 percent now. Is that not something that is worth jolting the economy for?

Where jobs are being created; that just didn't happen out of the horizon. That is because of tax cuts that we see

the jobs being created. And by the way, people are having more money in their pocket as a result of that.

We will continue to see economic growth from our tax cuts for years to come. As a matter of fact, I was just with a group of people not long ago that were talking about how a small business owner, a lady that had a pizza shop that started out in that organization as washing dishes, serving pizza. She then bought it. And you know what she has been able to do because of this tax cut? She has now bought a second business; someone who started out as a dishwasher. That is what our tax cuts are doing.

Spending is the problem. Our mandatory spending has been projected to nearly quadruple by 2040.

Our population is aging. Our workforce participation rate is stagnant. For every 1.65 employed persons in the private sector, we have one person who receives welfare assistance. When people need assistance, we want to give them assistance. But work is dignity.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACK. Work is dignity. That is what our goal should be; not having people depend upon the government. When you ask somebody what they do and they can tell you what they do, they are prideful. Because after you ask someone their name, what do you ask them? What do you do?

We want everybody to be at work, not where 1.65 people employed in the private sector, one is receiving welfare assistance. That is not dignity.

This must be addressed. My budget last year began this processing of addressing mandatory spending, and we need to build on that progress.

I agree that offering a constitutional amendment should be done rarely and reluctantly. Our debt burden threatens the kind of country that we leave behind for our children and grandchildren, and we must end this borrow-and-spend cycle that has gone on for far, far too long.

Ensuring future generations have the same opportunities that we have today means making hard choices. No more delays. No more denials.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this resolution.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this is a very poignant moment. Speaker PAUL RYAN announces his retirement the same week that the Republicans bring to the floor the so-called balanced budget amendment, which signals a surrender, that Republicans admit they can't budget responsibly.

After the largest transfer of wealth in our Nation's history with a tax bill that was so flawed they couldn't even risk having a hearing on it, they literally were writing the bill while we

were in work session in a desperate scramble for votes and special-interest support.

RYAN leaves as his legacy—a guy who, on the Budget Committee, railed against deficits and deficit spending, slashing social spending—he leaves as his legacy trillion dollar deficits for as far as the eye can see, year after year.

They come forward with a balanced budget amendment. Wait a minute. If my friends wanted to balance the budget, they could do it. They control the White House, they control the Senate, they control the House. If they wanted to, there is nothing stopping them. But, instead, they came forward with an omnibus bill that explodes spending further and adds to the deficit.

The balanced budget amendment would freeze into the Constitution a requirement that somebody else, 8 years from now, balance the budget. It is a classic bait-and-switch situation.

What a legacy for PAUL RYAN and the Republicans. They have made a shambles out of the Tax Code, they have made a mockery of tax fairness. They are not willing to make hard spending decisions today. They want to freeze something in the Constitution that would require somebody 7, 8, 10 years from now to do what they are afraid, unwilling, or unable to do today. It is a sham, bait-and-switch in the classic sense.

I don't think the American public is going to stand for it and, certainly, no responsible Member of this House should vote for it.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this imperfect balanced budget amendment, and let me say why.

This week, the Congressional Budget Office released the annual Budget and Economic Outlook. It estimates that the trillion dollar annual deficits will return in only 2 years. This represents the largest deficit in 6 years, and is 84 percent of increased spending over last year.

Today, our national debt is over \$21 trillion, and approximately, for each individual American, \$174,000-plus per taxpayer. Outrageous. And that is simply the debt on the budget.

When accounting for off-budget debt, things like unfunded pension obligations, projected spending increases in the social safety net programs, baby boomers retirement from the workforce, and actual debt is actually much greater.

In order to make our budget sustainable, we must decrease deficits by \$379 billion every year for the next 75 years. Sadly, we are not even coming close to this. In fact, we are going in the opposite direction.

History shows us that nations and empires usually fail when the cost of serving their debt exceeds the cost of

defending their borders. If we continue down this path, America could be spending more on the debt interest payments than we do on our national defense within 5 years.

However, as serious as this issue is to the future of our country and future generations, no one can possibly take this vote seriously, and let me tell you why. We are voting on a balanced budget amendment because my Republican friends passed, on a party-line vote, a deficit finance tax cut that will result in \$2.2 trillion in additional borrowing over the next 10 years. Therefore, this is nothing more than a fig leaf, and it is the height of hypocrisy.

What we should be doing is voting on a balanced budget amendment that STEPHANIE MURPHY has put forth that protects commitments our Nation has made to current generations by protecting social safety net programs like Medicare and Social Security from cuts. But we are not allowed that choice, and yet, we must get our fiscal house in order.

I am one of 38 Members that voted for the Simpson-Bowles Act. Talk about lack of profiles in courage.

Let me make an observation, after being here 14 years, and that is that the rhetoric that we see in this debate and that we have seen in past debates on our budget deficit does not comport to the hard realities of choices that we have to make. It is that simple.

After 14 years in Congress, it is my view that this will only happen when Republicans and Democrats come together to make hard choices to agree on long-term revenues that are in line with our expenditures. It is not a difficult concept to understand. We have got to think of hard-line revenues that are going to be in line with our expenditures. But we are not willing to do that.

So this balanced budget amendment, while not perfect, I am going to vote for it because I think it is a step to keep the debate going and, ultimately, hopefully, will allow us to sit down in a bipartisan fashion to make the hard decisions that Americans expect us to make. That is why we have been sent here.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, according to a FOX News poll from March 25, 91 percent of voters want background checks on all gun buyers. Another poll from Quinnipiac last November found that 94 percent of owners in gun-owning households support universal background checks.

Yet, as the American people ask for stronger gun laws, the majority would rather talk about mental health instead.

That is fine, Mr. Speaker. Want to talk about mental health? The vast majority of people with mental illness

aren't violent and are more likely to be the victims of violence than the perpetrators. And more than half of the Americans who need mental healthcare don't get it.

We have a mental health access crisis in this country, and gun violence is only a heartbreaking sliver of that problem.

Merely 43 percent of psychiatrists accept Medicaid, compared with 73 percent of other physicians.

But what does this have to do with the balanced budget amendment we are voting on today?

Mr. Speaker, this amendment is an attempt to tie our hands, an attempt to force us to dismantle programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. It would force cutting benefits, reducing coverage, slashing payments, or all of the above.

The most vulnerable Americans rely on these programs for a secure retirement, to stay healthy, and to make ends meet when a breadwinner is disabled or dies. And Medicaid is the single largest payer for mental health services, meaning that forcing constitutionally required cuts on Medicaid will plunge our mental healthcare system into even further disarray.

This amendment is just the latest example of mental health hypocrisy of the Republican caucus. It is a standard page out of the shameful GOP playbook whenever there is a mass shooting.

Step 1: Talk exclusively about mental health until people stop paying attention.

Step 2: Undercut and jeopardize access to mental health services, making the problem worse.

I am not going to let this Congress stop paying attention. I refuse to let my Republican colleagues use those who need mental healthcare as excuses and scapegoats.

And if Congress can't move forward with a policy supported by more than 90 percent of voters, something is wrong. Congress isn't representing the people. It is representing the bottom line of corporations that sell guns.

If we want to amend our Constitution, let's amend it to get money out of politics. Let's stop gun corporations from flooding our elections with money to protect their profits. Let's overturn Citizens United. Let's give the voices of the American people more power than wealthy special interests.

The Democracy for All Amendment, H.J. Res. 31, is supported by over 160 Members of Congress and voters across party lines, and it would do just that. That is the constitutional amendment we should be considering today, one that will put the American people in charge of the agenda of this House. Instead, we are voting again to put profits above our health, above our safety, above our democracy.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, our good friends across the aisle have been bristling when my colleagues have pointed out the breath-taking budget hypocrisy being shown by the majority today, so I thought, instead, I would offer the comments of their fellow Republicans.

Here is headline news: "Conservatives irate over GOP's budget hypocrisy." "Critics chafe over a balanced budget amendment vote on the heels of an omnibus spending spree."

And then we get quotes from a number of Members, including Freedom Caucus Chairman MARK MEADOWS, who says: "There is no one on Capitol Hill, and certainly no one on Main Street, that will take this vote seriously."

We hear from someone named Barbara Boland, who equated the exercise to "gorging on a sumptuous feast while insisting that you want a svelte physique."

Mr. Speaker, America knows they just drove a \$2 trillion deficit hole into our budget with their gold-plated tax-and-spend scam; and the CBO now predicts the deficit will reach an astounding \$1 trillion in 2019, and will continue increasing annually to \$1.5 trillion by 2028.

That is not something the Constitution made them do. That is not something the Declaration of Independence made them do, or the Gettysburg Address. That is something they cooked up all by themselves.

Mr. Speaker, they promised to drain the swamp, but they just moved into the swamp and drained the Treasury instead. The Treasury is ransacked, but the swamp is teeming with monstrous special interests devouring the common wealth of the American people.

After slashing taxes on the wealthiest corporations and individuals, they propose cutting hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security, the programs built up by the American people with their blood, sweat, tears, and hard-earned labor.

□ 1600

And now, today, after giving us one of the most regressive tax plans in history, they effectively want to make it unconstitutional to spend what we need on the people's Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security.

The whole idea defies a basic principle of our Constitution, which was enunciated by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes in his famous *Lochner* dissent in 1905. He said: "A constitution is not intended to embody a particular economic theory."

President Trump just signed a spending bill into law while complaining bitterly about it and saying he would never sign a bill like that again. Perhaps he shouldn't have signed it in the first place, but he has got the right solution in mind, Mr. Speaker: Show some courage.

Here is the bottom line: If you show political courage and wisdom, you

don't need a balanced budget amendment; and if you show no courage and no wisdom, then a balanced budget amendment will not save you.

We have the constitutional power right now to pass completely balanced budgets. Indeed, one of our recent Presidents, Bill Clinton, saw to it that we posted not just balanced budgets, but big surpluses in 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001, all of it done without a constitutional amendment.

Mr. Speaker, if this political-camouflaged constitutional amendment had been in place when President Obama took office with nearly 10 percent unemployment and GDP having fallen 3.5 percent over the previous year, it would have locked the Bush era recession into place and driven our country into a deep depression.

If you have a Congress that can't balance the budget, you don't need a new constitutional amendment; you need a new Congress.

If you have a majority that won't govern responsibly, you don't need to spray-paint political graffiti all over our Constitution; you need a new political program and new political vision.

They burned fiscal discipline and budget planning to the ground with their tax bill. Let's not throw the Constitution into the bonfire, too.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL).

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the recognition. I thank my chairman for bringing this resolution to the floor.

I confess I don't have the kind of speechwriter working for me that my friend from Maryland has. He has always had the gift of prose. I come completely unarmed with clever prose. I have just got some facts on my side.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, and you have been here long enough to see it, there has been a little bit of truth on both sides of the aisle today.

There is a little bit of frustration that folks say: Hey. How come it is true that we are bringing up a balanced budget amendment in the days after we have just passed a bill that is the largest spending bill that I have seen since I have been in the United States Congress? I think that is a legitimate concern. I think it is a legitimate concern.

Now, I come to the other side of aisle, and folks say: It is because we just passed that spending bill that we have to talk about balanced budget amendments again.

Why?

Because the House did its work, as all my colleagues recall. The House did its work underneath the budget caps, on time, before the end of the fiscal year, in the same fiscally responsible way that I have seen this body act over and over and over again in the 7 years I have been here.

Then that bill went across to the United States Senate, where Repub-

licans don't control 60 votes, and it became a partnership bill.

And the frustration that I have heard on both sides of the aisle about the level of spending in that bill happened for one reason, and one reason only: because Democrats voted "yes," and Republicans voted "yes," and a majority of the Congress acted.

What this balanced budget amendment says, Mr. Speaker—and you have read it, and if any Members haven't, it is only 3 pages long, so it is easy to digest—it says: Listen. Spend as much money as you want to.

For all the challenges that my friend from Maryland just recognized, and they are coming again—for folks who believe economic cycles are over, I have bad news. Economic cycles are still in effect. The laws of the economy are still in place, and we are going to have down cycles again.

What this resolution says is, if you want to buy something, agree to pay for it. It seems fair.

If you want to spend something in the name of helping your children, pay for it out of your bank account instead of mortgaging your children's future to pay for it. I think that seems fair.

And the truth is, Mr. Speaker, you know how culture is. Culture is hard to change. For the first 200 years of our Republic, the men and women who ran this Chamber, Republicans, Democrats, they didn't borrow against the Nation's credit card except in times of war.

As you know, it is only at the end of World War II where we saw levels of debt at the size that they are today.

But something has happened culturally in my lifetime where we decided that the responsible thing to do was to spend but not tax.

That is not the responsible thing to do. It is not a responsible liberal thing to do. It is not a responsible conservative thing to do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you have heard over and over again talk about the big tax cut that happened last year for America. I am glad that happened for America. I am seeing bonuses in paychecks in my constituency back home. I am seeing new businesses open. I am going to more ribbon cuttings. I see excitement and optimism on Main Street in ways I haven't seen it in years. I am excited about that. To my friend from Maryland's point, that is what he referenced in the Clinton administration.

There in the 1990s, Mr. Speaker, we didn't cut a penny in spending. You remember. Congress spent more and more and more and more. But America was enjoying such a great economic boom, all of that money folks were making, turns out you can't pay your income taxes if you are not making an income. Folks were making more money. They were sending more money to the Federal Government. That is how the budget came to balance.

Mr. Speaker, over the next 10 years, after the tax cut—after the tax cut—CBO has just projected tax revenues are going to increase by more than 60 percent.

I will say that again. For folks who want to do more in America, tax revenues are going to increase by 60 percent. The only way, then, we will run a budget deficit is if folks want to spend even more than 60 percent, more than we are spending today.

And guess what, Mr. Speaker. They do. Nobody likes to be lectured in this institution, certainly not by folks who they don't believe have credibility on the issue. And we have heard the word "hypocritical" time and time again on the floor, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry that is true.

But my friends on the Democratic side of the aisle will remember our budget process. What I love about the Budget Committee, my friend Ms. JAYAPAL, we serve there together, and we have amazing opportunities to talk.

Candidly, it is not as collegial as either one of us would like. We shed a whole lot more heat and a lot less light than either one of us would like on that committee. But when we had an opportunity to bring all of our ideas to the floor of the House, every single Democratic plan for Federal spending raised taxes by trillions and reached balanced budgets never in the 10-year window. That is just a fact.

It is okay because we are talking about priorities and where we invest our money, and folks prioritized investments over a balanced budget. That is fair.

Now, on the Republican side of the aisle, every single budget that came to the floor cut taxes and balanced budgets within a 10-year window. That reflects our priorities. We believe in balanced budgets. We believe in cutting taxes.

On the other side of the aisle, folks believe in investments. They believe in borrowing today so we can get greater returns tomorrow. Those are perfectly legitimate conversations to have.

But, Mr. Speaker, my frustration is this. What my friend, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, has brought before us today is a simple resolution that says: Put out your best ideas and let the best idea win; but do not, do not, do not mortgage your children's future because you lack the courage today to pay for it.

We just increased spending on NIH by \$3 billion, Mr. Speaker—\$3 billion. We are going to do amazing things together as a nation, things that are going to make every American family proud. Cures for diabetes, for Parkinson's, for Alzheimer's. We are going to move the needle for generations to come. We did that together. We both agreed that was an investment that was worth making.

But we are \$21 trillion in the hole, Mr. Speaker. There are a bundle of ideas that we can use together to attack that challenge. This is but one, and it is the one we have before us today.

I would just ask my colleagues, recognize that there is more that unites us in our drive and desire to do what is

best for the American people than that divides us. Recognize that we all want what is best for America.

If you don't believe in balanced budgets, fair enough, but let's not deride the Judiciary Committee, which has been working on this issue not for a day, not for a week, not for a month, but for years. This isn't the first time we have had this conversation. We missed it by one vote during the Clinton era. This is something that can bring America together and not divide America.

I know this: If we do not come together, Mr. Speaker, come together with the votes required for a constitutional amendment, come together for the votes required to make a courageous change in the direction of Federal spending, it will be to all of our detriments, and sadly, not just our detriments, but to the detriments of our children and our grandchildren as well.

I believe we have a Chamber full of men and women who want to do the right thing for the right reasons, Mr. Speaker. This is a great way to start today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my chairman for yielding me both the time and for providing the leadership to make this resolution available.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) will control the time for the minority.

There was no objection.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), my very good friend.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 2, which would force deep cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid under a so-called balanced budget amendment. Like the Republican tax bill, this amendment is another scam that will hurt American families and the American economy.

Of course I support balancing our budget and fiscal responsibility, but it is impossible to take this proposal seriously after the Republicans just gave away trillions of dollars in tax cuts to the most profitable corporations and the wealthiest Americans without paying for them.

I have been listening to speaker after speaker lecture us about the importance of fiscal responsibility, about the future of their children. What a joke. This is the same party that added \$2 trillion to the deficit, the largest contribution to the deficit by a single act of Congress in our history. And they have the audacity to talk about fiscal responsibility?

Let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, about what is really happening here, what this is really about. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are using this amendment to lay the groundwork and to cover up their plans to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

They plan to balance the budget on the backs of middle class families and seniors, and then they will say: We have no choice. It is the balanced budget law that requires us to do this.

The American people can see right through this.

Mr. Speaker, the American people look to Congress to protect the interests of all Americans and not the privileged few and the well-connected. But once again, we see our Republican friends are saying one thing and doing another. They are trying to lecture us about fiscal responsibility just a few weeks after they blow up the deficit to pass tax cuts for the top 1 percent.

This is the kind of political double-talk that drives people crazy. It is the kind of stuff people hate about Washington.

They don't expect their Representatives to give huge tax cuts to the wealthiest 1 percent and then pay for them by underfunding crucial programs that millions of middle class families rely on. But this is exactly what will happen if H.J. Res. 2 becomes law.

Republicans are hoping to fool their constituents into thinking they are serious about fiscal responsibility, but all this amendment does is expose their shameless hypocrisy. They are hoping that we all have short memories and we have forgotten that just a short time ago they ran through the GOP tax scam, which resulted in a huge deficit spike.

Remember, these are the same folks who told us: Oh, tax cuts for rich people? They pay for themselves.

Of course we know that is not true. We said it then, we say it now, and we certainly know the Congressional Budget Office has proved that in their recent report that concludes that this tax bill will add nearly \$2 trillion to the debt over the next 10 years and that the deficit will jump to \$1 trillion by 2020. It is hard to take today's proposed legislation seriously in light of this fiscal recklessness.

We already know that the Republican tax scam will cut trillions of dollars from Medicare, Medicaid, education, infrastructure investments, and healthcare for our veterans in order to fund a massive giveaway to billionaires and corporations.

It turns out that the Republican tax scam was part one. Part two is to gut the social safety net and crucial programs for working families and the earned benefits for seniors.

Given the Federal deficits that are projected in the coming years, the mandate under this amendment would result in an unthinkable reduction in spending on critical government programs. No program would be safe. It would require cuts to national security, the military, healthcare, environmental protection, and medical research.

□ 1615

It would require stealing money from bedrock social safety programs like

Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, foods stamps, disability insurance, and veterans' pensions.

The Center for American Progress estimates that if this amendment were ratified this year, it would require cutting the government budget by nearly one-quarter in fiscal year 2023.

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

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, it would slash Social Security by \$308 billion, Medicare by \$239 billion, and Medicaid by \$114 billion in 1 year alone.

Mr. Speaker, if Republicans are truly concerned about reducing the deficit, they should start with repealing their tax bill that added trillions of dollars to the deficit. Congress cannot under any circumstances pass this legislation, which is a direct threat to the health and safety of all Americans, and will decimate social safety net programs for veterans, retirees, and children.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time, and I certainly appreciate the chairman's long-term commitment to the issue of a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, providing States the opportunity to add a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

Let me also say that amending our Constitution is something we should never take lightly. When drafting our foundational document, our Founders intended it to provide not just the outline of our Federal Government, but also to restrict the powers of each branch through a system of strong checks and balances.

We must also understand this amendment, if ratified, is still just one part of addressing our current fiscal situation. We must still do the hard work of looking at spending. Reducing spending, reforming entitlements for the future, and encouraging the economic growth and opportunity needed to eliminate our deficits in the short term, and certainly pay down our debt in the long term.

This is a very vital first step, Mr. Speaker, in getting our Nation on better fiscal footing, but we have a long road ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this resolution.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a list of over 270 organizations opposed to the balanced budget amendment.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OPPOSING THE
BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

9to5, National Association of Working Women; AASA, The School Superintendents Association; Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+);

Advance CTE; Advocates for Youth; African American Health Alliance; AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families; AIDS Community Research Initiative of America; AIDS United; Alaska Wilderness League; Alliance for a Just Society D535; Alliance for Excellent Education; Alliance for Justice; Alliance for Retired Americans; Alliance for Strong Families and Communities; American Association for Dental Research; American Association for Justice; American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; American Association of University Women (AAUW).

American Council on Education; American Counseling Association; American Dance Therapy Association; American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO; American Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO); American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA); American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO; American Indian Higher Education Consortium; American Jewish Committee (AJC); American Music Therapy Association; American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR); American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO; American Public Health Association; American School Counselor Association; American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; Americans for Democratic Action (ADA); Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF); Asian Americans Advancing Justice—AAJC; Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA); Association for Career and Technical Education.

Association for Psychological Science; Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP); Association of Educational Service Agencies; Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs; Association of Flight Attendants—CWA; Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO); Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD); Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America; Autism National Committee; Autistic Self Advocacy Network; Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law; Bienestar Human Services; B'nai B'rith International; Bread for the World; Campaign for America's Future; Campaign for Youth Justice; Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good; Center for Community Change Action; Center for Family Policy and Practice Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP).

Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.; Center for Public Representation; Center for Science in the Public Interest; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; Child Care Aware of America; Child Welfare League of America; Children's Action Alliance; Children's Defense Fund; Children's Dental Health Project; Children's Health Watch; Children's Leadership Council; Citizens for Tax Justice; Clinical Social Work Association; Coalition for Health Funding; Coalition on Human Needs; Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE); Committee for Education Funding; Common Cause; Communications Workers of America (CWA).

Community Access National Network (CANN); Community Action Partnership; Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA); Concerned Black Men National; Conservation Legacy; Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED); Corporation for Supportive Housing; CoSN—the Consortium for School Networking; Council for Exceptional Children; Council for Opportunity in Education; Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.; Council of the Great City Schools; CREDO Criminalization of Poverty Project at the Institute for Policy Studies; Defenders of Wildlife; Democracy 21; Demos; Department for Professional Em-

ployees, AFL-CIO; Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund; Disciples Justice Action Network; Easter Seals.

Ecumenical Poverty Initiative; Every Child Matters; FamiliesUSA; Farmworker Justice; Feeding America; First Focus Campaign for Children; Food & Water Watch; Food Research & Action Center (FRAC); Foster Family-based Treatment Association; Franciscan Action Network; Franciscans for Justice; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Friends of the Earth; Futures Without Violence; Gamaliel; Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC); Generations United; Global Justice Institute; Health Care for America Now (HCAN); Health GAP (Global Access Project).

Higher Education Consortium for Special Education; Housing Works; Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy; Interfaith Worker Justice; International Association of Fire Fighters; International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE), AFL-CIO; International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW; International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE); Jewish Council for Public Affairs; Jobs With Justice; Justice in Aging; LeadingAge; League of Conservation Voters; League of United Latin American Citizens; League of Women Voters of the United States; Learning Disabilities Association of America; Main Street Alliance.

Medical Mission Sisters, North America; Medicare Rights Center; Mental Health America; Metropolitan Community Churches; Mom2Mom Global; MomsRising; NAACP; NASTAD (National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors); National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys; National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE); National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE); National Alliance of HUD Tenants; National Alliance to End Sexual Violence; National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum; National Association for Children's Behavioral Health; National Association for College Admission Counseling; National Association for Hispanic Elderly; National Association for Music Education; National Association for the Education of Young Children.

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a); National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities; National Association of County and City Health Officials; National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors; National Association of Elementary School Principals; National Association of Federally Impacted Schools; National Association of Letter Carriers; National Association of Private Special Education Centers; National Association of School Psychologists; National Association of Secondary School Principals; National Association of Social Workers (NASW); National Association of State Directors of Special Education; National Association of State Head Injury Administrators; National Birth Defects Prevention Network; National Black Justice Coalition; National Center for Law and Economic Justice; National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence; National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (National CAPACD); National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare; National Community Development Association; National Congress of American Indians; National Council for Behavioral Health; National

Council for Community and Education Partnerships; National Council of Asian Pacific Americans; National Council of Jewish Women; National Council of La Raza (NCLR); National Council on Independent Living; National Disability Institute; National Disability Rights Network; National Domestic Violence Hotline; National Down Syndrome Congress; National Education Association (NEA); National Employment Law Project; National Fair Housing Alliance; National Federation of Federal Employees; National Health Care for the Homeless Council; National Hispanic Medical Association.

National Housing Law Project; National Housing Trust; National Immigration Law Center; National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health; National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund; National Low Income Housing Coalition; National Multiple Sclerosis Society; National Network to End Domestic Violence; National Organization for Women; National Partnership for Women & Families; National People's Action; National Priorities Project; National PTA; National Recreation and Park Association; National Respite Coalition; National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition; National Rural Education Association; National School Boards Association; National Skills Coalition; National Superintendents Roundtable.

National Treasury Employees Union; NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE; National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable; National WIC Association; National Women's Health Network; National Women's Law Center; National Working Positive Coalition; Natural Resources Defense Council; NDD United; Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility of United Church of Christ; NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby; Not Dead Yet; OWL-The Voice of Women 40+; PAI; Paralyzed Veterans of America; Partnership for America's Children; People for the American Way; PICO National Network; Planned Parenthood Federation of America; Prevention Institute.

Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS); Progressive Congress; Project Inform; ProLiteracy; Protect All Children's Environment; Public Advocacy for Kids; Public Citizen; Public Health Institute; Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition; RESULTS; Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law; School Social Work Association of America; School-Based Health Alliance; Senior Executives Association (SEA); Service Employees International Union (SEIU); Share Our Strength; Sinsinawa Dominican Peace and Justice Office; Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership; Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership; Sisters of Mercy South Central Community.

Social Security Works; Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC); Special Needs Alliance; State Innovation Exchange (SiX); Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future; Susan G. Komen; TESOL International Association; The AIDS Institute; The Arc; The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; The National Coalition for Literacy; The National Crittenton Foundation; The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas; Institute Justice Team; The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society; Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Treatment Action Group (TAG); Tremor Action Network; Trust for America's Health (TFAH); UNCF; Union for Reform Judaism.

United Auto Workers (UAW); United Cerebral Palsy; United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries; United Spinal Association; United States Student Association (USSA); United Steelworkers (USW); USAction; Voices for Progress; Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER);

Young Invincibles; YouthBuild USA; ZERO TO THREE.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY), my good friend.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, when the Federal Government spends far more than it receives year after year, it threatens the long-term stability of our economy, compromises our children's future, and undermines our security.

Amending the Constitution to require a balanced budget is a serious step, but one that has become appropriate. That is because all other efforts to make Congress demonstrate a reasonable degree of fiscal discipline have failed. But not all proposed balanced budget amendments, or BBAs, are created equal.

The BBA we are considering today—and I say this with respect for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—is poorly crafted, painfully cruel, and profoundly cynical.

It is poorly crafted because it is excessively rigid. For example, it does not allow Federal lawmakers to run even small deficits to help the country emerge from a recession or a depression. That is bad economic policy that will hurt working families.

It is cruel because it would allow a Federal court, if called on to enforce the BBA, to order cuts to Social Security and Medicare payments, harming citizens who have earned their benefits through a lifetime of hard work, and it is cynical because House leadership is bringing this bill to the floor after it enacted a tax law that doesn't do enough to help middle class and small businesses, and that will explode our Nation's deficits and debt.

In fact, in a sobering new report, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that our annual deficit will exceed \$1 trillion within 2 years. CBO also estimates that the debt to GDP ratio will approach 100 percent within a decade—a dangerous figure not witnessed since the immediate aftermath of World War II.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that this BBA is a superficial exercise in political messaging rather than a serious effort to address a real problem. This is a real shame because we must tackle this problem, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as patriotic Americans concerned about the future of the country we love.

That is why last June I filed my own BBA, which has been endorsed by the Blue Dog Coalition. I believe my bill is a far better approach to the problem than the resolution we are considering today. My bill generally prohibits the Federal Government from spending more than it receives in a fiscal year, but it does not dictate how lawmakers should bring receipts and outlays into balance. We must examine the problem in a holistic manner and make the tough but necessary choices our constituents elected us to make. My bill contains provisions to protect Social Security and Medicare.

Unlike the resolution before us, it would not balance the budget on the backs of those who built our economy. My bill recognizes that there are times when running a deficit is necessary or sensible; like when our Nation is engaged in a military conflict or mired in an economic slump.

Therefore, the bill authorizes an exception to the balanced budget requirement when Congress declares war, when GDP does not grow for two consecutive quarters, or when unemployment exceeds 7 percent for 2 straight months. In addition, a supermajority of the House and Senate may vote to authorize outlays to exceed receipts in other circumstances.

In short, the goal is not to make annual deficits impossible, but to make it harder for policymakers to sacrifice the long-term stability of our economy for the sake of short-term gain.

If the Federal Government is going to spend more than it receives, that decision should be taken in a deliberate and bipartisan fashion, and not merely because it is politically expedient.

My broader goal in filing a BBA is to spur an honest conversation in Congress, in my central Florida district, and around the country, about the consequences, for both our economy and our national security, of piling deficit upon deficit.

It is clear our country must change course. We still have time to act. The question is: Do we have the courage to act?

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS).

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate some of the comments of others here and make it very clear.

We have been warned over the years in writing by the Congressional Budget Office, by the Government Accountability Office, and by Gene Dodaro, the Comptroller General of the United States, that our current financial path is unsustainable. In accounting language, that means insolvency and bankruptcies.

Back in 2015, by way of example, we as House Republicans had been able to successfully reduce America's annual deficits from the peak of \$1.4 trillion under the Obama administration in the 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 timeframe, to approximately \$438 billion in 2015. However, beginning in 2015, Washington took a wrong turn.

In 2016, the deficit increased to approximately \$585 billion. In 2017, the deficit increased to approximately \$666 billion. This year, the Congressional Budget Office just this week has warned us that we are looking at a roughly \$804 billion deficit this year. Again, wrong direction. Wrong turn.

Next year, almost \$1 trillion, and every year thereafter, \$1 trillion or more hastening the day that the United States of America suffers from a debilitating, a dangerous insolvency and bankruptcy. Hence, it is very im-

portant that we become masters of our own fate. It is very important that we do not become the debtor—as warned in Proverbs 22:7—that becomes a slave to the creditor who becomes the master.

In that vein, let's be clear about who one of our masters is, one of our creditors: China—\$1.2 trillion. Perhaps for the long term they will be a geopolitical friend, but there is also a chance that they will be a geopolitical foe. Do we really want them to have control over our fate as a country?

And let's be clear about the situation that we are in right now. Right now, if the Congressional Budget Office's projection of \$800 billion is accurate, if, in fact, we are going to spend roughly \$1.3 trillion in our discretionary budget that we just got through passing a few weeks ago—in my judgment, irresponsibly, but nonetheless that is in the past. It has happened. If that is going to be the case, if our creditors tomorrow were to simply cut us off, were to say we are not going to loan you any more money—which they have every right to do—and if that \$1.3 trillion was prorated, that \$800 billion shortfall out of \$1.3 trillion, you are looking at a roughly \$400 billion cut to national defense. That would be their share of an \$800 billion proration out of \$1.3 trillion.

That puts national security at risk. So it is important that we have a balanced budget constitutional amendment that forces Washington, D.C., to act like every family has to act, to act like every city, county, and State government has to act, to act like every business has to act, and that is to act within our financial means, act within our financial resources.

That having been said, I am inclined to vote for this balanced budget constitutional amendment, but I have serious reservations about whether it is ineffective and somehow hollow. It needs to be stronger, and I urge the United States Senate to make it stronger if it passes this body and gets to the Senate.

Here are three of the problem areas that I have identified:

Section 2: "The limit on the debt of the United States held by the public shall not be increased, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House shall provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote."

Mr. Speaker, three-fifths isn't going to cut it. It needs to be two-thirds or three-fourths or four-fifths, something substantial so that those of us who understand the economic risk of a national insolvency and bankruptcy who only constitute 10, 20, or 30 percent of this body are able to enforce this provision and force the United States Government to be financially responsible.

That is one area, increase that three-fifths to two-thirds or three-fourths or four-fifths.

A second area in section 5: "The provisions of this article may be waived for any fiscal year in which the United

States is engaged in military conflict which causes an imminent and serious military threat to national security and is so declared by a joint resolution, adopted by a majority"—a mere majority—"of the whole number of each House."

So let's be clear. In virtually every year since December 7 of 1941, we have had a military conflict. A sharp lawyer is going to say that it involves national security, which triggers a majority vote to go into deficit spending.

What is the law now? The law in the House is 50 percent plus 1, and you can pass a spending bill. The law in the Senate, though, is 60 percent because of their filibuster rule. So we are moving that 60 percent threshold down to 51 percent, thereby making it easier to pass a deficit-ridden bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Finally, this legislation has no express enforcement provision. What good is it to have a balanced budget constitutional amendment if there is no enforcement mechanism? I, as a United States Congressman, or any of my colleagues, 434 other Congressmen, United States Senators, Jane voter, Joe voter, they are not given the power under this constitutional amendment to enforce its terms.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate then to change three aspects of this. Number one: increase that 60 percent to two-thirds, three-fourths, or four-fifths.

Number two: make sure that we adjust the problem with the majority vote whenever there is a military conflict—which the United States seems to perpetually be in.

And number three: have an enforcement provision so that we know this is not a hollow shell of a constitutional amendment; rather, it is one that has substance; rather, it is one that will help prevent a debilitating insolvency of a great Nation that it took our ancestors centuries to build.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Washington has 11 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 26 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD two letters: one from AFSCME and one from AARP.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE,
COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES,
AFL-CIO,

Washington, DC, April 10, 2018.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I am writing to urge you to vote no on H.J. Res. 2 and to reject this and any

other effort to amend the U.S. Constitution to require a balanced budget.

The proposed constitutional amendment is a draconian and unwise proposal that would damage the economy, result in huge job losses and weaken vital public services that all Americans depend upon. It unwisely requires outlays to match receipts each year regardless of economic conditions, a supermajority vote of three-fifths to increase the debt ceiling with limited exceptions for outlays to exceed receipts only in times of war, but not during recessions or disasters.

H.J. Res. 2 is a false attempt to claim fiscal responsibility on the heels of a reckless tax cut that is projected to cause the deficit to skyrocket to \$1.9 trillion over the next decade, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and to exceed \$2.5 trillion if its tax policies are extended. The tax cut for the wealthy and big corporations irresponsibly forced revenues to their lowest levels since 1956, an unsustainable level far below what is needed to support programs that provide basic needs for struggling families, to promote economic growth and meet other critical needs like investing in infrastructure and education.

H.J. Res. 2 would irresponsibly require a supermajority vote to lift the debt ceiling, an already difficult vote that subjects the U.S. and worldwide economies to instability and potential economic destruction. Further, requiring a balanced budget annually would take away the ability to respond to changing economic conditions and raise serious risks of tipping weak economies into recession and making recessions longer and deeper. Most egregious, H.J. Res. 2 is a thinly veiled attempt to force drastic changes to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and veterans' benefits that Americans earn and depend on.

H.J. Res. 2 is a dangerous and fiscally irresponsible political maneuver. AFSCME urges you to reject this politically motivated and dangerous proposal.

Sincerely,

SCOTT FREY,

Director of Federal Government Affairs.

AARP,

April 9, 2018.

DEAR MEMBER: AARP is writing to express our opposition to a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States. AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment.

A balanced budget amendment would likely harm Social Security and Medicare, subjecting both programs to potentially deep cuts without regard to the impact on the health and financial security of individuals. It would also likely diminish the resources available for programs assisting Americans who are least able to provide for themselves—services such as meals or heating for those who are too poor or physically unable to take care of their basic needs without some support.

A balanced budget amendment would prohibit outlays for a fiscal year from exceeding total receipts for that fiscal year. It would impose a constitutional cap on all spending that is equivalent to the revenues raised in any given year. Because revenues fluctuate based on many factors, spending would, out of necessity fluctuate as well under a balanced budget amendment. Consequently, Social Security and Medicare benefits would

also fluctuate, potentially subjecting each to sudden or deep cuts. Social Security and Medicare would therefore cease to provide a predictable source of financial and health security in retirement under a balanced budget amendment.

The lack of a dependable Social Security and Medicare benefit would be devastating for millions of Americans. Social Security is currently the principal source of income for half of older American households receiving benefits, and roughly one in five households depend on Social Security benefits for nearly all (90 percent or more) of their income. Over 50 million Americans depend on Medicare, half of whom have incomes of less than \$24,150. Even small fluctuations in premiums and cost sharing would have a significant impact on the personal finances of older and disabled Americans.

Individuals who have contributed their entire working lives to earn a predictable benefit during their retirement would find that their retirement income and health care out of pocket costs would vary significantly year-to-year, making planning difficult and peace of mind impossible.

It is particularly inappropriate to subject Social Security to a balanced budget amendment given that Social Security is an off-budget program that is separately funded through its own revenue stream, including significant trust fund reserves to finance benefits. Imposing a cap on Social Security outlays is unjustifiable, especially when the Social Security trust funds ran a surplus for decades—reducing the past need for additional government borrowing from the public—and resulted in a public debt that is less today than what it otherwise would have been.

Older Americans truly understand that budgets matter and that we all need to live within our means. However, they also understand that budgets affect real people; and they certainly understand the difference between programs to which they have contributed and earned over the course of a lifetime of work, and those they have not. AARP opposes the adoption of a balanced budget amendment that puts Social Security and Medicare at risk. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact Joyce A. Rogers, SVP, Government Affairs office

Sincerely,

NANCY LEAMOND,

Executive Vice President and

Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, let me read a couple of paragraphs from this letter from AFSCME.

"The proposed constitutional amendment is a draconian and unwise proposal that would damage the economy, result in huge job losses, and weaken vital public services that all Americans depend on. It unwisely requires outlays to match receipts each year regardless of economic conditions, a supermajority vote of three-fifths to increase the debt ceiling, with limited exceptions for outlays to exceed receipts only in times of war, but not during recessions or disasters."

This is a false attempt to claim fiscal responsibility on the heels of a reckless tax cut projected to cause the deficit to skyrocket to \$1.9 trillion over the next decade.

Mr. Speaker, let me read from the AARP letter. This is, as we know, AARP, the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans over 50 on how they choose to live as they age. And

here is what they had to say: “A balanced budget amendment would likely harm Social Security and Medicare, subjecting both programs to potentially deep cuts without regard to the impact on the health and financial security of individuals. It would also likely diminish the resources available for programs assisting Americans who are least able to provide for themselves—services such as meals or heating for those who are too poor or physically unable to take care of their basic needs without some support.”

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Mr. Speaker, the letter goes on to say:

“The lack of a dependable Social Security and Medicare benefit would be devastating for millions of Americans. Social Security is currently the principal source of income for half of older American households receiving benefits, and roughly one in five households depend on Social Security benefits for nearly all . . . of their income. Over 50 million Americans depend on Medicare, half of whom have incomes of less than \$24,150. Even small fluctuations in premiums and cost sharing would have a significant impact on the personal finances of older and disabled Americans.”

Mr. Speaker, I am here to say that we are in strong opposition to the so-called balanced budget amendment today. There is a word that has been thrown around in this discussion. Because I care about words, I wanted to make sure that I was using the right word for what is happening. So I looked in the dictionary, and I looked up the word “hypocrisy.” Here is the definition of hypocrisy: hypocrisy is the practice of claiming to have standards or beliefs to which one’s own behavior does not conform. The dictionary definition goes on to say: a pretense.

That, Mr. Speaker, is what is happening, a pretense.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON).

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia, our chairman, for his leadership on, quite frankly, two of the most important issues that we face as a nation: number one, border security, which is national security; and then our national debt which if we ever—and we don’t know when—but when it happens, it will be awfully hard to put it all back together, but a sovereign debt crisis would be devastating and would be our greatest national security threat. So I want to thank him for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, our great country is currently over \$21 trillion in debt, and if we don’t address this looming crisis, our children will not inherit the exceptional Nation that we as Americans have known for generations. This is the most important issue, I think, of our

day. This is my generation’s greatest challenge.

One of the main reasons the American people are so frustrated and have lost confidence in Congress is because we play by a different set of rules. Nowhere is that disconnect more prominently on display than how we fund our government. No one gets to spend money they don’t have on things they don’t need. No one has a money tree growing in their backyard except, apparently, the United States Treasury.

A day of reckoning is coming, and once the sovereign debt crisis begins, we won’t be able to stop it, and the dark days of high taxes and high unemployment will descend upon the next generation of Americans.

History has proven a few things, and one of them is that Congress will only limit its appetite for spending and responsibly manage its fiscal affairs when forced to do so. So the only solution that I see to this potentially devastating problem is to force Congress to do what it collectively doesn’t have the will to do.

That is why I support a balanced budget amendment that requires Congress to—get this—not spend more money than it receives, not to spend more money than it gets in revenue.

The American people have to prioritize to live within their means, Mr. Speaker, and their government ought to do the same.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the word “hypocrisy.” I mentioned the word “pretense.” If this was such an important issue, why did it not get proposed before the GOP tax scam? Because if the majority is really worried about the deficit, then they would not have passed a tax scam that cost this country \$1.9 trillion simply to give tax cuts to the wealthiest individuals and corporations in our country.

This morning in the Budget Committee where I serve as vice ranking member, the Congressional Budget Office Director, Keith Hall, reaffirmed what we always knew, that these tax cuts do not pay for themselves. He also told us that there is no such thing as sustained growth of the rates that our Republican colleagues have thrown out there and said are going to happen.

So if the majority were worried about a balanced budget, they should have voted “no” on the GOP tax scam. But that is not what my Republican colleagues did. If they were worried about a balanced budget, then Republican colleagues should not have insisted on a \$670 billion military spending budget. But we didn’t hear a peep about this then. You can’t just oppose spending, Mr. Speaker, when you don’t like the things that we are spending on.

By the way, I have some breaking news: Republicans control the House, the Senate, and the Presidency. Republicans have control. But as we are seeing, that does not mean that Republicans know how to govern.

This amendment is a new low to showcase a contempt of the American people’s memory and intelligence. But I believe that the American people are watching. They didn’t buy the tax scam where they are now seeing that only 5 percent of those tax cuts are actually going to workers, and they are not going to believe in this maneuver either, Mr. Speaker.

Why? Because, as I said during the tax scam debate on the floor last year, the American people are going to rise up against any concerted and naked effort to cut earned benefit programs like Medicare and Social Security. I want to emphasize the words “earned benefit” because people call them entitlement programs, but Social Security is a program that people have contributed to with a promise that they would be taken care of when they retire.

But let’s talk about the real purpose of this balanced budget amendment. It is similar to what I said on the floor last year in the middle of this debate, a three-step dance. Step one, pass a GOP tax scam to transfer \$1.3 trillion in debt from working Americans to the wealthiest 1 percent and largest corporations.

Step two, explode the deficit—exactly what we heard from the CBO Director today—\$2 trillion to the budget deficit over the next 10 years.

Step three, use those exploding deficits to justify deep cuts to the very programs that matter the most to Americans, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

We have already seen this strategy in the President’s fiscal year 2019 budget which slashes \$500 billion from Medicare, \$1.4 trillion from Medicaid, and \$72 billion from Social Security disability.

Mr. Speaker, it is not just the American people and Democrats in Congress who have noticed the hypocrisy of what is being proposed today. Even some Republicans in Congress have talked about it. Our colleague, Congressman MARK MEADOWS, said—and these are his words that I am quoting—“There is no one on Capitol Hill, and certainly no one on Main Street, that will take this vote seriously.”

He is right. This isn’t going to fool anyone, least of all the American people.

Americans deserve so much better. My friend from Georgia talked earlier about how we both sit on the Budget Committee, and we have actually had conversations about how we wish we could actually talk about real solutions. That doesn’t happen as often as it should, and certainly if you want to have a conversation about the deficit and the debt, we should have that. But to propose a balanced budget amendment after you have already voted for a tax cut that increased the deficit by \$2 trillion over the next 10 years, that, I think, is something that people will see through. Americans will see through that just as they saw through whom the benefits of the tax cut are actually going to.

So, Mr. Speaker, today I urge all my colleagues to vote “no” on this amendment, and let’s get back to the real work of serving the American people with real discussions and real questions that come up at the time when they are relevant.

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

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

In closing, let me quote President Ronald Reagan. In his address to the Nation on the fiscal year 1983 Federal budget, he said:

“Only a constitutional amendment will do the job.”

“With the stick of a balanced budget amendment, we can stop government squandering, overtaxing ways, and save our economy.”

A few years, later he said this in his weekly radio address:

“One part of our Founding Fathers’ genius was their provision for amending the Constitution. They knew they had created a good document but not a perfect one. In fact, even two centuries ago, some of them, especially Thomas Jefferson, were troubled by one omission: the lack of a limitation on public borrowing by the Federal Government.”

“Well, even in their reservations about the Constitution, the Founding Fathers were perceptive and wise.

“I think most of you know how badly out of control Federal spending has gotten in recent years;”—I’m quoting President Reagan in 1980—“today the national debt is \$2.25 trillion.”

“... I’m one of those Americans who has always believed that a constitutional amendment mandating that Congress balance the budget is the answer to what ails us.”

That was 30 years ago. Today the national debt is over \$20 trillion, and President Reagan’s words ring 10 times louder as a result.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment and in freeing our children and grandchildren from the burden of a crippling debt they had no hand in creating so they and their own children and generations to come can be free to chart their own futures.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment to the United States Constitution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, here they go again. Republicans are coming to the House floor to decry growing deficits, as if they had nothing to do with them.

Just this week, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) reported that the federal deficit is going to double over the next five years—driven by policies passed by a Republican-controlled House and a Republican-controlled Senate and signed into law by a Republican President.

Their hands are stained with red ink.

The fact that these same Republicans are now saying we need a Balanced Budget Amendment to tame our debt is more than a little hard to swallow. In fact, I don’t know how they are not choking on their hypocrisy.

Republicans increased the deficit by \$1.9 trillion to provide huge tax breaks mostly to wealthy individuals and large corporations. Just look at the analysis from the Tax Policy Center, which shows the top one percent—those with income over \$730,000 a year—getting an average tax cut of over \$50,000 in 2018, compared to only \$60 for those at the bottom.

And CBO tells us the deficit will grow even higher if the GOP further extends these tax cuts for the top.

The purpose of today’s activity is not to bring balance to the budget—it is to provide political cover for Republicans. But even they are having trouble pretending to take this bill seriously.

Here’s what Representative MARK MEADOWS, Chairman of the Freedom Caucus, has said about this measure:

There is no one on Capitol Hill, and certainly no one on Main Street, that will take this vote seriously.

Representative JIM JORDAN characterized today’s proceedings by saying:

... we’re going to pound our chest like Tarzan and say we’re for a balanced budget, it’s not going to fool anybody.

And a staffer for the conservative Club for Growth summarized the whole effort as, “Leadership is just trying to check a box here.”

If today’s legislation was only about hiding the real Republican record on rising debt, it would be bad enough. But this measure also paves the way for devastating cuts in critical programs, including Social Security and Medicare.

The Republican balanced budget amendment would prevent Social Security from drawing down savings the program is now accruing in its trust fund to pay promised benefits in the future. This would force cuts in Social Security benefits because all federal expenditures would have to be covered by tax revenues collected during that same year. A similar problem would exist for paying future Medicare benefits out of that program’s trust fund.

Additionally, by requiring a balanced budget every year, regardless of the state of our economy, this legislation would force benefit cuts and tax increases at the worst possible time—potentially turning mild recessions into great depressions. Not only would that be devastating for hard-working families, it also would drive future deficits even higher.

Mr. Speaker, today our Republican colleagues are hoping their concerned words will hide their harmful actions on increasing our nation’s debt. But in doing so, they are only creating more potential harm. We should reject this deceptive and dangerous charade.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Balanced Budget Amendment.

This Monday, we heard that federal deficits are going to be almost \$2 trillion more over the next decade than previously projected. While there is more than one reason for our exploding deficit, the GOP’s tax reform bill increased our deficit by almost 20 percent.

Last fall, I and many of my colleagues voiced our fears that the so-called party of fiscal conservatism was going to try to pay for their tax bill by gutting Medicare and Social Security.

I agree with the amendment’s authors that Congress urgently needs to address our debt.

If Congress advanced a carefully structured balanced budget amendment, with waivers to allow fast action to stabilize the markets in the event of a financial crisis like the one we faced just a few short years ago, and with waivers to allow us to fulfill the promises that we have already made to our country’s senior citizens, I would support it.

But this amendment does not do that. It endangers our long-term prosperity in order to pay short-term lip service to fiscal responsibility.

I do not support potentially pulling the rug out from under Americans counting on their Medicare and Social Security benefits, who have been relying on the promises our government made to them for their whole lives. I do not support action that increases the likelihood that our country will be plunged once again into recession, endangering markets and economies worldwide. And I do not agree that the cost of larger tax breaks for multinational companies or of other fiscal decisions made by Congress should be borne by our country’s elderly and sick.

I ask my colleagues to vote to protect our constituents from an economic crisis that could be far worse than the one we suffered in 2008, and to join me in voting against this amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BROOKS of Alabama). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 2.

The question was taken.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Natural Resources:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 12, 2018.

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

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: I, Norma J. Torres, am submitting my resignation from the House Committee on Natural Resources in compliance with the Rules of the Democratic Caucus. It has been a privilege and honor to have served on this Committee.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

NORMA J. TORRES,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.
There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) at 5 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Suspending the rules and passing H.J. Res. 2; and

Agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

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

PROPOSING A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 2) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 184, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 138]

YEAS—233

Abraham	Calvert	Duffy
Aderholt	Carter (GA)	Duncan (SC)
Allen	Carter (TX)	Duncan (TN)
Amodei	Chabot	Dunn
Arrington	Cheney	Emmer
Babin	Coffman	Estes (KS)
Bacon	Cole	Faso
Banks (IN)	Collins (GA)	Ferguson
Barletta	Collins (NY)	Fitzpatrick
Barr	Comer	Fleischmann
Barton	Comstock	Flores
Bergman	Conaway	Fortenberry
Bilirakis	Cook	Fox
Bishop (MI)	Cooper	Frelinghuysen
Bishop (UT)	Costa	Gaetz
Black	Costello (PA)	Gallagher
Blackburn	Cramer	Garrett
Blum	Crawford	Gianforte
Bost	Cuellar	Gibbs
Brady (TX)	Culberson	Goodlatte
Brat	Curtis	Gottheimer
Bridenstine	Davidson	Gowdy
Brooks (AL)	Davis, Rodney	Granger
Brooks (IN)	Denham	Graves (GA)
Buchanan	Dent	Graves (LA)
Bucshon	DeSantis	Graves (MO)
Budd	DesJarlais	Griffith
Burgess	Diaz-Balart	Grothman
Byrne	Donovan	Guthrie

Handel	Marshall	Royce (CA)
Harper	Mast	Russell
Harris	McCarthy	Rutherford
Hartzler	McCaul	Sanford
Hensarling	McClintock	Scalise
Herrera Beutler	McHenry	Schweikert
Hice, Jody B.	McKinley	Scott, Austin
Higgins (LA)	McMorris	Sensenbrenner
Hill	Rodgers	Sessions
Holding	McSally	Shimkus
Hollingsworth	Meadows	Shuster
Hudson	Meehan	Sinema
Huizenga	Messer	Smith (MO)
Hultgren	Mitchell	Smith (NE)
Hunter	Moolenaar	Smith (NJ)
Hurd	Mooney (WV)	Smith (TX)
Issa	Mullin	Smucker
Jenkins (KS)	Newhouse	Stefanik
Jenkins (WV)	Noem	Stewart
Johnson (LA)	Norman	Stivers
Johnson (OH)	Nunes	Taylor
Johnson, Sam	Olson	Tenney
Jones	Palazzo	Thompson (PA)
Jordan	Palmer	Thornberry
Joyce (OH)	Paulsen	Trott
Katko	Pearce	Turner
Kelly (MS)	Perry	Upton
Kelly (PA)	Peterson	Valadao
Kind	Pittenger	Wagner
King (IA)	Poe (TX)	Walberg
King (NY)	Poliquin	Walden
Kinziger	Posey	Walker
Knight	Ratcliffe	Walorski
Kustoff (TN)	Reed	Walters, Mimi
Labrador	Reichert	Weber (TX)
LaHood	Renacci	Webster (FL)
LaMalfa	Roby	Wenstrup
Lamborn	Roe (TN)	Westerman
Lance	Rogers (AL)	Williams
Latta	Rogers (KY)	Wilson (SC)
Lewis (MN)	Rohrabacher	Wittman
LoBiondo	Rokita	Womack
Long	Rooney, Francis	Woodall
Loudermilk	Rooney, Thomas J.	Yoder
Love	Ros-Lehtinen	Yoho
Lucas	Roskam	Young (AK)
Luetkemeyer	MacArthur	Young (IA)
Marchant	Rothfus	Zeldin
Marino	Rouzer	

NAYS—184

Adams	Demings	Kuster (NH)
Aguilar	DeSaulnier	Langevin
Amash	Deutch	Larsen (WA)
Barragan	Dingell	Larson (CT)
Bass	Doggett	Lawrence
Beatty	Doyle, Michael F.	Lawson (FL)
Bera	Ellison	Lee
Beyer	Engel	Levin
Biggs	Eshoo	Lewis (GA)
Blumenauer	Eshoo	Lieu, Ted
Blunt Rochester	Espallat	Lipinski
Bonamici	Esty (CT)	Loeb
Boyle, Brendan F.	Evans	Loeb
Brady (PA)	Foster	Lowenthal
Brown (MD)	Fudge	Lowey
Brownley (CA)	Gabbard	Lujan Grisham, M.
Bustos	Galleo	Lujan, Ben Ray
Butterfield	Garamendi	Lynch
Capuano	Gohmert	Maloney
Carbajal	Gomez	Maloney, Sean
Cardenas	Gonzalez (TX)	Massie
Carson (IN)	Gosar	Matsui
Cartwright	Green, Al	McCollum
Castor (FL)	Green, Gene	McEachin
Castro (TX)	Grijalva	McGovern
Chu, Judy	Gutierrez	McNerney
Ciçilline	Hanabusa	Meeks
Clark (MA)	Hastings	Meng
Clarke (NY)	Heck	Moulton
Cook	Higgins (NY)	Murphy (FL)
Cleaver	Himes	Nadler
Clyburn	Hoyer	Napolitano
Cohen	Huffman	Neal
Connolly	Jackson Lee	Nolan
Correa	Jayapal	Norcross
Courtney	Jeffries	O'Halleran
Crist	Johnson (GA)	O'Rourke
Crowley	Johnson, E. B.	Pallone
Curbelo (FL)	Kaptur	Panetta
Davis (CA)	Keating	Pascarella
Davis, Danny	Kelly (IL)	Payne
DeFazio	Kennedy	Pelosi
DeGette	Khanna	Perlmutter
Delaney	Kihuen	Peters
DeLauro	Kildee	Pingree
DelBene	Kilmer	
	Krishnamoorthi	

Pocan	Schiff	Titus
Polis	Schneider	Tonko
Price (NC)	Schrader	Torres
Quigley	Scott (VA)	Tsongas
Raskin	Serrano	Vargas
Rice (NY)	Sewell (AL)	Veasey
Richmond	Sherman	Vela
Rosen	Sires	Velázquez
Roybal-Allard	Smith (WA)	Visclosky
Ruiz	Soto	Wasserman
Ruppersberger	Speier	Schultz
Rush	Suozzi	Waters, Maxine
Ryan (OH)	Swalwell (CA)	Watson Coleman
Sánchez	Takano	Welch
Sarbanes	Thompson (CA)	Wilson (FL)
Schakowsky	Thompson (MS)	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—11

Bishop (GA)	Moore	Simpson
Buck	Rice (SC)	Tipton
Cummings	Scott, David	Walz
Frankel (FL)	Shea-Porter	

□ 1729

Mr. BROWN of Maryland changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mrs. BLACK changed her vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds not being in the affirmative) the motion was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 6, 2018.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of the Certificate of Election received from the Honorable Tom Wolf, the Governor of Pennsylvania and the Honorable Robert Torres, the Acting Secretary of the Commonwealth, indicating that, at the Special Election held on March 13, 2018, the Honorable Conor Lamb was duly elected Representative in Congress for the 18th Congressional District, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

Enclosure.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA Governor's Office

I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby certify that at the Special Election held on the thirteenth day of March, 2018, Conor Lamb having received One hundred fourteen thousand one hundred two votes was duly elected to the office of Representative in Congress in the Eighteenth Congressional District of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State, at the City of Harrisburg, this fourth day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand and eighteen and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and forty-second.

TOM WOLF,
Governor.
ROBERT TORRES,
Acting Secretary of the Commonwealth.

[State Seal Affixed]

SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE CONOR LAMB, OF PENNSYLVANIA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER. Will Representative-elect LAMB and the members of the Pennsylvania delegation present themselves in the well.

All Members will rise and the Representative-elect will please raise his right hand.

Mr. LAMB appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you are now a Member of the 115th Congress.

WELCOMING THE HONORABLE CONOR LAMB TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to welcome our newest colleague.

CONOR LAMB is a lifelong resident of Pittsburgh, where, incidentally, his family has been active in civic life for generations, and he comes to the House after service to his country as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and an assistant U.S. attorney in the Justice Department.

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Pennsylvania Law School, he was commissioned as a judge advocate general officer in the Marine Corps, where he spent several years prosecuting cases in the military justice system.

Upon completing his Active-Duty service in 2013, Conor clerked for a Federal district court judge and then was appointed assistant U.S. attorney in the Western District of Pennsylvania, where he successfully prosecuted a number of major drug dealers and gun traffickers.

He also continues to serve his country in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to welcome the newest member of the Pennsylvania delegation. He is a lifelong resident. And, incidentally, his family is up in the gallery, and I am sure he is going to be introducing them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), the dean of the Republican delegation, for his comments.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Republican delegation, I rise today to wel-

come the newest member of the Pennsylvania delegation, representing the 18th District, CONOR LAMB. As MIKE mentioned, he continues the Lamb family tradition of public service and politics.

Again, as a prosecutor and as a marine, we thank him for his service to his nation.

I would also like to point out that CONOR and I share a unique bond. Obviously, both of our families have been involved in public service and politics for a number of years. We both hail from western Pennsylvania, the Lambs from the South Hills, the Shusters from the Mon Valley; we share counties in our districts; we were both elected in a special election; but most importantly—most importantly—we come from the same side of the aisle: Steelers fans, not Eagles.

Western Pennsylvania is in our blood, and we like to think the importance of family, understanding the value of hard work, and, of course, rooting for the black and gold are what we share with our constituents back home.

CONOR, I look forward to working with you, and on behalf of all the Republicans in the House of Representatives, I welcome you to the House of Representatives. Welcome, Congressman LAMB.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. LAMB).

Mr. LAMB. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to take this oath and to join this House.

The founding creed of our country holds that we are endowed by our Creator, that our rights do not come from the State, but from the hand of God. We have always believed that government is established to secure those rights, and the oath we have taken binds us to that cause. I believe in that cause.

When we started our campaign, we heard a lot of talk about how nothing could get done in the government anymore. Wise commentators worried that we were too divided, our institutions too old and too slow to respond, and our people's ancient faith in our democratic process was disappearing, but that is not what we found.

At Legion posts, at union halls, and on people's doorsteps, we found a faith in America and a fierce determination to make our institutions work again, as they have so often in our history. The people of western Pennsylvania picked me up every day.

The essential truth of our situation is we are all in this together. We need solidarity with each other; we need universal programs and aspirations; and we need to honor the service of our fellow citizens.

I will do my level best to reach out, to find common ground, and to help this great American institution deliver the results we need and deserve.

It may be difficult to acknowledge everyone, but I will start with my

grandmother, Barbara Lamb, who is in the House. My parents, Tom and Katie, are with her, along with my uncles, my aunt, and my brother. I also have a brother and sister watching from far away. My fiancée is in the House as well, and I hope everybody gives her a round of applause.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the administration of the oath to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, the whole number of the House is 430.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 3336

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 3336, the Employ Young Americans Now Act, a bill originally introduced by Representative Conyers of Michigan, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GALLAGHER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

□ 1745

HONORING THE LEGACY OF THE AIR FORCE RESERVE ON ITS 70TH BIRTHDAY

(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, Saturday marks the 70th anniversary of the Air Force Reserve.

Since President Harry S. Truman called for the formation of the Air Force Reserve in 1948, it has been a critical part of our Nation's defense. Its mission is to provide combat-ready forces to fly, fight, and win.

Operating in various locations around the world, the Air Force Reserve has evolved from a "stand by" force for emergencies into a major command of the Active Duty Air Force.

The Air Force Reserve currently performs about 20 percent of the work of the Air Force, including traditional

flying missions and other more specialized missions, such as weather reconnaissance, modular aerial firefighting, and personnel recovery.

The Air Force Reserve is part of every Air Force core mission function and performs the same missions as the Active Duty partners. On Saturday, we will remember where the Air Force Reserve has been, where it is now, and where it is going.

Great men and women have sacrificed to give all Americans a better tomorrow. On Saturday, we honor their legacy. Happy birthday to the Air Force Reserve.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF BISHOP CLEVELAND BLASH, JR.

(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, I rise this evening to honor Bishop Cleveland Blash, Jr., on the occasion of his 44th year of serving God and the people of Newark.

Bishop Blash began his long service when he was ordained in the late 1970s. He faithfully served churches in Connecticut, Florida, and New York, before being assigned to St. Paul Sounds of Praise PFM Church in Newark, New Jersey.

Bishop Blash is truly a community leader. He is the founder of Operation CLEANN, which stands for Citizens Looking to Empower a New Neighborhood. He has given more than 10,000 hours of labor to the community around West Side Park in Newark, New Jersey.

Bishop Blash also created a scholarship committee, founded the annual U.S. Marines Toys for Tots Drive in his neighborhood, and created a communitywide Thanksgiving dinner, among other great deeds.

Last weekend, Bishop Blash celebrated his 68th birthday and 44th year in the ministry. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Bishop Blash for his lifetime of service to his community.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when Bianca Ramirez left her Massachusetts home one Sunday morning for a jog, she had no idea it would be the worst morning of her life. Shortly after she began running, she was blindsided by a strange man in broad daylight. He choked her into unconsciousness and dragged her into the bushes, brutally beating her.

When she came to nearly 30 minutes later, she realized the horror that had happened to her. With the help of coun-

seling and other victim resources, Bianca is a survivor, and the criminal went to prison.

Mr. Speaker, this is National Crime Victims' Rights Week. During this week, we remember the evil that victims like Bianca have endured. Victims like Bianca are the reason that Congressman JIM COSTA and I formed the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus, with the goal of ending modern-day slavery and giving victims a voice on the national level.

In honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, I ask Members to join me to honor and be a voice for victims of crime in America.

And that is just the way it is.

WELCOME HOME, HECTOR BARAJAS

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

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome my constituent, Hector Barajas, home. Mr. Barajas enlisted in the Army in 1995, served nobly for 6 years, and was honorably discharged in 2001.

Hector was not a U.S. citizen. Despite being a veteran, he was deported in 2002 and separated from his family, despite his years of service and sacrifice for our country.

Soon after his deportation, Mr. Barajas became a leader and role model for other deported veterans, establishing a safe house in Tijuana, Mexico, called the Deported Veterans Support House, or "The Bunker," as they like to call it.

Meanwhile, he continued to pursue his dream of returning legally to the United States and becoming a U.S. citizen. His dream has finally come true. On April 13, Mr. Barajas will return to Compton, California, as a United States citizen. Upon his return, let's work together to bring home our veterans.

Welcome home, Hector, and thank you for your service.

RECOGNIZING SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

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

Mrs. LOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Salt Lake Community College, also known as SLCC, for its leadership in making it more affordable to residents in Utah to earn a degree or certificate.

Early this month opened Open Education Week, and I would like to highlight "Open SLCC," an initiative that started in 2014 and has grown to more than 600 open sections across a wide range of foundational courses online.

To date, Open SLCC has saved \$5.8 million for over 40,000 students by

using Open Educational Resources, or OER, as an alternative to costly textbooks. This is truly remarkable.

Combined with SLCC's promise, where the community college covers the tuition and fees for students with significant financial needs, SLCC is effectively addressing issues of access and affordability to help students complete college and compete in our workforce. I salute SLCC for this winning combination.

I also want to congratulate Mr. Jason Pickavance at SLCC for hosting the first "State of the OER Conference" in February. This is a great example of collaboration among education leaders in Utah and nationally to address college affordability and completion issues.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today is Holocaust Remembrance Day; remembrance of the horrors of 6 million Jews being killed in Nazi Germany, and others being killed as well: homosexuals, Communists, and other minorities that were objectionable, like Gypsies.

In recent polls, it shows millennials, over a third, don't realize what Auschwitz was, or that the Holocaust occurred. On this day, Yom HaShoah, we need to remind the world of what horrendous events occurred on this planet just 75 years ago.

Never again. Never again. Elie Wiesel said: "We may not be able to defeat injustice, but we should always protest it."

COMBATING ONLINE EXPLOITATION OF SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

(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, I want to recognize an important new law, the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act, or FOSTA. This landmark anti-trafficking legislation that I helped coauthor was just signed into law by the President this week, and it ushers in a new era of combating the online exploitation of trafficking victims.

Last month, half a dozen Minnesota men were rolled up in an online underage trafficking sting. They had met what they believed were young girls advertised for sex on backpage.com, one of the worst offenders when it comes to exploiting trafficking victims. But when each of them showed up to the designated meeting spot, instead of finding teenage girls, they found law enforcement waiting for them.

Sadly, there are more who are able to buy sex on websites like Backpage, but the new law will help us put a stop to

that. Now it ensures that websites that facilitate sex trafficking will be held liable and held accountable for their actions.

Backpage.com has now been taken over by Federal authorities. It isn't the only such site in existence, but it is a sign that their ability to profit from trafficking without consequence has come to an end.

GRANT THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FULL EMANCIPATION

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, D.C. begins commemorations of the emancipation of slaves in the Nation's Capital 9 months before slavery was abolished elsewhere in the United States. Yet, D.C. residents, 156 years later, still are not free. Congress can overturn local laws nowhere else except in the District, and collects taxes without representation.

The residents of the Nation's Capital have more than paid the price for their citizenship. Most are native-born American citizens. Residents have fought and died in every U.S. war, including the Revolutionary War that created the United States of America.

And D.C. residents rank number one in taxes paid to support the United States Government. We are well within our rights to ask Congress to grant the District of Columbia full emancipation by making the District the 51st State.

NATIONAL RETIREMENT PLANNING WEEK

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of nearly 50 million baby boomers ready for retirement.

This week is National Retirement Planning Week. Let me emphasize two earned benefits that have done more to grant security and peace in retirement than any other: Medicare and Social Security. If future generations are to reap their retirement security, our generation must ensure their solvency. And if we only talk retirement with seniors, we fall seriously short.

Although nearly half of all baby boomers say they have \$100,000 or less saved, and their Social Security is critical to their survival, half of Generation Xers have less than \$10,000 saved. Given the financial pressures on millennials, they could end up in precarious situations.

Congress must show real leadership on this issue; and the somber reality is more Americans than ever are shouldering the burden of financing retirement alone. As a society, Congress also must prioritize financial literacy and education, beginning with young students in schools. We must equip every-

one to start small nest eggs that can grow over the decades into what I call Social Security Plus.

Thank you to the National Retirement Planning Coalition, whose fantastic online resources are available to Americans free of charge. That is the National Retirement Planning Coalition, free of charge, to all Americans. Let's get to work for security for our retirees, not just this generation, but those to come.

□ 1800

HONORING THE LIFE OF VICTOR LINK

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

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Victor Link.

Victor was an intelligent man who had a vast knowledge on many topics. He was the father to his adopted son, Christian, and was engaged to be married to his fiancée, Lynne.

Victor loved music and loved sharing his expertise on craft beers. He attended the Route 91 festival in Las Vegas on October 1.

He often traveled around the country to attend many different music festivals with his fiancée, but he always made sure to make time for friends and family.

His son remembers him as being a very strong role model who had a deep passion for life.

I would like to extend my condolences to Victor's family and friends. Please know that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the entire country grieve with you.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA CRUZ BANANA SLUGS

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of California at Santa Cruz Banana Slugs, specifically, their rocket team, the so-called Rocket Slugs, for not only being selected to compete in NASA's elite Student Launch Week, but for medaling in the Best Rocket Fair Display.

The annual competition in Huntsville, Alabama, allows students to research and develop projects related to NASA's Space Launch System. That is America's deep space exploration rocket that is built to return astronauts to the Moon and possibly even send them to Mars.

Their work is a testament to UC Santa Cruz and team cocaptains Kent Roberts and Zafar Rustamkulov. These students pushed the limits of design and engineering, pushed themselves

through trial and error, and proved that they can push their dreams to the Moon and beyond.

FARM BILL AND NUTRITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight to join with my colleagues for this Special Order.

Over the past 3 years, the House Agriculture Committee has been diligently working on the next farm bill, which sets agriculture and food policy for our Nation every 5 years.

As chairman of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, I am pleased that we can discuss this important topic tonight, nutrition, and I want to thank Chairman CONAWAY for his great leadership and commitment putting forward the best farm bill possible.

Tonight, we are here to talk about the nutrition title, specifically the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which we used to call food stamps. SNAP accounts for 80 percent of spending in the farm bill, and it is an important safety net for low-income families to help ensure that no one in America goes hungry when times get tough. Far too many Americans are living in poverty, and many have been for a generation.

There is no worse feeling for a parent than to see their child go without something as basic as food, yet food insecurity exists for so many. That is why, since 2015, the Nutrition Subcommittee has hosted 21 hearings on SNAP. It has heard from more than 80 witnesses on how we can improve the program and work to end hunger in America.

In fiscal year 2017, SNAP provided 42.2 million Americans with food benefits at a cost of \$63.7 billion. That is nearly 21 million households, Mr. Speaker.

In my district, Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, nearly 35,000 households received SNAP benefits for fiscal year 2015. Thirty percent of those homes have one or more people over the age of 60, and nearly half, 45.9 percent, of those homes have children who are under the age of 18.

What this farm bill does is ensure that SNAP benefits continue to be available for those who truly need the help, especially children, seniors age 60 and older, and the disabled, who represent nearly two-thirds of the program's participants.

Unfortunately, though, many Americans may not have the skills necessary to find a family-sustaining job or may have encountered roadblocks while trying to get ahead. This new farm bill makes a historic investment in work programs so SNAP recipients have a

chance to learn new skills and climb the rungs on the ladder of opportunity.

Now, this investment will equip States with resources to arm participants with the soft skills—job search skills, certifications, and education—needed to succeed in today's economy, truly, on-ramps to opportunity.

Now we have a unique opportunity to expand funding and resources for these life-changing programs by closing loopholes and improving opportunities for individuals who have been marginalized by a lack of employment, education, or, quite frankly, life circumstances. By doing this, SNAP can provide immediate food assistance in the short term, while also helping those in need learn skills to help them permanently escape poverty.

Now, let me be clear. We are not removing anyone from receiving the SNAP benefits. What we are doing is providing the tools necessary to help individuals escape the cycle of poverty. I believe that there are many pathways to success in life, and sometimes we do need that critical safety net to take care of our families and help us get back on our feet.

With a rebounding economy and an increased focus on workforce development, I know we are going to be able to open new economic doors for many, because all Americans deserve no less.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), the chairman of the Agriculture Committee.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for allowing me to speak this evening.

Today, we introduced H.R. 2, which is the Agricultural Nutrition Act of 2018. H.R. 1 was the tax bill, and so leadership, the Speaker in particular, believed that this issue is important enough that he gave us that rare opportunity to have a single-digit bill number.

My colleagues will join us tonight at the microphone and we will talk about more of the details, but 3 years ago we began this quest to reform SNAP. We wanted to start with basically as blank a sheet of paper as we could get. We didn't want to be constrained by spending or resources. We just wanted to find the best policy we could possibly get to so it would let us know our guideposts.

We did that. We had it scored. It comes in at a budget-neutral position, which is what our commitment to the broader conference was, and accomplished that on not only SNAP, but also with the rest of the title as well.

We did six listening sessions around the country this past year. Three-hundred-plus good citizens stepped to the microphone to speak to Members of Congress about what was on their heart, what was working with the farm bill, all aspects of it. I specifically remember a young woman who stood at the microphone, incredibly brave young lady, who said: I am the reason that SNAP needs to stay in place.

She said: I was 18 years old, a single mother of a 3-year-old, and I didn't like my future, and I wanted to go to college.

And SNAP and the other benefits that were available, her hard work, her sweat equity, but, yes, our helping hand up allowed her to get a college education.

She became an educator. She then got an advanced degree and is now in administration. She said for her and her daughter, public assistance is now defined by what they do for other folks as opposed to what gets done for them.

That is the success we want to drive. That is how we want to measure SNAP and all of our programs as against a yardstick that says we want to give folks a helping hand up. We want folks to break that cycle of poverty.

I believe that the good policies we put in place with the SNAP program that were released today, as people begin to understand what we are doing and begin to understand a bunch of the misinformation that has been in the public arena over the last several weeks about what we were trying to do, that that will dissipate and our colleagues across both sides of the aisle will see the wisdom of what we are going to do with respect to SNAP.

I am proud of the work that we have done. I am particularly proud of G.T. Thompson's leadership the last year on our Nutrition Subcommittee. He has done incredibly good work, and I am looking forward to him and my other colleagues continuing this process.

The bill we introduced today is a work in progress, and it is not what will get to the President's desk; but we are excited about the process of marking it up in committee, coming to this House floor, having those fulsome conversations with our colleagues about what is working, what is not working, and then getting this to the President's desk once the Senate does their work.

So a great step forward for the Agriculture Committee today. I am proud of the work we have done and look forward to working with my colleagues to get this even further along the path.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership and for leading what has been one of the most transparent processes. The amount of hearings that we have had, over 20 hearings just on nutrition, 80 witnesses—a job well done.

You know, there is a saying that we have always heard. What is it? The doctor knows best. I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL), another member of the Agriculture Committee, a physician, who really understands health and healthy nutrition.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding to me today to speak on one of my favorite topics.

Perhaps I look at the importance of SNAP through a different set of lenses than some of my peers who sit among me. I spent nearly the last 30 years as

a physician counseling and advising expecting moms.

Starting a family is a special and scary time for many of my patients. Almost all of them would come to me with a list of questions and problems. And despite the variety of their concerns, many could be solved with proper and improved nutrition.

SNAP assisted many of my patients in providing nutrient-dense foods for my mothers and children. The importance of nutrition in the weeks prior to conception, during pregnancy, while breastfeeding, and within the early years of infancy can never be overestimated.

In the United States, one in eight people identify as being food insecure. To put that into perspective, of the 5,000 babies I delivered, 625 of them are food insecure today. The thought of this, alone, weighs on our hearts and makes them heavy, and that is why I am so proud of this farm bill's nutrition component and why we worked so hard to get it right.

Our farm bill increases nutrition education, incentivizes our SNAP recipients to make healthier choices, and increases access to nutritious foods.

And for those people who live in our Nation's food deserts with limited access to grocery stores, we thought about you, too. We have to incentivize retailers to want to invest in these underserved communities. That is why we have extended and improved the Healthy Food Financing Initiative that gives grants to retailers to open businesses in areas that lack the access to healthy foods.

So I ask you today: How could anyone vote against a bill that looks at the food insecurity problem in this country from so many angles through the eyes of so many people?

We all know that food is health and that, truly, we are what we do eat. This bill will help all Americans become more healthy and to stay more healthy, and that is why I am so proud to support this bill and look forward to its passage, getting it on through the Senate and on to our President to sign.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being part of this Special Order.

All of the hearings that we had were bipartisan, great bipartisan input into the hearings, and there is nothing in the nutrition title that really hasn't come out as a part of those hearings.

In fact, I know my colleagues, my friends across the aisle, our Democratic members of the committee I have been so honored to work with and be a part of these hearings, they submitted specific priorities for the nutrition title under title IV, and I am proud to say that all those priorities are included within this farm bill.

I now yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD), a friend of mine, who is also part of our leadership with the Agriculture Committee, a subcommittee chairman, from the First District of Arkansas.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Pennsylvania for doing such a great job on this. I know he has worked really, really hard on it.

We have talked about the number of committee hearings that have been dedicated to just nutrition. That is because the nutrition title of the farm bill accounts for about 80 percent of the total authorization. So it is really important that we get it right.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express support for the Agriculture and Nutrition Act, specifically, the improvements that we are making here in the critical nutrition title under the leadership of my friend Mr. THOMPSON, who has done a fantastic job.

Currently, there is a loophole related to heating and cooling allowances that is often used to artificially increase SNAP benefits. States are given the flexibility under the previous iteration of the SNAP program to use the standard utility allowances for heating and cooling to ease SNAP administration.

Households automatically qualify for the SUA if they receive Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program, it is called the LIHEAP program, payments, if they receive payments from that program. States, in order to increase SNAP benefits, provide LIHEAP payments of just greater than a \$20 minimum threshold, allowing households to qualify for the SUA, thus increasing the SNAP benefits the household receives, even though the household may not have actual heating and cooling expenses.

Our bill requires demonstrated heating or cooling expenses in order to receive a standard allowance for such expenses. We basically removed the automatic availability of the SUA for heating and cooling and ask that households demonstrate actual utility costs to receive the State-determined SUA.

Note that we exempt the elderly from that requirement of documentation, so we will make sure that people understand that they are not being adversely impacted.

My home State of Arkansas is already demonstrating how to implement this practice. In our State, we currently require folks who want to be a part of this program—and, by extension, eligible for SNAP—to demonstrate that they, in fact, have utility bill expenses.

This reform will take what my State is doing and implement it across the entire Nation and ensure that SNAP's initial purpose of helping those who need this program the most is being achieved.

□ 1815

Much of the frustration of my constituents, and many folks across the country, has been about the explosion of enrollees in programs who, quite frankly, don't need the benefits in the first place and are deemed eligible through an administrative shortcut.

It is my hope that more States will see this the same way that my home

State of Arkansas does and realize that Federal resources are not infinite and being responsible stewards of this program serves those who need the serving the most. If we enact this reform, they will always be taken care of.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman again for his steadfast leadership and his diligence in all of the hearings that we have had over the last 4 years.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being a part of this important Special Order tonight, because nutrition matters and farmers feed.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to a gentleman from another part of our Agriculture Committee leadership from the State of Illinois. He is the chairman of the Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research Subcommittee.

He actually did a great job yesterday convening a briefing where he brought in 4-H leaders from all over the country to share their experiences as a part of that great organization.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) from the 13th Congressional District.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) and all of the colleagues that I see on this floor who are part of the Agriculture Committee team—and we are a team.

We are a team that I got to watch work 4 years ago together to pass a bill that the Congressional Budget Office said was only going to save taxpayers \$23 billion in mandatory spending. As a matter of fact, that was the largest, single spending cut that was projected in my entire freshman term.

Well, they came back over the recent weeks and told us that they were wrong. Those savings have actually been \$111 billion in mandatory spending. This is why good policies matter. The bill that we introduced today is an example of good policies that save taxpayer dollars, but, just as importantly, it helps American families who are trapped in a cycle of poverty.

They have suffered from food insecurity and depend on SNAP to feed themselves and their families; and some of these men and women are capable of working, but they lack the access to adequate skills training to obtain a job that provides meaningful income and a chance to improve their family's future.

We want to change that. Just like we wrote good policy 4 years ago, we have written good policy again because we are going to change that by shifting the antipoverty conversation from one purely focused on benefits to one focused on helping someone climb the economic ladder and developing a strong workforce.

We have created a streamlined, simplified work requirement, paired with meaningful investments in workforce training. This farm bill requires and funds sufficient education and training slots, guaranteeing access to all SNAP

participants subject to being able to work.

We have modernized the components of SNAP employment, education, and training to include assessment and case management, include additional options like supervised job search apprenticeships, time-limited volunteer work, subsidized employment, and financial history.

Last week, Caterpillar, in Decatur, Illinois, hosted an event to recruit more welders and machinists. They have jobs available, but not enough people are trained to fill these skilled jobs.

I visited the Bridgestone tire plant in Bloomington, Illinois, last week, and I heard the same thing. Jobs are available, but there is no one to take them.

Our economy is growing; jobs are growing. We must do more to get people the education and training that they need to take these available, skilled jobs and help themselves and help their families.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank my colleague from Pennsylvania.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership and for joining us here this evening.

One of the things I really love about the Agriculture Committee is, quite frankly, what we do. Everyone eats, nutrition matters, and our Agriculture Committee is represented by Members from all over the country, including Tennessee.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DESJARLAIS), another member of the Agriculture Committee from Tennessee's Fourth Congressional District.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman THOMPSON. We really do appreciate his leadership on this issue and his passion. He spent so much time and effort to get this right, and it is really rare in this country where you can get so many people to come together—especially in these times—and agree on one thing.

But when it comes to work-capable people between age 18 and 59 contributing to the workforce, about 80 percent of Americans agree on this. This is across the aisle. This is Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. It is hard to get people to agree on anything, but this is just such a common sense, humane thing to do.

I don't fully understand who the 2 in 10 are who would disagree with this. Maybe they are people who are not working who are able-bodied. But at any rate, this is something that is designed to help lift people from poverty, break the cycle of debt, and get people to work and feel good about themselves.

I would urge everyone listening to call their Representatives and their Senators and urge them to support this farm bill because it is well thought out. The time is right. The jobless claims are down in this country, yet there are people all over our districts

who are clamoring to us about the lack of skilled workers.

All throughout Tennessee's Fourth District, there are people asking me: How do we get people to come and work? And here is a solution that we have people who can go out and get good-paying jobs, break the cycle. They are able to work. They are capable of working, but for some reason just haven't reentered the workforce. And, frankly, our government has made it too easy for people not to work. They have made it too comfortable. We have been bad parents.

It is time to do the right thing. We all need to contribute to this country. We have record debts, and getting people back to work is the answer.

But when you hear folks who are opposed to work requirements for people who are able-bodied, I just would ask you to ask them why. It does not help their self-esteem. It does not help their country. It does not help their families. And what we are offering here is an opportunity to work 20 hours a week. If you are still in need of assistance, you will get it. If you don't have the proper training, this will allow you to get training. We are making this mandatory.

So either you are going to become a part of the workforce, you are going to be trained to become part of the workforce, or you are simply going to choose not to work; and, in that case, you might lose your food stamps benefits. But that is the whole point of this, is to help people make the right decision, make good choices; and, again, 80 percent of the country agrees with this across the aisle. So there should be no real controversy on this. There should be no reason that people don't want to support this bill.

It is the right thing to do. It is the right time. There are jobs available. It is just simply a matter of people breaking that cycle, getting out, contributing, and feeling good about themselves again. I really can't understand why we have opposition to this great piece of work that was put together. It is great that it is coming in the form of the farm bill.

I stand in strong support of this and am grateful for the gentleman's work and the work of so many on the committee, and the Members, and the staff to help get people in the right place, back to work, and still protecting and preserving the safety-net program that is vital for so many people.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being a part of the Agriculture Committee and thank him for his great work on behalf of the folks in Tennessee.

As the gentleman from Tennessee was saying, what we are talking about is, part of the nutrition title is really looking at making improvements to it. We are not really doing anything to people. We want to do things for people. And, quite frankly, for 65 percent of the folks who find themselves in a

situation where they are on the SNAP program, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, I don't want to say nothing is going to change, but it is just going to get better. We are going to get them greater access to healthy foods.

Those are the 65 percent of the folks who are under the age of 18 or over the age of 65, or living with a disability. And so for the 35 percent that find themselves on this program—usually for temporary times—it is because of financial situations. And that is their number one need. They are unemployed, underemployed. Maybe they have been living in poverty for generations.

And, yes, we want to provide that safety net for food, but we want to provide them actually an onramp to opportunity as the gentleman talked about.

We don't force anybody to do anything. If you are able-bodied and you fall within that category, that age of 18 to 59—and I guess if you don't want to take access, take the opportunity for that job training, then you can self-select out of the SNAP program. But why would you want to do that?

What we are investing in, education and training, we are actually guaranteeing a training slot in every State. We are providing the support to the States to be able to do that, to provide—most importantly, I think—case management.

Because case management—the gentleman is a physician as well. I am a rehab therapist and a former manager in rural hospitals, and case management plays an important role helping lead people through the process when they have a time of need. And that is what this bill does.

So from Tennessee to New York, I am really pleased to yield to another member of the Agriculture Committee, representing New York's 19th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FASO). I thank the gentleman for being a part of the discussion tonight.

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank G.T. THOMPSON, my colleague from Pennsylvania, our subcommittee chairman on the Nutrition Subcommittee for his leadership.

G.T. THOMPSON deeply feels about the condition that people have who may be living in poverty, who may be suffering from food insecurity for themselves and their family. And I say to Chairman THOMPSON that it has been a pleasure to serve for the last 15 months under his leadership on the Nutrition Subcommittee.

The reforms that we are seeking to implement in H.R. 2 in the SNAP program, in this 2018 farm bill, are truly intended to assist people out of dependency and into employment.

I have heard from so many employers throughout my district in the Catskills and Hudson Valley and in central New York that they have jobs available, but

they simply can't find qualified people to meet those jobs and to fulfill those responsibilities.

In fact, this morning in the Budget Committee, we had the Director of the Congressional Budget Office before us, and one of the topics that was raised was the fact that there are very low workforce participation rates among able-bodied people between 18 and 65 in our Nation. And this is part of the problem that we have a workforce participation rate nationally of approximately 63 percent.

In a number of the counties that I represent in the 19th Congressional District in New York State, that workforce participation rate for able-bodied, employable people between 18 and 65 hovers at 60 percent or slightly below 60 percent. There are plenty of jobs that are there, but, unfortunately, people do not have the skills, the training, sometimes the work ethic, and the notion of what it means to get up and go to work every day and meet the need of that employer and customers of that employer.

So this is a real serious issue in our country. If we are going to deal with the looming fiscal crisis that we have for mandatory spending programs like Social Security and Medicare, for instance, we need to get more people in the workforce. We need to create more opportunities to give people a hand-up, and not simply a handout.

Now, one of the things that is truly important about this SNAP reform that Chairman THOMPSON and Chairman CONAWAY are leading the way in H.R. 2 on, in this 2018 farm bill, is that we are going to make it easier for people who are on the SNAP program to qualify for the program without having every nickel of any asset that they possibly have to count against their qualification.

So, for instance, this legislation will allow a family on SNAP to have a savings account of up to \$2,000 without that counting against the asset test. Today, that simply isn't the case. So a family that might need money for fixing their car, or having their kids go to the orthodontist or the dentist, or some other kind of family emergency—to buy a washing machine, for instance—they are not even allowed under SNAP's asset test rules to have a \$2,000 savings account. That is wrong, and it is simply an outmoded notion that we have precluded that.

The other thing that I think is very interesting in this proposal, in this reform proposal, is that we are going to raise the asset test on the value of an automobile from about \$4,650 to \$12,000. I represent a rural part of upstate New York. My district is larger than the State of Connecticut. Many times people have to drive 40, 50 miles one way to get to a job.

Well, we can't expect someone who is struggling with difficult economic circumstances for them or their family to be able to qualify for SNAP and have an asset of a vehicle—which they need

desperately to get to work every day—we can't have that asset limited to a \$4,600 vehicle.

□ 1830

So this legislation which Chairman THOMPSON and Chairman CONAWAY are spearheading would raise that vehicle asset test up to \$12,000. So these are logical, rational things. That asset test has been at \$4,650 for many decades now. So these are the kinds of commonsense reforms that are contained within this proposal that I hope that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will pay heed to and carefully study because we welcome their input in this.

But we also know that the American people are demanding that we have reform in these programs and that we encourage and we really bring the job opportunities and the job training counseling to people who are dependent. There are over 3 million people in the SNAP program today who are able-bodied adults, who are capable of working, between 18 and 59, who have no children at home. We know that, in today's economy, many, many parents and many Americans go into the workforce with minor children at home. They are out there working. They are out there pitching in trying to improve the lot for themselves and their families. There is absolutely no reason why an able-bodied adult with no children whatsoever should not be in a work program and should not be required to participate in a State-sanctioned, State-supervised employment counseling and training program.

So these are the things that we are trying to do: increase opportunity, obviously reduce fraud and people who might be benefiting from the program who might be working off the books somewhere but still qualifying for benefits. But that is not the main impetus here. The main impetus is: How are we going to create more opportunity for people who need a hand-up in the economic ladder?

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman THOMPSON so much for leading the way on this. We had numerous hearings and listening sessions, including one in my district in Schoharie County at SUNY Cobleskill. The overwhelming consensus in dealing with the Food Stamp program or SNAP program is that we need to keep it, we need to make sure that people who are on it and who are able to work have the opportunities and are certainly encouraged to move into the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article which I wrote in the Albany Times Union which appeared on April 9, 2018, about the SNAP reform and the need to include healthy measures for food but also enhanced work requirements.

[From the Albany Times Union, Apr. 9, 2018]
SNAP MUST INCLUDE WORK, HEALTHY FOOD
MANDATES

(By Rep. John Faso)

With over 42 million Americans—and over 2.8 million New Yorkers—receiving critical

nutrition assistance, it is a self-evident fact that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps people in meaningful ways. SNAP reduces hunger in low income households, and when it provides benefits to families with children, it has been shown to improve health outcomes for those children.

Like any program of this size, SNAP is not without flaws. The program insufficiently promotes self-sufficiency; too many recipients could be working, but are not.

There continues to be too much fraud and abuse in the program, and the program also needs to be much more effective in promoting proper nutrition. Congress will soon reauthorize SNAP as part of the 2018 Farm Bill and now is the time to fix the program. Let's address these issues one at a time.

First, the program needs to better focus on encouraging and helping non-working recipients find and retain employment. While many receiving SNAP benefits do work—and others are seniors, children or disabled, and therefore can't be expected to work—a large group of those currently receiving benefits are neither disabled nor employed. In 2016, there were over 11 million non-disabled people aged 18 through 59 receiving SNAP, who aren't working.

A purpose of benefit programs such as SNAP should be to help people gain self-sufficiency. We would be more successful at reducing systemic hunger and poverty if states required able-bodied adults to participate actively in employment and training programs that put them on a path toward stable employment.

Alternatively, if someone does not wish to participate, they could actively self-select and unenroll from the program. This approach was successful in increasing earnings and reducing poverty in the wake of President Bill Clinton's sweeping welfare reform in the 1990s, and it will work again if applied to SNAP's current entitlement structure.

Second, fraud and the improper use of benefits is still too rampant in the SNAP program. Only in Washington is losing roughly \$650 million per year due to fraud and failures in program integrity considered a “good job” because it is a small percentage of the total amount of taxpayer money spent. That is still \$650 million that is not being used as intended, which is to feed families.

There must be zero tolerance when it comes to fraud and abuse. Hiding income, failing to disclose assets, trafficking benefits or utilizing unscrupulous food vendors are activities we need to stop. Congress needs to allow state and local officials who see this fraud right before their eyes to pursue and penalize this activity.

Finally, the SNAP program is not doing enough to promote nutrition and reduce childhood obesity. Obesity is an issue for far too many American families and childhood obesity in low-income families is growing. The program's title suggests that it promotes healthy and nutritious food options but does nothing to limit the ability to purchase products that no one will argue are part of a healthy diet. Hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of SNAP benefits are spent on sugary beverages, and it's past time that Washington prohibits the use of SNAP benefits to purchase soda. Every dollar not spent on soda can go toward a healthier alternative. While some will contend we are limiting choice for the poor, tax dollars should only pay to encourage healthier choices.

At the same time, we should also fix some of the asset tests for eligibility, such as allowing a recipient to have a car worth over \$12,000 instead of the \$5,000 limit today. If we expect someone to work, they need a reliable vehicle to get to the job. We should also allow a recipient to have savings up to \$2,000, without affecting eligibility.

Over the next decade, SNAP benefits will total more than \$630 billion in taxpayer dollars. We must do more to ensure that we assist able-bodied recipients in joining the job market, while at the same time continuing to assist those for whom nutrition assistance is a necessity.

John Faso, R-Kinderhook, represents the 19th Congressional District.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, the timing is good for our approach here, isn't it? We have an economy where, for the first time maybe in 10, 15 years, we see wages rising and we see job creation. Even before this most recent economic surge, I guess for lack of a better word to call it, there are an estimated 5 million jobs that are open and available in the United States. These are jobs that most of them do not require a 4-year degree or a 6-year degree. These are jobs that require some skills-based education, maybe a certification, a specialization. It is kind of perfect with what we are looking at.

There is some confusion that is out there. Some people are saying this is creating a brand new level of bureaucracy. I know for a fact that the people I serve with here wouldn't go for anything that is creating more bureaucracy. The fact is we are actually taking advantage of, first of all, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA. That is our Career Links. That is where people go today, where if they are unemployed or underemployed, to be able to get a job. That is where employers look to find qualified and trained employees. So we are going to be able to utilize that existing infrastructure.

But community colleges, apprenticeships, and private companies that want to engage in training, there are a lot of opportunities out there for this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER), who is another absolute friend and leader of agriculture. She is a former teacher and leads our chair's Values Action Team which I am proud to be a part of. Representative VICKY HARTZLER represents the Fourth Congressional District of Missouri.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate so much Chairman THOMPSON's leadership on this to provide just a wonderful, wonderful program to help people have that onramp to opportunity. I also appreciate the chairman's heart because I know in the meetings and the opportunities I have had to have conversations with the gentleman how much he cares about people, and he has provided that care to many people.

This is just a wonderful package. The chairman just mentioned that community colleges are going to be involved in this. I just had one of my community colleges in my office this afternoon. We were talking about this very proposal. They are so excited about this because they were emphasizing the point that so many of my colleagues

here tonight have made in that the businesses and the manufacturers in my district and everywhere across this country cannot find enough skilled, able people who can fill these jobs that are out there.

They were sharing that the salaries are really good—really good. As I visit with some of the manufacturers, they say a welder can start at \$60,000 or a truck driver can start at \$60,000 or \$70,000. I was a teacher. I went into education, and I have a bachelor's degree and then went on to get a master's degree. When I was teaching, I never got near close to that. So there is so much opportunity out there. There is such a need.

That is why I am excited about the plan that we have here to help expand the current program we have to give individuals the personalized training that they need to be able to connect with the job.

It is a wonderful, wonderful opportunity. As has been said, as the chairman said, there are 5.9 million jobs sitting there waiting for individuals, yet we have people at home right now who want to fill them, but they just don't have those skills. So we are going to provide that.

I want to share a little bit about what we have done in Missouri so far with this program. The SNAP employment and training in Missouri has operated as a partnership between the University of Missouri Extension, community colleges, and local job boards. MU Extension provides the most extensive interactions with each applicant by providing a coach, training, and wraparound services to support the individual in building the skills necessary to fill open positions in Missouri. Those have included and are including nursing, over-the-road trucking, warehouse logistics and management, and welding, just to name a few. MU Extension's niche component is coaching, helping those with the most barriers like homelessness, lack of transportation, or having no high school diploma to gain the necessary skills to fill the jobs in their community.

MU Extension has focused their efforts on short-term certificate programs or vocation programs to ensure success of those who may not have been successful in the past and who face the greatest challenges to education and employment. This intensive coaching led to a 96.6 percent graduation rate for those participants completing training last year. Those individuals who secured employment report making annualized salaries of between \$20,800 and \$93,600. Can you imagine going from being on public assistance, having SNAP in order to be able to feed your family, going through this program, and getting a job at \$96,000 a year? That is exciting. People are excited about this.

Recently, I had the opportunity to sit down with one of the participants of this program. His name is Joe. After

spending 10 years in prison, Joe knew he needed a new start. He signed up for an HVAC program using the SNAP employment and training funding. Joe, today, is working full time, and he gets great reviews from his employer. He no longer needs any Federal benefits, and he has the confidence and skills needed to be a productive member of society.

So this bill, the 2018 farm bill, provides this unique opportunity to expand funding for these life-changing programs to ensure all SNAP recipients have access to education and training resources. Not just some, all of them will have access to this training so that they can secure employment.

A major increase in the SNAP employment and training funding will provide States with the vital resources to help their residents break the cycle of poverty.

Smart, commonsense reforms can produce great results like the story I told about Joe, and it can break the cycle of poverty. SNAP employment training currently being implemented across Missouri now can be expanded everywhere. So by supporting this enhanced employment training program, we are augmenting someone's future by supporting them in achieving their goals.

Jobs are available, the need is great, and the time for action is now. Let's help families make their dreams of self-sufficiency a reality.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her enthusiasm for this.

Congratulations to Joe. Actually, that is a great story.

Mrs. HARTZLER. He is a great guy.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, for someone who was incarcerated, that is difficult to overcome; but through the programs, it gave a great example of how that occurs.

Contrast that also with what Mr. FASO from New York was saying about those cliffs, what I refer to as poverty cliffs. We try to incentivize folks to do better for themselves. We are making improvements because right now the way the program is, like most of our programs, if you make a dollar more than the limit, an arbitrary limit, the government pulls the rug out from beneath you.

The fact that we are going after some of those, how much assets you can have and the value of your car—the folks who are most at risk need reliable transportation. I am just really proud that we are addressing all that, and I thank the gentlewoman for being a part of all of this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER), who is a great member of the Agriculture Committee from North Carolina's Seventh Congressional District. Congressman DAVE ROUZER is a man I am proud to serve with.

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding. It is a great

honor to be with the gentleman here tonight, and I commend him for his great leadership on this issue.

This really, really is a great, great bill. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly referred to as SNAP, as we all know it, is a nationwide food assistance program that provides a nutritional safety net for low-income families and individuals who meet certain eligibility requirements.

Now, I think the vast majority of Americans would agree that, if you work, you should be better off than if you don't work. Our farm bill makes commonsense reforms to ensure that recipients of these benefits, those who are perfectly capable of work, have a pathway to upward mobility, can get good jobs, and ultimately can use their God-given talents to achieve a very rewarding career. That is what this is all about.

As we drafted this farm bill, we stayed focused on providing those who find themselves in unfortunate circumstances the ability to lift themselves up and the ability to succeed and contribute to society.

Another aspect of the farm bill I want to highlight is in the nutrition title as well. It provides assistance to low-income seniors through the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. This vital program increases the consumption of good quality food by expanding, developing, and aiding in the development and expansion of domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs.

It does so by providing seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible foods such as fruits, vegetables, honey, and fresh-cut herbs.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the commonsense reforms included in the 2018 farm bill among many, many more. I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will take the time to really study and understand what these reforms will mean to our farm families, rural America, and the upward mobility created for those individuals and families in this country who need a helping hand.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I think we are going to see many coming out in favor of this proposed farm bill and specifically the nutrition title.

Two articles came out today. The first one is from USA Today entitled, "Food-Stamp Work Requirements Will Lift Americans Out of Poverty," by our own agriculture chairman, Mike Conaway. He was joined by Lee Bowes who is the CEO of America Works of New York which is a training placement company. Also, there is an article that was published in The Wall Street Journal entitled: "Working on Food Stamps: A House GOP reform would help the able-bodied get off the dole."

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD these two articles.

[Apr. 12, 2018]

FOOD-STAMP WORK REQUIREMENTS WILL LIFT AMERICANS OUT OF POVERTY

(By Mike Conaway and Lee Bowes)

There is a fundamental link between poverty and work.

Individuals who hold full-time employment (<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/demo/P60-259.pdf>) are 10 times less likely to be poor than people who are out of work during at least part of the year.

But not every American has the skills and training needed to hold full-time employment.

Teaching these skills takes time and resources, which is why for so long our nation has taken a piecemeal approach to supporting work and training to help move people out of poverty. Instead, we've focused the conversation on poverty around benefits—on the dollars spent and the meals served.

Benefits are critically important and serve a vital role in the safety net aimed at catching people if they should fall into poverty. But equally important is a focus on helping these same people climb back out of poverty.

That point is underscored by a 2016 poll from the American Enterprise Institute and the Los Angeles Times. Forty-one percent of the poor people included in the survey viewed their circumstances as temporary (<http://www.aei.org/publication/2016-poverty-survey/>).

People want to believe the American dream is attainable.

That's why we need to shift the conversation on poverty in this country from one focused purely on benefits to one about improving futures.

And as the House Agriculture Committee releases its new farm bill (<https://agriculture.house.gov/news/documentquery.aspx?IssueID=14904>)—legislation that governs the policy for our nation's nutrition programs—that is precisely what we aim to do.

Our proposal is straightforward: help those on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) who are work-capable find employment to support their households.

Under this proposal, work-capable SNAP recipients will need to work for at least 20 hours per week. That can take a variety of forms they can work, participate in a work program, or participate in a SNAP employment and training (E&T) program. This bill makes a significant investment in training and case management to guarantee access to an E&T slot to anyone who wants one.

But to ensure this investment yields results, we're also making these work requirements mandatory. No more loopholes that create disincentives to work.

We are equipping states with resources to arm participants with the skills, certifications and education needed to succeed in today's economy.

And that's a critical point, because our economy is supporting more jobs and a higher standard of living for ALL Americans. Jobs that were once unavailable are now at an individuals' fingertips if aided with the proper training and skill set.

SNAP recipients want to be beneficiaries of this economic growth. They want to take advantage of opportunities and meet the needs of our nation's businesses.

It is also important to note that for nearly two-thirds of SNAP recipients (<https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/able-bodied-adults-without-dependents-abawds-rules>) who are currently exempt from work-related programs, nothing will change. That group includes seniors, those who are mentally or physically disabled, children and various other individuals who would not be subject to our proposed modifications to work.

But for work-capable adults, if they want to receive benefits, they'll be expected to work. And if they don't work, they are self-selecting to remove themselves from the program.

People will try to demonize what we are doing here and say that this proposal is too much, too fast, too soon.

They will try to claim that this bill is about kicking people out of the program to save money. But that couldn't be further from the truth.

Under this work proposal, only an individual who chooses not to participate in a guaranteed E&T slot will lose eligibility for SNAP.

Others will claim that these modifications aren't needed because most SNAP recipients who can work, do work (<https://www.cbpp.org/snap-households-with-working-age-non-disabled-adults-have-high-work-rates-6>). And under our bill those individuals can have the peace of mind that their benefits will not be compromised.

While critics will say SNAP isn't meant to be a jobs program, we believe these modifications can support nutrition for families in need while also creating new opportunities that emphasize work and independence and provide the resources needed to move people forward.

Advocating for the status quo has never and will never lift someone out of poverty.

That's why we need to begin to define success differently—not by how many people we serve, but rather how many people we aid in climbing the economic ladder.

[Apr. 11, 2018]

WORKING ON FOOD STAMPS

(By The Editorial Board)

A common refrain from businesses is that they can't find enough workers. The unemployment rate is a low 4.1%, but one reason for the shortage are government benefits that corrode a culture of work. So credit to House Republicans for trying to fix disincentives in food stamps amid what are sure to be nasty and dishonest attacks.

House Agriculture Chairman Mike Conaway on Thursday will introduce a farm bill, though food stamps absorb much of the cost. More than 40 million Americans are in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the official name for food stamps, and the figure is up from about 17 million in 2000. The size of the benefits has also increased, and the program cost has exploded to about \$70 billion a year.

More Americans need assistance during recessions like 2008, but the question is why so many have stayed on food stamps even amid the long expansion. The American Enterprise Institute's Robert Doar in 2014 compared the post-2008 recovery to the recession in the early 1980s. If folks had left the program at similar rates to the 1980s, food stamps would have had 36 million beneficiaries by 2013. Instead there were 47.6 million.

One result is that many Americans haven't returned to the labor force. Enter the House's first proposal: A 20 hours a week work requirement for able-bodied adults, ages 18 through 59. This usually elicits panic about child labor or single moms, but the requirement does not apply to seniors, children, the disabled, or anyone who cares for a child under six or is pregnant. That exemption covers roughly two-thirds of everyone on food stamps.

The folks subject to the work rule have many ways to satisfy the requirement, including apprenticeships that could contribute to higher earnings later. States will have to offer access to training programs, which can also count as work. The bill stipulates case management and other techniques to help people transition off assistance.

Food stamps already has a de minimis work rule for some participants, but states have applied for waivers and exemptions that have diluted it. Yet the results of real welfare work requirements in states have been encouraging, including former Governor Sam Brownback's reform in Kansas. A Foundation for Government Accountability paper last year noted that Kansas tracked 6,000 families who moved off welfare and went to work in 600 different industries. Incomes on average more than doubled over a year.

The House proposal includes other good ideas, notably eliminating "broad-based categorical eligibility." This is a notorious loophole that declares someone eligible for food stamps because he received a brochure on heating assistance or a number for a hot line. The bill retains cross-eligibility that allow the truly needy to qualify for multiple programs without redundant asset tests.

The politics of all this are tough. The House Freedom Caucus will pan such changes as "welfare reform lite." The Senate won't want to take hard votes in an election year. Yet this isn't a budget slasher and merely reorients money and incentives. That will make it harder for Senators to pretend this "guts" the program, as some falsely said about Medicaid last year.

Democrats have attacked the plan with packaged lines that the GOP will kick millions off the rolls. The work rule doesn't bounce a single person. One irony is that the left says work requirements are misguided because most recipients already work. Then why fight a requirement?

Those who stop receiving benefits because of a work requirement will fall into two categories: They refused to work or train for work. Or they found a job and no longer need assistance, which is supposed to be a success story. The GOP's work requirements—explained accurately—poll well with the public because Americans think working is a fair trade for helping those who have fallen on tough times.

The program is supposed to be "supplemental," but progressives have transformed it into a permanent entitlement. The GOP's 1996 welfare reform was an historic success, and fixing food stamps is a chance to do it again.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT), who is another great leader within the Agriculture Committee.

The Congressman is a man I have been really pleased to serve with. He has been a Bible study buddy of mine. He represents Georgia's Eighth Congressional District and actually chairs the Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for yielding. As we have talked a little bit, the question is: How do we help people get off of government programs? Not kick them off but give them a path off the programs.

I think one of the things that has not been talked about enough is the fact that the current system is a trap, and the harder people work and the more they make, sometimes the less they have.

So what we have done in our farm bill that is coming up is to change the assets that a household can have and remain on the SNAP program until they graduate off the SNAP program.

Under current law, households without an elderly or disabled member

could not have counted liquid assets above \$2,250. Households with an elderly or disabled member could not have liquid assets above \$3,250.

□ 1845

These dollar limits should have been annually indexed for overall inflation and then rounded down to the next \$250. But our bill raises the asset limits for an eligible household from \$2,250 to \$7,000. I want to say that again: \$2,250. That asset limit is raised to \$7,000 for an eligible household consisting of at least one elderly or disabled family member. It moves from \$3,250 to \$12,000. We want people who are out there doing the best they can to have the ability to work hard, save some money, and continue to improve their lives.

We also exclude in this legislation the first \$12,000 in the value of any licensed driver's vehicle in a SNAP household from the applicant's assets for purposes of eligibility determination. For many people on the SNAP program, they have to travel a long way to work or to get groceries, and we want them to be able to have that vehicle to get them there, especially in rural areas like the 24 counties that I represent. So excluding these vehicle assets is another benefit that we give to people in helping them have that avenue to graduate off of the SNAP program.

Our bill also permits SNAP applicants to maintain up to \$2,000 in a savings account. That is \$2,000 that will not count towards the \$7,000 asset threshold. So again, we are trying to help people who work hard, who do the best they can, be allowed to save some assets so that they are very comfortable when they graduate off of the SNAP program.

One other thing I would like to point out: Resources of a household member who receives SSI or PA benefits, those benefits are excluded as well. Under our current farm bill, SNAP recipients are caught between a rock and a hard place: You work hard, you save a little money, you invest in a vehicle, and you get kicked off the program.

Our farm bill actually fixes a lot of those things that people who want to graduate off of the SNAP program need fixed. So I am very pleased to be a supporter of this bill, and I think that this bill moves the law in a great direction to help those people who are out there actually working and doing the best they can graduate off of the SNAP program. And these asset threshold increases, along with the incentives to work, I think, move our legislation in a very good direction. And I am looking forward to having the vote on the floor and supporting this.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman for his leadership and for being a part of the Special Order.

I am now pleased to yield to a former chairman of the full Agriculture Committee and currently the Judiciary Committee chairman, who obviously

has a lot of experience in this area and with agriculture. And so it is my pleasure and privilege to yield to the gentleman from Virginia's Sixth Congressional District (Mr. GOODLATTE).

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you, Chairman THOMPSON. I really appreciate your organizing this Special Order.

I am glad you picked this topic because we need to tell the story of what the great provisions are in this farm bill, but also how important it is to Republicans that we work with America's agricultural community to make sure that we continue to provide the safest, most abundant, most affordable food supply in the world.

Americans today, right now, enjoy one of the lowest percentages of their average income being spent on food of any country in the world, at any time in the world's history. Back when our country was founded, 90 percent of Americans lived on farms and basically produced enough food to just take care of themselves and then maybe have a little bit left over to sell to buy some implement for their family. Today, 2 percent of America's farmers do that, provide all of that food and nutrition, including what goes into these important programs for low-income people. So making sure these programs are protected but also making sure that they work fairly and honestly is the objective of this farm bill.

I want to talk tonight about a program that helps get food directly into the hands of those who are in need in communities throughout the country, including in Virginia's Sixth Congressional District that I have had the honor of representing. The Emergency Food Assistance Program, known as TEFAP, is a Federal program that helps to supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost.

TEFAP provides commodities to the States, who then distribute the food through local agencies, like the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank and Feeding America Southwest Virginia in my district. This program is a good model of efficiency and allows State and local organizations to play a leading role in helping to meet the nutritional needs of those in their communities.

Food banks are an existing, strong network for food delivery to those in need. However, it is also important to note that many farmers often still have excess fruits and vegetables that go to waste. The solution is to establish a farm-to-food bank program, allowing States to enter into agreements with farmers to procure this excess for distribution.

To achieve this, we are expanding funding in H.R. 2 for TEFAP, using a portion of that increase for a farm-to-food bank program, a State-administered agriculture surplus clearance program, that provides an inexpensive source of food for low-income families while supporting producers.

I want to thank Chairman THOMPSON and Chairman CONAWAY for their hard

work to ensure that TEFAP remains a viable resource for American families.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your hard work and for organizing this opportunity to share some of the great things in this farm bill with the American people.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Chairman GOODLATTE, thank you for your leadership and your mentoring. Greatly appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time remains.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Excellent. I will take advantage of that opportunity. If we have some other Members who come in, I will yield to them.

The nutrition title for me, personally, is important. When I was just starting out in life, I had graduated from Penn State, I was working with people facing life-changing disease and disability, and married. We were pregnant with our first son, Parker, and so it was during that first pregnancy. And I was making, I think, maybe a whopping \$8,000 a year working full time.

There wasn't a time when we visited my parents or Penny's parents, my wife's parents, where we didn't come back with a bag of groceries. People do that. Families step in and they help. We did what we could, but we always came home with a bag of groceries.

We also found ourselves WIC eligible. The Women, Infants, and Children program is not under the farm bill. That is on the Committee on Education and the Workforce side.

But we know what it was like. It was difficult, actually. It was embarrassing to be able to use that voucher, but it was important that Penny and our unborn son at that point, now a 30-some-year-old dad with two boys of his own, got the nutrition that they needed. So I have been there, I have experienced that, and I know how important nutrition is.

Nutrition title, for me, I kind of relate it to, Mr. Speaker, what I would say is the worst part about living and growing up in a rural area, outside a small town, that everybody knew your business. I would be out playing with my brother and my sister, and if I did something wrong, when I got home, mom and dad already knew about it.

But the best part about living in that rural area, in rural America, is that everybody knows your business. I have a cousin, and about a month and a half ago their house burned to the ground. It was a terrible fire. They were lucky to get out. They just barely got out of the house. Yet, as the fire was just breaking through the roof of their home and the volunteer fire department was on the scene, they were surrounded by loved ones, friends, neighbors, and strangers who were there to offer their assistance, whether it was their love, their support, money, clothing, whatever, all kinds of things.

That is what the nutrition title is. Nutrition title is about helping neighbors in need, whether those neighbors

live in the most densely populated city or whether they live back on long country lanes. So that is why I'm so proud of the bipartisan work we have done up to this point, because there is nothing, again, in this nutrition title in this farm bill that wasn't a part of all those, over 21, hearings that we had.

Some of the things that are in there, in fact, are some of the priorities. I enjoy working across the aisle in a bipartisan way. I dedicate myself to that. So I was pleased to see my Democratic colleagues who communicated their four priorities into this bill to the committee.

Their first one was to incentivize nutrition education and healthy eating through a continuation of the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program, what we call FINI. I am pleased to report that the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018—that is what we are calling the farm bill—which includes the nutrition title, Title IV, maintains the FINI Program and enhances it with a technical assistance center allowing for best practices in operations and delivery to be housed and used for current and future grantees.

Additionally, the bill provides \$275 million for FINI over the life of the farm bill, actually establishes a baseline funding of \$65 million a year, allowing for expansion of opportunities to bring together stakeholders from the distinct parts of the food system to foster understanding of how they might improve nutrition and the health status of participating households and the people who live in those houses.

Their second priority, which I am pleased to report on, was—and I appreciated them putting this forward; it was important—to maintain our commitment to food banks with adequate funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program. You just heard the former Agriculture Committee chairman, Mr. GOODLATTE from Virginia, talk about TEFAP.

The farm bill increases TEFAP, funding for our food banks, by \$45 million. We have been funding it at \$15 million. It goes to \$60 million and directs \$20 million of that in a very innovative way, that funding, to establish a farm-to-food bank program in all States. It allows States to access agriculture surplus products directly from the farmers. The freshest of foods is the way I like to look at it. What a great enhancement, Mr. Speaker.

The third priority I am pleased to report on that is a part of this farm bill that they communicated was to promote the use of cutting-edge technology to ensure that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, retailers and recipients have secure, reliable, and efficient benefit processing. The farm bill introduces the concept of a national gateway, which is a system modernization that gives the USDA real-time oversight over the flow of transactions. It helps control costs.

It allows USDA to develop more tools to ensure integrity, assist in controlling access to individuals' payment information, and it sets the stage for the USDA to handle future developments in payment technology. With that increase in accountability, in those rare instances where fraud and abuse may occur, it allows for identification of that. And we incentivize States. States are now able, when they actually identify fraud, to keep a greater amount of that money that is recovered, although it has to be reinvested back into the nutrition title.

It is about to go for more program integrity, to make sure we are doing a better job of serving the needs of our neighbors who find themselves in those circumstances.

And finally, the last one was to continue to encourage States to collaborate with business and education leaders to provide innovative employment and training solution opportunities and programs. That is what we have been talking about this evening, largely. It is about the workforce solutions. This was put forward by my friends across the aisle that I am proud to serve with, the Democratic members of the Agriculture Committee. This was their goal.

We were able to do that. We have provided significant attention and considerable investment to improve SNAP workforce and education development services for recipients. I appreciate what they put forward as a part of this process, and I appreciate the fact that we have stepped up and we see this as a part of the text of this farm bill.

The updates to employment and training include best practices taken from beneficiary, industry, and State feedback. It includes interim education and training pilot reports. It partners with the workforce-to-innovation opportunity works that are already in place across our communities and our counties all across this great country. And it heightens emphasis on public-private partnerships and nutrition education and also allows recipients to continue to receive a supportive suite of services to address both food insecurity and upward mobility.

That is what we are trying to achieve. We want to make families food secure. We want to provide them access to the rungs on the ladder of opportunity.

□ 1900

Mr. Speaker, we have also done something for populations very near and dear to my heart as the dad of an Active Duty soldier, and that is, when individuals join the military later in life, they tend to enter with a spouse and a couple of kids, and it is hard to support a family on a private salary. Most privates are usually 18, 19 years old. They don't have that family support, and they do fine.

In fact, we just provided all of our military a 2.9 percent pay increase, the largest in over a decade. But for those

who are joining later in life, it is difficult. Their families live off base and they get a basic housing allowance to help pay for that, but in the past, basic housing allowance, 100 percent, with no contribution, no assistance, counted towards their eligibility for the SNAP program. They need that SNAP program to be able to make sure that their family gets support.

We have addressed that by providing moneys that would go toward an allowance, more or less, that would go towards to help them to truly to be able to receive those benefits and to be eligible for the SNAP program.

And so I am just so thankful for, really, the good bipartisan work that we have done up to this point, with all these hearings—over 100 hearings on the farm bill, as a whole; over 20 hearings for the nutrition title, title IV of this farm bill. We had over 80 witnesses. There is nothing in this farm bill that didn't come out there. There were some rumors of something about a Harvest Box, which was a terrible idea. That is not a part of the farm bill, never had any intentions of including that as a part of the farm bill.

I am appreciative to all the hard work that has gone into the bill, preparing this at this point, and I look forward to next week, next Wednesday. We will be marking this bill up in the Agriculture Committee. And I am pleased at the timing too. Normally, when we talk about reauthorizing the farm bill, we are 6 months, 12 months after it expired.

Quite frankly, we can't afford to do that. The farm income has been down for 4 years now, and this total farm bill is so important to providing for a robust rural America, and that is important to every American. Because without a robust rural America, people everywhere, including the cities, will wake up in the dark, in the cold, and hungry, because that is what the people of rural America, those farm families, provide for each and every one of us.

So, Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the opportunity to be joined by so many colleagues tonight on this topic, and I thank you for your attention.

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

ADDRESSING FISCAL DEFICITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I am here on behalf of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and I want to just state our opposition to the balanced budget amendment.

It is worth reviewing the history on this topic. When President Bill Clinton left office, he left this country with surpluses. He had reversed the policy of Reagan economics, which had some of

the largest structural deficits in the 1980s and during the first President Bush's term.

And then we went from record surpluses back to deficits. And what was the reason for those deficits? There were two very simple reasons. One, we made a strategic mistake in Iraq and spent trillions of dollars, which even President Trump has acknowledged was a blunder, and that ballooned the deficit. And secondly, we made a decision to provide tax cuts for the very wealthiest Americans.

Now, the Democrats supported the tax cut for the middle class, for folks making \$50- to \$75,000, but we said you don't need to provide tax cuts for people making \$1 million, \$500,000; you don't need to provide tax cuts for those who are already paying capital gains tax rates at 20 percent and don't need additional tax breaks.

So those two decisions, the intervention overseas and our continued interventions overseas and these extraordinary tax breaks for the very wealthy, have led us to the deficits that we have today, have led us to the \$20 trillion debt.

No one wants that kind of debt. We don't want to see interest rates continue to go up and crowd out private investment. We don't want to see people's savings lose value. But the solution to that is not a gimmick of a balanced budget amendment where the Republicans have doubled down on more tax cuts for the very wealthy, where they haven't stopped our interventionism abroad. We still actually have escalation in Afghanistan, escalation in Iraq, escalation around the world, in contradiction to what this President promised on the campaign where he said that he would focus on developing our domestic economy and stop the interventionism, and we just have symbolic votes for a balanced budget amendment.

The question is how? How can you vote for extraordinary tax cuts? How can you vote for more overseas interventionism? How can you vote for huge spending bills and then just say you are for a balanced budget amendment? The math just doesn't work.

And so what Democrats have said is, instead of having a balanced budget amendment, instead of constraining our policy or economic policy to spend more at times of war or times of recession—which, by the way, Roosevelt did, which Woodrow Wilson did, what many of our Presidents did—that what we ought to do is have sensible government, that we ought to stop the foreign interventionism, we ought to repeal these tax breaks and giveaways to the very wealthy, and instead we ought to invest in the middle class, invest in our education, invest in our infrastructure, invest in our schools, invest in new technology that will grow the economy.

That is how you reduce the structural deficits. But, by the way, this is not a theoretical debate, because Bill

Clinton showed that when you have that kind of "people's first" economic policy, you left this country with surpluses, and the trickle-down Reaganomics has always left this country with deficits.

It is not enough to just vote for balanced budget amendments while piling on debt. A far more responsible policy would be to end the foreign interventionism, to repeal these massive giveaways to the wealthy, and to invest in the middle class.

That is why my colleagues and I opposed the balanced budget amendment. That is why we have offered the Congressional Progressive People's Budget that will lead to greater economic growth than anything that the President has proposed, and that will also reduce our Nation's debt.

Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am always honored to have this great privilege of speaking in the House of Representatives. We have a total of 441 Members of the House, including those delegates, those who cannot vote, 435 who can, and it is an honor to be one of the 441.

I never want to take for granted this privilege that has been accorded me by the people of the Ninth Congressional District of Texas, so I thank them for allowing me to serve, and I am grateful to the leadership in the House for allowing me the opportunity to speak tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight, I rise, if you will, because I would like to reference H. Res. 817. This was introduced on April 11, 2018. This resolution celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The Civil Rights Act of 1968 contained the Fair Housing Act, and it is the Fair Housing Act that this resolution actually addresses.

I am proud to say that the Honorable EMANUEL CLEAVER is the person that worked with me. In fact, we worked with each other to produce this resolution. I am proud also to say that this resolution has a total of 54 cosponsors that are officially acknowledged, and then we have two additional cosponsors that have not been officially placed on the Record, but they are still cosponsors of this resolution.

This resolution does something that is important. It celebrates and commemorates, if you will, the passing of the Fair Housing Act. The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination. It prohibits it based upon race, color, national origin, sex, familial sta-

tus, disability, religion, and should have other categories added. It should have sexual orientation. It should have gender identity. So there is still work to do.

And for those who may not believe that persons are discriminated based upon gender identity and sexual orientation, those persons who are fired from their jobs because of their gender identity, fired from their jobs because of sexual orientation, they have stories to tell, because they not only know that it happens, they have experienced it. They have had a firsthand encounter with this type of discrimination.

It also exists in housing. People are discriminated against because of who they are, because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and for the other reasons that we have already codified into law.

So it is my hope that one day I will stand here with a resolution that will celebrate not only what the law is currently, but also what the law will be at that time, and, hopefully, it will include other classes of individuals.

I am also proud to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that this resolution is one that is subject to have additional cosponsors. I have talked about original cosponsors, but there are others who will become cosponsors. The Congressional Black Caucus has a good many members who are cosponsors of this resolution. I am proud to tell you that we plan to continue to acquire cosponsors such that, by the end of this month, we will have many additional cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, housing is important, because where you live can impact your health. If you live near landfills and rock crushing companies, that can have an impact on your health. This is why a good many people find themselves combating, fighting, in a very political way, the placement of these types of facilities in their neighborhoods.

There is empirical evidence to show that where you live can impact your health, where you live can impact your education. If you live in an area with poor schools, it is likely that you will have a poor education. There are exceptions, but exceptions don't make the rule. Exceptions prove the rule.

Where you live can impact your employment. If you live in an area with high unemployment, you are likely not to have a job. If unemployment is exceedingly high, as is the case in some places around the world and in this country too, there are persons who are not likely to have jobs.

If you live in an area where you are likely to be in poverty, you are likely not to become wealthy. Your wealth can be related to the area that you are born in, where you live. There are exceptions, but there are also persons who don't acquire the opportunity to become an exception.

Your life expectancy can be impacted by where you live. If you live in a war

zone, your life expectancy will be impacted and your personality can be impacted. If you live in a hostile environment, hostility all around you, it is likely to impact your personality.

So where you live is important, which is why invidious discrimination in housing is something that should not be tolerated, and I am proud to say that there was a struggle that was overcome so that we could have this Fair Housing Act.

□ 1915

I would like to do this now. I would like to give a bit of history of the Fair Housing Act that was signed into law in 1968, April 11, 1968. A little bit of history is important.

If you understand the history, you can understand why I make the comment that the law, itself, was written in ink, but it was signed, in a sense, with the blood of the many who died and made sacrifices so that the bill could become the law. I believe that the history of the times is important.

It was signed April 11, 1968, as I have indicated, during the sixties. The sixties were not the best of times for this country. In the 1960s, on June 11, 1963, President John F. Kennedy proposed a Civil Rights Act. However, he was not to see it become the law because on November 22, 1963, he was assassinated. Upon being assassinated, President Johnson was sworn in as President on Air Force One that very same day, November 22, 1963. Then, in July, July 2, 1964, after the death of President Kennedy, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination based on race.

Now, it is important to note that President Kennedy, who was a great President, highly respected and admired, proposed the Civil Rights Act, or a civil rights act. He lost his life before he had the opportunity to see it come to fruition.

But it is also important to note that President Johnson worked tirelessly to make real the noble American ideal that was called to the attention of our Nation by President John F. Kennedy. President Johnson was, if you will, the person in the Senate who knew how to speak Southern.

He knew how to communicate well with the Southern Senators and the Members of the House. He knew the rules of the Senate. He knew how persons had voted in the Senate, and he knew how to leverage the votes and the rules to get Senators to do things that they might not ordinarily do.

So when you couple his knowledge of the Senate with the fact that we had lost a great President, and this great President had proposed this Civil Rights Act, you can understand how President Johnson, a great President, was able to get the Civil Rights Act of 1964 passed that outlawed discrimination based upon race.

In 1967, we had what was called the long, hot summer. There were what were called riots. I prefer another

term. I see what happened as rebellions. There were people who were suffering. I don't justify what happened, but I can explain that there were people who were rebelling.

Now, whether you agree with the rebellions or not, they took place. That was what precipitated what was called the long, hot summer. In fact, it was such a rebellious time that, on July 28, 1967, the Kerner Commission was appointed to investigate the causes of these rebellions.

President Johnson appointed this Commission. He wanted to get to the bottom of what was going on in this country. And on February 29, 1968, the Commission released its report, which said, in essence, that the rebellions—they didn't use the term "rebellions," that is my term—the rebellions were caused by discrimination, that this Nation was becoming two separate people, if you will, people who were segregated from each other. This is in a very general sense. That we were becoming two nations, in a sense, separate and unequal.

This was something that I think President Johnson was impacted by. But there were many others who were impacted by this.

Dr. Martin Luther King, he was trying to bring this country together. He was an integrationist. And in trying to bring this country together, Dr. Martin Luther King went to Memphis. He was trying as best as he could to achieve some degree of fairness for those who were working as sanitation workers.

President Johnson announced, on March 31, 1968, that he would not seek reelection; and then some days later, on April 4, Dr. King, while in Memphis, was assassinated.

So now we had the death of a great President; we have the death, now, of the great human rights, civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, taking place; and then President Johnson, the same President Johnson who pushed through the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the same President Johnson sought to push through the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which contained the Fair Housing Act. It was within about 1 week of the demise, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King that he was able to sign into law the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

The important aspect of this history is this: that these acts, though written in blood and signed in ink, were able to be signed because of the death of great persons, and also many persons who were not so great. They weren't great in the eyes of history because they were not documented as having done the things that President Johnson or President Kennedy or Dr. King accomplished.

But there were other great people, as well, who shed blood and gave their lives. There were people who were found to have marched, and some of them were protesting and lost their lives. There were people who suffered the indignation and humiliation associated with segregation and the fact that

there were those who wanted to maintain the institution to the extent that Medgar Evers lost his life. They wanted to maintain the institution to the extent that Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney lost their lives.

They wanted to maintain segregation. They wanted the South. They wanted the country to remain two separate nations, if you will, within this Nation: one, unfortunately, discriminated against, and another having all the benefits that this great Nation could offer.

The loss of lives allowed us to achieve an integrated housing system within this country. The integrated system was just not enough, and still is not enough, because housing discrimination exists to this very day. The empirical evidence is there. The truth of the matter is that we can do more to eliminate the discrimination.

One of the best tools to eliminate discrimination in housing is testing, where you send out persons of different races, different ethnicities, and you ask them to acquire housing at a certain location. Those who are of one race may find that housing is available to them, but those of another race may find that it is not—at the very same location, on the very same day.

We have found that testing is one of the best tools to eliminate discrimination, especially in housing. But I want to announce today that testing is also a great tool to eliminate discrimination in lending.

This Civil Rights Act, this Housing Fairness Act, and all of the tools that we have used to achieve the degree of integration in housing and fairness in housing that we have achieved, this has been done, in great part, because of testing. That same tool of testing that helped us to integrate housing in this country is a tool that we can use to allow persons to receive fair treatment in lending, fair access to capital.

The truth is that access to capital in this country makes all the difference in your life. If you can go into a bank and you are qualified and you can get a loan to buy a home, that home that you will buy will impact your life in ways that I have talked about, impact your life expectancy, impact your education. It can have a positive impact on your life. It can be the means by which you will move from one status in life to another. Just living in that neighborhood and buying that home can be meaningful to you.

We believe that that loan should not be denied a person because of that person's race, color, creed, national origin, sexual identity, sexual orientation, familial status, religious status. That person's loan should not be denied. It should be granted because of your qualifications.

This is why I am a proponent of testing. This is why I want to see more testing in banking. This is why I believe that we need additional laws to protect those who apply for loans, because access to capital makes a difference in your life. This is why I will

be introducing, in this Congress, legislation to make it a crime to discriminate in lending.

People who deny people access to capital are committing an offense. People who deny people access to capital are impacting their lives. I want to make sure that people who do this are properly punished for what they do. If we can pass such a law, I believe it will deter those who would discriminate against persons because of who they are, and it would cause them to better understand that every person who is qualified for a loan ought to acquire that loan.

So I am leaving you with the notion that we are building on what happened with the Civil Rights Act. We are building on the sacrifices that have been made by persons such as Dr. Martin Luther King and a good many others. We are going to build on it.

We are going to introduce legislation that can help all persons receive not only the house that they merit by virtue of having the money, but also acquire the capital in lending such that they can afford the house that they qualify for by way of the loan they will receive.

I am honored to thank you for the time that I have been accorded, Mr. Speaker. I am grateful that I have the opportunity to stand here in the House and make this presentation, and I am grateful to this country for allowing a person who, at birth, would never have been thought to stand in this position in the House of Representatives.

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

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on April 11, 2018, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 3445. To enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of programs under the African Growth and Opportunity Act and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3979. To amend the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 to reauthorize the volunteer services, community partnership, and refuge education programs of the National Wildlife Refuge System, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 13, 2018, at 9 a.m.

OATH OF OFFICE MEMBERS, RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, AND DELEGATES

The oath of office required by the sixth article of the Constitution of the

United States, and as provided by section 2 of the act of May 13, 1884 (23 Stat. 22), to be administered to Members, Resident Commissioner, and Delegates of the House of Representatives, the text of which is carried in 5 U.S.C. 3331:

“I, AB, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

has been subscribed to in person and filed in duplicate with the Clerk of the House of Representatives by the following Member of the 115th Congress, pursuant to the provisions of 2 U.S.C. 25:

CONOR LAMB, 18th District of Pennsylvania.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4482. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Administration's Fiscal Year 2017 Performance Report to Congress for the Animal Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4483. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's Fleet Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) Program Report for FY 2017, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 13218(b)(1); Public Law 102-486, Sec. 310 (as amended by Public Law 109-58, Sec. 705); (119 Stat. 817); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4484. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; Colorado; Control of Emissions from Existing Commercial and Industrial Solid Waste Incineration Units [EPA-R08-OAR-2017-0552; FRL-9975-39-Region 8] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4485. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Montana; Revisions to East Helena Lead SIP [EPA-R08-OAR-2017-0634; FRL-9975-63-Region 8] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4486. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Revisions; Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community; Navajo Nation; California; Correcting Amendments [EPA-R09-OAR-2018-0133; FRL-9975-96-Region 9] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4487. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Nebraska Air Quality Implementation Plans; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulfur Dioxide and the 2012 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R07-OAR-2017-0477; FRL-9976-09-Region 7] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4488. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2017-0680; FRL-9975-65-Region 9] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4489. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, San Diego County Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-OAR-2017-0140; FRL-9975-66-Region 9] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4490. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2017-0737; FRL-9976-08-Region 9] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4491. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Maryland; Control of Emissions from Existing Commercial and Industrial Solid Waste Incineration Units [EPA-R03-OAR-2017-0570; FRL-9976-31-Region 3] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4492. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Interstate Transport Requirements for the 2010 1-Hour Sulfur Dioxide Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2014-0701; FRL-9976-30-Region 3] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4493. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; New Hampshire; Approval of Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements and Single Source Order [EPA-R01-OAR-2017-0266; FRL-9975-79-Region 1] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4494. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; KY: Removal of Reliance on Reformulated Gasoline in the Kentucky Portion of the Cincinnati-Hamilton Area [EPA-R04-OAR-2017-0389; FRL-9976-20-Region 4] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4495. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Florida; Stationary Sources Emissions Monitoring [EPA-R04-OAR-2017-0500; FRL-9976-17-Region 4] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4496. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Alabama; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [AL-2017; FRL-9975-72-Region 4] received March 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4497. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Delaware; State Implementation Plan for Interstate Transport for the 2008 Ozone Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2013-0408; FRL-9975-85-Region 3] received March 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4498. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Infrastructure and Interstate Transport for the 2012 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standard and Revised Statutes [EPA-R06-OAR-2015-0850; FRL-9975-60-Region 6] received March 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4499. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Pennsylvania's Adoption of Control Techniques Guidelines for Automobile and Light-Duty Truck Assembly Coatings [EPA-R03-OAR-2017-0342; FRL-9975-86-Region 3] received March 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4500. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R03-OAR-2017-0413; FRL-9975-88-Region 3] received March 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4501. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — N,N-Dimethyl 9-Decenamide; N,N-Dimethyldecenamide; N,N-Dimethyltetradecanamide; Exemption from the Requirement from a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0660; EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0720; EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0723; FRL-9974-70] received March 26, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4502. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Reasonably Available Control Technology for Cement Kilns, Revisions to Port-

land Cement Manufacturing Plant and Natural Gas Compression Station Regulations, and Removal of Nitrogen Oxides Reduction and Trading Program Replaced by Other Programs and Regulations [EPA-R03-OAR-2016-0309; FRL-9975-82-Region 3] received March 26, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4503. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Redesignation of the Chicago and Granite City Areas to Attainment of the 2008 Lead Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2016-0593; FRL-9975-93-Region 5] received March 26, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4504. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report to U.S. Support for Taiwan's Participation as an Observer at the 71st World Health Assembly and in the Work of the World Health Organization, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 290 note; Public Law 108-235, Sec. 1(c); (118 Stat. 658); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4505. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting reports concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1(a) (as amended by Public Law 108-458, Sec. 7121(b)); (118 Stat. 3807); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4506. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Secs. 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-121; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4507. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 16-097; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4508. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-145; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4509. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-120; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4510. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-107; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4511. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-102; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4512. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-068; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4513. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 16-118; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4514. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-134; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4515. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, pursuant to Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, Transmittal No.: DDTC 17-131; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4516. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period of August 1, 2017 — September 29, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with Sec. 1(a)(6) of Executive Order 13313; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4517. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's FY 2017 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4518. A letter from the President and CEO, Inter-American Foundation, transmitting the Foundation's FY 2017 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4519. A letter from the Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's FY 2017 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4520. A letter from the Special Counsel, U.S. Office of Special Counsel, transmitting the Office's FY 2017 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4521. A letter from the Director, Congressional Affairs and Public Relations, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting the Agency's FY 2017 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 2. A bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. ROYCE of California (for himself, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. WAGNER, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois):

H.R. 5480. A bill to improve programs and activities relating to women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment that are carried out by the United States Agency for International Development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. HURD (for himself and Mrs. DAVIS of California):

H.R. 5481. A bill to reform the GEAR UP program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BACON:

H.R. 5482. A bill to direct the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs to develop a plan for countering emerging and deliberate infectious disease threats, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. STEFANIK, Mrs. HANDEL, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, and Mr. RUSH):

H.R. 5483. A bill to impose a deadline for the promulgation of interim final regulations in accordance with section 311(h) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 831(h)) specifying the circumstances in which a special registration may be issued to a practitioner to engage in the practice of telemedicine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H.R. 5484. A bill to amend the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act to prohibit a court from making an award of costs to a defendant except on a finding that an action was brought in bad faith; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COMER (for himself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 5485. A bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to provide for State and Tribal regulation of hemp production, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CORREA:

H.R. 5486. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide child care assistance to veterans receiving certain training or vocational rehabilitation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 5487. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to modify the regional conservation partnership program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. DESJARLAIS):

H.R. 5488. A bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to provide for a Federal charter for Remote Area Medical, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ESTES of Kansas:

H.R. 5489. A bill to institute reforms to the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families and the supplemental nutrition assistance program; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. ESTY of Connecticut (for herself, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Ms. ADAMS):

H.R. 5490. A bill to provide for a grant program for handgun licensing programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 5491. A bill to provide loans and grants to qualified agricultural associations to assist in the establishment of agricultural association health plans; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico):

H.R. 5492. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to address the use of opioids and substance use disorders with respect to pregnant women and babies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut):

H.R. 5493. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from income discharge of medical indebtedness; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KELLY of Mississippi (for himself, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. BERGMAN, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH):

H.R. 5494. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to include contracts awarded under section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, in the limitations relating to subcontracting, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (for himself and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 5495. A bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require employees of the Executive Office of the President or the White House to notify the Office of Government Ethics and Congress in each instance the individual is recused from a particular matter pursuant to section 208 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PERRY (for himself and Mr. BIGGS):

H.R. 5496. A bill to amend Immigration and Nationality Act regarding the extension of a foreign state's designation for purposes of temporary protected status, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PETERSON (for himself and Mr. CRAMER):

H.R. 5497. A bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to establish the Office of Rural Telecommunications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PETERSON (for himself and Mr. TIPTON):

H.R. 5498. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the floor on the area wage index under the inpatient prospective payment system to certain sole community hospitals and to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide eligibility for certain sole community hospitals to discounted drug prices under the 340B drug pricing program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RICHMOND (for himself, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. SCALISE):

H.R. 5499. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Stephen Michael Gleason; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROUZER:

H.R. 5500. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct outreach to vet-

erans regarding the effect of delayed payments of claims for emergency medical care furnished by non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical providers by the Office of Community Care and to direct the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report regarding such delayed payments; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. TORRES:

H.R. 5501. A bill to direct the Secretary of State to take certain actions to end corruption in the Northern Triangle region of Central America, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:

H.R. 5502. A bill to prohibit private passenger automobile insurers from using certain income proxies to determine insurance rates and eligibility; to the Committee on Financial Services, 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. KELLY of Mississippi:

H. Res. 822. A resolution expressing support for the designation of April 12, 2018, as "Reman Day"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. VELAZQUEZ):

H. Res. 823. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of April 16, 2018, through April 20, 2018, as National Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Appreciation Week; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR (for himself, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. TROTT, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. BERGMAN, and Mr. UPTON):

H. Res. 824. A resolution opposing the detention and deportation of Iraqi Chaldean Christians; 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 Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 2.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The ability to regulate interstate commerce and with foreign Nations pursuant to Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 includes the power to regulate commodity prices, practices affecting them and the trading or donation of the commodities to impoverished nations. In addition, the Congress has the power to provide for the general Welfare of the United States under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 which includes the power to promote the development of Rural America through research and extension of credit.

By Mr. ROYCE of California:

H.R. 5480.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. HURD:

H.R. 5481.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. BACON:

H.R. 5482.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution: "... to make rules for the government and regulation of land and naval forces . . ."

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 5483.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress Under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 5484.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following :

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. COMER:

H.R. 5485.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. CORREA:

H.R. 5486.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(1) The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 5487.

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. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 5488.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18. To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. ESTES of Kansas:

H.R. 5489.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

"This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution."

By Ms. ESTY of Connecticut:

H.R. 5490.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 5491.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority for this bill is pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 5492.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 5493.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KELLY of Mississippi:

H.R. 5494.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY:

H.R. 5495.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 5496.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. PETERSON:

H.R. 5497.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PETERSON:

H.R. 5498.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following :

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 5499.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following :

This bill is introduced pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under the General Welfare Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 1), the Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3), and the Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 18).

Further, this statement of constitutional authority is made for the sole purpose of compliance with clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and shall have no bearing on judicial review of the accompanying bill.

By Mr. ROUZER:

H.R. 5500.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. TORRES:

H.R. 5501.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: of the United States Constitution, seen below, this bill falls within the Constitutional Authority of the United States Congress.

Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:

H.R. 5502.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 3 of the United States Constitution and Article 1, section 8, clause 18 of the United States Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 233: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 354: Mr. ESTES of Kansas.

H.R. 754: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 788: Mr. BUDD.

H.R. 820: Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 846: Mr. NORMAN and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 980: Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 1038: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 1143: Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 1150: Mr. MITCHELL.

H.R. 1205: Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 1268: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. YODER, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1300: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 1358: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 1377: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 1378: Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 1409: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 1445: Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. MESSER, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 1447: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 1456: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 1472: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1606: Mr. GAETZ, Mr. DUNN, and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 1617: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 1676: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 1683: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1727: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 1763: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 1772: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1818: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 1825: Mr. RENACCI, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 1898: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1911: Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1939: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 1953: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 2044: Mr. RASKIN and Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 2069: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 2077: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 2095: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2147: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 2345: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2366: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 2392: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 2418: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2556: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2584: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2735: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 2871: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 2942: Mr. SARBANES and Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 2980: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 2996: Mr. BUCSHON.

H.R. 3010: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 3238: Mr. OLSON and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 3325: Mr. SOTO, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. PAULSEN, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 3330: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 3378: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 3528: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 3605: Mr. KILMER and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 3654: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 3708: Mr. EMMER and Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 3780: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 3840: Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 3861: Mr. EMMER.

H.R. 3956: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 4082: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4099: Mrs. TORRES and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

- H.R. 4107: Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. BYRNE, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
- H.R. 4143: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
- H.R. 4202: Mr. LOBIONDO.
- H.R. 4256: Mr. MCCAUL and Mr. DOGGETT.
- H.R. 4265: Mr. SANFORD.
- H.R. 4311: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. POSEY.
- H.R. 4327: Mr. BARR.
- H.R. 4396: Mr. ESPAILLAT.
- H.R. 4425: Mr. RASKIN, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. LEE, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
- H.R. 4556: Mr. KILMER.
- H.R. 4575: Mr. TIPTON and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
- H.R. 4635: Mr. KILMER.
- H.R. 4638: Mr. DONOVAN.
- H.R. 4673: Mr. KATKO.
- H.R. 4706: Mr. PASCRELL.
- H.R. 4770: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
- H.R. 4805: Mr. DESJARLAIS.
- H.R. 4811: Mr. SWALWELL of California and Mr. BUCSHON.
- H.R. 4828: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
- H.R. 4915: Mr. BUCSHON and Mr. BUDD.
- H.R. 4941: Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. GAETZ.
- H.R. 4953: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
- H.R. 4958: Mr. PETERS.
- H.R. 4962: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.
- H.R. 5041: Mr. GIANFORTE.
- H.R. 5061: Mr. WITTMAN.
- H.R. 5065: Mr. BRAT.
- H.R. 5100: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Ms. STEFANIK.
- H.R. 5113: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
- H.R. 5132: Mr. YODER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. WALDEN, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. BOST, Mr. RENACCI, and Ms. ROSEN.
- H.R. 5176: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
- H.R. 5192: Mr. TIPTON and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
- H.R. 5221: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
- H.R. 5223: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
- H.R. 5251: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
- H.R. 5266: Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas.
- H.R. 5271: Mr. COHEN.
- H.R. 5291: Mr. KENNEDY.
- H.R. 5292: Mr. CAPUANO and Ms. TITUS.
- H.R. 5332: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. HUNTER.
- H.R. 5336: Mr. GOHMERT.
- H.R. 5339: Mr. CRIST, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. BEYER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. WELCH, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. TITUS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
- H.R. 5353: Mr. GRIJALVA.
- H.R. 5354: Mr. COFFMAN.
- H.R. 5358: Mr. HARRIS.
- H.R. 5365: Mr. POCAN and Mr. LYNCH.
- H.R. 5383: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. ENGEL.
- H.R. 5389: Mr. LYNCH.
- H.R. 5400: Mr. HUNTER.
- H.R. 5417: Mr. KING of Iowa and Mr. ROKITA.
- H.R. 5431: Ms. MOORE.
- H.R. 5439: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.
- H.R. 5444: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. MARCHANT.
- H.R. 5445: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, and Mr. MARCHANT.
- H.R. 5448: Mr. POLIS and Mr. CROWLEY.
- H.R. 5468: Mrs. HANDEL.
- H.R. 5473: Mr. MCKINLEY.
- H.J. Res. 15: Mr. SANFORD.
- H.J. Res. 107: Mr. CRIST.
- H.J. Res. 129: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. DEUTCH.
- H. Con. Res. 8: Mr. LAMALFA.
- H. Res. 31: Mr. SARBANES.
- H. Res. 69: Mr. SCHIFF.
- H. Res. 189: Ms. MENG, Mr. BERA, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Ms. SPEIER.
- H. Res. 470: Mr. POCAN, Mr. DEFazio, and Mr. PETERS.
- H. Res. 570: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
- H. Res. 673: Mr. BABIN.
- H. Res. 763: Mr. CALVERT.
- H. Res. 766: Mr. SCHRADER.
- H. Res. 774: Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. STIVERS.
- H. Res. 817: Ms. JAYAPAL and Mr. KIHUEN.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

96. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City Commission of Safety Harbor Florida, relative to Resolution No. 2018-05, opposing assault rifles being in the hands of individuals and calling upon the United States House of Representatives to pass the necessary legislation to protect Floridians by restricting the sale of assault weapons to the military and law enforcement; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and the Judiciary.



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Senate

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Labor.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Patrick Pizzella to be the Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Labor, DOL. The Department of Labor is charged with enforcing laws to keep workers safe on the job, ensuring workers are paid the wages they are owed, helping to develop our workforce, and keeping critical data on our employment market.

Patrick Pizzella brings a wealth of relevant experience in both Democratic and Republican administrations. President Trump designated Mr. Pizzella as acting Chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, FLRA, in January 2017, a position which he held through December 2017. President Obama appointed Mr. Pizzella to the FLRA in August 2013, after which he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate by voice vote on October 16, 2013.

Mr. Pizzella served under President George W. Bush from 2001 to 2009, as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Administration and Management at the Department of Labor. Mr. Pizzella was nominated by President Bush in April 2001—approved in May without a hearing by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, HELP, under Senator Ted Kennedy—and confirmed by the full Senate 2 days later.

Mr. Pizzella also served at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the U.S. General Services Administration.

This day is long overdue. President Trump initially nominated Mr. Pizzella to be the Deputy Secretary of Labor on June 20, 2017. The Senate HELP Committee received Mr. Pizzella's HELP Committee application on June 29, 2017. On June 23, 2017, the committee received Mr. Pizzella's Office of Government Ethics, OGE, paperwork, including his public financial disclosure and ethics agreement. Based on these documents, OGE determined that Mr. Pizzella "is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest." Mr. Pizzella completed all paperwork in accordance with the HELP Committee's rules, practices, and procedures. The HELP Committee held Mr. Pizzella's hearing on July 13, 2017, and reported his nomination favorably on October 18, 2017.

Pursuant to Senate rules, Mr. Pizzella's nomination was returned to the President at the end of the first session of the 115th Congress. In fact, Mr. Pizzella was one of nearly 100 of President Trump's nominees who were returned to the President. It is unfortunate the Department of Labor has had to operate without its second most senior official for more than 9 months since Mr. Pizzella's initial nomination.

President Trump again nominated Mr. Pizzella to be the Deputy Secretary of Labor on January 8, 2018. The HELP Committee again favorably reported Mr. Pizzella's nomination on January 18, 2018.

The Department will greatly benefit from Mr. Pizzella's leadership and experience, and I look forward to supporting his confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pizzella nomination?

The Senate met at 9:15 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Most High God, our Heavenly Father, Your loving kindness fills our hearts with gratitude. We are grateful for this opportunity to work in our government's legislative branch, striving to contribute to the progress of this great Nation.

Lord, we thank You for our lawmakers and for those who support them. Bless our Senators with Your wisdom, enabling them to make decisions that will benefit our Nation and world for generations to come.

We ask You, also, Eternal God, to bless the American people. Place Your shield of protection around them, providing them with the inspiration in their pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. Fill them with the gift of Your peace.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Mr. SASSE. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rubio
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Corker	Inhofe	Scott
Cornyn	Isakson	Shelby
Cotton	Johnson	Sullivan
Crapo	Kennedy	Thune
Cruz	Lankford	Tillis
Daines	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Murkowski	

NAYS—48

Baldwin	Hassan	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Peters
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Jones	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	Markey	Udall
Donnelly	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Gillibrand	Murphy	Whitehouse
Harris	Murray	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth McCain

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the cloture vote.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, the Senate will vote on cloture on the nomination of Andrew Wheeler to be the Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Deputy Administrator is critical in developing and implementing policies that fulfill the EPA's mission of protecting America's water, land, air, and communities.

He is the right person for the job. He has spent 25 years working in environ-

mental policy. In that time, he has served as a career employee of the EPA; a staff director on the Hill for the committee I now chair, the Environment and Public Works Committee; and, most recently, as a consultant in the energy policy space.

Andrew Wheeler is well qualified to fill this critically important job. I urge all Senators to support the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, they say that a man or woman's word is his bond. When the Environment and Public Works Committee voted on the nomination of Andrew Wheeler, someone I have known for 25 years or more, I was very clear about my desire to help smooth the way to a faster floor process. I was very clear that what I needed, and what we needed, was an assurance from EPA that it would respect settled law, that it would respect EPA actions and court decisions that found that global warming pollution from cars and SUVs is a danger to our Nation, to our citizens, and to our planet.

What I asked for was an assurance from Scott Pruitt that he would do what the auto industry has asked him to do, which is to negotiate an agreement on vehicle standards for the State of California. I worked with Bill Wehrum, the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation, for weeks, and we reached an agreement that I was told Administrator Pruitt supported until Scott Pruitt reneged on the deal and decided he might prefer fighting and litigation to cooperating and negotiating.

Let me be clear, I tried to work with the EPA. I believed that perhaps in just this one instance we could find a win-win. There is one that is right there to be grasped. But Administrator Pruitt ignored his own top air official. Let me close, if I can.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. CARPER. Whatever Mr. Wheeler's qualifications, he cannot solve this problem alone at EPA, which is that Scott Pruitt has no interest in governing, no interest in leaving a lasting and responsible legacy, and no interest in working with anyone who doesn't enable him to act on his own worst instincts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. CARPER. I urge a "no" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Andrew Wheeler, of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mitch McConnell, Jerry Moran, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, John Boozman, John Thune, Roger F. Wicker, John Hoeven.

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 Andrew Wheeler, of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 70 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cassidy	Heller	Rounds
Collins	Hoeven	Rubio
Corker	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cornyn	Inhofe	Scott
Cotton	Isakson	Shelby
Crapo	Johnson	Sullivan
Cruz	Kennedy	Thune
Daines	Lankford	Tillis
Donnelly	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	Manchin	Wicker
Ernst	McConnell	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—45

Baldwin	Hassan	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Jones	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	McCaskill	Udall
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Harris	Nelson	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Andrew Wheeler, of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate confirmed John Ring to the National Labor Relations Board. Now the NLRB is, once again, fully staffed and ready to call balls and strikes fairly for America's workers.

This morning, we confirmed Patrick Pizzella, the President's highly qualified nominee, to fill the No. 2 job at the Department of Labor. Mr. Pizzella brings a sterling reputation and an impressive resume. It includes time at the GSA, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Education, the Federal Housing Finance Board, and OPM.

Even with 8 years as the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Administration and Management and 4 years as a Senate-confirmed member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, this dedicated public servant saw his confirmation process play out in a manner that has become all too familiar—months of waiting on the Senate calendar, months of obstruction by our Democratic colleagues, months of needless vacancy in this critical agency position. After this morning's vote, Mr. Pizzella can finally get to work, but the same story of obstruction applies to the next nomination on the slate as well.

Andrew Wheeler is ready and waiting—and waiting and waiting—to clock in as Deputy Administrator of the EPA. His qualifications are beyond question. He has won the support of the American Farm Bureau Federation and has won praise from both sides of the aisle. Mr. Wheeler's former boss, our colleague Senator INHOFE, said, "There is no one more qualified." Our former colleague, Senator Lieberman, called Mr. Wheeler "fair and professional" and said, "I hope his nomination will receive . . . fair consideration by the Senate."

Delaying key executive nominees does not come cost-free to the country. The Deputy Administrator is the EPA's chief operating officer. He plays a major role in protecting America's air and water, while minimizing unnecessary obstacles for workers and job creators. The American people deserve to have him and other key officials in place.

I mentioned yesterday that our Democratic colleagues are literally setting records. Just 15 months in, they have chosen to force—listen to this—84 cloture votes on President Trump's executive and judicial nominees. Eighty-four. That is more than three times as many nominee cloture votes as happened in the first 2 years of Presidents Obama, President Bush, and President Clinton combined. Combined, 84 cloture votes is more than 3 times as many cloture votes as happened in the first 2 years of President Obama, Bush, and Clinton altogether. Many of the nominees were then confirmed nearly unanimously.

I hope these stalling tactics will end soon because the personnel business isn't going anywhere. Today, in fact,

CIA Director Mike Pompeo is appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for the first time as the President's nominee for Secretary of State. He is yet another qualified nominee who deserves fair and swift consideration for our country's sake.

For now, I meant what I said on Monday. We will remain in session as long as it takes to process this week's slate of nominees. After Mr. Wheeler, we still have two judicial nominees: Rebecca Grady Jennings for the Western District of Kentucky and John Broomes for the District of Kansas. One way or another, the easy way or the hard way, this Senate will get the people's business done this week.

PRO-GROWTH AGENDA

Mr. President, on another matter, I have been speaking all week about the stark difference between the Obama administration's economic legacy and the pro-growth agenda this Republican Congress and Republican President have been putting in place.

For 8 years, our Democratic friends' so-called economic recovery hardly made it past our Nation's biggest and richest cities. Democratic policies largely failed the millions of working Americans who live in our small towns and suburbs, smaller cities and rural areas—not so with this Republican Congress and this Republican President. Already, our inclusive opportunity agenda is bringing new energy, new optimism, and new growth to all of those forgotten parts of our country.

On my recent trip back to Kentucky, I heard what I have been hearing for months now. I heard how tax reform is helping bourbon producers compete, create jobs, and reinvigorate their local economies. I heard how employers in the State are reinvesting in their workers by offering bonuses or looking to increase hiring. I heard how farm families are breathing easier after regulatory reforms that will keep the government from invading every puddle, ditch, and pothole in America.

These signs of progress just confirm what Republicans have said all along: that middle-class families flourish when the IRS takes less of what they earn; that American entrepreneurs thrive when we scrub the regulatory rust off our economy and give farmers, ranchers local communities, community banks, and small businesses more say over their own affairs; that good things happen when we just get Washington out of the way.

Our policies are delivering real prosperity for Americans in all kinds of communities, so it is no surprise that a recent study found that last year, rural areas outpaced the rest of the country in relative job creation.

These are promising signs and long over due, but, of course, there is a lot more work to do.

HEMP FARMING ACT

Mr. President, that is why a number of us have been working hard on legislation that would get government out of the way in another important re-

spect. As the tobacco industry has changed, some farmers in States like Kentucky have been searching for a new crop that can support their families and grow our agricultural economy. Many believe they found such a product—industrial hemp—but the Federal Government has stood in the way. It is time to change that. That is why some colleagues and I are introducing legislation that will modernize Federal law in this area and empower American farmers to explore this promising new market.

I want to thank my fellow Kentuckian, Congressman JAMIE COMER, and my good friend and colleague from Oregon, Senator WYDEN, for their leadership on this issue, as well as Senator MERKLEY for his support.

During the recent State work period, I stood with Kentucky's agriculture commissioner, Ryan Quarles, to announce my intention to introduce new legislation on this subject. Today we are introducing the Hemp Farming Act of 2018. It will build on the success of recent pilot programs and take a big step toward growth and more innovation. As I travel across Kentucky, I have spoken with farmers, manufacturers, and small business owners. Time and again, they shared with me their enthusiasm for hemp's potential to reenergize agricultural communities and provide a new spark to the U.S. economy. This bill will help make that potential a reality.

But first, let's remember how we got to this point. In 2014, I secured language in the farm bill that established hemp pilot programs in States that allow hemp research. The results have been extraordinary.

In Kentucky, hemp is proving useful across a wide variety of innovative products. Its fibers are being added to concrete and home insulation. Its extracts are being researched for potential health benefits. Some breweries in Kentucky have even crafted hemp-infused beer. Last year alone, the hemp industry added 81 new jobs in Kentucky and yielded more than \$16 million for Kentucky farmers. That is just under Kentucky's research pilot program.

Of course, that is just one State. Already, in fact, around \$600 million in hemp products are sold each year here in the United States. Due to current laws, much of this hemp has to be imported. That cuts out our American farmers. It is time for that to change. The legislation we are introducing today will solve this problem and get the Federal Government out of the way of this promising market.

The Hemp Farming Act of 2018 will do the following:

First and foremost, our bill will finally legalize hemp and remove it from the list of controlled substances. By recognizing the difference in statute between hemp and its illicit cousin, we can remove much of the confusion facing farmers, producers, and State agencies.

Second, the legislation will allow States to become the primary regulators of hemp, if they can develop a plan to properly monitor its production.

Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Quarles is a strong supporter of hemp and its potential, and under his guidance, the industry is already growing and maturing in Kentucky through the pilot program. He and State leaders like him around the country are well positioned to develop their own policies and take the industry to the next level. If States are unable or choose not to create their own regulatory plan, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will provide the necessary oversight.

Third, this bill will also allow researchers to apply for competitive Federal grants from the USDA, so we can continue to see more innovation with respect to this extraordinarily versatile crop.

Finally, our legislation will also explicitly make hemp farmers eligible to apply for crop insurance. That will enable farmers to build out a steady business model and put it on a level playing field with other crops.

I look forward to continuing to work with colleagues here in Congress and hemp farmers in Kentucky and throughout the Nation on this legislation.

Again, I particularly thank Senator WYDEN and Senator MERKLEY for working with me on this bipartisan bill. I also thank Congressman COMER, a longtime advocate for hemp—who, by the way, is a former agriculture commissioner in Kentucky—for taking the lead in introducing companion legislation over in the House. I will be proud to continue to work with him on this issue.

Today is a promising step. I am hopeful that together we can get this bill across the finish line and onto the President's desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the majority leader said that this is a promising day, and I would just say that I think it is more than that. It is really a milestone to have the majority leader of the Senate working with a bipartisan group of us to lift a restriction that is anti-farmer, certainly anti-consumer, and anti-common sense. This industrial hemp restriction really, in my view, is working in needless hardships from sea to shining sea.

I am going to take a minute to build on some of the majority leader's remarks.

Colleagues may have heard me say that, for me, this issue goes back several years. My wife was pregnant, and she and I headed from our house in Southeast Portland, and we went off to the nearby Costco store. We were walking through the aisles, and we came across a huge bag of hemp hearts. It said: Great fiber. Terrific source of protein. A variety of different attributes

were spelled out on this package. Good for your heart, and good for your blood pressure.

I looked at the package, and the package clearly indicated that it had been grown outside the United States. So I said to my wife, who is a businesswoman and savvy about such matters: What would be wrong with saying that if you can buy it in a major supermarket in America, our farmers ought to be able to grow it in America?

She said: Well, dear, that just sounds way too logical for what goes on in your world.

I think what the leader has said—and I just want to back this up with a little more detail—is that the current policy is somehow based on the idea that hemp is a dangerous drug, meaning that if you look at the way some people have attacked this idea in the past, that was always the heart of it, that hemp was a dangerous drug.

Hemp does not produce the high associated with marijuana. The only thing you are going to accomplish by smoking hemp is wasting your breath, wasting your time, and wasting lighter fluid. That is pretty much what you would accomplish. This misguided policy of treating hemp like it is some kind of peril, an imminent threat to the American people, is, I think, a mistake, and it means that the hemp products that are lined up on shelves all across America simply aren't going to be fully American-made.

Senator MCCONNELL and Senator PAUL have heard that from farmers in Kentucky, and Senator MERKLEY and I have heard that from farmers in Oregon. That is why it is so important that we move to a system that is built on common sense, something that will be good for farmers, and something that will be good for consumers and certainly offer additional consumer choice.

If I might build on the now sort of memorialized words of Nancy Wyden, because when we talked about, hey, if you can buy it in a market in Oregon, the farmers ought to be able to grow it—I think that is a pretty good watchword for this bipartisan bill we are undertaking.

I look forward to working closely with you, Mr. Leader. We are obviously going to be working with Chairman ROBERTS and Senator STABENOW, the ranking Democratic leader. This is long, long overdue.

As you noted, we have bipartisan supporters, and we are going to pull out all the stops to get this legislation passed. I think I mentioned to the majority leader that those who have been involved in this effort—and it has been a really impressive coalition of farmers, health advocates, and others—are watching the Senate this morning. They are saying that the Senate has finally come to understand what is relevant for this century. The policies that have been so flawed in the past are sort of outdated relics of yesteryear, and I am pleased that Senator

MERKLEY and I can join you and Senator PAUL. We will have colleagues on both sides involved in this legislation. It is long overdue.

I thank the leader.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Oregon. I think this is a great project we can work on together.

During the recent break, I met with a lot of farmers in Kentucky. Since farmers demographically tend to be older in most of our States, I thought it was particularly noteworthy that there were a lot of young, enthusiastic farmers, including research people from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, with genuine enthusiasm about what this could mean to help reinvigorate a rural economy in Kentucky that is not what it used to be when we had tobacco as our No. 1 cash crop. That has faded, and it should have, given the health implications of it.

This is an opportunity for us to do something together, to do something important for rural America, and I look forward to working with my friend and colleague to achieve success.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, over the past 2 weeks, we have seen increasingly worrisome signs that President Trump is seriously considering firing the special counsel in charge of the investigation into Russia's meddling in the 2016 election. Equally troubling is the possibility of the President firing the Deputy Attorney General who oversees that investigation in order to install someone who would dismiss Mr. Mueller or otherwise impede or shut down the investigation.

Let me be clear. Firing Mr. Rosenstein would be as great an injury to our democracy as firing Mr. Mueller. Mr. Rosenstein, by all accounts, since being appointed by President Trump, has followed the letter of the law. There is no conduct the President or anyone else can point to that would suggest Mr. Rosenstein went beyond DOJ regulations or otherwise abused his position. He has dutifully done his job. When he approved Mr. Mueller's referral to the U.S. attorney in the Southern District, it was simply because he was provided sufficient evidence that Mr. Mueller had uncovered a potential crime. It doesn't matter if it upsets President Trump; Mr. Rosenstein was following the facts and the law. It is the obligation of a Justice Department official when he or she sees evidence of a crime to pursue it without fear, without favor. That is what Rosenstein was doing, and somehow President Trump doesn't grasp the rudiments of our democracy and our system of laws.

Instead, President Trump seems to have the view that the Justice Department exists to protect his interests and

prosecute his enemies. But in the long history of our grand, wonderful country—God's noble experiment, as the Founding Fathers called it, and it still is today—that has never been what the Justice Department has stood for. It is an independent Federal agency tasked with following the law wherever it leads, free of considerations of politics or power. Mr. Rosenstein is acting in line with that long and great tradition, and it is no reason—none at all—for the President to fire him.

My friends on the other side of the aisle know, just as well as we do, that firing Mr. Rosenstein or Mr. Mueller would precipitate a constitutional crisis. Our constitutional order is built upon a bedrock faith in the rule of law, of equality under the law. No person—not even the President—can subvert that principle for his or her political interests or needs.

Let me remind everyone that the investigation is not a witch hunt, as the President keeps tweeting it is. It has resulted in multiple indictments and guilty pleas. By definition, that is not a witch hunt. The Trump administration itself leveled sanctions against Russians based on information obtained as a result of the Russia probe. So if the President's own administration, separate from Mueller, leveled sanctions against the Russians using information that Mueller has gotten, how can he then proceed to call it a witch hunt? It just doesn't add up.

The investigation concerns the national security of the United States. If the President were to try to shut it down for personal, political reasons, there is no doubt we would face a constitutional crisis.

So let's make this simple. The consequences of firing Mr. Rosenstein, Mr. Mueller, or issuing pardons would be dire for our democracy. We have clear evidence from the President himself that each of those things is a possibility. President Trump basically mused about it on national television.

Every Democrat and every Republican, regardless of politics, party, or ideology, should stand up and say that what the President is considering is not only wrong but a real threat to the constitutional order of this government. Once they admit that, what rational person would not want to take steps to prevent a constitutional crisis from happening now, before the President acts precipitously and against the whole meaning of our democracy? We, in Congress, have the power to prevent that constitutional crisis and to do it right away. We have the power to protect the special counsel's investigation. Only the Deputy Attorney General can fire the special counsel and only for cause.

A bipartisan group of Senators, including Senators GRAHAM and TILLIS on the Republican side and BOOKER and COONS on the Democratic side, have come up with legislation that would allow the special counsel to appeal a firing to a panel of independent judges

under an expedited procedure to determine if Mr. Mueller were fired for cause. If he weren't fired for cause, the special counsel would be reinstituted immediately. That makes eminent sense. The bipartisan legislation would simply provide a legal avenue to reinforce existing procedures and assure that the grand tradition of rule of law is maintained.

Chairman GRASSLEY and Ranking Member FEINSTEIN have agreed to hold a hearing and mark up this legislation. I applaud them both for it and urge the members of the Judiciary Committee to approve this legislation without watering it down or weakening it with amendments. We should pass it out of committee. Leader MCCONNELL should bring it to the floor of the Senate quickly, where I believe it would pass with a very large majority, and we should pressure our colleagues in the House to do the same. It is my view that if the bill came to the floor and passed the Senate by a significant majority, the House would follow because the pressure would be enormous.

The rule of law, quite simply, should not be a partisan issue. It must not be a partisan issue. We cannot ever let it become a partisan issue. The last time it was at risk under President Nixon's administration, Republicans stepped up to the plate, and they went down in history as very admirable. I hope they will do it again. The Congress should speak loudly and soon by passing this legislation in both Chambers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask to continue my remarks for a few minutes on another subject.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I apologize to my colleague from Delaware.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

Mr. President, on a second issue, on the issue of taxes, since the beginning of the tax debate, Republicans have insisted their bill is about cutting taxes for working Americans. This is despite the fact that the bill would direct 83 percent of the benefits to the top 1 percent of Americans. Despite the fact that they made corporate tax cuts permanent but let individual tax cuts expire, Republicans said that middle-class workers were the focus. Democrats warned that if you give big corporations, powerful corporations, and the wealthiest of Americans the overwhelming lion's share of the tax cuts, the corporations would do what they have always done when they have higher profits—distribute it amongst themselves. Unfortunately, we said it at the time, and I wish we were wrong, but our warnings proved prescient.

Almost every day, we hear a new story about a corporation using the savings from the Republican tax bill to purchase its own stock. That is called a stock buyback. What does it do? It

boosts the corporation's stock price to provide a reward for the wealthy CEOs and top executives who have the shares and shareholders, the vast majority of whom are wealthy Americans and a third of whom are not even Americans. They get the breaks.

A stock buyback is designed to feather the nest and increase the power and support among shareholders of the CEO. When you buy back stock, you use that money—instead of investing it in workers, instead of investing it in a new plant, instead of investing it in training—to decrease the number of shares, which raises the value of the other shares. So who benefits? The shareholders. Who are the shareholders? They are the CEOs and major officers of the corporations, so they are not doing this without self-interest.

As I said, 80 percent of the stocks in America are owned by the top 10 percent of the wealthy. It is not very good.

Let me give you an example. These are the kinds of things that are happening daily. Devon Energy announced a billion-dollar stock buyback in March, and 2 days ago they said that they are laying off 9 percent of their workers “to streamline operations and boost the shale oil producer's sagging returns and stock price.” They are not atypical.

According to JUST Capital, 60 percent of the money in the Republican tax break went to shareholders, who tend to be the wealthiest, and only 6 percent went to workers. So much for all the talk that when we gave the corporations all this money, the workers would gain most of the benefits. It has not happened.

Stock buybacks are a big reason why workers no longer see the benefits of record corporate profits. Why? Because instead of investing in corporate profits and things that benefit the long-term health of the economy and workers—higher wages, new equipment, research, development, and new hires—corporations spend the money on buybacks.

In fact, stock buybacks were illegal because they so feathered the nest of the very few, that when corporate CEOs and their board did it, they were not objective observers because they would make so much money from them. So stock buybacks were illegal until 1982, which is about the same time wages stopped increasing with corporate profits.

Senator BALDWIN has led the charge in our caucus to go back to the days before 1982. So when corporations had a lot of profits, whether through earnings, revenues, or tax breaks, they couldn't use these stock buybacks, and almost certainly a larger percentage of money would go to the workers and the middle class.

The theory behind the Republican tax bill was to allow corporations and the richest Americans to keep more of their already very great wealth, and maybe the benefits will trickle down to

everybody else. As we are already seeing, the idea was folly. The middle class will pay the price.

Because of the enormous cost of the Republican tax bill—\$1.9 trillion, according to the most recent CBO projection—the number keeps going up. All of our deficit hawks on the other side of the aisle somehow forgot about that when it came to giving breaks to the wealthiest Americans and big corporations. The deficit and debt will grow over the next several years, and many Republicans are already talking about targeting Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare for cuts to make up the difference. On top of the tax bill that mostly goes to the folks who need it the least, the Republican tax bill has become an excuse for Republicans to come after Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

It was a huge mistake and could have been crafted a whole lot better had our Republican colleagues decided to work with us Democrats.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, we are here today primarily to discuss the nomination of Andrew Wheeler to serve as Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Before I turn to Andrew Wheeler, I want to spend a few minutes talking about our current EPA Administrator.

Recent reports of EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's ethical shortcomings and lavish spending on the American taxpayers' dime are breathtaking, but they should come as no surprise. Just over a year ago, I stood at the very same spot where I stand today to discuss Mr. Pruitt's nomination. Last February, I said that never before had I been forced to consider a candidate to lead the EPA who had been so focused throughout his career on crippling the very Agency he sought to lead or so hostile to the basic protections that keep Americans and our environment safe.

At the same time, I warned our colleagues that based on his record as attorney general of Oklahoma, Scott Pruitt had an unacceptably casual approach to meeting obligations as a public servant. Unfortunately, with respect to too many of my colleagues, that warning fell on deaf ears.

In the 15 months since he was confirmed—narrowly confirmed—Mr. Pruitt has proven to be an even worse leader than I imagined on a policy front but also with regard to one ethical failing after another, as well as his disregard for the American taxpayers.

The Presiding Officer and I have spent large portions of our lives serving our country in uniform—he as a marine, me as a naval flight officer. I was a midshipman for 4 years before being commissioned, served 5 years in the war in Southeast Asia, and 18 years at the end of the Cold War as a P-3 aircraft mission commander.

From the age of 11, I was trained to be a leader. My guess is, my colleague

was also. I was a Boy Scout, Civil Air Patrol cadet, naval ROTC midshipman, served 5 years on Active Duty, and another 18 years as a Reserve flight officer. If I don't know something about leadership, it is my fault. I have had great mentors, great role models. I was trained as a leader since the age of 11.

I want to mention this about leadership. Leaders are humble, not haughty. Leaders are servants. Our job is to serve, not be served. We lead by example. Leaders stay out of step when everybody else is marching to the wrong tune. Leaders put the best team around them that they can find. When the team does well, the leader gives credit to the team. If the team falls short, the leader takes the blame.

Leaders are aspirational. They appeal to our better instincts. They are purveyors of hope. Leaders build bridges, not walls. Leaders focus on doing what is right—not what is easy or what is expedient but what is right. Leaders treat other people the way they want to be treated. They actually embody the Golden Rule.

Leaders focus on excellence in everything they do. If it isn't perfect, they say: Let's make it better. Let's work with other people to make it better. When leaders know they are right, are convinced they are right, and other people realize they are right, leaders don't give up.

I knew 13 or 14 months ago what kind of steward Scott Pruitt would be with respect to protecting our air, our water, our public health. I had no idea—no idea—what kind of leader he would prove to be with respect to ethical behavior or misbehavior. What a shame. What a shame.

Over the last 2 weeks, we have been barely able to go a day without learning new and increasingly troubling information about the Administrator's failures to conduct himself in a way a public servant, working on behalf of the American people, should behave.

His poor financial judgment and serious ethical lapses make it clear that he is unfit for office. Setting aside his lack of stewardship on environmental issues, he should have never been confirmed in the first place.

Administrator Pruitt's conduct is emblematic of an extraordinarily and ethically tone-deaf administration. There are some good people in this administration, a number of them. Our Presiding Officer knows them, and I know them. Unfortunately, one of them is not running the Environmental Protection Agency, where lavish trips, extravagant office furniture, and personal favors are the norm, not the exception.

President Trump said he was going to drain the swamp. Scott Pruitt is the definition of what I recently heard one person call a swamp creature, with his close ties to polluters, misuse of taxpayer money, and corrupt dealings.

Should the Senate confirm Andrew Wheeler, we will be setting him on a course to address not just these recent

allegations but these occurrences, these terrible examples.

As of today, Administrator Pruitt faces growing bipartisan calls for his firing or resignation amid nearly 25 ethics and improper expenditure allegations—25—and growing.

This is 2 weeks of turmoil. This chart is the cliff notes version. There is more. It is not anything to be proud of. It is a lot to be ashamed of—excessive raises for political appointees who came with him from Oklahoma and unprecedented security requirements are just a few of his growing collection of scandals that have made headlines almost every day in recent weeks.

Since his confirmation, Administrator Pruitt has developed a taste for the finer things in life, particularly when the American taxpayer is picking up the tab. Mr. Pruitt has been broadly criticized for his lavish spending of taxpayer dollars on various flights in his first year as EPA Administrator, including international trips, first-class flights, weekend trips home to Oklahoma, and chartered military jets.

Mr. Pruitt somehow managed to spend over \$1,600 on a flight from Washington, DC, to New York City last year. It takes real effort to find a seat that expensive. My offer to Mr. Pruitt still stands; that the Administrator join me on Amtrak and save a ton of money.

Administrator Pruitt took a \$40,000 trip to Morocco in December 2017 to promote liquefied natural gas—an issue that is not within his Agency's jurisdiction. On his way to Morocco, Administrator Pruitt missed two flights while staying in Paris for 2 days. Reports also indicate that Administrator Pruitt spent \$120,000 on a trip to Italy last June, including \$30,000 in security-related expenses, \$53,000 in travel vouchers, and a \$36,000 chartered flight from Cincinnati to New York City to catch his international flight. A \$36,000 chartered flight from Cincinnati to New York City—really?

Mr. Pruitt has spent more than \$105,000 in first-class flights during his first year alone in office. When confronted with the exorbitant pricetag on his first-class travel, the Agency said Mr. Pruitt's first-class travel was necessary—listen to this—because of the high number of security threats he had received. If that were truthful, we should all be concerned. There are a lot of reasons to believe it is not truthful.

He apparently did not consider a first-class upgrade to be vital to his safety while flying on his own dime, since Administrator Pruitt flew coach on personal trips back home to Oklahoma.

Administrator Pruitt is also facing scrutiny for assembling a team of 20 security agents deployed in 19 vehicles—20 security agents deployed in 19 vehicles—who provided an unprecedented 24/7 level of protection. Administrator Pruitt's unprecedented domestic and international travel has led to rapidly escalating costs, with his around-the-clock security detail racking up so

much overtime—get this—that many hit their annual salary caps of \$160,000.

CNN has reported that the demands of providing the Administrator with the 24/7 security coverage he desired meant taking some investigators from their field work.

The New York Times reported that Administrator Pruitt asked his security team to use his vehicle's emergency lights and sirens to speed through traffic en route to a French restaurant right here in Washington, DC, to celebrate the President's withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement. And when the security agent advised Mr. Pruitt that sirens were only to be used in an emergency, the agent was reassigned less than 2 weeks later.

The Washington Post reported that Administrator Pruitt also sought a \$100,000-a-month private jet membership, a bulletproof SUV with run-flat tires, and \$70,000 for office furniture, including a bulletproof desk.

I am not sure where Administrator Pruitt thinks he works, but his security detail has cost the American taxpayers nearly \$3 million during his tenure—\$3 million—roughly three times that of his predecessor Gina McCarthy.

Related to Administrator Pruitt's apparent privacy concerns, he felt the need for taxpayers to pay for him to install a private, soundproof, \$43,000 phone booth in his office at EPA headquarters. He added \$6,000 biometric locks to the booth, paid \$3,000 to have his office swept for bugs, and described his soundproof booth as a sensitive compartmented information facility. No other EPA Administrator in history felt the need for such a booth. I am not aware of any Cabinet Secretary who has felt that kind of need.

Earlier this week, Administrator Pruitt removed a career staffer who approved an internal report that undermined Mr. Pruitt's claims that he needed to fly first class, a 24/7 security detail, a bulletproof desk, and other unprecedented security protections. The career staffer who questioned those expenditures, who approved the internal report discussing them, was removed.

Reports have also surfaced that Administrator Pruitt bypassed the White House to hire ex-lobbyists and sidestep President Trump's promise to drain the swamp and require appointees to sign an ethics pledge. Utilizing an obscure provision in the Safe Drinking Water Act intended to let the Agency quickly hire senior management and scientific personnel, Mr. Pruitt instead used his authority to skirt the ethics pledge and increase the number of ex-lobbyists who could work on issues of importance to their previous clients with impunity.

It goes on. Mr. Pruitt used this same authority to again bypass the White House and grant significant raises to favored staff.

After the White House refused to boost the pay of those favored staff, Administrator Pruitt reappointed both

staffers under the Safe Drinking Water Act authority, allowing him to set salary levels himself. A 30-year-old senior counsel who worked for Pruitt in Oklahoma was given a raise of approximately \$56,000 a year—\$56,000 a year. That raise is just \$1,000 short of the annual median household income for our country. Mr. Pruitt's 26-year-old director of scheduling of events got a pay bump too—almost \$30,000.

On his interview with FOX News last week, Mr. Pruitt denied knowledge of the raises, but recently reported emails among EPA staff indicated that Mr. Pruitt was aware and personally involved with at least one of those raises.

Perhaps the most troubling among the litany of questionable financial expenditures and ethical lapses Mr. Pruitt has exhibited during his time as Administrator are recent reports that say he demoted, reassigned, or pushed out staff who tried to curtail his spending or question his ethical misbehavior.

The New York Times reported 2 weeks ago that at least five officials—both career EPA employees and one political appointee, four of them high-ranking—were reassigned, demoted, or pushed out after they raised concerns about Mr. Pruitt's excessive spending and mismanagement.

Just yesterday we learned that Mr. Pruitt wanted to revamp EPA memorabilia to, of all things, more prominently highlight himself. That is not what leadership or public service are supposed to be.

The list goes on. Almost every day a new scandal emerges, and Mr. Pruitt's alleged actions and ethical shortcomings surpass what many of us thought even possible. Yet he continues to serve the American people as the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Unfortunately, this outcome was predictable. I hope to go to a baseball game in Delaware tonight, the home opener for the Wilmington Blue Rocks, the Kansas City Royals' farm club. Some of the pitchers are going to throw a pitch tonight, and the pitch will be well telegraphed. That means the hitters can sort of guess what is coming their way.

Well, this outcome was predictable. This pitch was well telegraphed. When the Senate confirms a candidate who has focused throughout his career on crippling the very Agency he seeks to lead, we should not expect a different result. Expecting anything more from Mr. Pruitt would be foolish. He spent 6 years as Attorney General of Oklahoma attacking the very Agency that he now leads—suing the very Agency he now leads.

The only question is when President Trump or Members of this body will finally hold Scott Pruitt accountable for the damage he has done to the Agency and the environment he has promised and pledged and sworn to protect.

We should know whether Andrew Wheeler is up to the task of helping to right this badly damaged EPA ship, to

restore confidence, and to get it headed back on the right course.

So, once again, I will warn my colleagues that Scott Pruitt's behavior should give us pause before we consider another nomination.

Some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle may suggest that I am grandstanding or that this is some effort to score political points. Let me just say that this is serious stuff. This is serious stuff not just to Democrats, not just to Republicans or Independents, not just to the people in government, but to the people who pay for that government—the taxpayers of this country.

Today we are considering the nominee to serve as the Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Andrew Wheeler. The Deputy Administrator is second in command at the Agency. The role of Deputy Administrator is to assist the Administrator—in this case, Scott Pruitt—in overseeing the day-to-day operations that help to keep the Agency running, to protect our air, to protect our water, and to protect our public health.

Scott Pruitt has been making headlines at the EPA as of late, but for all the wrong reasons. From his first-class flights to his ethically questionable dealings with industry, Scott Pruitt has clearly been doing what he wants to do at EPA with little regard for the rules or for the American people. Even if Mr. Wheeler disagrees with the decisions being made by EPA's current leadership, which is something we should find out, it seems as though Scott Pruitt simply silences or isolates or reassigns any dissenters.

It is important to know how Andrew Wheeler views the chaos that has engulfed EPA in the last year, most of which is of Scott Pruitt's own making. After all, the things we have learned about the EPA over the last 2 weeks gives us a different outlook than when Leader MCCONNELL filed cloture on Andrew Wheeler's nomination just before the Easter recess. It certainly gives a different perspective than we had when Andrew Wheeler sat before the Environment and Public Works Committee last year.

It is especially important to learn how Mr. Wheeler would address Scott Pruitt's ethical lapses because it is becoming clear that my Republican colleagues, sadly, have little interest in addressing them.

This week, our colleague Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island and I sent a letter to our chairman and our friend, Senator BARRASSO, requesting a hearing on the troubling information that we received regarding Mr. Pruitt's expensive and unprecedented security detail. Chairman BARRASSO apparently does not intend to hold a hearing. I hope he will reconsider that decision.

When our top government officials fail to follow the rules, we in Congress have a constitutional duty to hold them accountable and to get to the

truth. What did Thomas Jefferson used to say? He said: If the people know the truth, they will not make a mistake. Hopefully, if we in this body know the truth, we will not either.

The legislative branch of government is a coequal branch of government. Our Founding Fathers in their wisdom designed a system where there would be checks and balances built in so that no one branch could get too far out of line, but that system only works if each branch is willing to assert its authority.

I am hardly the first person to recognize the need or the importance of congressional oversight. Many of our Senate colleagues have conducted effective oversight over the years. I have, our Presiding Officer has, and many Members of this body have.

Here is a call for increased oversight from 2010. It reads:

The legislative branch has its own responsibility to provide oversight over the executive branch agencies. . . . Our mission should be to provide oversight for the current administration to ensure integrity and transparency over policy decisions being made that affect peoples' lives today.

As issues arose in previous Congresses, previous chairmen held hearings into those matters.

Those are not my words. Those are the words of our friend, the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

Let me just say, that I approved this message.

Here is a call for increased oversight from, I think, April 2016. It reads:

Mr. President, like so much in Washington, D.C., the EPA has grown too big, too arrogant, too irresponsible, and too unaccountable. And people in America deserve accountability.

Again, I agree with JOHN BARRASSO.

Finally, a quote from September 2015 reads:

The agency needs to step back and rethink its priorities. . . . The Environmental Protection Agency has been out of control for far too long. It is time for Congress and President Obama to hold the EPA accountable for its failures, and it is time to rein in this runaway bureaucracy before it does more damage to our communities, to our economy, and to our country.

September 17, 2015.

Some things are too important to be held hostage by partisanship. Oversight shouldn't only be important when a Democrat is in the White House. Oversight shouldn't only be a critical component of Congress's work when Barack Obama or Gina McCarthy are in charge. Oversight of the executive branch is, in fact, our constitutional responsibility here in the Senate, and it should be constant no matter which party is in power in the Senate, the House, or in the White House. Whether an official's actions are right or wrong does not depend on where they fall on the political spectrum.

Even TREY GOWDY—a terrific Congressman from South Carolina, the Republican chair of the House Oversight Committee—recognizes the need for

oversight here, and our Republican colleagues in the Senate have an obligation to hold Mr. Pruitt to the same standards that they held officials who served in past administrations. If Lisa Jackson had been accused of even a fraction of the things it seems as though Mr. Pruitt has done, we would be holding hearings in the Dirksen Senate Office Building in the EPW hearing room every week—and we should be.

Andrew Wheeler worked as a Senate staffer. He worked for our friend George Voinovich, one of my dearest friends in my whole life. He conducted oversight throughout his career. He later worked for Senator JIM INHOFE. Andrew has worked for Members such as Senator INHOFE and Senator George Voinovich, who I know take and took seriously their oversight roles. We should be able to hear from Andrew Wheeler what his plans are to rein in the abuses at EPA before he takes over this important job.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

THE FBI

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I want to say a few words about the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the FBI—our Nation's premier law enforcement agency—and to speak about the men and women who distinguish it.

First, I want to refer to an opinion piece in the New York Times that talks about the former Director of the FBI, James Comey. As the article is entitled, "The Tragedy of James Comey," the story has both positive things to say about Mr. Comey—well deserved—but also some criticism, which I would suggest is also well deserved. Perhaps all of us exhibit both positive and negative attributes. All of us make mistakes, and I don't mean to pick on Mr. Comey unnecessarily, but it sort of lays the foundation for what I want to say.

In the April 8, 2018, New York Times article, the first line is, "James Comey is about to be ubiquitous." In other words, he is going to be everywhere with his book, published next week. Of course, he will be on an "epic publicity tour, including interviews with Stephen Colbert, David Remnick, Rachel Maddow, Mike Allen, George Stephanopoulos, and 'The View.'" So he will be everywhere.

Of course, we expect him to tell his story from his perspective. As a preface for what I want to say about the rank-and-file men and women in the FBI, let me just read a couple of paragraphs.

The writer says:

[Director Comey] was the F.B.I. director overseeing the investigation into Hillary Clinton's private email server. He and his team decided that she had not done anything that warranted criminal charges. And [Director Comey] knew that Republicans would blast him as a coward who was trying to curry favor with the likely future president.

So he decided to go public with his explanation for not charging Clinton and to criticize her harshly. He then doubled down, re-

leasing a public update on the investigation 11 days before the election, even as other Justice officials urged him not to. Department policy dictates that investigators aren't supposed to talk publicly about why they are not bringing charges. They especially don't do so when they could affect [the outcome of] an election.

That, as people will recall, is one of the primary reasons why Rod Rosenstein, the current Deputy Attorney General of the United States, recommended to the President that he dismiss Mr. Comey—for violating Department of Justice guidelines when it comes to talking about an investigation, which should remain confidential, particularly when there is a decision not to charge the person being investigated, and usurping the role of the prosecutor, recognizing that the role of the FBI as a primary investigator is very different. When it comes to the charging decision, that is left to the Department of Justice, not to the FBI.

But, as the article goes on to say:

Comey, however, decided that he knew better than everyone else. He was the righteous Jim Comey, after all. He was going to speak truth to power. He was also, not incidentally, going to protect his own fearless image. He developed a series of rationales, suggesting that he really had no choice. They remain unpersuasive. When doing the right thing meant staying quiet and taking some lumps, Comey chose not to.

As I said, the article has a lot of complimentary material and also some criticism, and I think it is a fair piece. I mention that because so much of what we have heard about the FBI and the Department of Justice recently has been caught up in the emotions and the drama here in Washington, DC, and while appropriate criticism and investigation of past actions at the Department of Justice should take place—former Attorney General Loretta Lynch and why she made the decision not to demand that Director Comey let the Department of Justice make the ultimate charging decision—there is a lot of room for criticism, and I suggest there will be additional information that will be forthcoming and should be produced to Congress as part of our oversight responsibilities. But I think the big mistake Mr. Comey made is assuming that he was a law unto himself and that the rules applied to everybody else but not to him and, as the article says, that he knew better than anyone else.

But all of that I want to contrast with what I experienced recently, back home in Austin where my wife and I live.

I was there during and after the series of five bombings that detonated in packages across the city, killing two people and wounding others. People were very much on edge. It reminds me of the sniper that was on the loose here in Washington, DC, for a while, and people were terrorized—not willing to go and put gasoline in their cars. There was a similar sort of effect with what happened with the bombings in Texas and in Austin.

While the suspect was still at large, I spoke to Austin police chief Brian Manley, and he told me how thankful he was for the army of Federal agents, including FBI agents, who had supported the investigation. He told me that as many as 500 Federal agents, including from the FBI and other agencies, were on the ground while the suspect was on the loose. I am sure it was the agents' methodical investigative work, combined with the work of their State and local partners, that was the big reason why the alleged bomber didn't wreak even more havoc in the Texas capital.

It is important to remember that the FBI's role during the Austin bombings is important to acknowledge in our current political climate, when the Bureau has come under criticism and become the target of so much drama and politics. Of course, that was mainly about the past and certainly not about the new leadership that has been installed at the FBI under the leadership of FBI Director Christopher Wray.

Of course, the debate started during the tenure of Loretta Lynch and Eric Holder at the Department of Justice, but it continued through Director Comey's investigation, as I said, of Hillary Clinton, and it has not gotten any better. But it is important to distinguish between the rank-and-file professionals at the FBI and people who made mistakes and overstepped their bounds and, unfortunately, gave the rest of the organization—tainted their name.

So I want to take a moment to do what Director Wray has done in the past, and that is to reintroduce people to the FBI. The American public needs to be reminded of what the FBI actually does and how pivotal that work is and how long it has been doing it. The FBI has been in existence since 1908, and I think "relentless" is the best way to describe it.

The Bureau's investigations have helped solve crimes like cold-blooded murder, which happened in my home State in 1983. Just last year, the FBI added the suspect to its Ten Most Wanted list, and shortly thereafter the man turned himself in to FBI agents. It took more than three decades, but the FBI pursued all leads until, finally, it got its man.

That is just one example of what happens every day at the FBI. Under the effective leadership of Director Wray, the agency has remained committed to doing things independently and by the book—which I think is perhaps the most important characteristic—for as long as it takes to close the cases.

It is absolutely critical that law enforcement agencies do things by the book and follow the rules and the law. We have seen criticism directed toward Director Comey and former Attorneys General Loretta Lynch and Eric Holder because they did not appear to do things by the book but appeared to be unduly swayed by other considerations and, indeed, broke the rules in the book, so to speak.

Sometimes the fierce independence and tightlipped process by which the FBI is supposed to operate can irk people. We are people with a need for immediate gratification who want to know the answer right now when, in fact, often law enforcement investigators have to do painstaking, time-consuming work, indeed, over years and decades.

Critics say that investigations are taking too long or shouldn't be going on at all. But that is how the agency is supposed to operate—on its own, according to the standardized legal process, step by painstaking step. As Director Wray has said in the past, the FBI's means need to justify its ends, not the other way around. No rock should go unturned in an investigation because that is how crimes are solved and innocent people are exonerated.

For the rank-and-file men and women who work at the FBI, I think it is important for us to send a clear and emphatic message here in the U.S. Senate: We appreciate everything you do to protect the public safety and secure the public trust.

I want to particularly acknowledge the service of the special agent in charge of the FBI San Antonio Division, Christopher Combs, as well as the other men and women under his command. These agents have recently been working some pretty long days and nights, as we can imagine, supporting our local law enforcement during the Austin bombings and the tragic shooting at Sutherland Springs last fall.

These days, it is important that our appreciation for the Bureau not get drowned out by the criticism, with people somehow mistakenly assuming that because a few people have misbehaved, it somehow reflects on the organization as a whole. It is important that we let the men and women of the FBI know we stand behind their detail-oriented approach to enforcing and upholding the law, that we support the FBI's doing the right thing in the right way, pursuing the facts and the evidence independently and objectively, wherever they lead.

More than 37,000 men and women work at the FBI. That is a staggering number of diligent individuals, all of whom play some role in investigating crimes, executing search warrants, conducting interviews, and carrying out counterintelligence investigations across our country.

Today, the FBI helps track down fugitives, terrorists, kidnappers, bank robbers, and more. It publishes its top Ten Most Wanted list, as I alluded to earlier, and tracks down thousands of other leads at the same time. It investigates terrorism, cybercrime, civil rights violations, public corruption, elder fraud, and even weapons of mass destruction.

The FBI provides crisis intervention teams—including mental health professionals and even chaplains—after mass casualty events.

It recently launched Operation Disarray, part of a broader Department of

Justice initiative to disrupt the sale of opioids online. One special agent said the point of this new initiative "is to put drug traffickers on notice: Law enforcement is watching when people buy and sell drugs online. For those who think the Darknet provides anonymity," [the special agent] explained, "you are mistaken."

To that FBI agent, I say: Amen, sir. Nice work.

As his example shows, the very nature of crime itself is changing with advances in technology, and the FBI is busy innovating and adapting to the changed circumstances and ever-enterprising criminals.

Recently, the FBI helped us indict online sex traffickers who used websites like backpage.com to coerce children into sexual servitude. The FBI also provided critical information that led to the thwarting of a terrorist plot to blow up part of the subway system in Manhattan.

Let's not forget these countless examples as we continue to sort out issues related to Russian interference in our last election and what happened during the Hillary Clinton email server debacle. Let's leave politics to those who work in that realm and allow the men and women of the FBI to do their work. Let's not forget that in 1935, when the FBI adopted the official seal, the FBI was synonymous not only with the agency's name but with three traits—fidelity, bravery, and integrity—which appear on the seal to this day and describe what truly motivates the overwhelming majority of FBI personnel.

So I wanted to come to the floor to say thank you to the men and women at the FBI for all they do in protecting this country and pursuing justice. We are indebted to them and stand behind them in this unending quest.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

MR. CARPER. Mr. President, yesterday, Jeh Johnson, our former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, dropped by to say hello, and I shared with him the results of an annual Federal survey. As the Senator may know, every major Federal agency has its employees surveyed with respect to its morale. Some agencies have very high morale, and some agencies have not so high.

I am still a member of the Homeland Security Committee. Jeh Johnson and Alejandro Mayorkas, who were the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of that Department, spent 3 years serving in these capacities and working with us on the committee to try to figure out how we could help the employees at the Department of Homeland Security feel better about their work.

I would come here to this floor every month and pick out a different part of the Department of Homeland Security where work was being done and have posters and pictures, just as the Senator has done here today, in order to

make real the service and the sacrifices of the folks, whether they be in the FBI or the Department of Homeland Security. It was one of those things, we found out, that kind of resonated in the Department. It just spread. Even to this day, people remember it and express thanks for that.

I thank the Senator for taking a moment to do, really, something very similar—maybe better—than what I tried to do over those years.

When I was the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, I will say I had a chance to work with Jim Comey—not every day but a fair amount. I have worked with a lot of great leaders and some who were not so great. The Senator from Texas has as well. Yet I must say that I have enormous respect for Jim Comey, for his integrity and his commitment to doing what is right. I have high regard for Chris Wray, our new FBI Director, but there is a part of me that still wishes Jim Comey were still leading that agency. So we will see what he writes in his book, but I wish him and his family well.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. 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. WHITEHOUSE. 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. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to react to the President's selection of Andrew Wheeler to be the proposed No. 2 at the EPA. This is a selection that continues the Trump administration's essentially complete subservience to the fossil fuel industry in the entire environmental arena.

I have described Scott Pruitt, Rick Perry, and Ryan Zinke, who is over at Interior, as the three stooges of the fossil fuel industry, and I reiterate that today.

Scott Pruitt, in addition to being one of those stooges, also has some of the most extraordinary displays of unethical and self-serving political acts of anybody I have ever seen. I can only imagine what this floor would look like if an Obama appointee had engaged in those kinds of behaviors. In all of those seats, we would have had Republicans shouting and jumping up and down in their being infuriated by that misconduct. Yet, because it is Pruitt, because it is Trump, and because the fossil fuel industry is getting everything it wants out of this guy, the silence is deafening. But that doesn't change the underlying fact that the American people are owed folks in high office who take their public duty seriously. There is very little chance that Mr. Wheeler is going to take his public duties seriously as No. 2 at the EPA. It is not like

it is with the No. 1 at the EPA, where there is a stopgap who is going to defend us.

This is a very dangerous duo. Scott Pruitt is a complete flunky of the fossil fuel industry—largely disgraced but still hanging on there and his only claim to fame being that he will do anything the fossil fuel industry tells him to do. That is why he is hanging on. Now coal lobbyist Wheeler is coming on to be his No. 2. That is a dangerous combination to lead our Environmental Protection Agency.

There was an interesting series of photographs that actually got the photographer fired in this administration for having released these photographs. There was a little meeting over at the Energy Department with Secretary Perry and Bob Murray, who is the head of Murray Energy. He is a coal baron, and he, obviously, has one interest in mind, which is to sell more coal, burn more coal, and to heck with the rest of you, more or less.

This was Mr. Murray as he arrived at the Department of Energy, up in the Secretary's conference room. The bald gentleman is Mr. Murray. The man whose head is obscured behind him in this torrid hug is our Energy Secretary. So you knew things were going to go well for Mr. Murray at this meeting after that nice, cozy reception that he got.

Then the photographer went on and took this picture, which is of Murray Energy Corporation's recommendations to the Honorable Richard Perry as to what he should do about the environment. I will spend some more time on that memo in just a moment. After long delays, we were actually able to get our hands on it. They delayed and they fiddled and they faddled and wouldn't confirm that they had it. When the photograph showed that they had it, they said: OK. We will give it to you when we give our FOIA requests.

Great. Thanks a bunch. So much for congressional oversight.

I hope that if the now majority is ever in the minority in the Senate, that it doesn't get treated this way—being told to line up with the FOIA folks as they are not interested in responding to oversight requests for memos, but that is what we got.

Here is another photograph from that meeting. Here is Mr. Murray telling the Energy Secretary what to do. There is the Energy Secretary—fresh out of his nice hug—being told what to do. Here is Mr. Wheeler, the guy who is going to be the No. 2 at the EPA. He was right in the room where the Murray directions to the Trump administration were being discussed and delivered.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this document be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

Here is the action plan. It reads: "Dear Secretary Perry, enclosed is an Action Plan for achieving reliable and low cost electricity in America and to

assist in the survival of our country's coal industry."

What are the recommendations?

Page 1: "SUSPEND THE COAL-FIRED POWERPLANT EFFLUENT LIMITATION GUIDELINES."

Yes. Why would we want limitations on the effluent that a coal-fired powerplant can emit? Why on Earth would anybody want that? No. To suspend those is one of the recommendations.

The second is to withdraw and suspend the so-called endangerment finding.

The endangerment finding is the fact-based finding at the EPA that shows that, in addition to it being a matter of law pursuant to Massachusetts v. EPA, carbon dioxide is a pollutant in the air. This is the Agency's finding that it is actually a dangerous pollutant in the air. That is why it is called the endangerment finding. So they want to knock that out so they can knock out regulation of more coal-powered powerplant effluents, including carbon dioxide.

Then they want to eliminate the tax credit for wind and solar. Here is an industry that gets, according to the International Monetary Fund, \$700 billion a year in effective subsidies in the United States of America alone, and their goal is to knock out the little production tax credit that wind and solar get? That is what he asked for.

"WITHDRAW FROM THE . . . PARIS CLIMATE ACCORD." Well, we all know he was obeyed on that.

Here's a particularly good one: "END . . . OZONE REGULATIONS." Let me state what Rhode Island's experience in this is. The midwestern powerplants burn coal and other fossil fuels. They run the exhaust out of smoke stacks. Many of them have raised enormously high smoke stacks to get all that stuff way up into the air, so it is then carried by prevailing winds out of their State—out of their State. As it bakes in the heat as it travels through the air, it becomes ozone. That ozone lands in Rhode Island.

Ladies and gentlemen, children go to the hospital because of asthma complications from ozone in Rhode Island. We have had periods when, on a bright and sunny day, the talk radio, your drive-time radio, announces to Rhode Islanders that today is a bad air day in the State of Rhode Island, and the elderly and babies and any people with breathing difficulty should stay indoors. You are not welcome out-of-doors because of ozone levels.

This guy wants to end ozone regulation. I think not. This guy was his lobbyist in trying to do that. That is what has become of the EPA.

What else? "OVERTURN THE . . . CROSS-STATE AIR POLLUTION RULE." Rhode Island doesn't create much air pollution. The EPA protects Rhode Island from other States' air pollution with—guess what—the cross-state air pollution rule. He wants to overturn it.

Finally, "CUT THE STAFF OF THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

AGENCY IN AT LEAST HALF.” Well, they are doing a pretty good job of destroying the Environmental Protection Agency as an agency that does environmental protection, but I have to say, cutting the Agency in half and firing half of it—that seems a bit much.

They also want Justices of the Supreme Court who rule in favor of coal. They want to replace all the members of the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission, the members of the Tennessee Valley Authority board, and the members of the National Labor Relations Board. There is a bunch in there to make sure that coal safety regulations are undone.

That is what we are dealing with. We are dealing with an agency that has been taken over by the fossil fuel industry, and it has gotten so bad that I want to conclude with this editorial, which I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

This is an editorial from, of all places, the Charleston, WV, Gazette-Mail. I think the body can take notice that West Virginia is more or less the heart of coal country.

Here is what the Charleston, WV, Gazette-Mail said about where things are at EPA right now. The title is “Editorial: With self-serving Pruitt at EPA, Trump is building a swamp.”

Here are some selections:

Donald Trump campaign crowds loved to chant, “Drain the Swamp!” But if ever there was a political swamp creature, it’s Scott Pruitt, the man Trump picked to head the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Charleston Gazette-Mail continues:

Pruitt has been a shill for fossil fuel industries since his days as attorney general in Oklahoma, so maybe he saw this—

all his self-aggrandizing expenditures—as his just desserts. But of all the Trump administration flunkies who have used taxpayer money for their personal benefit, Pruitt may be the worst.

That is the word from Charleston, WV.

Some of the examples:

[Pruitt] used a loophole in the Safe Drinking Water Act that’s supposed to let the EPA hire experts quickly in a [drinking water] emergency . . . [to] give tax taxpayer-funded raises to political lackeys.

[He] took first-class, charter, and military flights that cost taxpayers \$163,000.

He . . . tripled the size of his security detail.

He had the EPA spend \$25,000—

I think we actually know that is up to \$43,000 now—

to build a soundproof communications booth in his office.

There is nothing more that the EPA Administrator needs than a cone-of-silence soundproof booth in his office—as if he is running the CIA or something.

They conclude:

There are many reasons why Scott Pruitt shouldn’t be leading the EPA, primarily that he doesn’t seem to believe in science and is more interested in helping big business than, you know, protecting the environment. But his obvious belief that taxpayer money and

resources are given to him for his personal benefit is a big reason, as well.

I thank the newspaper in West Virginia for acknowledging that some conduct is so disgraceful that it goes too far.

When that is the No. 1 person in the EPA, we have no business confirming this person as the No. 2 person for the EPA.

With that, I see colleagues who, I assume, want to speak in favor of this nominee, and I will yield the floor to them.

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

MURRAY ENERGY CORPORATION,
St. Clairsville, OH, March 28, 2017.

Hon. J. RICHARD PERRY,
Secretary, Department of Energy,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PERRY: Enclosed is an Action Plan for achieving reliable and low cost electricity in America and to assist in the survival of our Country’s coal industry, which is essential to power grid reliability and low cost electricity.

We are available to assist you in any way that you request.

Sincerely,

ROBERT E. MURRAY,
Chairman, President
& Chief Executive Officer.

ACTION PLAN FOR RELIABLE AND LOW COST ELECTRICITY IN AMERICA AND TO ASSIST IN THE SURVIVAL OF OUR COUNTRY’S COAL INDUSTRY

SUSPEND THE COAL-FIRED POWER PLANT EFFLUENT LIMITATION GUIDELINES (ELG) AND COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS (CCR) RULES OF THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The compliance deadlines for both regulations must be suspended. The illegal ELG rule needs to be rescinded. The CCR regulation need to be rewritten delegating the authority to the states in light of the new legislation passed in December.

IMPLEMENT EMERGENCY ACTIONS RELATIVE TO THE SECURITY AND RESILIENCY OF THE ELECTRIC POWER GRIDS

The Department of Energy (“DOE”) must issue an emergency directive to have an immediate study done of the security and resiliency of our electric power grids. DOE will direct that no power plants having an available fuel supply of at least forty-five (45) days be closed during the study period, or a minimum of two (2) years.

“ENDANGERMENT FINDING” FOR GREENHOUSE GASES

There must be a withdrawal and suspension of the implementation of the so-called “endangerment finding” for greenhouse gases.

EPA’s “endangerment finding” under the Clean Air Act serves as the foundation for the agency’s far reaching regulation of the economy in the form of emission limitations for greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide. The high degree of uncertainty in the range of data relied upon by EPA combined with the enormous regulatory costs without concomitant benefits merit revisiting the “endangerment findings”.

According to EPA’s finding, the “root cause” of recently observed climate change is “likely” the increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. EPA relied upon computer-based climate model simulations and a “synthesis” of major findings from scientific assessment reports with a significant

range of uncertainty related to temperatures over 25 years. The climate model failures are well documented in their inability to emulate real-world climate behavior. Models that are unable to simulate known climate behavior cannot provide reliable projections of future climate behavior. As for the scientific assessments underlying the “synthesis” of findings used by EPA, many were not peer reviewed, and there are multiple instances where portions of peer reviewed literature germane to the “endangerment finding” were omitted, ignored or unfairly dismissed.

ELIMINATE THE THIRTY (30) PERCENT PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT FOR WINDMILLS AND SOLAR PANELS IN ELECTRICITY GENERATION

Electricity generated by windmills and solar panels costs twenty-six (26) cents per kilowatt hour with a four (4) cent per kilowatt hour subsidy from the American taxpayers. These energy sources are unreliable and only available if the wind blows or the sun shines. Coal-fired electricity costs only four (4) cents per kilowatt hour. Low cost electricity is a staple of life, and we must have a level playing field in electric power generation without the government picking winners and losers by subsidizing wind and solar power.

WITHDRAW FROM THE ILLEGAL UNITED NATIONS COP 21 PARIS CLIMATE ACCORD

The United Nation’s COP 21 Paris Climate Control Accord, to which Barack Obama has already committed one (1) billion dollars of America’s money, is an attempt by the rest of the world to obtain funding from our Country. It is an illegal treaty never approved by Congress, and it will have no effect on the environment.

END THE ELECTRIC UTILITY MAXIMUM ACHIEVABLE TECHNOLOGY AND OZONE REGULATIONS

We have won these issues in the United States Supreme Court, and these rules must be completely overturned.

FUND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CERTAIN CLEAN COAL TECHNOLOGIES

The Federal government must support the development of some Clean Coal Technologies, including: ultra super critical combustion; high efficiency, low emission coal firing; combined cycle coal combustion; and others. It should not fund so-called carbon capture and sequestration (“CCS”), as it does not work, practically or economically. Democrats and some Republicans use CCS as a political cover to insincerely show that they are proposing something for coal. But, carbon capture and sequestration is a pseudonym for “no coal”.

OVERHAUL THE BLOATED AND POLITICALIZED MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

This Federal agency, over the past eight (8) years, has not been focused on the coal miner safety, but on politics, bureaucracy, waste, and violation quotas. While coal mine employment has been cut in half, the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration has continued to hire inspectors every year. But, the government has nowhere to put them. Murray Energy Corporation received an average of 532 Federal inspectors per month in 2016.

We must send a Company manager with every one of these inspectors, taking us away from our employee safety inspections and safety training.

CUT THE STAFF OF THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY IN AT LEAST HALF

Tens of thousands of government bureaucrats have issued over 82,000 pages of regulations under Obama, many of them regarding coal mining and utilization. The Obama EPA, alone, wrote over 25,000 pages of rules,

thirty-eight (38) times the words in our Holy Bible.

OVERTURN THE RECENTLY ENACTED CROSS-STATE AIR POLLUTION RULE

This regulation particularly punishes states in which coal mining takes place to the benefit of other wealthier east coast states.

REVISE THE ARBITRARY COAL MINE DUST REGULATION OF THE MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

This regulation provides no health benefit to our coal miners, and threatens the destruction of thousands of coal mining jobs.

OBTAIN LEGISLATION TO FUND BOTH THE RETIREMENT MEDICAL CARE AND PENSIONS FOR ALL OF AMERICA'S UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA)—REPRESENTED, RETIRED COAL MINERS

For four (4) years, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has refused to address this issue. Some say that this is because the UMWA wrongly opposed him in his recent election. This must be taken care of. And the legislation enacted must address not just those recently orphaned through company bankruptcies and mine closures, but the medical benefits and pensions that were promised to all retired miners by the Federal government itself.

OVERTURN THE MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, PATTERNS OF VIOLATIONS RULE

This rule is a punitive action of the Mine Safety and Health Administration under its Director for the past eight (8) years, the former Safety Director of a labor union.

APPOINT JUSTICES TO THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES WHO WILL FOLLOW OUR UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION AND OUR LAWS

We must offset the liberal appointees who want to redefine our Constitution and our law.

MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION MUST BE REPLACED

The current Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has a record of favoring actions of the Obama Administration. That has systematically devalued base load generation as a result of the Obama "war on coal". These actions have put the future security and reliability of America's electric power grid at risk. Immediate action needs to be taken to require organized power markets to value fuel security, fuel diversity, and ancillary services that only base load generating assets, especially coal plants, can provide.

MEMBERS OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MUST BE REPLACED

The Board of Directors of this government agency has followed the mandates of the Obama Administration, rather than assure reliable, low cost electricity for the Tennessee Valley Authority's rate payers, whom they are mandated to serve in this manner.

REPLACE THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD ("NLRB")

Eliminate the antiemployer bias of the NLRB by appointing members and staff, particularly in the General Counsel's office, who will fairly consider the employer's position and needs and not automatically accede to the unions or unionized employees in every matter considered.

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

[From the Charleston Gazette-Mail, Apr. 5, 2018]

EDITORIAL: WITH SELF-SERVING PRUITT AT EPA, TRUMP IS BUILDING A SWAMP

Donald Trump campaign crowds loved to chant, "Drain the swamp!" But if ever there

was a political swamp creature, it's Scott Pruitt, the man Trump picked to head the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Pruitt has been in the news most recently for his cozy relationship with the lobbyist for a Canadian pipeline company. The company, Enbridge Inc., received a high recommendation from Pruitt's EPA for an oil pipeline expansion project.

Enbridge's lobbyist was the firm of Williams & Jensen. The wife of the firm's chairman owns a pricey condominium in Washington, D.C., and was letting Pruitt live there for \$50 a night, sometimes joined by his daughter, and Pruitt only had to pay for the nights he stayed there. That is an unbelievably sweet deal, and while there's no direct evidence of a mutual back-scratching, it sure looks that way. On some level, this is no surprise. Pruitt has been a shill for fossil fuel industries since his days as attorney general in Oklahoma, so maybe he saw this as his just desserts. But of all the Trump administration flunkies who have used taxpayer money for their personal benefit, Pruitt may be the worst.

Despite the White House telling him not to give large raises to two employees who followed him from Oklahoma, Pruitt did it anyway. He used a loophole in the Safe Drinking Water Act that's supposed to let the EPA hire experts quickly in an emergency, not give taxpayer-funded raises to political lackeys. One of those lackeys helped Pruitt find a new place to live, once the EPA administrator had to leave his sweetheart condo deal behind. Using publicly funded employees for such private business is another misuse of taxpayer-funded resources.

During his first year in office, Pruitt took first-class, charter and military flights that cost taxpayers \$163,000, according to EPA records provided to the U.S. House Oversight Committee. Pruitt and a group of aides also socked taxpayers with a \$90,000 bill for a trip to Italy that included a trip to visit the pope.

Pruitt was flying first-class because of public confrontations that involved "vulgar" and "threatening language," according to The Washington Post. Pruitt is clearly very worried about his security; he has tripled the size of his security detail, and is the first EPA administrator to have 24/7 security—again, at taxpayer expense. That security detail includes some EPA agents who would otherwise be investigating environmental crimes, rather than protecting their snowflake boss. (Pruitt's predecessors, Gina McCarthy and Lisa Jackson—who were demonized repeatedly by West Virginia politicians, among others—flew coach, with a much smaller security presence.)

Maybe Pruitt is just paranoid in general. In September, he had the EPA spend \$25,000—all together now, in taxpayer money—to build a soundproof communications booth in his office. He's asked employees not to bring their mobile phones to meetings with him, and he reportedly prefers not to use email—no doubt because emails from his time as Oklahoma attorney general show how much he coozied up to oil and gas producers. There are many reasons why Scott Pruitt shouldn't be leading the EPA, primarily that he doesn't seem to believe in science and is more interested in helping big business than, you know, protecting the environment. But his obvious belief that taxpayer money and resources are given to him for his personal benefit is a big reason, as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Wyoming. Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I am here with my colleague from Oklahoma to speak in favor of Andrew Wheeler. I support Andrew Wheeler to serve as the

Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

During the previous administration, the Environmental Protection Agency issued burdensome regulations that harmed American workers and American communities. Since President Trump took office 15 months ago, the EPA has rolled back many of these punishing regulations, including the so-called Clean Power Plan and the waters of the United States, or the WOTUS, rule.

Under President Trump and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, this Agency is now working for commonsense environmental policies—policies that don't harm the American economy and don't punish American families.

Administrator Pruitt needs his full team at the Environmental Protection Agency in order to accomplish these goals. So today, the Senate is going to consider the nomination of Andrew Wheeler to be Deputy Administrator of the EPA. The Deputy Administrator is critical in developing and implementing the policies that fulfill the EPA's mission of protecting human health and the environment.

Mr. Wheeler is very well qualified for the position. He spent over 25 years working in environmental policies. At that time, he served as a career employee at the EPA, working as an environmental protection specialist. This experience makes him uniquely qualified to serve in the role of Deputy Administrator.

He has spent over a decade here on Capitol Hill, shaping environmental law. He served as the staff director of the Senate Environment and Public Works Air Subcommittee from 1997 to 2003. This was followed by another 6 years as a Republican staff director and chief counsel for the full committee, 2003 to 2009. Most recently, Mr. Wheeler has been a consultant for a variety of energy and environmental clients.

Andrew Wheeler's commitment to sound environmental policies has received recognition from across the aisle as well. The ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee said this of Mr. Wheeler:

I think having worked in the agency, he actually cares about the environment; the air that we breathe; the water we drink; the planet on which we live.

Stuart Spencer, the president of the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies, said this of Mr. Wheeler:

Mr. Wheeler has exemplified excellence in his professional endeavors, in his previous government service and private sector experience. In short, he is keenly qualified to hit the ground running at EPA.

I agree. His nomination has garnered the support of a broad base of organizations, including the National Association of Manufacturers, the United Mine Workers of America, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Andrew Wheeler is well qualified to fill this critically important role at the EPA. He is the right person to serve as

Deputy Administrator of the EPA, and I urge every Senator to support this nomination.

With that, I recognize my colleague and friend from Oklahoma, who has been a mentor to me on the committee, the former chairman of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, JIM INHOFE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for the great remarks he made about Andrew Wheeler. You know, it is awfully hard to find anyone who knows him well who will say anything bad about him. I guess the only thing you can criticize him for is that he worked for me for 14 years.

But I will tell you, during that time-frame, over a 14-year period, I don't remember anyone ever accusing him of being unfair, of being negative in any way at all. But a couple of things were said, and I think I need to correct the record. I need to be the one to correct it because I am the guy he worked for over a long period of time—both in my personal office and in my capacity as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. Because I know him so well, I have to correct the record on his behalf.

One allegation made against Andrew in a news article is that he retaliated against a witness at an EPW—that is Environment and Public Works—Senate hearing in 2005 because we were unhappy with the witness's testimony. Nothing in the news article was true or accurate. This was an article that came out just the other day.

The witness in question and the major source of the article was Mr. Bill Becker. He was then the president of STAPPA, the Association of State Air Directors. These are the State directors who are becoming more prominent in what they are able to get through.

Mr. Becker charged at that time that in retaliation for his January 2005 testimony, the committee launched an investigation into his organization's finances.

In reality, the investigation was actually launched almost a year before Mr. Becker appeared before the committee. That is a huge difference. The article cannot be true.

Prior to the hearing, my staff notified the minority staff of the committee that he was currently under investigation, and we recommended against calling Mr. Becker as a witness.

I still have a copy of the memo my staff prepared for me before the hearing in 2005, noting that they had notified the minority staff about the investigation. This is the memo, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

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

TIMELINE OF EPA GRANTS OVERSIGHT INVOLVING FEDERAL GRANTS TO STAPPA-ALAPCO

March 3, 2004—EPW Committee hearing regarding EPA grants management where EPA

IG testified to an it audit involving a non-profit receiving federal funding in violation of the Lobbying Disclosure Act. Inhofe subsequently began a series of information requests announced at the hearing and thereafter gathering information concerning EPA grant management.

May 4, 2004—Email to EPA requesting the amounts of EPA grants awarded to the following organizations from 1988–2004:

Association of State Drinking Water Administrators

Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators

Environmental Council of the States
State and Territorial Air Pollution Program Administrators

Association of Local Air Pollution Control Officials

Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (An email was sent to EPA instead of a letter pursuant to the request of the EPA citing administrative convenience in responding to an email.)

May 20, 2004—Email to EPA following up on previous request for grant amounts to previous requested groups.

July 9, 2004—Letter to EPA requesting information to clarify material EPA provided in response to May email.

July 12, 2004—Telephone conversation with EPA Grants and Debarment Director and EPA Project Manager of STAPPA-ALAPCO grants regarding grants. EPW staff received previous complaints concerning the particular funding arrangement for STAPPA-ALAPCO. EPA confirmed that it has a special funding relationship with STAPPA-ALAPCO as it provides funding directly out of grants that are otherwise to be provided directly to states, and other professional associations do not have such a relationship. State that are members of other professional organizations provide dues funding directly to those organizations. EPA staff also referenced the House Report language Inhofe used in his question to STAPPA-ALAPCO as a specific directive to the EPA requiring state and local air agency concurrence to continue the funding practice.

STAPPA FUNDING REQUEST

WE HAVE HAD CONCERNS ABOUT WHO THEY REPRESENT FOR YEARS

During the late 90's debate on Gasoline/Sulfur STAPPA took a controversial position defending the auto industry against the oil industry. At the time we received letters from 14 Governors taking the opposite position from STAPPA and heard from several State Air Directors who complained that STAPPA did not represent their views.

WE STARTED LOOKING AT THEIR FINANCES LAST SUMMER

May 4, 2004—You requested funding information on 6 different State associations, including STAPPA from EPA as part of our Grants Oversight.

July 9, 2004—Requested additional info from EPA on all 6.

July 12, 2004—We requested more information from EPA on STAPPA alone. We received no complaints about the other organizations and STAPPA's funding arrangement appears to be different from all of the others.

SENATE APPROPRIATES STARTED LOOKING AT THEM LAST FALL

Fall 2004—Senate Appropriations Subcommittee included funding language directed specifically at STAPPA

NOTIFIED MINORITY

Prior to invite to testify, Inhofe staff told Jeffords staff that we would be asking questions about their financing and how they reach their decisions.

All of the IRS information we requested is available publicly and is necessary to deter-

mine if they are giving the EPA the same information they give the IRS. This is part of our long term EPA grants management oversight.

Mr. INHOFE. Unfortunately, facts don't seem to matter when a Trump nomination is at stake. The story that isn't being told is about his character and integrity. People don't remember that the Bush EPA told minority members of the EPW Committee, the Democrats, that they wouldn't respond to their letters.

Well, it was Andrew Wheeler who made it clear to the EPA that they would answer any questions the minority had or, as chairman, I would submit their questions for them. No one is telling that story, but they are spreading other allegations.

Another negative story making the rounds is that Andrew hosted fundraisers for Senator BARRASSO and me while it was known he was going to be nominated as Deputy Administrator of the EPA.

Well, the fact of the matter is that Andrew hosted these fundraisers long before even being interviewed by the White House for this nomination. All the dates are there. The facts are there.

After dispensing with the falsehood surrounding Andrew, the rest of the opposition to him comes down to two things and two things only: He doesn't have the correct view on environmental policy, and he worked for the wrong people, including me. Now, those things are actually stated on the Senate floor, and I understand that. If they consider that to be an opposition or something that needs to be corrected, I believe they are wrong because he was an excellent, excellent employee during that time and all the other times. The fact that he had a choice of someone to support when he had not even been notified that he might be considered for this nomination is significant.

The extreme environmentalists were given free rein under the Obama administration for 8 years, including writing the EPA's regulations, and they can't handle the fact that the American people have said "enough." Trump and Scott Pruitt have been delivering relief for the American people and the economy since they have been in office. Andrew Wheeler will be a great help to Administrator Pruitt in continuing to implement President Trump's vision of returning EPA to an agency of the people, subject to the rule of law. He has worked in EPA before, even winning awards from EPA, and he will be a good steward for the environment.

It is always difficult when you know someone personally and you know their character and you have a personal love for them and for their career and you have played an integral part to hear things of a negative nature said about them. As to a lot of the things they are grouping together, maybe they don't like philosophically Scott Pruitt. I do. I spent 20 years in business, and I know what overregulation

is, and I know that our economy was suffering during the 8 years that we had others in charge. In fact, the proof of that is that the average increase in our economy for 8 years was 1.5 percent. Now, just because of this President and this administration getting rid of some of the overregulations, it is now well in excess of 3 percent.

Now, people ask: How are you going to pay for the road program and rebuilding the military that was torn down during the last administration? They forget about the fact—and no one disagrees with this—that for every 1 percent increase in the economic activity or GDP, that equates to additional revenue to the Federal Government of \$1.9 trillion over a 10-year period. That is the reason we now are in a position to do some of the things we need to be doing in terms of infrastructure and other things and certainly for our military and other areas. So that is significant. That is something that Andrew Wheeler knows well, because we have gone through this in the past.

Andrew Wheeler is a wonderful guy, and I would defy anyone who knows him well to say there is any fault in his character. He is going to do a great job, and they need his help. I appreciate the fact that I believe he is going to be confirmed to that position.

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. CARPER. 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. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise—again today for the second time—in opposition to the confirmation of Andrew Wheeler, at this time to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. It is not a decision I came to lightly or without considerable effort to find a different path. I wish to begin this section of my remarks by describing some of the events that brought us to this point.

First, I wish to talk briefly about my own experience with Mr. Wheeler. As a staff member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, working for our dear friend, the late-Senator George Voinovich, and Senator JIM INHOFE, Mr. Wheeler was not someone with whom we agreed on each and every issue. However, Mr. Wheeler did prove to be someone with whom we could work on policies on which we did agree, like, for example, the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, which reduces significantly diesel engine pollution and emissions from older diesel engines. I would also note that his responses during and after last year's hearings on his nomination were, for the most part, encouraging.

Mr. Wheeler also has some recent professional history that is troubling—and to some, very troubling. During

the Trump transition, the public got a chance to read the so-called Murray action plan. What is that? It is a list of policy proposals submitted to President Trump and other Trump administration officials by Mr. Wheeler's former client for a while, Bob Murray. The Murray action plan includes any number of measures that EPA, in the last 15 months, has begun to implement, like the repeals of the Clean Power Plan and the clean water rule and the decimation of the EPA's career workforce. The document also calls for some measures that EPA has not yet acted upon. For example, Mr. Murray calls for the repeal of the mercury and air toxic standards, rules that limit dangerous pollution from powerplants, even though industry is already complying with those same rules.

Mr. Murray also calls for a reexamination of climate change science and the repeal of EPA's so-called endangerment finding. I will talk a little bit more about that in a minute. It is the conclusion that both the Bush and the Obama administrations reached that found that global warming pollution from cars and SUVs was dangerous. I think I will just take a minute and talk about the endangerment finding right here. People talk about the endangerment finding. I don't think it is well-understood where it came from, and I wish to take just a moment if I can to try to relate it in terms that I can understand and, hopefully, other people can as well.

If you go back to the Clean Air Act, section 202 of the Clean Air Act says that if EPA determines that an air pollutant emitted from motor vehicles endangers public health or welfare, EPA has to write regulations to control those emissions. It has to write regulations to control those emissions. I believe it was in 1999 that environmental organizations petitioned EPA to do just that, and they asked EPA to determine that the greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles were dangerous. President Bush rejected their position in 2003, saying that greenhouse gases did not meet the law's definition of an air pollutant.

The State of Massachusetts led a coalition of other States and environmental organizations, though, and they filed a lawsuit against the Bush administration's decision. In April 2007, I think it was, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Massachusetts and those who filed with Massachusetts. The court told EPA in 2007 that greenhouse gasses are "air pollutants" under the Clean Air Act, and they went on to say that EPA had to determine whether they were dangerous.

Although President Bush's EPA Administrator, Stephen Johnson, was ready to make the so-called endangerment finding for greenhouse gases being emitted from cars and SUVs, the White House would not let him do it. The White House would not let their own EPA Administrator make that finding. So it wasn't until a year

or 2 later—I think it was in December 2009—that the Obama administration's EPA finalized its determination that greenhouse gases from motor vehicles are dangerous. In 2010, EPA and the Transportation Department issued the first joint fuel economy and greenhouse tailpipe standards for cars and SUVs.

In the meantime, many industry groups tried to overturn the EPA's decisions. They filed suits in a number of different Federal courts saying that those groups did not agree with the climate science. They didn't agree with the process that EPA used to arrive at this endangerment finding, and they didn't like the regulation that EPA was writing in 2009. Well, 2 or 3 years later, in 2012, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit, which is the top appeals court in the whole country, right below the Supreme Court, ruled against the industry, upholding both the endangerment finding and the EPA's clean air rules. The Supreme Court declined to take up the industry's appeal. So it stood.

The U.S. court of appeals essentially sustained what EPA, under the Obama administration, sought to do and what Stephen Johnson, who was the EPA Administrator in the Bush administration the last year or 2, sought to do.

So what does all of this mean? What this means is that this is settled law. The highest courts in the land have said that greenhouse gases are air pollutants, they are dangerous, and EPA must regulate them.

Now, with that as a backdrop, let me say that I met with Mr. Wheeler a couple of times in the last year. I asked him directly whether or not he was involved in writing Mr. Murray's proposal—the so-called Murray plan that has been taken as an action plan by this administration and by this EPA under its current Administrator. Mr. Wheeler assured me that he was not involved in writing Mr. Murray's proposal.

He did go on to tell me, however, that one of Murray Energy's priority issues that Andy Wheeler actually worked on was securing health and other benefits for retired miners. I think that is something most of us would support.

Moreover, Mr. Wheeler also assured me that he views the EPA's legal authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, which is based on the endangerment finding, as settled law. Let me say that again. Mr. Wheeler assured me that he views the EPA's legal authority to regulate greenhouse emissions, which is based on the endangerment finding, as settled law.

I have no reason to doubt Mr. Wheeler's assurances that, at least on the question of the endangerment finding, he holds a view that is distinct from Bob Murray's, and that is a good thing, at least to me. I am sure that I speak not just for myself when I say that I do not feel similarly assured by Administrator Pruitt.

The Trump White House has said it wants EPA and the Transportation Department to negotiate what I would like to call a win-win on CAFE and tailpipe standards with California. That means the Trump administration's policy must be to leave the endangerment finding alone because the endangerment finding is what gives EPA and California the authority to write the tailpipe greenhouse gas rules in the first place.

But Administrator Pruitt has repeatedly refused to say this clearly. For example, last July, he told Reuters that there might be a legal basis to overturn the EPA's endangerment finding decision. When I asked him in late January not to overturn it for as long as he is Administrator, he refused to make that commitment.

In preparation for Mr. Wheeler's confirmation, I tried very hard to obtain some clarity about just what EPA plans to do with regard to the endangerment finding and the Agency's stated efforts to negotiate new greenhouse gas vehicle standards with California.

My staff and I talked to Bill Wehrum, who is the EPA Assistant Administrator for air—an important job—and with Ryan Jackson, Administrator Pruitt's chief of staff. We spent several weeks exchanging drafts of a letter that EPA planned to send me that sought to do three things, to make clear three things.

First, the letter affirmed the legal authority EPA used to find that the greenhouse gas emissions were dangerous and set vehicle standards. That is No. 1.

Second, the letter affirmed California's Clean Air Act authority to set its own, more stringent, vehicle standards.

And third, the letter committed to negotiate in earnest with California using a process not unlike the one used in past efforts to preserve a single national set of vehicle standards that automakers in California could support—a true win-win.

We actually reached agreement on the text of that letter with those who were negotiating, including Mr. Wehrum, his team, folks from California, and others. I am told Administrator Pruitt initially agreed to let the letter be sent, but then, maybe a week or two ago, a woman named Samantha Dravis, a political appointee at EPA, who I think is from Oklahoma and who recently resigned after reports that she failed to come to work for some 3 months last year, apparently convinced the Administrator to renege on the deal and to not sign the letter.

Ultimately, a significant part of the reason I cannot support Mr. Wheeler is because the Agency refused to follow through on an agreement it made with me on issues that are really important to the country, the auto industry, and California.

The truth is, at this point in time, it is not the only reason we should not be moving forward with this vote. In the

past several weeks, each day brings headline after headline. There they are again. This is just a handful of headlines. This is a target-rich environment in terms of headlines from Scott Pruitt. In the past couple of weeks, each day brings headline after headline, scandal after scandal, report after report about simply what I think is an unconscionably manner in which Mr. Pruitt is running the Agency, as I talked about earlier.

There have been dozens of calls for his resignation that have come from both parties here and in the House. Speculation about how long he will be able to remain in the job is at a very high pitch—very high pitch. It is entirely possible that Mr. Wheeler might be sworn in as Acting Administrator before he spends a single day on the job as Deputy Administrator. We will see.

The truth is, we have never really had the opportunity to ask Mr. Wheeler how he would remedy the reports of excessive spending out of EPA under Mr. Pruitt's leadership—inappropriate travel, retaliation against staff who dare to cross him, unlawful rule repeals, and the gross abuses of power Mr. Pruitt has inflicted on this country—if it were suddenly Mr. Wheeler's job to right those wrongs, which it will be if he is confirmed today.

Neither Mr. Wheeler nor members of the Environment and Public Works Committee were even aware of the extent of many of these problems and scandals when his confirmation hearing was held more than 5 months ago in the Environment and Public Works Committee.

Essentially, in my view, the Senate quite simply should not vote today on this confirmation until we know which job Mr. Wheeler will be filling at the Agency and until we know how he views and how he would remedy the overwhelming number of serious problems he will face when he arrives there.

Let me say one last thing, if I could. I am a big believer in win-win situations and win-win solutions. I think my colleague who is presiding at this moment is also. We partner on a variety of things, including trying to promote recycling, not just here in this body but all across this country, in ways that create jobs and create economic opportunity.

I focus a lot—and I think a lot of my colleagues do—on how do we create a more nurturing environment for job creation and job preservation. We don't create jobs here. Governments and Presidents don't create jobs. We try to help create a nurturing environment for job creation. One of the elements that is important for having that kind of nurturing environment for job creation, frankly, is clean air, clean water, and good public health. Another thing that is important is certain businesses like certainty and predictability.

It has been 10 years or more, but I will never forget when I was visited by a bunch of utility CEOs from all over

the country. They had come to talk with me and my staff about clean air legislation covering four distinct pollutants. They included mercury, CO₂, nitrogen oxide, and maybe one more—all types of legislation for polluters.

I had introduced legislation on the heels of President Bush's proposal. President Bush proposed multipollutant legislation that he called Clear Skies. The version I introduced, with a Republican colleague, was called Really Clear Skies. The four pollutants were VOC, NOC, mercury, and CO₂. That is what it was.

We had these CEOs from utility companies across the country who came to see us. They wanted to talk about our legislation to, over time, ratchet down the emission of those pollutants from their utilities. We talked for about an hour. At the end of the hour, one of the CEOs of the utilities—I think he was from the southern part of the country—said: Look, let me tell you, Senator, what you should do. Here is what you and your colleagues should do with respect to air emissions for utilities. He said: Tell us what the rules are going to be, give us some flexibility, a reasonable amount of time to meet those expectations, and get out of the way. That is what he said: Tell us what the rules are going to be, give us a reasonable amount of time to meet those expectations, some flexibility, and get out of the way.

With respect to CAFE, what we are doing with fuel efficiency requirements for cars, SUVs, and trucks—what we need to keep in mind is providing the same kind of certainty and predictability for the auto industry inside the country and outside of this country as we expect them to increase fuel efficiency over time for cars, trucks, and vans.

Under current law that we adopted, I want to say, about 10 years ago, we ramped up fuel efficiency requirements up through 2025. Between 2021 and 2025, the increases are pretty significant, pretty steep. The current administration wants to almost eliminate entirely those increases between 2021 and 2025 and be really silent on what happens after that.

I go to the Detroit auto show almost every year. In Delaware, until a couple of years ago, we built more cars, trucks, and vans per capita than any other State in the country. I got used to going to the Detroit auto show so often that I would know the people who ran Chrysler and GM so that if they ever thought about closing their plant in Delaware, we actually know whom to talk to. I still go to the Detroit auto show most years.

I went this time and met and talked with representatives from 10 auto companies from this country and around the world. We talked about CAFE and fuel efficiency requirements going forward. To a company, this is what they said to me in private conversation: We need some flexibility in the near term, between 2021 and 2025. In return for

that additional flexibility, we are willing to accept tougher goals extending out as long as 2030—near-term flexibility, longer term requirement for more rigorous standards. They said: Having said that, we don't want to be stuck in a situation where we have to go with one car with higher fuel efficiency requirements or see a model for a car, truck, or SUV with higher requirements for fuel efficiency for California and a different standard for the rest of the country. That just doesn't work for their business model. They need to be able to build one model, one set of standards for California and the other 49 States.

California, where they have had huge air pollution problems over the years, wants to have rigorous requirements.

I said this to the majority leader earlier this week; that there is a way to work through all of this with the auto industry, California, the other States, with EPA, and the Department of Transportation. There is a way to work through all of this that provides a real win-win, that preserves jobs in the auto industry—people building cars, trucks, and vans—and with respect to California's special concern, provides the certainty and predictability the industry needs and also ends up giving us more energy-efficient vehicles, cleaner air, and cleaner water—especially cleaner air. That is a real win-win situation. That is a real win-win situation, and that is where we need to go. We need leadership at EPA, we need leadership from the administration, leadership here, and in States like California to get us there.

Wayne Gretzky is a great hockey player. I am not a huge hockey fan. I watch it a little bit. When Wayne Gretzky was playing, he was believed to be the best hockey player anybody had ever even seen, at least in this country. His nickname was "The Great One." He took a lot of shots. He was not shy about shooting for a goal.

He was once asked: Mr. Gretzky, why do you take so many shots on goals? He said these words: I missed every shot I never took. I missed every shot I never took.

I like to take the shot in a lot of different respects. This is a shot we should take, and, if we do, we will do a lot more than score a goal. We will score a big win for our country. In the end, for people who are driving cars, trucks, and vans in the years to come, we will save them a lot of money, and we will have cleaner air and protect a lot of jobs that need to be protected and need to be preserved.

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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to talk a little bit about Scott Pruitt and his administration over at the EPA as well as the current pending nomination of Andrew Wheeler to be the Environmental Protection Agency's Deputy Administrator.

The Environmental Protection Agency is in crisis. Scott Pruitt has thrown the Agency into turmoil by gutting its mission to protect public health and the environment and by violating ethics and the taxpayers' trust. I believe Scott Pruitt must resign. Many of our colleagues have said the same. Even the President is questioning whether Mr. Pruitt should stay, and that is exactly why I am concerned that the Senate is not giving the Deputy Administrator nominee the scrutiny he should have. Andrew Wheeler could become the EPA Administrator if Scott Pruitt is forced out or resigns. He should be vetted as if he were the nominee—and there are many reasons to question whether he belongs at the EPA at all.

Just like Mr. Pruitt, Mr. Wheeler has spent his entire political career fighting EPA regulations that protect the environment and protect public health. He has lobbied for many years on behalf of polluters that the EPA regulates. The American people support clean air and clean water. Mr. Wheeler is out of step with the values and principles of the American taxpayers.

I know many Republicans who support environmental protection. We have had many decades of bipartisan support for public health, environmental protection, clean air, and clean water. Folks don't want their kids to have toxic chemicals in their blood or in their bodies. So there is a lot of support by Republicans in this area, and it has been a bipartisan issue.

I call on my Republican friends to press the pause button on Andrew Wheeler's nomination to be Deputy Administrator of the EPA. Let us join together and demand that the President withdraw this nomination and nominate someone who supports the basic mission of the EPA.

It is absolutely clear that Administrator Pruitt does not support the mission of the EPA. In fact, as State Attorney General, he prided himself in fighting everything EPA was doing and filing a number of lawsuits against the EPA.

We need a person at EPA who respects science and understands that climate change is here and now and must be addressed for the sake of our children and grandchildren, a person who is not hostile to environmental regulation in all forms, and a person who is not beholden to special interests. We are supposed to act as a check on the executive, so let's do our job.

When I mention climate change, one of the very first things that Administrator Pruitt did when he got in was sabotage a climate change website. That website had been in place for 10 years. It had been bipartisan through

several administrations. They were accumulating the best knowledge from scientists in this country and the best knowledge from scientists around the world to make it available to the public and to make it available to scientists and their researchers.

When I asked Administrator Pruitt in front of the Appropriations subcommittee, "Now, you have taken this website down. When are you going to put it back up," he said: "Oh, we are just updating it. We are just updating it," and we continue to ask the EPA.

Now, we are almost a year later—1 year later—and Scott Pruitt still refuses to put the website back up. So we really know where he is coming from on that issue.

When Scott Pruitt came before the Senate for confirmation, I voted against him because I expected he would work to undermine environmental health and protections. Mr. Pruitt has met and far exceeded my worst expectations. He lobbied the President to leave the Paris Agreement. The United States is now the only country in the world that is not a signatory to the Paris Agreement.

Mr. Pruitt proposed repealing the Clean Power Plan, our Nation's best effort to attack climate change. It is an important public health measure too. The EPA estimated that the Clean Power Plan could prevent 2,700 to 6,600 premature deaths and 140,000 to 150,000 asthma attacks in children.

Mr. Pruitt stopped a ban on chlorpyrifos, a dangerous neurotoxic pesticide that EPA's own scientists say should be off the market because it is linked to brain damage in young children. Chlorpyrifos is an example where scientists—and this is what the EPA does—consult with scientists outside the Agency, study within the Agency, and try to come to conclusions with regard to public health. In the case of chlorpyrifos, scientists were increasingly questioning whether it should be out there as a pesticide, so they were restricting its use in homes, they were restricting its use near schools, and finally they decided this is such a dangerous neurotoxin and we should ban it outright. So all the work had been done over 30 years.

Then, here it is, presented to the incoming Administrator—I would bet any other Administrator in the history of our country would have looked at the information, would have looked at what the science said, and they would have banned the chemical. What has Scott Pruitt done? Well, what he has done is, he has said we are going to take a look at it for another 5 years. That is what he posted on his website. There is no evidence that they are doing any review or anything. There is no evidence that chlorpyrifos isn't dangerous and should be banned, but that is the record he has at the Environmental Protection Agency.

He has also tried to suspend methane and smog regulations on oil and gas wells. He tried to roll back mercury

pollution rules for powerplants, and he wants to delay rules to protect against pesticide exposure and formaldehyde emissions. It is absolutely clear, Mr. Pruitt's actions have not respected the rule of law and, fortunately, they have been blocked by the courts.

Now, Mr. Wheeler's environmental record is not much better. It gives no confidence that he will put health and safety first.

Mr. Wheeler has called the Paris climate agreement a "sweetheart deal" for China.

He has fought limits on greenhouse gas emissions.

He is a longtime lobbyist for Murray Energy Corporation—one of the dirtiest coal companies in the country—which also has a terrible safety record. Murray Energy is the largest privately held coal company in the Nation. That raises big questions about conflicts of interest. The EPA is now moving to repeal the Clean Power Plan. It would be a big win for Big Coal at the expense of the American people.

Mr. Wheeler opposed reducing poisonous mercury emissions from powerplants—regulations Scott Pruitt wants to gut. In fact, I don't see anything in Mr. Wheeler's background that indicates he will act as our Nation's top environmental protector.

When Mr. Pruitt was confirmed, we knew he had no problem bending ethics rules. His claim to fame in Oklahoma was currying favor with moneyed interests and doing their bidding, but the number and extent of Mr. Pruitt's ethical lapses might surprise even the most cynical.

The list of abuses grows daily: lavish first-class flights around the world; swanky hotel stays; billing the taxpayers for his personal trips home to Oklahoma; a \$43,000 soundproof phone booth in his office; taking 30 EPA enforcement officers away from investigating polluters to serve as his round-the-clock personal security detail—something no other EPA Administrator has done; speeding down the streets of Washington with sirens and lights blaring to get to fancy restaurants; huge, unauthorized salary increases for his friends; and he even allowed a close aide to just not come to work for 3 months while still getting paid by the taxpayers; detailing EPA staff to find him a place to live. While he siphons hundreds of thousands of dollars off the taxpayers for special perks for himself, he tries to slash millions of dollars for health and safety programs for the American people.

Even his own staff has balked at his extravagances, and the Administrator has met their resistance by retaliating against them, changing their duties, sidelining them. Mr. Pruitt has treated the EPA like his own little personal fiefdom, and EPA employees are like serfs who cater to his whims.

Former EPA Administrator under President George W. Bush, Christine Todd Whitman, recently called his spending "absolutely ridiculous." That

is what Christine Todd Whitman said, "absolutely ridiculous." She charged that his conduct is part of "an extraordinarily ethically tone deaf administration."

It is time for Scott Pruitt's imperial tenure to end. It is time for him to resign and high time for the President to stop defending him and to demand his resignation. But Mr. Pruitt should not be replaced by someone who does not support the basic mission of the Agency—to protect the environment and public health. That is what the EPA Administrator should be focused on; it is absolutely clear.

The EPA's first Administrator, William Ruckelshaus, a Nixon appointee, has sounded warnings about what is going on at the EPA. He said: "My principal concern is that Pruitt and the people he's hired to work with him don't fundamentally agree with the mission of the agency."

The American people value that mission. They want clean air and clean water. They want the health of their children and our seniors protected. It is our responsibility to make sure the EPA protects the American people.

I urge my friends and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to do our job—to put the nomination of Andrew Wheeler on hold and to work together to demand that the President nominate a Deputy Administrator who will have the trust and confidence of the American people and to work to keep their air and water clean and their families safe and healthy.

There are a couple of articles that I think show what has been happening over at the EPA.

This article says that "nearly a year into the Trump administration, mentions of climate change have been systematically removed, altered or played down on websites across the federal government." As I said earlier, they have taken down this huge, bipartisan project that was in place for 10 years, gotten rid of it and claim they are updating it, but they haven't done anything after a year.

The article goes on to quote a report by Environmental Data & Governance Initiative: "Removing information regarding climate from federal websites does not affect the reality of climate change, but may serve to obfuscate the subject and inject doubt regarding the scientific consensus that climate change is happening and that it is caused by human activity."

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the January 10, 2018, article by the New York Times be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, Jan. 10, 2018]

HOW MUCH HAS 'CLIMATE CHANGE' BEEN SCRUBBED FROM FEDERAL WEBSITES? A LOT.

(By Coral Davenport)

WASHINGTON.—Nearly a year into the Trump administration, mentions of climate change have been systematically removed,

altered or played down on websites across the federal government, according to a report made public Wednesday.

The findings of the report, by the Environmental Data and Governance Initiative, an international coalition of researchers and activist groups, are in keeping with the policies of a president who has proudly pursued an agenda of repealing environmental regulations, opening protected lands and waters to oil and gas drilling, withdrawing the United States from the Paris climate accord, shrinking the boundaries of federal monuments, and appointing top officials who have questioned or denied the established science of human-caused climate change.

The authors of the study said that the removal of the words "climate change" from government websites, and a widespread effort to delete or bury information on climate change programs, would quite likely have a detrimental impact.

"We have found significant loss of public access to information about climate change," the authors wrote.

"Why are these federal agencies putting so much effort into 'science cleansing' instead of using time and resources to fulfill agency responsibilities, such as protecting the environment and advancing energy security?" they wrote. "Removing information regarding climate change from federal websites does not affect the reality of climate change, but may serve to obfuscate the subject and inject doubt regarding the scientific consensus that climate change is happening and that it is caused by human activity."

The report tracks the Environmental Protection Agency's removal of hundreds of websites connected to state and local climate change programs; the removal of information about international climate change programs from the State Department, Energy Department and E.P.A. websites; and the deletion of the words "climate change" from websites throughout the federal government.

In many cases, the report found, "climate change" was replaced by vaguer terms such as "sustainability."

In a separate report, also made public Wednesday, the group found that the Bureau of Land Management had deleted its climate change website and removed text about the importance of climate change mitigation from its main site.

The researchers took care to note that raw government data on climate change, such as historical records of temperatures and emissions levels, had not been deleted. However, Toly Rinberg, a co-author of the report, said: "The data is certainly less accessible. Links to websites that host the data have been removed. That data is still available online but it's been made harder to find on the agency's websites."

Trump administration officials have noted that it is the administration's prerogative to highlight its agenda—repealing climate change policies and promoting the exploration of oil, gas and coal—on its websites. The Obama administration sought to promote climate change policies and elevate the issue in the public eye, but the Trump administration is under no obligation to continue that effort.

And some information about government programs related to climate change, while no longer easily found on the main federal agencies' websites, was still accessible. Liz Bowman, a spokeswoman for the E.P.A., said in an email that pages were "archived and available" on the agency's website.

But the report concluded that of all federal agencies, the E.P.A.—the agency charged with protecting the nation's environment and public health—had removed the most information about climate change. An E.P.A.

website once titled "Climate and Energy Resources for State, Local and Tribal Governments," which included prominent links to programs like "Climate Showcase Communities," now contains no mention of the term "climate change" and no prominent links to state and local climate information.

The E.P.A. has also removed a website on the Clean Power Plan, the Obama administration's signature climate change regulation, which was designed to reduce planet-warming pollution from power plants. The Trump administration has put forth a legal plan to repeal that regulation, and part of that process includes a public comment period. The new report suggests that when people cannot easily find the original rule on the E.P.A.'s website, they may be less likely to submit comments against repealing it.

"Beyond reducing access to actionable information, removing public web resources can undermine democratic institutions such as notice-and-comment rulemaking," the report's authors wrote.

Mr. UDALL. A September 27, 2017, article by Reuters with regard to EPA workforce reductions describes EPA's workforce declining to levels not seen in decades. The article says:

In June, the EPA unveiled a buyout program that would contribute to the biggest cuts of any federal agency in President Donald Trump's 2018 proposal. The EPA employs about 15,000 people.

After buyouts and retirements, that number could drop to 14,428 by October, the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said in an email.

That would be below the fiscal 1988 level, when EPA staffing was 14,440, the official noted.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the September 27, 2017, article by Reuters with regard to EPA workforce reductions be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From Reuters, Sept. 27, 2017]

(By Eric Walsh)

EPA WORKFORCE SHRINKING TO REAGAN-ERA LEVELS—AGENCY OFFICIAL

WASHINGTON.—The workforce at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is on course to fall to its lowest level since Ronald Reagan was president, an agency official said on Tuesday.

In June, the EPA unveiled a buyout program that would contribute to the biggest cuts of any federal agency in President Donald Trump's 2018 budget proposal. The EPA employs about 15,000 people.

After buyouts and retirements, that number could drop to 14,428 by October, the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said in an email.

That would be below the fiscal 1988 level, when EPA staffing was 14,440, the official noted. A further 2,998 employees, or just over 20 percent of the total, are eligible to retire now, the official said.

In an April spending bill, the Republican-controlled Congress set a cap for EPA staffing at 15,000 employees for fiscal year 2017, rejecting proposed increases by the previous administration of Democratic President Barack Obama.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said the reductions were "giving long-serving, hard-working employees the opportunity to retire early."

"We're proud to report that we're reducing the size of government, protecting taxpayer

dollars and staying true to our core mission of protecting the environment and American jobs," he said in a separate statement.

Pruitt has rolled back a slew of Obama-era regulations limiting carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels.

He was also instrumental in convincing Trump to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate accord—a global pact to stem planetary warming through emissions cuts.

While acknowledging the planet is warming, Pruitt has questioned the gravity of the problem and the need for regulations that require companies to take costly measures to reduce their carbon footprint.

Before becoming head of the EPA, he was Oklahoma's attorney general and repeatedly sued the agency he now runs to block federal environmental rules.

Mr. UDALL. So here we have an attempt by Administrator Pruitt to emasculate the Agency by chasing off some of the best and brightest scientists, buying out people, doing everything he can to intimidate people to leave the Agency, and we are at a point in time where we have a staffing level equivalent to 1988. This is the Agency that protects our water and our air, makes sure the water and air are clean, and protects our children from toxic chemicals. This is a pretty remarkable record.

I ask my Republican colleagues to reconsider the Wheeler nomination, to put a hold on it, to have the proper vetting, and let's find the kind of individual who is going to respect the mission of the Agency and move us forward in the direction of public health, protecting the environment and our air and water.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. 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. MARKEY. Mr. President, Scott Pruitt is the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. He is charged with running the Agency and ensuring its mission. There are serious questions about Mr. Pruitt's leadership, but we will get to that later.

Today, the Senate is preparing to vote on the nominee to be the second highest ranking official at the Environmental Protection Agency—Andrew Wheeler. As the No. 2 at the Environmental Protection Agency, Andrew Wheeler deserves the kind of scrutiny that reflects a position one step away from Administrator.

Andrew Wheeler has spent years protecting the coal industry—first from here in the Senate, where he worked to prevent passage of climate legislation, and then as a lobbyist for Murray Energy, one of the largest coal companies in America, which has led the fight by the coal industry to undo the progress we have made on climate policy.

Andrew Wheeler's coal credentials are without equal. He is without ques-

tion a member of the coal industry's hall of fame. He was even present in March of last year at the meeting where Murray Energy CEO Bob Murray presented Energy Secretary Rick Perry with the now-infamous secret plan to save the coal industry.

Sadly, I am concerned that Andrew Wheeler's background means that he will never understand that saving coal is not the Environmental Protection Agency's job. It is the EPA's job to regulate coal, to protect public health and the environment, to keep particulate matter from filling the lungs of children in our most vulnerable communities—more than 7,500 people die every year from the pollution from fossil fuel powerplants—to reduce the harmful carbon pollution that is causing climate change, and to end the toxic coal-mining practices that are poisoning our waters and our communities.

The corporate special interests, who have worked hand-in-hand with the Trump administration to block clean energy deployment and force Americans to breathe dirty air from fossil fuel combustion, are exactly the opposite of what we need to be at the head of the Environmental Protection Agency. They are, at the same time, the companies that Andrew Wheeler has represented. Andrew Wheeler has made a career of promoting the policies that make our air and our water dirty and that endanger the public's health.

Now, with Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt under siege as a result of Agency mismanagement and scandal, we must have real concern about who will be No. 2 at the EPA. Who is on deck to take over if Scott Pruitt has to leave? Who is going to be sitting there in the chair as the Administrator to make these decisions about clean air, clean water, about the role which coal plays in polluting our environment? Who will that be if Scott Pruitt were to be removed from his position or resign from his position? And, by the way, that is a position from which I strongly support that he be removed—that he resign—but that would then lead to the consequence that Andrew Wheeler would most likely be the new Administrator of the EPA. This individual would then be in charge of the environment of our country. He would be in charge of it. The coal industry would have their person running the Environmental Protection Agency. That is unbelievable. That is the dream of the coal industry—that, finally, after all these years, they get the guy to be in charge of the environment, as the country and the world are moving in just the opposite direction.

Now, would he have been vetted for that role as the head of the EPA? Absolutely not. He is out here on a snoozy Thursday afternoon with his name out here to be considered with the Galleries empty of either publicity, citizens, or the press paying attention to the debate when the consequences of this decision that the Senate is about

to make is of historic magnitude. This man is the coal industry. If you Google the word “coal,” his picture comes up. Coal, ladies and gentlemen, has declined from 50 percent of all electrical generation down to 30 percent just over the last 10 years. Why? Well, because utilities in America are moving toward wind. They are moving toward solar. They are moving toward energy conservation. They are moving toward natural gas, which has half of the pollutants of coal. The coal industry has met its maker in the marketplace. The utilities themselves have moved toward cleaner sources of electrical generation in our country, and the only way that they can stave off this revolution, in their minds, is to have a coal industry representative be the head of the Environmental Protection Agency. Talk about the fox guarding the chicken coop. Talk about some kind of upside-down, bizarro world, where, all of a sudden, at the Environmental Protection Agency, the one industry that has most contributed to the greenhouse gases up in our atmosphere over the last 100 years, now has someone who is next in line to take over the entire Environmental Protection Agency.

So Scott Pruitt is under siege, and we have not asked Mr. Wheeler about his readiness to lead the EPA or how his policies would be different from those of Mr. Pruitt. We don't have any reason to believe his views are any different than Mr. Pruitt's. Does he agree with the policy direction Mr. Pruitt has taken at the Agency? Does he agree with the exorbitant costs associated with the questionable activities Administrator Pruitt has engaged in as head of this Agency?

There is a lot that Andrew Wheeler has yet to answer to if he were to take over as the head of the Environmental Protection Agency, which brings us to the embattled EPA Administrator, Scott Pruitt himself.

Mr. Pruitt's leadership at the EPA has made that Agency as toxic as a superfund site. Administrator Pruitt has consistently undermined the core mission of the EPA—to protect the environment and to protect the health and the safety of all Americans. He has put the interests of the fossil fuel, chemical, and auto industries above the needs of the public's health.

Perhaps the best example of Scott Pruitt's war on good, bipartisan policy is his full frontal attack on fuel economy emissions standards. Last week, Administrator Pruitt and the Trump administration began the process of rolling back these historic standards. In 2007, I worked on a bipartisan basis to enact a provision in the energy law that increased our Nation's fuel economy standards for the first time in 32 years. It is one of the laws that I am most proud of. I was then serving in the House of Representatives and I was able to work with NANCY PELOSI and able to work with John Dingell to push through that measure. Over here in the Senate, DIANNE FEINSTEIN, working

with Senator Stevens and others, were able to bring together a consensus that changed the direction of fuel economy standards in our country. They had not been increased in 32 years because of the viselike grip that the auto industry and the oil industry had on public policymaking with regard to pollution over the preceding 32 years. It was a tragedy. It was a disgrace. It was harmful to the health of Americans, to the national security of Americans, and to the economy of Americans. Yet they had the power to do it.

But this world changed for the first time in 2007. Then building on that law, in 2009, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Transportation began negotiating a historic agreement with State regulators, automakers, labor unions, and the environmental community. In 2012, the landmark fuel economy emissions of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025 got placed on the books. Consulting with States, auto manufacturers, environmental groups, and other experts, the EPA and the National Academies of Sciences have proved beyond a doubt that the existing standards are appropriate. Automakers are meeting these standards more quickly and at a lower cost than predicted. These fuel economy standards are technically feasible. They are economically achievable. They have revived the competitiveness of our domestic auto industry, which has added 700,000 new jobs since 2010 and sold a record number of vehicles in 2015 and again in 2016.

But Scott Pruitt is threatening American consumers, our national security, and our climate by trying to slam the brakes and make a U-turn on this critical policy. We cannot allow Scott Pruitt to put us in reverse on these strong standards. But it doesn't stop there.

Time after time, Scott Pruitt has undermined the core mission of the EPA to protect the environment, to protect the health and the safety of all Americans. The litany of Scott Pruitt's sins is a Big Oil wish list: repealing the Clean Power Plan; supporting withdrawal from the Paris climate accord; weakening the Clean Water Act; allowing more toxic pollution in our streams and our wetlands; loosening standards for hazardous pollutants like mercury, arsenic, and lead that corporations can spew into our air. With Scott Pruitt's actions at the EPA, more Americans would get sick, more children could get asthma, and more people could die. He has shut out the public from the EPA's rulemakings and decisions. During his tenure, the EPA has hidden countless thousands of pages of publicly funded reports on climate science and other topics from the EPA's main web page.

Now it is emerging that he has betrayed the trust of the American people by pursuing ethically questionable behavior while heading this Agency. His mismanagement of the EPA, his intimidation of scientists, among whom fear is rampant, and his insistence on

undermining key environmental policies is unacceptable. It is impossible to have any confidence in him to lead this Agency. It is time that we issue an eviction notice, change the locks, and kick Scott Pruitt out of the EPA. It is time for him to go.

Amid this dark cloud, it is up to the Senate to ensure that anyone who is going to be responsible for overseeing our Nation's environmental policy is properly vetted for that position. Without more questioning and more examination, we do not know if Andrew Wheeler is that individual. Ultimately, I cannot vote for a lobbyist for the coal industry to lead the Agency that is tasked with making sure that carbon pollution is regulated. So that is the decision that we are being called upon to make here. It is like a shadow confirmation vote for the next Administrator of the EPA. It is an attempt to slip by at the end of the week, with Members of the Senate wanting to get home, the nomination and confirmation of a man who stands for just the opposite of what the credentials of a candidate to run the EPA should be.

We have a massive wind revolution in our country. We have 260,000 people now working in the solar industry in America. There are 50,000 coal miners, 260,000 people in solar, and 100,000 people in wind. Most of the wind and solar jobs were created over the last 10 years. Which direction does President Trump go? Which direction does Scott Pruitt go? Which direction will Andrew Wheeler, the heir apparent to Scott Pruitt, go? It goes toward coal and not wind, not solar, not renewable energy, not this greatest creation of blue-collar jobs in two generations in a single job sector.

Two percent of all new workers in America last year were solar workers who got hired, and they are good jobs. Who are they? They are electricians up on the roof. They are people who are carpenters. They are putting together the equipment. They are blue-collar workers. They are high-paying, secure, long-term jobs.

The President, however, looks to the coal industry with 50,000 coal miners and says: I am going to put in place a man who is committed to protecting that industry while destroying the wind, the solar, and the renewable industry in general and by saying to the automotive industry that you do not have to any longer increase dramatically the fuel economy standards of the vehicles which we drive in our country.

Elon Musk and all these smart, technologically savvy people in our country who are reinventing the way in which we drive are being told: No, the standard is too high. Your goal cannot be achieved. We are going to roll back those goals. That is Scott Pruitt. That is Andrew Wheeler. That is Donald Trump. That is what this debate is about here on the floor. It is a debate about the future of our country. It is a debate about the future of our planet.

It is about the future, about the direction in which we are going to be heading. Are we going to be looking at the world through a rearview mirror, back toward a technology of the 19th century, coal, or are we going to be looking toward the future? That future is one of solar and wind, renewable energy, and all-electric vehicles. It is a revolution that saves the planet, creates jobs, protects our security by backing out of importing oil from other countries.

The fuel economy standards in our country that are on the books right now that Scott Pruitt and Donald Trump want to roll back, back out 3½ million barrels of oil a day that we never have to import from OPEC and the Middle East. Do you know how many barrels of oil we import each day from the Middle East? Three and one-half million barrels of oil. That should be our goal.

Right now, the President is debating whether he should have more missile strikes in Syria in the Middle East and what the impact would be in Iran and Saudi Arabia, but, meanwhile, simultaneously, out here on the floor, we are debating a nominee who is going to be the hand-picked successor to Scott Pruitt to water down those fuel economy standards, water down that protection, which were given to young men and women so they will not have to go over to the Middle East in order to protect those ships of oil which come into our country. That is just morally indefensible when we know these revolutions are moving, they are creating jobs, and they are working.

That is why this nomination today goes right to the heart of the future of our country and the future of our planet. That is who Andrew Wheeler is. He represents the worst of what this Trump administration is trying to do to our country.

We should be the leader, not the lagger. We should be the point of light for the planet, going to a goal that we know can then be exploited around the rest of the world. That is what the 21st century should be all about, where children have to look back in the history books to find that there ever was a time when we were burning coal that was polluting the lungs of children and the planet, when we had a chance to move toward wind, solar, renewable energy, and all-electric vehicles. That should be our goal today. That is why I urge, in the strongest possible terms, a rejection of his nomination.

We should be having a full-blown debate, not this truncated process that is being imposed upon us here today. This is just plain wrong. This nomination is too important. This is the heart of what the green generation in America wants us to debate. Which way are we going, backward or forward? Which way are we going, toward a clean planet or a further polluting of the planet?

In his encyclical, Pope Francis made it very clear, No. 1, that the world is dangerously wanting; No. 2, that it is

being caused largely by human activity; and, No. 3, that we have a moral responsibility to do something about it as the principal polluter over the last 100 years; because, No. 4, those who are going to be most adversely affected are the poorest and most vulnerable on the planet, and we have to do something about it.

That is why a “no” vote today is correct, because Andrew Wheeler is going to take us in the wrong direction, just the opposite of where Pope Francis urges us to go.

I yield the rest of my time to Senator CARPER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator so yields.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I want to start by thanking my colleague from Massachusetts for the clarity and passion he brings to this debate.

I, too, am here to strongly oppose the nomination of Andrew Wheeler to be the Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Before I talk about Mr. Wheeler, I want to join my colleague from Massachusetts to talk a little bit about Scott Pruitt and the current management over the EPA. Because the people of our country rely on a strong, effective, and healthy EPA to keep our air and water clean and to make sure people are not living among toxic substances, we need strong leadership there.

In the State of Maryland, the EPA is also important to protect a great national and natural treasure, the Chesapeake Bay. The bay States include many of the States in this area. We have made great progress over the years through the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program. It was recognized many years ago that when you have a bay such as the Chesapeake, where multiple States feed into it, so that when you see pollution in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, or Virginia, it ends up in the bay, you need a national response, and you need an agency like the EPA to bring people together. That is why the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program was created. Yet we now have a Director of the EPA, Scott Pruitt, who doesn't recognize the vital and unique role the EPA plays in protecting the Chesapeake Bay.

We know that because, if you look at the budget Scott Pruitt and President Trump submitted to the Congress, they zeroed out funding—zeroed out funding—a big goose egg for the EPA Chesapeake Bay funding. That is what they did in year 1.

Then, when Senator CARDIN and I and others said: This is a really important national effort; in fact, it has had bipartisan support in the Congress, it has bipartisan support among the Governors of all the Chesapeake Bay States, then they said: OK. We are going to provide just 10 percent of the moneys that had been provided for that program.

This is a \$73 million-a-year program. It actually needs more to achieve its

full effectiveness, but Administrator Pruitt and President Trump provided only \$7.3 million in their budget, which would devastate the bay program.

Fortunately, on a bipartisan basis, this Senate and the House of Representatives have continued full funding for the Chesapeake Bay Program for the past 2 years. I thank my colleagues for recognizing the vital importance of that program, not just to the bay States but really to protecting a national treasure.

I guess it shouldn't be surprising that Scott Pruitt's first budget zeroed out funding for Chesapeake Bay protection because, back when he was the attorney general of Oklahoma, he filed an amicus brief in a case that would have neutered the ability of the EPA to actually enforce the pollution protection standards for the Chesapeake Bay.

We can set forth all sorts of standards, we can set forth all sorts of restrictions in terms of pollution that can fall into the bay, but if you don't have the ability to enforce it, it means nothing. It means people can pollute with impunity.

Even before he took the current job, Scott Pruitt telegraphed to all of us that he didn't care about enforcing pollution standards for the Chesapeake Bay.

We have also seen other recent actions where it is clear he has a disregard for adequate protections for clean air and water. The Senator from Massachusetts was just talking about a recent proposal to roll back the auto emission standards, auto emission standards that are essential to addressing the challenge of climate change, that are also vital to making sure we have energy independence—standards, by the way, that would save consumers a whole lot of money that would otherwise be going to the oil companies and the gas companies.

In fact, those new emission standards would save the average American family \$300 per year. Apparently, Mr. Pruitt and President Trump want to see those \$300 come out of the pockets of American consumers and go right to the bank accounts of big oil companies.

It is maybe not surprising, given the very close relationship between Administrator Pruitt and the Koch brothers, who worked very hard and worked over time on his confirmation to be EPA Administrator. With Administrator Pruitt, they are getting the policies they want—policies that are not good for the health of the American people but very good for the bottom line of the Koch brothers and some of the biggest oil companies in the country.

The Chesapeake Bay and the rolling back of the auto emission standards are just two examples of a record that fails the American public when it comes to the environment under this current EPA.

I also want to talk about the work environment today at the Environmental Protection Agency because my State of Maryland is the home to many

terrific public servants—Federal employees, including many dedicated employees of the EPA. You can listen to them, but you can read about accounts in many of the publications we have seen about the incredibly low morale at the EPA.

Leadership starts at the top, and Scott Pruitt has taken an agency with strong morale and led it down the tubes. I guess it is not surprising, since he has been seeking to cut the EPA team, the professionals there, by roughly 20 percent. I should say, he is talking about cutting those folks who are working every day on behalf of the American people at the same time he is increasing the number of political appointees at the EPA—people who really do nothing more than the politics of the Administrator. So he is increasing the number of high-paid political appointees while proposing to cut, by 20 percent, the EPA workforce that looks out for the American people.

Under his directorship, already 700 employees have left the Agency either because they found it a hostile place to work or were actually forced out. So I do find it ironic that the Agency that is supposed to protect the country from toxic pollution has created a toxic environment under its own roof.

Beyond my concerns about how he actually manages his staff, concerns about undermining protections for the Chesapeake Bay and other environmental efforts, we have seen a total disregard for basic public ethics from the current Administrator. His conduct is not appropriate for a public official and has violated the public trust time and again. It seems every day now, when you open a newspaper or look online, you can find another example of the current Administrator abusing the public trust.

We have to ask ourselves whether Andrew Wheeler is going to be someone at the EPA who addresses those serious problems we have with the current Administrator. How will he help stabilize the situation? Will he be any kind of counterbalance on these important issues? The clear answer, from the record, is no. In fact, the clear answer is that Mr. Wheeler would just reinforce Mr. Pruitt's worst instincts. One might say he is a carbon copy of Mr. Pruitt. And when we look at his history—Mr. Wheeler's history—we find a very cozy relationship between the nominee, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Pruitt, the current Administrator, and an army of lobbyists for the coal industry. In fact, Mr. Wheeler, as we have noted, has been a lobbyist for that industry. When we look at his relationships, we find that he was advising Murray Energy. Murray Energy was at that time a top donor to Scott Pruitt's super PAC. This was before Mr. Pruitt became the Administrator of the EPA. He had a super PAC. Murray Energy, for whom Mr. Wheeler lobbied, was one of the top donors to that Pruitt super PAC.

The relationship between Pruitt and Wheeler and Bob Murray gets even

cozier when we see that Bob Murray was a co-plaintiff in 8 of the 14 lawsuits that Pruitt brought against the EPA before Pruitt became the Administrator. So I want to get this right. We have Mr. Wheeler, who is the lobbyist for Mr. Murray, and Mr. Murray joined with Pruitt in filing 8 of 14 lawsuits against the EPA. So we can see that we have a very cozy relationship there and one that will only reinforce, not counterbalance, Mr. Pruitt's worst instincts at the EPA.

Among those challenges is the question of climate change. Just yesterday, in the Environment and Public Works Committee, we had a hearing. We had a hearing on using Federal incentives to have more carbon sequestration, to try to take carbon out of the environment, and carbon recapturing technology.

What was interesting was that every single one of the witnesses—those called by the majority and those called by the minority—every one of them, when asked whether climate change represented a serious threat, answered yes. All of them acknowledged that human activity was contributing to that climate change—every one of the witnesses, right down the table.

It is also interesting that that legislation, which has bipartisan support, uses taxpayer dollars and, combined with the tax measures we passed recently, creates tax incentives for carbon capture. So we are agreeing on a bipartisan basis to use public funds for the purpose of reducing carbon pollution. The only reason to do that would be that we agree carbon pollution represents a threat.

I will tell my colleagues who believes carbon pollution represents a threat: the U.S. military. I represent the Naval Academy. A little while back, I went out there and talked to the head of the Naval Academy, who talked about the fact that even today, sea level rise is creating threats, and we can actually see the results of sea level rise with the flash flooding down in Annapolis, MD, which is home to the Naval Academy. That is just one small example. Yet, if we look at Mr. Wheeler's record and statements, we find just another person with their head in the sand, and that is not the kind of person we should have as the No. 2 at our national Environmental Protection Agency.

I was looking to see if the No. 2 appointment might provide some kind of counterbalance to Mr. Pruitt. Unfortunately, everything we find shows not only that they had this prior, very cozy relationship—lobbyist, Attorney General, and a lot of coal industry companies—but on all of the issues that are important to protecting the health of the American people, we have a Deputy nominee who is actually going to take us in the wrong direction.

So I urge all of my colleagues to oppose the nomination of Andrew Wheeler.

I yield the remainder of my postcloture time to Mr. CARPER.

I see that Mr. LEAHY is on the floor. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

GUN SAFETY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the Chair. I am a proud Vermonter. My family has lived there for over 150 years.

Yesterday, Vermont set an example for the Congress, and for the Nation. A Democratically controlled legislature and a Republican Governor, in a rural State with a strong gun-owning tradition and very few gun laws, worked together to debate, forge, and enact meaningful, commonsense gun safety laws.

Yesterday, Governor Phil Scott, who is a Republican, signed three bills into law. They expand background checks, require those under 21 to complete training before purchasing a firearm, create extreme risk protection orders, and ban bump stocks and high-capacity magazines. Vermont did that, and other States are also acting. It makes me wonder why Congress can't do its job and follow that example.

In Vermont, this was a debate about what the people of the Green Mountain State could do to keep their communities, schools, and citizens safe. We had some difficult conversations in my home State. Difficult compromises were made. And for the Republicans and Democrats in our legislature, these were difficult votes. In our State, as in every other, there are honest differences on this and many other issues. Vermonters made their voices heard, particularly a brave new generation of student activists inspired by their peers in Parkland, Florida.

This isn't the first time that our small but brave State has stepped in and stepped up to tackle difficult but significant issues. On July 1, 2000, Vermont became the first State to offer same-sex couples the same legal rights and responsibilities of traditional marriage.

David Moats, the Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial page editor of the *Rutland Herald*, wrote a book about this debate entitled "Civil Wars: A Battle for Gay Marriage." Ted Widmer, writing in the *New York Times Book Review*, said this in his review of the book:

Near the end of "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town," the Vermonter played by Gary Cooper dishes out a series of homespun metaphors for how government is supposed to treat people, from helping to push a car up a hill to saving a swimmer who's drowning. Obviously, life isn't quite that simple. This will take time. But in the long run, the question will be answered in the vast middle where most Americans live, and where they privately decide what is right and wrong.

In his remarks at yesterday's bill signing—and I note that the Governor signed the bill sitting at a table outdoors in front of the statehouse, where people who were opposed and people who supported it could watch what he was doing—at that bill signing, Governor Scott spoke as well about civility and public discourse. In a democracy,

civility is more than a virtue; it is foundational for the democratic process to work. That is something all of us—all of us in both parties in the Congress and at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue—should remember.

Here is some of what the Vermont Governor said:

Today in America, too many of our fellow citizens—on both sides of every issue, not just on guns—have given up on listening, deciding to no longer consider other opinions, viewpoints or perspectives.

Our national dialogue has been reduced to angry, hateful social media posts that you can either ‘like’ or not, with no room for conversation or respectful disagreement, and where facts and details no longer seem to matter.

We would be naive to believe that the way we talk to each other, the way we treat each other, and the rise of violence are exclusive to one another.

The Governor concluded:

These things are hurting our nation. If we can reduce the polarization we’re seeing across the country, we can diminish some of the anger at the root of these larger challenges. And this must be part of our ongoing pursuit to reduce violence and make our communities safer.

He is right. Those are Vermont values that draw from time-tested American values.

Three weeks ago, students from schools across this country led millions of fellow Americans of all ages, races, and backgrounds in marches against gun violence. On that Saturday morning, hours before the march on Washington, I met hundreds of Vermonters who came to the Nation’s Capital. My wife Marcelle and I hosted a gathering with them. They were here to lend their voices to what has become a national outcry for commonsense reforms to reduce gun violence.

Thousands more rallied in our capital city of Montpelier, in Rutland, and in other Vermont towns for a ban on military-style assault rifles and on high-capacity magazines; for universal background checks, so that if you have a felony record you are not going to be able to buy a gun; and for laws that keep guns out of the hands of the mentally ill and those who seek to do us harm.

I have rarely been more inspired than when I was listening to the eloquence, the clarity, and the indignant frustration in the poignant speeches of those students. To hear their stories, to hear of the loss and grief and the unsettling and unyielding fear resulting from not knowing whether your school will be next.

I am reminded again of the appalling number of school shootings and the other daily tragedies caused by guns and the lasting and physical scars and trauma that gun violence has had on children, families, and neighborhoods, in cities and towns in every State of this country. How can one not feel that our generation has failed miserably to deal with the epidemic of gun violence? How can one not feel that the gun lobby and others who reflexively oppose all efforts at reform, no matter

how modest or grounded in common sense, have won?

Commonly exploited loopholes in our gun laws allow practically anyone—even those who are criminals or those who openly intend to do us harm—to buy 1 or 10 or 50 guns, guns that can shoot as many rounds per minute as you can pull the trigger or even more with the assistance of readily available accessories, like bump stocks. What have we done to stop it? Not nearly enough.

Over a period of many years, I have introduced or cosponsored and advanced through the Senate Judiciary Committee many pieces of legislation to stop it. This includes legislation to close background check loopholes—loopholes that allow criminals with records of violent crime to buy weapons—to ban military-style assault rifles, and to shut down the black market for firearms by strengthening tools to prosecute straw purchasing and firearms trafficking. We have gotten some of them through committee. Sometimes we have passed them on the Senate floor. But each time, the gun lobby has prevailed in blocking these efforts, just as they have blocked the efforts of others who have dared to take steps to reduce gun violence.

The students are right. They don’t just want our thoughts and prayers. They don’t want us to stand up and piously say: What a tragedy. They don’t want their teachers to have guns, and neither do their teachers. They don’t just want a ban on bump stocks. They want real, meaningful change. They are saying enough is enough.

Columbine, Virginia Tech, Newtown, Roseburg, Parkland—these are school shootings that made the front pages, but there are hundreds of others. There were 18 school shootings in the first 3 months of 2018 alone. As horrific as that is, it is only a part of the problem. Every day, an average of 318 people in America are shot in murders, assaults, suicides, and suicide attempts—every day, 318. That is an epidemic, and we need to treat it like one. You can hear the outrage, and the fear, in the students’ voices.

I am probably the only Member of this body who has gone to murder scenes, who has been there in the middle of the night and seen a child who has been shot to death, knowing that I would be the one who would have to order the autopsy and have investigators from my office, when I was a prosecutor, notify the parents that their child was not coming back. I have seen so many people shot to death, I still have nightmares about them.

Those who hold up the Second Amendment as somehow justifying their opposition to commonsense gun control laws could not be more wrong. None of the tragedies those students, our schools, our communities, our country are experiencing today are the price we must pay for the Second Amendment. None of the proposals in Congress threaten an individual’s right

to own a gun, nor would the bills signed by Governor Phil Scott. Any such argument is nothing more than baseless fearmongering.

I have heard the NRA and some of its defenders ridicule the students for speaking out about seeing their fellow students shot. If you have seen somebody who has been shot to death, as I have on many occasions, you do not forget that. It was over 40 years ago that I was a prosecutor. There is hardly a day that goes by that I don’t remember some of those scenes. When high-priced lobbyists or pundits go on national TV to belittle teenagers who saw their friends gunned down in their classrooms and who had the courage to speak for those who died, then the corrosive power of money and politics is glaringly apparent. Those children will never forget what they saw. I know. I know they will not.

It reminds me of how the first and loudest voices in favor of using military force are rarely those who have actually experienced combat themselves. I wonder how many of those who represent the gun lobby have experienced what those students went through or have seen people who have been shot to death as I have and—worse yet—as those children did, seeing it when it happened and when it was friends of theirs. As much as I shudder to remember what I saw, it was nothing compared to what they saw.

The only solution I have heard offered by those who oppose reform is to put more guns in the hands of good people. Well, I am a gun owner. We do need well-trained, well-equipped community police officers. I strongly support school resource officers, and we should invest more in our police. But police armed with assault rifles at every school, at every movie theater, in every church, on every street corner in America, at every shopping mall, at every museum—is that the solution? Is that the United States of America we want?

We should talk to the police. We would find that police across this country support stricter, commonsense gun safety laws. It is Congress’s job to regulate when regulations are needed, and we have a responsibility to do so when so many Americans’ lives are at stake. Let’s use the power we have to do what the Constitution requires of us and what the American people overwhelmingly are asking us to do.

The students who organized these marches have challenged us. President Trump, your party controls the Congress. Members of Congress can act or they can continue to make excuses or remain silent in hopes that this issue goes away. But, I can tell you, these students aren’t going away—not the students I have met, not the students whose determination is in their eyes and in their voices.

It is time for you, President Trump, and for this Congress to do right by these students and by all Americans who are asking their leaders to stop

gun violence. Follow Vermont's example. Support comprehensive, common-sense gun reform legislation, just as you said you would when you met with Members of Congress of both parties after the Parkland shooting. Keep your word. Do what you said you would do, but this time follow through. Fight for it so that it passes, and sign it.

Listen to the words we heard yesterday in Montpelier, VT. Stop the shouting on either side. Have people sit down and talk about what the American people really want and what the American people really need, and listen to each other. But then let's do it. Let's do it.

I think it can be done. I know any killing is terrible, but as a parent and a grandparent, I wonder how anyone can think of a child or grandchild having to witness such a horrible thing. It should stop.

I yield the remainder of my time to Senator CARPER from Delaware.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware has been yielded 2 hours as provided by rule.

The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Delaware for allowing me to speak for up to 12 minutes.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. President, I rise today to discuss three bipartisan bills that I have introduced this week to combat the vast and growing opioid epidemic. I want to begin by first thanking the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate HELP Committee for their leadership in putting together a comprehensive bill to address opioid addiction and abuse.

The HELP Committee has held seven bipartisan hearings on opioid issues since October, and I commend the committee's leaders for crafting a bipartisan framework, the Opioid Crisis Response Act, which the committee intends to mark up later this month. My hope is that the three bipartisan bills that I am about to describe will either be incorporated into their more comprehensive legislation or approved separately.

Last year, in the State of Maine, 418 people died from overdoses—a record number and an 11-percent increase compared to the year before. Just this past weekend, there were nine overdoses in one night alone, largely as a result of fentanyl-laced heroin. Fortunately, first responders were able to save those individuals.

It is clear that we need to take an “all of the above” approach to tackling this crisis. This includes more support for education and prevention, treatment and recovery services, and law enforcement efforts. No single focus will be sufficient to combat this crisis.

The first bipartisan bill that I have introduced with Senators HASSAN, CAPITO, BALDWIN, and WARREN is the Safe Disposal of Unused Medication Act. Our bill would address the problem of unused prescription painkillers when a person is receiving hospice care at home.

Currently, hospice staff are not allowed to dispose of unused medications, including powerful opioids, even after the patient has died. As a result, these dangerous medications, with a high risk of diversion, theft, and abuse, are frequently left in the deceased person's home.

I have heard stories about criminals who actually scan the obituary pages to figure out when the family will be away at the deceased person's funeral so the criminals can target that time to break into the family's home to steal these dangerous drugs.

Our bill would allow certain hospice staff and emergency medical services personnel, such as paramedics, to dispose of these potentially addictive medications once the patient dies. Registered nurses and physicians involved in hospice care can not only help families who are dealing with difficult end-of-life issues, but they can also assist them by making their homes safer by disposing of dangerous leftover medications. All of these drug disposals would be documented in the patient's clinical records.

Our bill would also allow the Drug Enforcement Agency to develop regulations permitting hospice staff to dispose of drugs if a patient's plan of care has changed and the patient no longer needs the medications. The disposal of unused prescription drugs is key to making sure that they do not fall into the wrong hands, and this bill would help to solve that problem.

One way that families struggling with addiction are finding support is through peer-to-peer recovery groups. The second bipartisan bill, which I have introduced with Senator SHAHEEN, is the Opioid Peer Support Networks Act. This bill would foster the creation of peer support networks, also known as communities in recovery, and would provide them with the resources and training they need to be successful. In peer support networks, individuals and families battling addiction help one another stay on the road to recovery and assist with employment, education, housing, health, and overall well-being.

Last year, I visited the Bangor Area Recovery Network, known as BARN, in Brewer, ME. It is a volunteer-led organization that provides support to individuals who are recovering from addiction. BARN is a model for peer-led counseling and brings hope, recovery, and healing to those who are struggling with substance abuse. Individuals who are themselves in recovery can make that critical connection to others who are facing addiction, which, in turn, can make the recovery process sustainable and reduce the stigma of addiction and treatment.

Yesterday, the Senate HELP Committee, on which I serve, heard from three experts about the legislation that the committee is developing. Jessica Nickel, the founder and CEO of the Addiction Policy Forum, told us: “Peer recovery support specialists are a key

component to making sure that we provide the services that are needed for folks that are in recovery or those that need treatment.” The Opioid Peer Support Networks Act would bring critical training and assistance to these on-the-ground, peer-to-peer networks and help build up these important recovery support systems.

Finally, the Community Action Opioid Response Act, which I have introduced with Senator KLOBUCHAR, would provide competitive grants to help Community Action Agencies and Community Action Partnerships, known as CAPs in my State, expand their efforts to respond to opioid misuse and addiction problems that are experienced by low-income individuals and their families. Our bill would support a wide range of activities, such as treatment and recovery referral, direct services for children and their caregivers, including their grandparents, and two-generation anti-poverty models that respond to the needs and barriers that are facing both parents and children.

The CAPs are uniquely positioned to help take on and be our partners in the opioid crisis. They can leverage their current programs, community relationships, and existing infrastructures to respond to the unmet needs resulting from the opioid epidemic, but they need more help to do so.

CAPs in my State have told me about how the opioid crisis has affected their programs and how they are thinking innovatively to improve the services that they provide.

For example, the Waldo CAP in Belfast, ME, uses its transportation services to bring 175 people a week to drug treatment programs. That is 175 people who otherwise might lack the transportation that is necessary for them to receive the treatment services that are needed for them to cope with their addictions. Penquis, a CAP agency in Bangor, ME, has found that some clients don't access treatment because they can't find transportation for their children to safe childcare settings. In York County, the Community Action Agency has partnered with the Sanford Police Department to deliver access to medication-assisted treatment for clients who are struggling with opioid addiction.

Our bill would give these CAP agencies additional resources to develop the wraparound services that make it possible for treatment to succeed and for recovery to take hold.

Tackling the opioid epidemic, both its causes and its consequences, takes a multipronged approach. The three bipartisan bills that I have introduced provide additional ways to respond to this growing problem. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting them, and I look forward to their enactments.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL TAYLOR CONRAD

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I honor today the life and sacrifice of one soldier in particular, U.S. Marine Corps LCpl Taylor Conrad, who was 24 years old and was a Central Louisianan.

Our military men and women deserve recognition. They sacrifice time away from family and friends and put themselves in harm's way to advance our country's interests. Every day, they risk their lives to secure our safety. In the case of Taylor Conrad, along with three of his fellow marines, he tragically lost his life last week when their helicopter crashed during a training mission in California.

A Louisiana native and Central High School graduate, Taylor exemplified the qualities of a good marine. He was tough, compassionate, and wanted to help others. In high school, Taylor played football and was an accomplished powerlifter. He also volunteered in the Best Buddies program, which matches students with schoolmates in the special ed program.

A teacher said:

The one thing that made Taylor such a special friend with our kids is he didn't approach them in a way that he felt sorry for them. He approached them in a way where he truly wanted to be their friend.

The school's athletic director said Taylor's "love for those who need the most is something I'll never forget." There was one child who would never speak except, with Taylor, he would laugh. That was the effect Taylor had on others.

After school, Taylor decided to serve our country by joining the Marines. He went on to become a CH-53 helicopter crew chief in the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing's Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465. One marine who served with Taylor had this to say of him:

He was the gold standard. He pushed everybody and he cared about everybody. I wouldn't be the Marine I am now if it wasn't for him.

Our hearts go out to everyone whose life was touched by Taylor. We especially pray for his family, including his daughter, who was born just last October. Their loss is great, and their hearts are heavy. I want them to know that Louisiana and our entire country mourn with them because our loss is great too. When they lost a brother, a son, and a dad, we lost a good man, a great marine, and a fellow American.

Thank you.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Mr. President, I would like to speak about nominations for the U.S. Department of Education and the approval of them or, I should say, their lack of approval.

It is no secret that Democrats in Congress hate President Trump. For months, they have held up his nominees for key positions in the government. This strategy may serve in their hatred of President Trump, but it is harmful to our country.

One example is the nominee for the Federal Railroad Administration, whose nomination was held up for months after he had been approved unanimously by the committee of jurisdiction for his appointment in the Federal Government. As a result, there have been multiple fatal crashes in the railroad system—Republicans were on a trip when one of them occurred—that may have been prevented had there been leadership on that railroad commission.

We have a sense that there can be a consequence to this kind of unremitting "whatever Trump proposes we are going to oppose, no matter, just because it is Trump" when folks die in railroad accidents. I will note, after the last set of fatalities, that hold was lifted, and the nomination was allowed to proceed.

Sometimes it is not so clear that damage has occurred from this kind of "whatever Trump proposes we shall oppose." In multiple cases, it involves the Department of Education. One example is the nomination of BG Mitchell "Mick" Zais for Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. President Trump nominated General Zais in October 2017. It has been over 6 months since his nomination, and we still do not have a Deputy Secretary of the Department of Education.

General Zais is qualified for the position. He served as South Carolina's elected State superintendent of education, the president of Newberry College, and as a commissioner on South Carolina's Commission on Higher Education. He also served his country honorably and faithfully as an infantry soldier in the U.S. Army for 31 years—again, retiring as a brigadier general.

A little known fact about the general is that he is dyslexic—an issue I care passionately about that affects 20 percent of our Nation's population. He knows firsthand of the struggles of one with dyslexia and how, with the proper evidence-based resources, our children with dyslexia can learn to read and have as successful futures as any other. Ensuring children with dyslexia have the resources they need to succeed is a legislative priority for me and also will be for General Zais, as he indicated, when he is finally confirmed.

Democrats have imposed 30 hours of debate on nominees they support by forcing cloture votes. They have forced more cloture votes in the first year of the Trump administration than in the entire first terms of the last four Presidents combined. These delay tactics have consequences for the rail system just as they do in the education of our children. It is a tragedy that Democrats are blocking or playing games with our children's futures.

One example—and it is not a very good example, not good for those affected—is with the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NEPA, which released its Nation's Report Card. The results show that our Nation's children have not made gains in reading and math. In 2017, nationally, only 40 percent of fourth graders were considered proficient in math, and only 36 percent were reading at grade 4 levels.

This is unacceptable. If a child learns to read in grades 1, 2, 3, after that, he or she reads to learn, and if one can't read by the fourth grade, one may never be able to read to learn as effectively as one needs in order to succeed in today's economy. Democrats hate Donald Trump so much, they would rather risk a child not learning to read than to have their future prospects dimmed and easily approve a Trump appointee.

Mr. President, the time is now to stop the obstruction. Let's put our Nation's children's educational needs first and confirm the remaining nominees to serve at the U.S. Department of Education.

This is not about Donald J. Trump; this is about the children of our country who, if they don't learn to read or do math proficiently, will have a future that is less than it should be, and that should be a bipartisan concern.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rarely rise three times in the same day to give a speech. This is a special day for me and maybe for the Senate. But I want to assure my colleagues that the concerns many of us have been expressing about the current chaos at the Environmental Protection Agency and the nomination of Andrew Wheeler—the person who could predictably replace the EPA Administrator—are not ours alone. Editorial boards around the country, including those from newspapers in Republican-leaning States, are expressing concerns regarding EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's recent slew of ethical lapses—it would be charitable to call them lapses. It is these failings by Mr. Pruitt that Andrew Wheeler will be expected to address if he is confirmed by the Senate.

I can assure the citizens of all these States, the editorial boards of all these papers, and all my colleagues that the Environment and Public Works Committee has not considered the nomination of Andrew Wheeler with these ethical failings in mind. Mr. Wheeler has been nominated to serve as the individual who will oversee day-to-day operations of an EPA currently in chaos. We have had no opportunity to ask Mr. Wheeler about the Administrator's questionable behavior, nor have we had a chance to ask him how he plans to right a ship that has so clearly lost its way.

I am sobered but not shocked to read what people who have their fingers on

the pulse in their communities have to say about the current leadership in the Environmental Protection Agency. It is truly maddening and deeply sad to see the indictments on an agency that we in Congress have vested with the responsibility of protecting our children, supporting our elders, and ensuring a world in which we and all the life around us can thrive.

What are newspapers around the country saying about the leadership of the Environmental Protection Agency these days?

As a kid growing up in Virginia, I never read the *Virginian-Pilot* in Danville and Roanoke. This is what they said in Virginia through a newspaper called the *Virginian-Pilot* on April 6, 2018, about a week ago. The headline of the editorial is "EPA's Pruitt a terrible choice."

They said:

Short of nominating an actual oil derrick or a landfill to the post, President Donald Trump couldn't have done worse than tapping Scott Pruitt to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.

They went on to say:

And yet, it's unlikely that his sinister approach to managing the EPA will be Pruitt's undoing. Rather, it's almost certain to be a comparatively banal brand of corruption that is infuriatingly commonplace in the highest echelons of the Trump administration.

The editorial goes on to say:

Having a director of the Environmental Protection Agency wholly uninterested in protecting the environment is a national embarrassment, and Americans deserve much better than the worst option available.

The next quote comes from *Charleston, WV*, and it is from the *West Virginia Gazette-Mail*. It is focused more on a favorite Presidential theme.

Donald Trump campaign crowds loved to chant "Drain the swamp!" But if ever there was a political swamp creature, it's Scott Pruitt, the man Trump picked to head the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

On the issue of favoring his fellow Oklahomans on the EPA staff, the *Charleston Gazette-Mail* editorial continued:

Despite the White House telling him not to give large raises to two employees—

I think one raise was \$29,000 and another was \$56,000 per year—

—who followed him from Oklahoma, Pruitt did it anyway. He used a loophole in the Safe Drinking Water Act that's supposed to let the EPA hire experts quickly in an emergency, not give taxpayer-funded raises to political lackeys.

Nor did the Administrator's security concerns pass muster. The *Charleston Gazette-Mail* went on:

Pruitt is clearly very worried about his security; he has tripled the size of his security detail, and is the first EPA administration to have 24/7 security—again, at taxpayer expense. That security detail includes some EPA agents who would otherwise be investigating environmental crimes, rather than protecting their snowflake boss.

Those are the newspaper's words, not mine.

The editorial goes on to say:

Pruitt's predecessors, Gina McCarthy and Lisa Jackson—who were demonized repeatedly by West Virginia politicians, among others—flew coach, with a much smaller security presence.

The *Charleston Gazette-Mail* editorial concludes:

There are many reasons why Scott Pruitt shouldn't be leading the EPA, primarily that he doesn't seem to believe in science and is more interested in helping big business, than, you know, protecting the environment. But his obvious belief that taxpayer money and resources are given to him for his personal benefit is a big reason, as well.

Let's go down to Texas. The *Houston Chronicle* weighed in on this. I don't know if we have a poster on this one, but here we go. This is what they said at the *Houston Chronicle* on April 6, this month. The headline of the editorial is "The time has come for EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt to resign."

It reads in part:

On the next episode of the Trump administration's reality show, the latest character the President needs to vote off the island is Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt.

Indeed, it's hard to figure out how Pruitt has survived so far into this season. The host of this show says he wants to drain the swamp, but the EPA boss is so deep in the muck, he could play the creature from the *Black Lagoon*.

The *Houston Chronicle* concluded:

So Pruitt seems destined to become the next character cut from Trump's chaotic reality show. Dropping this bad actor can't happen fast enough.

Even in Mr. Pruitt's home State, some people are fed up with his antics. The *Tulsa World* editorialized in this way—this was on April 6. The title is "With a controversial agenda, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt must live above suspicion."

In part, the editorial reads:

Some of the latest accusations are embarrassing. He should have known better, and he may pay a heavy consequence for them.

The paper goes on:

From his first day in office, Pruitt has been under the microscope of scrutiny from those who disagree with the president's thinking on environmental issues. If that's not entirely fair, it also should have been obvious to Pruitt that he would have to live a life that was above suspicion. In ways that have nothing to do with money, he couldn't afford to fly first class.

The second Oklahoma newspaper, the *Edmund Sun*, had more particular advice for the President, along these lines:

Donald Trump has never needed help mirroring himself in controversy, and that was true before he ever moved into the White House. But he could do himself a favor, and gain some begrudging respect from detractors, by drop-kicking Scott Pruitt to the curb.

The fact that he defied a White House decision should by itself make Pruitt ripe for termination. Staffers and Cabinet members far more ethical than Pruitt have been shown the door. Trump should cut him loose, and get rid of the rope and the scissors he used to make the snip.

Under the best of circumstances and even in the most accountable administrations, consideration of a nominee to

serve as EPA Deputy Administrator is a huge responsibility for this body. As the *Miami Herald* rightly points out, this is no normal circumstance and surely not a normal EPA that Mr. Wheeler would enter. He would have to be ready for a job that none of us can say at this time that he is ready to tackle—cleaning up a huge mess at EPA.

The *Miami Herald* notes:

The flurry of ethical questions surrounding Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt is now a blizzard. The emerging picture is of a chief environmental officer not only fighting a war on science as he promotes oil and gas interests but also arrogantly betraying the public trust.

The *Miami Herald* concludes:

Time and again, Trump has accepted arrogance and incompetence on his staff as long as loyalty remains beyond question.

Meanwhile, in Akron, OH, in its editorial entitled "Deep in the Swamp at the EPA," on April 8, the *Akron Beacon Journal* notes that some folks in the White House knew just how bad Scott Pruitt was.

John Kelly showed the right instinct.

John Kelly is the Chief of Staff.

According to news accounts, the White House chief of staff advised President Trump that Scott Pruitt, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, needed to step down in view of his ethical misdeeds and spending excesses.

The *Beacon Journal* concludes:

Scott Pruitt should go. This isn't about policymaking, dismaying and damaging as the direction of the agency has been. The problem is his conduct in office. Pruitt has abused the public trust, in the way he has spent taxpayer dollars, in the perception he invites.

Apparently, Mr. Pruitt is not showing folks in the Show Me State what they want to see in an EPA Administrator either. In an editorial on April 7, 2018, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* said:

There are many good reasons why President Donald Trump should fire Scott Pruitt as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Top on our list are his multiple failures to do his job protecting the environment. He's gone so far as to say that if global warming is real, it might be a good thing.

Do you know what. I wholeheartedly agree with the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

In conclusion, I share these editorials because I think they illustrate the situation that Mr. Wheeler will face should he be confirmed, and that is a very difficult situation. As the No. 2 person at EPA, Mr. Wheeler will be responsible for fulfilling the Agency's mission and doing so in a way that earns, once again, the public's trust. There is a long way to go to regain that trust, and Mr. Wheeler will have a Herculean task in front of him to help the Administrator do so, should he be confirmed today.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to voice my opposition to the nomination of Andrew Wheeler to be Deputy Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Senators standing up this afternoon to fight this nomination are not just opposing Mr. Wheeler. We are trying to shine a light on the fact that this administration has one of the worst environmental records in history. And you don't have to take my word for it because this unprecedented assault on our Nation's bedrock environmental laws has drawn strong criticism from former Democrat and Republican Environmental Protection Agency Administrators.

The American public overwhelmingly supports the laws and regulations that protect our air and water. And my constituents don't buy the false trade-off between protecting the environment and jobs. To them they come hand in hand. The facts on the ground have proven that these are red herring arguments.

There are so many examples of how this administration's disdain for science has led them to try to undo decades of progress on the environment. I want to focus on three issues that are particularly damaging and serve as an indication of why Mr. Wheeler's nomination and record are so troubling.

First is the example of Mr. Wheeler lobbying on behalf of fossil fuel interests. My concern is that Mr. Wheeler would have a prominent role in reviewing the air pollution rules that govern coal plants, rules that he got paid millions of dollars to help attack.

A number of press reports have exposed how one of Mr. Wheeler's biggest lobbying clients, Murray Energy, was a driving force behind Secretary Perry's ill-considered resilience proposal. That proposal ignored the Energy Department's own staff report and was an attempt to try to say that coal was the only reliable source of energy for the electricity grid, which would have forced citizens to pay more on their utility bills. They said that is a wrong conclusion. And it was a transparent attempt to try to prop up one of the administration's favorite energy sources, which really would have made everything more expensive for consumers and certainly would have changed the focus of what we need to do to decarbonize our energy system.

But the biggest problem here was how the proposal would have hit consumers, as I said, with billions of dollars in added costs. Bailing out old coal plants wasn't just bad policy; it was a breathtaking raid on consumer pocketbooks. The regional grid manager found that the Secretary's proposal would nearly double the cost of wholesale energy in the Nation's largest electricity market.

Fortunately, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission unanimously rejected this proposal. But if Mr. Wheeler comes to EPA as the No. 2, what other misguided proposals like this are they going to propose or try to fight, even though the science within the own agencies says they are wrong-headed? How much time will we have to waste exposing these bad ideas? We should instead be making investments in policy and infrastructure that will help us be more competitive in the future.

I am also troubled by the administration's backward view on how the United States can achieve so-called energy dominance by focusing more on coal. In my assessment, the days of this strategy are numbered.

Selling away our cheap natural gas to foreign buyers. Or eking a little more life out of our grandfathered coal plants. Or drilling, as the administration has proposed, in every part of the United States and off our shores, is not the way to be competitive for the future. I am concerned that Mr. Wheeler holds and will support these backward views.

When he was criticizing the Paris Climate Agreement, he called it a "sweet-heart deal" for China because it gave them a manufacturing edge, but he really got it backwards.

That is because China itself has been investing in renewable energy. By 2040, it will have invested over \$6 trillion in clean energy technologies, according to the International Energy Agency. China also adopted a 5-year solar energy plan calling for 105 gigawatts of solar capacity by 2020. They have proposed an aggressive stance moving forward, and I want to make sure that U.S. companies who have great technology get a fair crack at making investments there and particularly in the area of energy efficiency, which is already accounting for about a \$2.2 trillion investment in 2016.

So we know that we can move forward on a cleaner energy economy, and we want to know that we have the leadership that are going to support this critical transition. I am perhaps most troubled that, during his confirmation hearing, Mr. Wheeler refused to acknowledge the indisputable reality that humans are the cause of dangerous accumulation of greenhouse gases.

The fact that greenhouse gases are going to warm our planet and cause acidity in our oceans is something my State knows well.

In Washington, climate change has serious consequences for human health and our economy. Climate change has resulted in extreme weather patterns, putting lives and property in danger. It has impacted water quality, and it has caused other impacts to our salmon and shellfish industries, big parts of our seafood economy. Climate change has created drought conditions, has jeopardized our farm economy, and it is even changing the chemistry of Puget Sound.

Mr. President, responding to climate change is more than just an environmental issue. It is an economic imperative.

Senator COLLINS and I requested from the Government Accountability Office an analysis about the full costs of climate change.

That is because, after seeing how it impacted us with fires, how it impacted our shellfish industry, how it impacted so much of our coastline, we wanted to know how much climate is costing taxpayers. Well, the GAO report said it will cost taxpayers more than \$1 trillion in the next 10 to 15 years.

So I know that Mr. Wheeler thinks this may not be part of his day job, but rolling back strong environmental laws that help us move forward will put us further and further behind and cost us billions of dollars more than we need to be paying.

We need to uphold these critical environmental standards and laws that protect our clean air and clean water so that we can make progress, so that we can diversify our economy, and so that we can make the right investments.

I believe Mr. Wheeler is the wrong choice for this position. I think he is the wrong person to help us meet those standards.

We need a Deputy Administrator who isn't there trying to just jam coal down the throats of American consumers and businesses, but rather advocating for the next generation of Americans, who will need to be able to compete and compete in a cost-effective way.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting no on Andrew Wheeler to be the Deputy Administrator at EPA.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, in Federalist Paper No. 76, Alexander Hamilton wrote that it was the job of the Senate to "prevent the appointment of unfit characters." That is certainly the mission for which we have responsibility today—to make sure that the unfit characters do not have roles of power and influence within our government.

Andrew Wheeler, the nominee who is before us for the No. 2 job at the Environmental Protection Agency, raises a series of questions and concerns related to whether or not he is fit for office. This is a man whose entire career working for the fossil fuel industry stands in direct opposition to the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency—a mission to protect the health of the American people and the well-being of our planet.

At such a volatile moment for the EPA, when the Agency is plagued by scandal, ethical misbehavior, and pandering to polluters, this nomination deserves the closest of scrutiny. After all, it is quite possible that, before long, whoever fills the role of No. 2 at the EPA could be acting in the No. 1 spot.

It is clear that Andrew Wheeler is not fit to be that person.

When President Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970, he recognized that we all share “a profound commitment to the rescue of our natural environment, and the preservation of the Earth as a place both habitable by and hospitable to man.”

For more than 47 years, the EPA has worked under Democratic Presidents and Republican Presidents to protect our natural environment and preserve our planet as a habitable and hospitable place. That has included controlling toxic and poisonous chemicals, improving air and water quality, and enhancing vehicle efficiency and emissions control. The list of EPA’s accomplishments goes on and on, but it can be summed up like this: Americans value clean air. Americans value clean water. Scott Pruitt does not, and Mr. Wheeler does not.

Administrator Pruitt has turned his longstanding disdain for the EPA into a crusade to destroy it. Think about the hard work of protecting our air and our water. There is a lot that goes into that. You can think about the equivalence of constructing a house. You need to have somebody who knows the foundation, knows the plumbing, knows the wiring, knows the carpentry, knows the drywall, and knows the roofing. You have to combine all of that with someone to get the windows installed right and the insulation installed right. It is a lot of work to create a structure that protects our air and water from the thousands of chemicals that can do it harm, but it only takes one person to knock down that carefully constructed house—one person, one wrecking ball.

Scott Pruitt is that wrecking ball in the EPA, knocking down the carefully constructed work of decades of efforts by some of the Nation’s leading scientists and most dedicated team members.

There is a lot of frustration among those dedicated scientists, and 700 employees have left or have been forced out. Critical clean air and clean water regulations have been stalled or left in limbo. Enforcement of existing regulations has virtually disappeared. Regionally, EPA offices have been routinely stripped of the power to investigate, while advisory committees that have usually been made up by scientific, objective individuals are now being filled with industry shills. To put it bluntly, under Scott Pruitt, the EPA is conducting a war against clean air and clean water. This is really a shameful situation, and that is just the policy side.

Then we have the ethical side. There is the Administrator’s desire to waste our taxpayer money on \$40,000 private phone booths, first-class travel, and swanky accommodations; the Administrator’s determination to retaliate against those who have pointed out the restrictions that he is violating; and an

Administrator who has increased the salaries of his friends in an unapproved fashion. There is little to think that any of this would change with Andrew Wheeler in either the No. 2 or No. 1 position.

It starts with the fact that neither man takes seriously the profound threat to our planet from carbon pollution. I believe that these individuals are smart, that they actually know the enormous damage that carbon pollution is doing to our planet.

After all, it is hard to miss. You can see it this last year in the ferocity of Hurricanes Irma, Maria, and Harvey. Why were they so fierce? Because 90 percent of the heat produced by climate chaos was trapped by the oceans, and that hotter ocean energizes the storms to a higher level of impact. You can see them in the forest fires that raged in Montana, across Oregon, and down into California. Year after year, the fire season is longer and fiercer. There are more forests burned.

You can see it in the insect population. You can see it in the mosquitoes that carry Zika. You can see it in the success of the pine beetles, when it is too warm to kill them in the winter. So they do great, and the trees don’t. You can see it in the oysters that now have to have the water in which they are born be artificially buffered because it is now too acidic for baby oysters.

And why is it too acidic? Because the ocean absorbs carbon dioxide from the air, creating carbonic acid.

It is hard to miss. It is hard to imagine when you see the ocean, where so much carbonic acid has been placed through our ocean through polluted air that it has changed the acidity of the ocean, but that is exactly what it has done.

Now, the EPA does a lot of wonderful work under a normal administration, be it Democratic or Republican. It tracks greenhouse emissions. It works on money-saving regulations, like renewable fuel standard programs. It conducts analyses to compare different policies to see which one would be more effective and what the range of impacts would be. It conducts world-class research on the science. It partners with States and local communities and governments on efficiency and renewable energy. But that is under a normal administration and a normal Administrator. There is no partnering now. It is just simply the wrecking ball.

Scott Pruitt said scientists disagree about the extent of global warming in connection to the actions of mankind. Actually, NASA has very precise estimates or recordings of the changes in the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the temperature changes that are occurring from that.

You can find people, primarily those who are funded by the fossil fuel industry, who dispute that and sow confusion. It is certainly the strategy of the fossil fuel folks, who are choosing their

greed over our planet. They are selling out America, and those who shill for them are selling out America.

They say: Well, you know, out of 100 scientists, we can find 2 or 3 who disagree. Well, how often do you have somebody who goes to 97 doctors and have them say: You have cancer. And they say: Oh, but, wait; I can find one doctor somewhere. If I pay them enough, they will say I don’t have cancer, and then I am healed—except that they wouldn’t be healed and they would soon be dead.

In Oregon, we have seen the impact on the Klamath Basin, the worst ever droughts time after time over the last 15 years. Talk to the people in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, whose communities were devastated by last year’s hurricanes.

In the last 10 years, the time I have been in office, we have seen half the coral reefs around the world either die or be deeply damaged—in the time since I was elected in 2008. As to the fact that our economists have calculated the monetary terms of damage for the United States from last year’s storms and fires to be well over \$300 billion, the fact that quality of life would be profoundly affected by the movement of diseases, the fact that the moose are dying in New Hampshire and lobsters are migrating north from Maine, none of that matters because these folks keep coming back and saying: You know, it is just not clear what is happening. It is not even an understanding of the basic scientific principle. Really? That is just such a lie.

As far back as 1959, Edward Teller, the eminent scientist, was warning folks in the petroleum industry. When he gave his speech at the 100th anniversary of the petroleum industry, he said: “First of all, these energy resources will run short as we use up more and more of the fossil fuels.” True enough, it turns out that there is a lot more than anyone thought in 1959. But then he said, second, that it turns out that carbon dioxide produced by burning fossil fuels has a big problem.

You can look through it and you can’t smell it so it doesn’t seem like a pollutant, but it turns out it traps heat. He proceeded to say that would be a big problem because it would melt ice in the world and raise the sea levels and that would flood our cities. He didn’t have all of the science that has been generated since 1959, but he had a basic understanding of the physics of the problem.

What have we seen? We have seen, from that time until now, a 25-percent increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and that is a big deal. So we have seen, year after year, it become hotter and hotter. In fact, 2015, 2016, and 2017 were the three hottest years ever recorded. In fact, 17 of the 18 hottest years on record occurred within the last 18 years. Yet these individuals stand up and say: Do not worry. Be happy. There is no problem.

But there is a big problem, and putting folks whose bread is buttered by the fossil fuel industry in charge of clean air and clean water is a colossal mistake for our Nation.

Mr. Pruitt's association with the fossil fuel industry is well documented. He went as far as to send a letter to the EPA on his stationery accusing regulators of overestimating how much air pollution energy companies drilling new natural gas wells in Oklahoma were causing. The letter was written almost word-for-word by a company, not by a scientific expert, nor did it have input from scientific experts.

This type of cozy relationship has continued throughout his tenure at the EPA. Take, for instance, his efforts to stall or eliminate regulations, delay implementations of new ones to help polluters at the expense of the health, safety, and livelihood of millions of Americans. He has issued a memorandum saying the regional EPA offices first have to seek permission from headquarters before investigating polluters, investigating violations, or requesting information. So he has sought to really completely stop the investigation into malfeasance and misconduct damaging our environment—all to help his associates who are in private industry.

The list goes on and on.

We see the same thing with Mr. Wheeler working so closely as a lobbyist for the same fossil fuel industry; specifically, Murray Energy. How can you say an individual will enforce the rules when he represents the industry? That is the challenge.

Our U.S. President said he was going to drain the swamp, but Scott Pruitt is the swamp. He is the person who is proceeding to fail to enforce our clean air and clean water laws. He is the person who is stopping his team from investigating violations. He is the person who is allowing his friends to have their pay increased, or actively working to increase their pay, when it is outside of the regulation. He is the person wasting our taxpayer money in all kinds of ways that have been documented, from security details to trains of cars blowing lights so he can get someplace in the city 5 minutes faster, violating the rules; demoting people who try to hold him accountable—every possible ethical and professional violation.

The nominee before us is a straight backup to that kind of misconduct. He should absolutely not be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. He should not get a single vote from a single Member here because the American people want the rules on clean air and clean water enforced. So let's vote for enforcement.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL POMPEO

Mr. President, just a short time ago, I was in the hearings regarding Michael Pompeo to be our Secretary of State. I think my concerns can be summed up by this: I read to him the two provisions of the War Powers Act that give the President the power to put our

troops in motion on foreign soil. One of those is a direct and explicit congressional authorization, and the second is a direct threat or attack on the United States or our forces or our assets.

I asked him: Do you think the President of the United States can put forces into action outside of those two provisions, congressional authorization or a direct attack on America?

He said: Yes.

In other words, he absolutely, 100 percent disavows our Constitution, which says the power to make war rests in Congress, not at the whim of the President.

This was one of the most important provisions in the debate about the design of our Constitution; that it should not be easy to go to war. The Constitution gives that power explicitly to Congress. Mike Pompeo says it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter, even if there is not a threat to the United States, an attack on the United States; it doesn't matter, even if there is no congressional authorization, the President can do what he wants. You really can't make that argument and honestly take an oath of office to abide by the Constitution.

That is why I will adamantly oppose his nomination as Secretary of State.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any further debate on the nomination?

Hearing no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Wheeler nomination?

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 71 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Alexander	Enzi	Kennedy
Barrasso	Ernst	Lankford
Blunt	Fischer	Lee
Boozman	Flake	Manchin
Burr	Gardner	McConnell
Capito	Graham	Moran
Cassidy	Grassley	Murkowski
Collins	Hatch	Paul
Corker	Heitkamp	Perdue
Cornyn	Heller	Portman
Cotton	Hoeven	Risch
Crapo	Hyde-Smith	Roberts
Cruz	Inhofe	Rounds
Daines	Isakson	Rubio
Donnelly	Johnson	Sasse

Scott
Shelby
Sullivan

Thune
Tillis
Toomey

Wicker
Young

NAYS—45

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons
Cortez Masto
Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand
Harris

Hassan
Heinrich
Hirono
Jones
Kaine
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Markey
McCaskill
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Nelson

Peters
Reed
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Udall
Van Hollen
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth

McCain

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the further rollcall votes in this series be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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 John W. Broomes, of Kansas, to be United States District Judge for the District of Kansas.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, John Kennedy, Johnny Isakson, Cory Gardner, John Cornyn, James E. Risch, Thom Tillis, Pat Roberts, Jerry Moran, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Richard Burr, Tom Cotton, Jeff Flake.

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 John W. Broomes, of Kansas, to be United States District Judge for the District of Kansas, 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 Arizona (Mr. McCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 74, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Ex.]

YEAS—74

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Baldwin	Gardner	Murphy
Barrasso	Graham	Nelson
Bennet	Grassley	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Perdue
Blunt	Heitkamp	Portman
Boozman	Heller	Reed
Burr	Hoeven	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Roberts
Cardin	Inhofe	Rounds
Carper	Isakson	Rubio
Casey	Johnson	Sasse
Cassidy	Jones	Schatz
Collins	Kaine	Schumer
Corker	Kennedy	Scott
Cornyn	King	Shelby
Cotton	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Crapo	Lankford	Tester
Cruz	Leahy	Thune
Daines	Lee	Tillis
Donnelly	Manchin	Toomey
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Menendez	Wyden
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—24

Booker	Hassan	Shaheen
Brown	Heinrich	Smith
Cantwell	Hirono	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Peters	Whitehouse
Harris	Sanders	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth	McCain
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 74, the nays are 24.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John W. Broomes, of Kansas, to be United States District Judge for the District of Kansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Broomes nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Rebecca Grady Jennings, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, John Kennedy, Johnny Isakson, Jerry Moran, Cory Gardner, John Cornyn, James E. Risch, Thom Tillis, Pat Roberts, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Richard Burr, Tom Cotton, Jeff Flake.

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 Rebecca Grady Jennings, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCain) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. Toomey).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. Coons) and the Senator from Illinois (Ms. Duckworth) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Young). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 94, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 73 Ex.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Gillibrand	Nelson
Baldwin	Graham	Paul
Barrasso	Grassley	Perdue
Bennet	Harris	Peters
Blumenthal	Hassan	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Reed
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Isakson	Schumer
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Jones	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kaine	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Smith
Corker	King	Stabenow
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Tester
Cotton	Leahy	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Manchin	Udall
Daines	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden
Fischer	Murkowski	Young
Flake	Murphy	
Gardner	Murray	

NAYS—2

Hirono	Sanders
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NOT VOTING—4

Coons	McCain
Duckworth	Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 94, the nays are 2.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Rebecca Grady Jennings, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Jennings nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action for the nominations confirmed during today's session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

AMENDING THE WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE WATER RIGHTS QUANTIFICATION ACT OF 2010

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany S. 140.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 140) entitled "An Act to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund," do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 140.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to concur.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 140, an act to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Qualification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund.

Mitch McConnell, Cory Gardner, Orrin G. Hatch, Tom Cotton, Steve Daines, Roy Blunt, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch, Johnny Isakson, John Thune, Thom Tillis, James M. Inhofe, Pat Roberts, John Hoeven, John Boozman, Jeff Flake, Jerry Moran.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 2227

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 140, with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] moves to concur in the House amendment to S. 140, with an amendment numbered 2227.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end add the following:

"This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment."

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays on the motion to concur with amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2228 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2227

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 2228 to amendment No. 2227.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "1 day" and insert "2 days"

MOTION TO REFER WITH AMENDMENT NO. 2229

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to refer the House message on S. 140 to the Committee on Indian Affairs with instructions to report back forthwith.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] moves to refer the House message to accompany S. 140 to the Committee on Indian Affairs to report back forthwith with instructions, being amendment numbered 2229.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end add the following:

"This Act shall take effect 3 days after the date of enactment."

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays on my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2230

Mr. McCONNELL. I have an amendment to the instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 2230 to the instructions of the motion to refer.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "3 days" and insert "4 days"

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays on my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2231 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2230

Mr. McCONNELL. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 2231 to amendment No. 2230.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "4" and insert "5"

CONFIRMATION OF REBECCA JENNINGS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Senate completed its work on the personnel business for this week the way we started—by confirming a talented nominee to be a Federal district judge in Kentucky.

President Trump nominated Rebecca Jennings to be the first woman to serve as a district judge for the Western District of Kentucky. Widely recognized for her outstanding legal talents and judgment, Ms. Jennings has earned the support of Kentucky's legal community. In fact, dozens of her peers wrote that "she has a first-rate analytical mind and superb judgment. She is principled, thoughtful, and hard-working." These qualities are exactly what I believe we need on the Federal district courts. Our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee agreed, advancing Ms. Jennings' nomination to the Senate floor on a voice vote. Just moments ago, the Senate fulfilled its responsibility, confirming another well-qualified nominee for Kentucky and for the Nation, both of which will be well-served by Rebecca Jennings on the bench.

I hope the Senate can build on this momentum and continue confirming more of the President's abundantly qualified nominees without undue delay.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

CONFIRMATION OF JOHN BROOMES

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, judges and litigants in our State of Kansas have been anxious to have the vacant positions in our State filled. One of those two vacancies in district judgeships is the longest open vacancy in the country, and today we accomplished the filling of one of those positions with the confirmation of John Broomes.

I rise to express my pleasure to my colleagues and to Mr. Broomes—my

pleasure for his willingness to be considered for this position, to be nominated by the President, and now to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate—and to express my pleasure to my colleagues for seeing his qualifications and experience and capabilities and making that confirmation happen just a few moments ago. He is a highly qualified individual, he is a well-respected attorney, and he has the intellect and legal mind and legal experience to receive this lifetime appointment as a Federal judge.

I take these lifetime appointments very seriously, and I want to make certain that, as a Kansas Senator and as a U.S. Senator, I am doing my part to put highly qualified and soundly principled judges in place to serve Kansas and the country. John Broomes meets these qualifications. In my conversations with him over the last year, he expressed a judicial philosophy that is dedicated to the interpretation of the law as written, recognition that no person is above the law, and treatment for all litigants in a fair and legal fashion.

I appreciate Mr. Broomes' naval service to our country. His willingness to serve is a mark of his character and his love for our Nation.

I want to highlight a note from a distinguished professor at Washburn Law School in Topeka, KS. He indicated in his letter that he found Mr. Broomes to be "the most gifted legal mind he has ever encountered. Equally important, he is an honest and principled person and among the very best lawyers I know." Dr. David Pierce, a law school professor, is a highly regarded member of the faculty and chairman of the Washburn business and transactional law program, and his confirmation of my view of John Broomes is very fulfilling to me. It gives me great confidence that we have made a wise decision today.

Mr. Broomes served as a law clerk to U.S. Magistrate Judge Donald Bostwick and U.S. District Court Judge Monti Belot, and their reputation and experience add to Mr. Broomes' qualifications.

I met Mr. Broomes' family, and I was so impressed with him as a father. I was impressed with his wife and their children. He has a reputation as a solid, decent, and conscientious person and a man with a conscience. He also has a reputation for expertly managing cases and solving complex litigation. He has been a valuable attorney to the Hinkle law firm, a highly regarded law firm in Wichita, KS. That firm is known for employing associates and having partners who meet the qualifications that we would want in a judge. He focuses on business and natural resources law, and that knowledge of those kinds of cases will be very valuable to litigation that is heard in my State.

Mr. Broomes was unanimously confirmed by the Senate Judiciary Committee in December, and I appreciate the support my colleagues have demonstrated on his confirmation today.

Thank you, Mr. President.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN ACTIVE

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, every week I come to the floor to talk about my great State and a person in my State who has made a difference in their communities and in the State and sometimes throughout the entire country. I call this person our Alaskan of the Week, and it is actually one of the best things I get to do each week here in the U.S. Senate.

There is a lot to brag about with regard to Alaska. Frankly, while I love my job here, I wish I were home right now. My wife is there. Although the temperatures are still only in the single digits in some places in Alaska, particularly up north, springtime, which we call breakup in Alaska, has hit much of our State.

I will admit, breakup is not always pretty. The State gets a lot of snow—dirty, melting snow. There is sloshing through the slush and big, huge puddles everywhere. But the sun is now high in the sky and staying up longer and longer every day. Birds are migrating back by the tens of thousands, and the excitement of spring is everywhere. You can feel it and sense it.

The changing of the seasons is no more extreme and no more profound than in Alaska, where the weather, hunting, and passing on of traditions and culture are literally a way of life for many.

Today, what I would like to do is take you to Bethel, AK—a town of about 6,000 people about 400 miles west of Anchorage, which is in the full throws of breakup—in order for the Presiding Officer and everyone watching to meet our Alaskan of the Week, Mr. John Active.

John is an extraordinary Alaskan who has spent decades, season after season, on the radio, telling stories and passing on traditions helping to keep the Yup'ik culture of Alaska alive.

John, who is 70 years old, has lived a storied life, which began in a village outside of Bethel. Unfortunately, after he was born his mother passed away, and his father couldn't care for him, so he was adopted by James and Elsie Active and brought to live in Bethel. His grandmother, Maggie Lind, was a well-known storyteller, and John's childhood was filled with stories about Yup'ik legends, wisdom, and culture. John's experiences as he grew up led him to an incredibly important vocation—translating his native language into English.

You might ask: Translating? Well, yes, that is actually very important in Alaska. You see, we have about 20 different indigenous languages still spoken by the Native peoples of my great State, and throughout my great State thousands of Alaskans literally speak these languages.

During John's senior year of high school, he worked for the Bureau of In-

dian Affairs. He was able to travel to different villages translating the Yup'ik language and helping applicants fill out paperwork for housing, which was great training for the rest of his life.

He also became passionate about the news and spreading the news. In the 1970s, KYUK—Bethel's new local public radio and television shows, which are so important to get the word out in these smaller communities—was born, and John was there as one of the very first Yup'ik language broadcasters.

Many people in the area, particularly the elders, still read and speak only in Yup'ik. John was so intent on letting them know what was happening in the world in the early days that he would wait for the cargo plane to arrive from Anchorage to grab the Anchorage Daily News, the daily newspaper, and rush into the radio station to simultaneously translate the news from English into Yup'ik as he read it.

There are very few people in the world who can simultaneously translate English to Yup'ik. Among many other challenges, there simply aren't Yup'ik words for some English words. Take, for example, the word “computer” and what a computer does. It can take an entire paragraph in Yup'ik to explain that. When a bank was trying to inform Alaskans in the region about home loans, John found that it could take an entire paragraph to translate the phrase “home equity” into Yup'ik. So he had a really hard job, but he did it really, really well.

Over the years, John became known for starting his newscast with a short Yup'ik story. These were stories that he had learned from his grandmother, such as, “How the Fox Turned Red” and “How the Crane Got Its Blue Eyes”—stories that were eventually broadcast around the State. Some of them were even picked up by National Public Radio for the country.

He also became a columnist for the Anchorage Daily News and other papers across Alaska, sharing the stories of his ancestors and his humorous views on the world. It is such a delight to listen to him and to read his stories. He has become a beloved figure throughout Alaska.

But John's work goes way beyond entertainment. His work goal has been to preserve the Yup'ik language, which goes hand in hand with preserving the Yup'ik culture. It is so vitally important in our State where, as I have mentioned, we have 20 indigenous languages. Not a lot of people know that. In the not-so-distant past, unfortunately, Alaska Natives were discouraged, and sometimes even punished, for speaking in their native languages. Now, however, there are more and more efforts, encouraged by people like John Active and by KYUK, to help keep native languages and the cultures that belong to them alive and thriving. For example, my wife Julie is now taking classes in Koyukon, her family's native language.

John also wants to spread not just the culture but the values of the Yup'ik community—in his words, to “Yup'ify” Alaska and the world. With the help of KYUK, the amazing station that serves over 22,000 predominantly Yup'ik residents in this region of Alaska, he and his other cohosts have been able to do that.

“There are so many people in this region who can understand what we're saying,” John said. “I feel it makes them proud to hear their language being spoken over the airwaves. . . . I am helping to keep the language and culture alive.”

March 30 was John's last show on KYUK. He is now taking a well-deserved retirement, but his legacy and the radio's commitment to their Yup'ik culture continues. KYUK will continue to be a pioneer in bringing 1 hour a day of local news in the Yup'ik language and 5½ hours a week of Yup'ik public affairs and talk shows, all in the language of the region.

I want to thank KYUK for being a pioneer in bringing bilingual content to Alaskans and public broadcasting, and, of course, I want to thank John for being one of the major conduits for that pioneering work.

Your work, John, has touched so many, and you have certainly done your part to serve your fellow Alaskans while “Yup'ifying” the State, the country, and even the world. So thanks, and congratulations on being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

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.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for April 2018. The report compares current-law levels of spending and revenues with the amounts the Senate agreed to in the budget resolution for fiscal year 2018, H. Con. Res. 71. This information is necessary for the Senate Budget Committee to determine whether budget points of order lie against pending legislation. The Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, prepared this report pursuant to section

308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, CBA.

The enforceable levels included in this report reflect all of the numerical adjustments made to the resolution since its passage. The information contained in this report captures legislative activity from passage of the budget resolution through April 9, 2018. The only law enacted with significant budgetary effects since my last filing, on February 28, 2018, was the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, P.L. 115-141.

Republican Budget Committee staff prepared tables 1 to 4 of this report.

Table 1 gives the amount by which each Senate authorizing committee exceeds or is below its allocation for budget authority and outlays under the most recently adopted budget resolution. This information is used for enforcing committee allocations pursuant to section 302 of the CBA. For this reporting period, 10 of the 16 authorizing committees are in compliance with their allocations. As previously reported, the Senate Veterans' Affairs; Energy and Natural Resources; Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; Finance; and Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committees are in breach of their allocations. Since my last report, several committees' allocations were affected by changes in the nonappropriations provisions included in the omnibus appropriations bill. Still, the only new committee creating a breach was the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, which spent \$100 million more in both budget authority and outlays through Division P of the omnibus, Ray Baum's Act of 2018, than allowed under the budget resolution.

Table 2 gives the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations is below or exceeds the statutory spending limits. This information is used to determine points of order related to the spending caps found in sections 312 and 314 of the CBA. Appropriations for 2018 are consistent with the statutory limits as modified by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018.

The budget resolution contains two points of order limiting the use of changes in mandatory programs in appropriations bills, CHIMPS. Tables 3 and 4 show compliance with fiscal year 2018 limits for overall CHIMPS \$17 billion, and the crime victims fund CHIMP, \$11.2 billion, respectively. This information is used for determining points of order under sections 4102 and 4103 of H. Con. Res. 71, respectively. CHIMPS included in the 2018 omnibus comply with the existing limits.

In addition to the tables provided by Budget Committee Republican staff, I am submitting CBO tables, which I will use to enforce budget totals approved by Congress.

CBO provided a spending and revenue report for fiscal year 2018, which helps enforce aggregate spending levels in budget resolutions under CBA section 311. CBO's estimates, which now include the full effects of appropriations for this year, show that current-law

levels of spending for fiscal year 2018 are above the amounts assumed in the budget resolution by \$152.2 billion in budget authority and \$105.5 billion in outlays. For fiscal year 2018, Social Security outlay levels remain consistent with the budget resolution's assumption.

Current-law revenues continue to be in excess of the levels assumed by the budget resolution. On-budget revenue levels currently exceed assumed levels by \$3.2 billion in fiscal year 2018, \$39.8 billion over the fiscal year 2018–2022 period, and \$94.2 billion over the fiscal year 2018–2027 period. For fiscal year 2018, Social Security revenues are \$446 million below levels assumed in the budget resolution.

CBO's report also provides information needed to enforce the Senate pay-as-you-go, PAYGO, rule. The Senate's PAYGO scorecard currently shows deficit reduction of \$24 million in fiscal year 2018, but deficit increases of \$10 million over the fiscal year 2017–2022 period and \$11 million over the fiscal year 2017–2027 period. For fiscal year 2018, legislation has been enacted that would reduce outlays by \$24 million. Over the fiscal year 2017–2022 period, legislation has been enacted that CBO estimates will decrease outlays by \$13 million and decrease revenues by \$23 million. Over the fiscal year 2017–2027 period, legislation has been enacted that CBO estimates will decrease outlays by \$11 million and decrease revenues by \$22 million. Consistent with recent congressional practice, the direct spending and revenue provisions included in the non-Appropriations Committee portion of the fiscal year 2018 omnibus, which increased deficits by \$2.8 billion over 10 years are being excluded from PAYGO calculations. This is due to provisions in the omnibus that mandated the exclusion of those budgetary effects both from the Senate and statutory PAYGO scorecards. The Senate's PAYGO rule is enforced by section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71.

Also included in this submission is a table tracking the Senate's budget enforcement activity on the floor since Congress adopted the budget resolution. Two points of order were raised since my last filing. On March 14, 2018, Senator Sanders raised a PAYGO point of order against S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act. This point of order was waived by a vote of 67 to 31. On March 21, 2018, Leader McConnell raised a PAYGO point of order against Senator Wyden's amendment, S. Amdt. 2213, to H.R. 1865, the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017. This point of order was sustained with a vote of 21 to 78 on Senator Wyden's waiver motion.

All years in the accompanying tables are fiscal years.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables be printed in the RECORD.

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

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (–) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

(In millions of dollars)

	2018	2018–2022	2018–2027
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry			
Budget Authority	47	629	1,163
Outlays	47	711	1,249
Armed Services			
Budget Authority	–33	–102	–76
Outlays	–24	–15	–16
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Commerce, Science, and Transportation			
Budget Authority	0	10	100
Outlays	0	50	100
Energy and Natural Resources			
Budget Authority	220	–78	–70
Outlays	198	–82	–83
Environment and Public Works			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Finance			
Budget Authority	21,971	69,492	75,504
Outlays	5,211	14,037	6,435
Foreign Relations			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Judiciary			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions			
Budget Authority	705	–46	–46
Outlays	205	318	–39
Rules and Administration			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Intelligence			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Veterans' Affairs			
Budget Authority	2,100	2,100	2,100
Outlays	1,050	2,100	2,100
Indian Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Small Business			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Total			
Budget Authority	25,010	72,005	78,675
Outlays	6,687	17,119	9,746

TABLE 2.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS ¹
(Budget authority, in millions of dollars)

	2018	
	Security ²	Nonsecurity ²
Statutory Discretionary Limits	629,000	579,000
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	23,259
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	5,400	54,200
Defense	589,320	132
Energy and Water Development	21,800	21,400
Financial Services and General Government	31	23,392
Homeland Security	2,058	45,665
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	35,252
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	177,100
Legislative Branch	0	4,700
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	10,091	81,900
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	42,000
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	300	70,000
Current Level Total	629,000	579,000
Total Enacted Above (+) or Below (–) Statutory Limits	0	0

¹ This table excludes spending pursuant to adjustments to the discretionary spending limits. These adjustments are allowed for certain purposes in section 251(b)(2) of BBEDCA.

² Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending.

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)

[Budget authority, millions of dollars]	
	2018
CHIMPS Limit for Fiscal Year 2018	17,000
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	10,228
Defense	0
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	0
Homeland Security	0
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	6,772
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0
Current Level Total	17,000
Total CHIMPS Above (+) or Below (–) Budget Resolution	0

TABLE 4.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAM (CHIMP) TO THE CRIME VICTIMS FUND

[Budget authority, millions of dollars]	
	2018
Crime Victims Fund (CVF) CHIMP Limit for Fiscal Year 2018	11,224
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	10,228
Defense	0
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	0
Homeland Security	0
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0
Current Level Total	10,228
Total CVF CHIMP Above (+) or Below (–) Budget Resolution	–996

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, April 11, 2018.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2018 budget and is current through April 9, 2018. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of H. Con. Res. 71, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2018.

Since our last letter dated February 28, 2018, the Congress has cleared and the President has signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141). That act has significant effects on budget authority, outlays, and revenues in fiscal year 2018.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL,
Director.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018, AS OF APRIL 9, 2018

[In billions of dollars]

	Budget Resolution	Current Level	Current Level Over/Under (–) Resolution
On-Budget:			
Budget Authority	3,399.8	3,552.0	152.2
Outlays	3,221.3	3,326.8	105.5
Revenues	2,497.1	2,500.3	3.2
Off-Budget:			
Social Security Outlays ^a	849.6	849.6	0.0
Social Security Revenues	873.3	872.9	–0.4

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

^a Excludes administrative expenses paid from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018, AS OF APRIL 9, 2018

[In millions of dollars]

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Previously Enacted ^{a,b} :			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,658,139
Permanents and other spending legislation	2,105,225	2,003,386	n.a.
Appropriation legislation	0	513,307	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	–866,685	–866,685	n.a.
Total, Previously Enacted	1,238,540	1,650,008	2,658,139
Enacted Legislation:			
Authorizing Legislation:			
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (P.L. 115–91)	–33	–24	0
CHIP and Public Health Funding Extension Act (P.L. 115–96, Division C)	705	205	0
An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 . . . and for other purposes (P.L. 115–96, Division D)	2,100	1,050	0
An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018 (P.L. 115–97)	–8,600	–8,600	–143,800
An act making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (P.L. 115–120, Divisions C and D)	14,509	1,203	–1,263
Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115–123, Divisions A and C–G) ^{b,c}	7,504	4,050	–12,424
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Divisions M–V (P.L. 115–141) ^d	225	203	–348
Total, Authorizing Legislation	16,410	–1,913	–157,835
Appropriation Legislation:			
Department of Defense Missile Defeat and Defense Enhancements Appropriations Act, 2018 (P.L. 115–96, Division B)	4,686	803	0
Further Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2018 (P.L. 115–123, Division B, Subdivision 1)	84,436	11,185	0
Further Extension of Continuing Appropriations Act, 2018, (P.L. 115–123, Division B, Subdivision 3)	–315	–315	0
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Divisions A–L (P.L. 115–141) ^{d,e,f}	2,259,985	1,663,110	0
Total, Appropriation Legislation	2,348,792	1,674,783	0
Total, Enacted Legislation	2,365,202	1,672,870	–157,835
Entitlements and Mandatories:			
Budget resolution estimates of appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	–51,440	4,205	0
Total Current Level ^{a,g}	3,552,039	3,326,820	2,500,304
Total Senate Resolution ^h	3,399,841	3,221,349	2,497,139
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	152,198	105,471	3,165
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Memorandum:			
Revenues, 2018–2027:			
Senate Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	31,090,119
Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	30,995,967
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	94,152
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.

^a Includes the budgetary effects of the following acts that affect budget authority, outlays, or revenues and were cleared by the Congress during the 1st session of the 115th Congress, but before the adoption of H. Con. Res. 71, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018: the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–46); the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–48); a joint resolution compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (P.L. 115–54); the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2018 and Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2017 (P.L. 115–56); the Emergency Aid to American Survivors of Hurricanes Irma and Jose Overseas Act (P.L. 115–57); the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–62); the Disaster Fax Relief and Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–63); the Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Education Relief Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–64); and the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2017 (P.L. 115–72).

^b Emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Deficit Control Act does not count for certain budgetary enforcement purposes. These amounts, which are not included in the current level totals, are as follows:

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Disaster Fax Relief and Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–63)	263	263	0
Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115–123)	2,217	1,469	–509
Total	2,480	1,732	–509

^c The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115–123) contains seven divisions: Division A, Subdivision 2 of Division B, and Divisions C–F contain authorizing legislation, of which the budgetary effects of Subdivision 2 of Division B were designated as being for emergency requirements. Subdivisions 1 and 3 of Division B contain appropriation legislation: Subdivision 1 provided supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for disaster relief and designated those amounts as being for emergency requirements, and section 158 of Subdivision 3 provided authority for the duration of fiscal year 2018, for the Secretary of Energy to draw down and sell crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Division G of P.L. 115–123 provided for the budgetary treatment of Divisions A–F.

^d Sections 540–543 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2017 (Division F of P.L. 115–31), extended several immigration programs through the end of fiscal year 2017. Several continuing resolutions continued those authorities through March 23, 2018, and sections 202–205 of title II of Division M of P.L. 115–141 further extended those programs through 2018. CBO estimates that extending those authorities for the entirety of fiscal year 2018 will increase on-budget direct spending by \$5 million in fiscal year 2018, \$27 million over the 2018–2022 period, and \$53 million over the 2018–2027 period. In addition, CBO estimates that extending those authorities will decrease off-budget direct spending by \$1 million over the 2018–2022 period and by \$7 million over the 2022–2027 period. Further, CBO estimates that continuing those authorities will increase revenues by \$2 million over the 2018–2022 period and by \$7 million over the 2018–2027 period. Consistent with the budgetary treatment of Divisions K–V of P.L. 115–141, the budgetary effects of extending the immigration programs through March 23, 2018, are charged to the Appropriations Committee; the effects of extending the programs for the remainder of fiscal year 2018 are charged to the relevant authorizing committees.

^e Pursuant to sections 1001–1004 of the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114–255), certain funding provided to the Department of Health and Human Services—in particular the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—in 2017 through 2026 shall not count for the purposes of complying with provisions of the Deficit Control Act or the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974. As a result, the amounts shown do not include \$1.056 billion in budget authority or \$770 million in associated outlays in fiscal year 2018 within the following subcommittees' jurisdictions: \$60 million in budget authority and \$22 million in outlays for the FDA (Agriculture); and \$996 million in budget authority and \$748 million in outlays for HHS, which includes \$500 million in budget authority for state responses to the opioid abuse crisis and \$496 million for NIH (Labor, HHS, Education).

^f Section 255 of the Departments of Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018 (Division H of P.L. 115–141), delayed implementation of the recommendations of the United States Preventive Services Task Force with respect to breast cancer screening, mammography, and prevention. CBO estimates that the delay will increase direct spending (budget authority and outlays) by \$14 million in fiscal year 2019 and by \$6 million in fiscal year 2020. In addition, CBO estimates that section 225 will decrease revenues by \$23 million in fiscal year 2019 (of which \$6 million will be off-budget) and will decrease revenues by \$9 million in fiscal year 2020 (of which \$2 million will be off-budget).

^g For purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the Senate, the resolution, as approved by the Senate, does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, current level does not include these items.

^h Periodically, the Senate Committee on the Budget revises the budgetary levels in H. Con. Res. 71, pursuant to various provisions of the resolution. The total for the Initial Senate Resolution shown below excludes \$47,660 million in budget authority, \$22,467 million in outlays, and \$150,003 million in revenues assumed in H. Con. Res. 71 for discretionary spending not constrained by the budgetary caps established by the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112–25) and subsequently amended, including spending that qualifies for adjustments pursuant to section 4205 of H. Con. Res. 71.

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Initial Senate Resolution	3,089,061	3,109,221	2,640,939
Revisions:			
Pursuant to section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 3003 of H. Con. Res. 71	–8,600	–8,600	–143,800
Pursuant to sections 311 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974	4,686	803	0
Pursuant to sections 311 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974	84,436	11,185	0
Pursuant to sections 311 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 4108 of H. Con. Res. 71	230,553	108,997	0
Pursuant to sections 311 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974	–295	–257	0
Revised Senate Resolution	3,399,841	3,221,349	2,497,139

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF APRIL 9, 2018

(In millions of dollars)

	2018	2017–2022	2017–2027
Beginning Balance ^a	0	0	0
Enacted Legislation: ^{b,c,d}			
Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act of 2017 (H.R. 304, P.L. 115–83)	*	*	*
TSP Modernization Act of 2017 (H.R. 3031, P.L. 115–84)	*	*	*
FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017 (H.R. 3243, P.L. 115–88)	*	*	*
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (H.R. 2810, P.L. 115–91)	–24	–16	–21
Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017, Improvements Act (S. 371, P.L. 115–94)	*	*	*
An Act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue Department of Homeland Security-wide guidance and develop training programs as part of the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign, and for other purposes (H.R. 1370, P.L. 115–96) ^e	*	*	1
An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018 (H.R. 1, P.L. 115–97) ^f	*	n.a.	n.a.
To amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation (H.R. 560, P.L. 115–101)	*	*	*
400 Years of African-American History Commission Act (H.R. 1242, P.L. 115–102)	*	*	*
Western Oregon Tribal Fairness Act (H.R. 1306, P.L. 115–103)	*	2	5
Rapid DNA Act of 2017 (S. 139, P.L. 115–118)	*	*	*
An Act making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (H.R. 195, P.L. 115–120)	*	*	1
To authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to John L. Canley for acts of valor during the Vietnam War while a member of the Marine Corps (H.R. 4641, P.L. 115–122)	*	*	1
Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 ^{g,h} (H.R. 1892, P.L. 115–123)	*	*	*
Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 (S. 534, P.L. 115–126)	*	*	*
Kari's Law Act of 2017 (S. 582, P.L. 115–127)	*	*	*
An Act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a consistent eligibility date for provision of Department of Veterans Affairs memorial headstones and markers for eligible spouses and dependent children of veterans whose remains are unavailable. (H.R. 3656, P.L. 115–136)	*	*	*
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (H.R. 1825, P.L. 115–141) ⁱ	*	24	24
Eliminating Government-funded Oil-painting Act (S. 188, P.L. 115–158)	*	*	*
Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017 (H.R. 1865)	*	*	*
Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act of 2018 (H.R. 4547)	*	*	*
Current Balance	–24	10	11
Changes to Revenues	0	–23	–22
Changes to Outlays	–24	–13	–11

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: P.L. = Public Law; * = between –\$500,000 and \$500,000.

^a On October 26, 2017, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget reset the Senate's Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) Scorecard to zero for all fiscal years.^b The amounts shown represent the estimated effect of the public laws on the deficit.^c Excludes off-budget amounts.^d Excludes amounts designated as emergency requirements.^e Pursuant to Division E of P.L. 115–96, the budgetary effects of Divisions C and D are excluded from the Senate's PAYGO Scorecard.^f Section 3003 of H. Con. Res. 71, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, granted the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee the authority to revise balances on the Senate PAYGO ledger to fully incorporate the budgetary effects of P.L. 115–97. The Chairman exercised this authority with a filing in the Congressional Record on December 19, 2017.^g Pursuant to section 70101(b) of Division G, the budgetary effects of Division A, Subdivision 2 of Division B, and Divisions C through F are excluded from the Senate's PAYGO Scorecard.^h Pursuant to section 232(b) of H. Con. Res. 290 (106th Congress), the Concurrent Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001, the scoring effects related to the Federal Reserve Surplus Funds are excluded from the Senate's PAYGO Scorecard.ⁱ Pursuant to section 701 of Division M of P.L. 115–141, the budgetary effects of Division M and each succeeding division are excluded from the Senate's PAYGO Scorecard. The amounts shown reflect the revenue effects of section 225 of Division H of Public Law 115–141.

ENFORCEMENT REPORT OF THE 115TH CONGRESS SINCE THE ADOPTION OF H. CON. RES. 71

Vote	Date	Measure	Violation	Motion to Waive ¹	Result
294	December 1, 2017	S. Amdt. 1720 to S. Amdt. 1618 to H.R. 1—created a point of order against legislation that cuts Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid benefits.	313(b)(1)(A)—Byrd violation ²	Sen. Sanders (I–VT)	46–54, Not Waived.
295	December 1, 2017	S. Amdt. 1854 to S. Amdt. 1618 to H.R. 1—amended the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the Child Tax Credit.	302(f)—Exceeds a committee's 302(a) allocation ³	Sen. Brown (D–OH)	48–52, Not Waived.
296	December 1, 2017	S. Amdt. 1850 to S. Amdt. 1618 to H.R. 1—increased the refundability of the child tax credit.	302(f)—Exceeds a committee's 302(a) allocation ⁴	Sen. Rubio (R–FL)	29–71, Not Waived.
299	December 2, 2017	S. Amdt. 1846 to S. Amdt. 1618 to H.R. 1—provided for middle class tax relief.	4105—Unknown Budgetary Effects ⁵	Sen. Kaine (D–VA)	34–65, Not Waived.
301	December 2, 2017	S. Amdt. 1717 to S. Amdt. 1618 to H.R. 1—struck title II	302(f)—Exceeds a committee's 302(a) allocation ⁶	Sen. Cantwell (D–WA)	48–52, Not Waived.

ENFORCEMENT REPORT OF THE 115TH CONGRESS SINCE THE ADOPTION OF H. CON. RES. 71—Continued

Vote	Date	Measure	Violation	Motion to Waive ¹	Result
322	December 20, 2017	H.R. 1—provided for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.	313(b)(1)—Byrd Rule violations ⁷	Sen. Enzi (R-WY)	51–48, Not Waived.
324	December 21, 2017	H.R. 1370—continuing resolution	306—Budget Committee jurisdiction ⁸	Sen. Collins (R-ME)	91–8, Waived.
53	March 14, 2018	S. 2155—the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act.	4106(a)—Senate Pay-As-You-Go violation ⁹	Sen. Crapo (R-ID)	67–31, Waived.
59	March 21, 2018	S. Amdt. 2213 to H.R. 1865—provided additional funding to the Justice Department to combat online sex trafficking.	4106(a)—Senate Pay-As-You-Go violation ¹⁰	Sen. Wyden (D-OR)	21–78, Not Waived.

¹ All motions to waive were offered pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

² Senator Enzi raised a 313(b)(1)(A) point of order against the Sanders amendment because the amendment did not produce a change in outlays or a change in revenues and was extraneous to the reconciliation instruction.

³ Senator Enzi raised a 302(f) point of order as S. Amdt. 1854 would cause the underlying legislation to exceed the Finance Committee's section 302(a) allocation of new budget authority or outlays.

⁴ Senator Wyden raised a 302(f) point of order as S. Amdt. 1850 would cause the underlying legislation to exceed the Finance Committee's section 302(a) allocation of new budget authority or outlays.

⁵ Senator Toomey raised this point of order because the budgetary effects of the Kaine amendment were unknown at the time of consideration.

⁶ Senator Murkowski raised a 302(f) point of order because the Cantwell amendment, if adopted, would have caused the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to exceed its section 302(a) allocation of budget authority or outlays.

⁷ Senator Sanders raised a 313(b)(1)(A) point of order against section 11000(a), and 313(b)(1)(D) points of order against page 75, line 17 through page 76, line 9 and against the phrase "tuition-paying" as it appeared on page 309, line 12, and page 309, lines 14 through 15.

⁸ Senator Paul raised a section 306 point of order in relation to the statutory pay-go scorecard.

⁹ Senator Sanders raised a section 4106(a) of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress) point of order against the bill because the bill would increase the on-budget deficit.

¹⁰ Senator McConnell raised a section 4106(a) of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress) point of order against the amendment because the amendment would increase the on-budget deficit.

(At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for vote No. 70 on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 666, Andrew Wheeler, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. On vote No. 70, had I been present, I would have voted nay on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 666.

Mr. President, I was also necessarily absent for vote No. 71 on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 666, Andrew Wheeler, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. On vote No. 71, had I been present, I would have voted nay on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 666.●

CONFIRMATION OF ANDREW WHEELER

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, last year, Democrats kept the Senate in session all night to protest the nomination of Scott Pruitt to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.

We took this unusual step to protest Mr. Pruitt's hostility to the EPA's core mission and to highlight how his close ties to the fossil fuel industry could lead to serious conflicts of interest and breaches of the public trust.

Over the past year, Mr. Pruitt has exemplified the toxic mixture of corruption and hostility to government we have come to expect from the Trump administration.

Mr. Pruitt has radically changed the EPA's mission during his time in office.

He has abandoned the Agency's traditional mission to protect human health and the environment—a commitment that spanned administrations of both parties—in favor of serving the narrow interests of his friends in the fossil fuel industry.

During his tenure, Mr. Pruitt has begun work to repeal the Clean Power Plan, roll back vehicle fuel economy standards, and eliminate commonsense protections for our air and water.

These actions are only three examples of the damage he is doing to our country and environment as the Administrator of the EPA.

Through his actions, Mr. Pruitt confirms he does not understand why Congress and President Nixon established the EPA in the first place.

Mr. Pruitt's policy agenda is damaging enough, but we can scarcely go a week without learning about a new scandal or breach of the public trust at the EPA.

Mr. Pruitt is already being investigated for his first-class travel, spending tens of thousands of dollars on a soundproof phone booth, and providing massive pay increases to his political appointees.

Earlier this month, we learned that Mr. Pruitt got a sweetheart deal from an energy lobbyist to rent an apartment on Capitol Hill at way below market rate.

Scott Pruitt should be fired for cause, but I also find myself agreeing with former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie for once. Scott Pruitt never should have been appointed EPA Administrator in the first place.

Earlier today, the Senate voted to confirm Andrew Wheeler to be the Deputy EPA Administrator. I strongly opposed and voted against his nomination.

At a time when the current EPA Administrator is under siege for his lack of ethics, we don't need a Deputy Administrator who will prioritize the interests of the fossil fuel industry over the public's.

Prior to his confirmation, Mr. Wheeler worked as a fossil fuel lobbyist at a major DC law firm.

His lobbying clients included Murray Energy, the largest privately owned coal firm in the United States.

Bob Murray, the head of the company, is one of President Trump's biggest supporters in the industry.

We certainly don't need another fossil fuel ally undermining the EPA's mission to protect public health in a senior leadership position at the Agency.

During his confirmation hearing last November, Mr. Wheeler continued to question the overwhelming scientific consensus about climate change. He was voted out of committee on a narrow, party-line vote.

There is a serious ethical cloud hanging over the EPA, and I am disappointed that the majority leader forced a vote on Mr. Wheeler's nomination before we had a chance to question the nominee about the ongoing turmoil at the Agency.

Although we weren't successful in blocking Andrew Wheeler's nomination today, I will continue to hold the EPA accountable for the damage it is doing to our environment and our country.

REMEMBERING PEGGY ANN "PEG" LAUTENSCHLAGER

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Peggy Ann "Peg" Lautenschlager, whose passing at the age of 62 leaves Wisconsin without one of its greatest public servants. Peg was a true trailblazer in Wisconsin politics, and her kindness, tenacity, and strength will be greatly missed.

Peg was a native of Fond du Lac, WI. The only daughter of Milton and Patsy Lautenschlager, Peg attended Goodrich High School, now known as Fond du Lac High School, and graduated in 1973 as valedictorian of her class. Her early academic accomplishments were the initial signs of her future success.

After graduating summa cum laude from Lake Forest College, Peg earned her law degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1980. Peg broke through the glass ceiling of Wisconsin politics a mere 5 years later and never looked back. In 1985, Peg won an election as the first woman district attorney for Winnebago County. She later served as Wisconsin's first woman attorney general from 2003 to 2007. Between those two important bookends of her career, she spent every ounce of her professional energy in service to the people of Wisconsin.

In 1987, she unseated a 32-year incumbent to win election to the State assembly representing her hometown of Fond du Lac. She quickly became well respected for her work promoting criminal justice reform, sexual assault prevention, fair elections, and open records. President Bill Clinton appointed her to serve as the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin in 1993. Peg found a mentor and a friend in her boss, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, who named Peg to the

U.S. Attorney General's advisory committee, the first Wisconsinite to serve on the committee.

Peg was unstoppable. She was one of those rare jewels who was as caring as she was brilliant and funny as she was passionate. She will go down in the history books as one of Wisconsin's most powerful women, and she used every bit of that power in pursuit of justice for those who didn't have a voice. Her greatest legacy, however, is not something you can point at or capture in a headline. It is the countless women who can see themselves in a courtroom or on a ballot because they were inspired by Peg's audacity in never letting anything stop her. It is the hundreds of young girls who can imagine themselves walking through doors that they had always assumed were closed to them because Peg had already blazed that trail.

Peg was a brilliant attorney, a fierce friend, and a loving mother. Colleagues and staff struggled to keep up with her as she juggled dozens of legal cases, three phones, and five children. She toggled seamlessly between a discussion of the finer points of case law against drug manufacturers overcharging for pharmaceuticals and a call about her middle-schooler's wardrobe crisis. She tackled both challenges with the same passion, heart, and ingenuity.

Peg's memory will be kept alive by her husband, Bill, her five children, and all of us lucky enough to have known her. She knew that serving as the first woman attorney general in Wisconsin was not only an honor, it was a momentous responsibility. She carried that honor and responsibility proudly. She leaves behind a legacy that will be carried forward by women in Wisconsin who boldly pursue success in law and politics.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING PHILIPSBURG BREWING COMPANY

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week, I have the honor of recognizing Philipsburg Brewing Company in Philipsburg, MT.

Philipsburg Brewing Company opened in August of 2012. What started as a four-person team has since grown into a 16-person operation. With the expansive growth in their business, their product now reaches almost the entire State. Recently, they were named the Best Brewery in Montana by Montana Mint.

While their business has expanded tremendously, it is their impact on the community that stands out most. Before they opened, the community did not have a gathering place. With the opening of the Philipsburg Brewing Company, folks now have a great atmosphere to be together with their friends, families, and dogs.

I congratulate Philipsburg Brewing Company on their tremendous success

and thank them for their positive impact on the community. I look forward to seeing their business grow and visiting the brewery again soon.●

TRIBUTE TO GROVER CONNELL, JR.

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I want to wish a lifelong citizen of New Jersey the happiest of birthdays. Grover Connell, Jr., celebrates his 100th birthday today. That alone is an accomplishment that not many people are able to achieve and is worthy of recognition.

Grover Connell, Jr., was born on April 12, 1918, to joyous parents, Mr. and Mrs. Grover Connell, Sr., who were the founders of a rice distribution and export business, Connell Rice & Sugar Co. After serving in the Navy as an officer on a Fletcher Class destroyer from 1942 to 1946 during WWII, Grover succeeded his late father and moved the business to a modern building near their family residence in Westfield, NJ, in 1950. There, he expanded his business, and by the 1970s, Connell Rice & Sugar Co. became one of largest exporters of domestically grown rice, serving over 100 countries around the world. With the growing success of the family-owned business, Grover extended his scope of operations and became involved with a vast variety of services and products, and the business was renamed the Connell Company.

The Connell Company has provided thousands of jobs to New Jersey residents with its business of leasing, distributing, and selling construction equipment; brokering and selling canned food products; offering asset management services in the technology sector; and arranging financing of leased equipment and commercial property development. Today, under the leadership of Grover Connell, Jr., the Connell Company is one of the greatest known brokers of domestically grown rice. Thanks to love and support of his late wife, Patricia, his two daughters, Terry and Toni, and his three grandsons, Shane, Duane, and Sean, the Connell Company continues to grow while remaining a privately held, family-run company.

I applaud and honor the exemplary life of Grover Connell, Jr., for his sacrifice and service to our Nation and nations around the world and for his ambition and humility throughout his life. New Jersey is better today for his relentless hard work and dedication. I am immensely proud to have him as a constituent, and I hope that his 100th year is the best one yet.●

TRIBUTE TO JULIE NADEAU

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize the extraordinary work of Julie Nadeau of Waterford, VT. Julie, a mother of five, has been a volunteer for the St. Johnsbury Meals on Wheels program for the past 4 years, delivering meals to area seniors 3 days a week.

Julie brings freshly cooked nutritious meals to 42 seniors in their homes, many of whom otherwise might not have enough to eat. She plays a critically important role helping ensure that older Vermonters in the most rural and lowest income region of our State have access to adequate nutrition. That, in and of itself, is no small matter.

Julie understands that she is doing much more than just delivering a meal. She is also providing invaluable social interaction and companionship for the seniors she visits. She takes pride in finding time to have meaningful conversations with each senior, which goes a long way to combat the effects of isolation that many older Vermonters face, especially in rural areas.

The regular visits serve another purpose as well. Julie routinely checks to make sure that the seniors are safe, secure, and warm. She knows each person she visits and recognizes immediately if something doesn't seem right. It is no exaggeration to say that Julie has saved Vermonters' lives by checking when no one answers the door, taking the time to discover that someone had fallen and been injured.

Julie Nadeau has my sincere appreciation for her remarkable work. Of course, Julie is but one of many regular volunteers who give their time to ensure that seniors receive nutritious meals and conversation. Each and every one of those volunteers deserves to be recognized for their efforts.

Moreover, the St. Johnsbury Meals on Wheels program is run by caring and dedicated professionals. Chefs Ashley Coburn and Amy Garfield prepare the nutritious meals that Julie delivers, and program director Diane Coburn ensures that everything runs smoothly, as the organization provides close to 36,000 meals this year, for a mere \$6.64 per meal.

The St. Johnsbury Meals on Wheels program is but one of many such programs that are doing incredible work all across the State. Together, those programs served more than 1 million meals in Vermont last year alone. This is an indispensable component of our social safety net for older Vermonters.

Last month was "March for Meals," when Meals on Wheels programs across the country expand their outreach to draw attention to the growing need for the services these agencies provide. I am enormously pleased that many of my Vermont staff rode along with Meals on Wheels volunteers across the State, including with Julie Nadeau, to see the wonderful work they are doing.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Cuccia, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:10 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. 4061. An act to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to improve the transparency of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, to improve the SIFI designation process, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4293. An act to reform the Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review process, the Dodd-Frank Act Stress Test process, 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. 4061. An act to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to improve the transparency of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, to improve the SIFI designation process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 4293. An act to reform the Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review process, the Dodd-Frank Act Stress Test process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following joint resolution was discharged by petition, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 802(c), and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 57. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Indirect Auto Lending and Compliance with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act".

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2667. A bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to provide for State and Tribal regulation of hemp production, and for other purposes.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-191. A joint memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Washington urging the United States Congress to pass and

the President of the United States to sign legislation reforming the harbor maintenance tax; to the Committee on Finance.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8008

Whereas, The federal harbor maintenance tax is assessed on the value of goods being shipped into United States ports; and

Whereas, The harbor maintenance tax is not collected on transpacific cargo shipped to the United States via rail or roads from ports in Mexico and Canada; and

Whereas, The ability to move transpacific cargo through Canadian ports and avoid paying the harbor maintenance tax is an incentive to divert cargo away from United States ports; and

Whereas, The federal maritime commission inquiry into the harbor maintenance tax found that up to half of United States bound containers coming into Canada's west coast ports could revert to using United States west coast ports if United States importers were relieved from paying the tax; and

Whereas, Current United States law does not require the revenues raised through the harbor maintenance tax to be fully spent on harbor maintenance related investments, collections have far exceeded fund appropriation and surplus collections will grow to over nine billion dollars this year; and

Whereas, Revenue raised through the harbor maintenance tax pays for dredging and other maintenance costs, with significant amounts being spent for dredging at east coast, Gulf, and Columbia River ports; and

Whereas, Certain deep water ports on the west coast that require no or little dredging, including the new Northwest Seaport Alliance consisting of the ports of Seattle and Tacoma, receive just over a penny on every dollar of harbor maintenance tax paid by shippers who use their ports; and

Whereas, The Columbia river channel is critical to maintain global trade and the port of Vancouver USA serves as the largest wheat export gateway in the nation; and

Whereas, With the recent widening of the Panama Canal and potential addition of a canal in Nicaragua, Washington ports face increasing competition for maritime goods bound for the United States; and

Whereas, Washington ports are ready to compete on a level playing field to efficiently move goods to market; Now, therefore, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that:

(1) Congress pass and the president sign legislation reforming the harbor maintenance tax; and

(2) Such legislation ensures that United States tax policy does not disadvantage United States ports and maritime cargo, strives to have all navigation channels including the Columbia River be fully maintained, and provides greater equity for harbor maintenance tax donor ports through expanded uses of the harbor maintenance revenues to meet all Northwest port needs.

Be it resolved, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Honorable Donald Trump, President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

POM-192. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urging the United States Congress to amend the Gun Control Act of 1968 to protect the constitutional rights of medical cannabis users; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE RESOLUTION 253

Whereas, In 1968, the Congress of the United States passed the Gun Control Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-618, 82 Stat. 1213) to regulate the firearms industry and firearms owners; and

Whereas, In 1970, the Congress of the United States passed the Controlled Substances Act (Public Law 91-513, 84 Stat. 1236), which designates cannabis in the most restrictive category as a Schedule I drug; and

Whereas, In 1993, the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (Public Law 103-159, 107 Stat. 1536) amended the Gun Control Act of 1968 by restricting individuals who use controlled substances from owning firearms and ammunition; and

Whereas, The Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has issued guidance on restricting individuals who use cannabis from owning firearms and ammunition; and

Whereas, Section 102 of the act of April 17, 2016 (P.L. 84, No. 16), known as the Medical Marijuana Act, states that "Scientific evidence suggests that medical marijuana is one potential therapy that may mitigate suffering in some patients and also enhance quality of life"; and

Whereas, The Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States guarantees "the right of the people to keep and bear arms"; and

Whereas, The Fifth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States guarantees that no person shall "be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law"; and

Whereas, The Tenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States provides: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United States to amend the Gun Control Act of 1968 to protect the constitutional rights of medical cannabis users; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States, the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM-193. A report from the Housing Authority of the City of High Point, North Carolina entitled "Housing Authority of the City of High Point 2017 Annual Report"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

POM-194. A resolution adopted by the Township Council of Berkeley, New Jersey, memorializing their opposition to offshore oil and gas exploration and drilling activities that would affect the coast of New Jersey, and calling upon the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to withdraw New Jersey and the entire Atlantic Ocean from consideration for the offshore oil and gas exploration, development, or drilling; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-195. A resolution adopted by the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach, Florida, memorializing their opposition to the proposal to dramatically expand domestic oil and gas production by increasing offshore drilling leases off Florida's Atlantic and Gulf coasts, as well as along both the east and west coasts of the continental United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-196. A resolution adopted by the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach, Florida, memorializing their opposition to the Administration's decision to end temporary protected status for Salvadoran immigrants in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

POM-197. A resolution adopted by the Common Council of East Chicago, Indiana memorializing its opposition to the President of the United States' rescission of

DACA and calling upon the United States Congress to take affirmative steps to develop a bipartisan pathway to citizenship for DREAMERS; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

POM-198. A resolution adopted by the City Council of New Orleans, Louisiana, memorializing its opposition to H.R. 38, the "Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017," S. 446, the "Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017," and any other attempts to undermine Louisiana state laws; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment:

H.R. 2229. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide permanent authority for judicial review of certain Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblower, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-229).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Jill Aiko Otake, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

Timothy A. Garrison, of Missouri, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri for the term of four years.

Kenji M. Price, of Hawaii, to be United States Attorney for the District of Hawaii for the term of four years.

John Cary Bittick, of Georgia, to be United States Marshal for the Middle District of Georgia for the term of four years.

David L. Lyons, of Georgia, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Georgia for the term of four years.

Rodney D. Ostermiller, of Montana, to be United States Marshal for the District of Montana for the term of four years.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2653. A bill to create a poverty relief benefit under title II of the Social Security Act for eligible individuals; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SMITH:

S. 2654. A bill to amend the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 to establish the Community Connect Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mrs. McCASKILL):

S. 2655. A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to promote hydropower development at existing nonpowered dams, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2656. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report biennially on actions taken to address areas of concerns that led to the inclusion of veterans health care in the High Risk List of the Government Accountability Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2657. A bill to amend title V of the Public Health Service Act to establish a grant program to create peer support recovery networks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2658. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection, analysis, and epidemiological research regarding neonatal abstinence syndrome; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. BALDWIN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2659. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to authorize employees of hospice programs to handle controlled substances in the residences of certain hospice patients to assist in disposal of those controlled substances; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. YOUNG:

S. 2660. A bill to require Federal agencies not performing security functions to relocate throughout the United States by the beginning of fiscal year 2030; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. HASSAN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2661. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to allow hospice providers to dispose of leftover prescription medications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2662. A bill to provide for a grant program for handgun licensing programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 2663. A bill to modify and improve provisions relating to environmental requirements for agriculture and agricultural producers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TILLIS, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 2664. A bill to reform the GEAR UP program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 2665. A bill to require guidance on how the Food and Drug Administration will consider claims of opioid sparing and on the conditions under which the Food and Drug Administration will consider misuse and abuse of drugs in making certain determinations of safety; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2666. A bill to improve assistance provided by the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership to small manufacturers in the defense industrial supply chain on matters relating to cybersecurity, and for other

purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. PAUL):

S. 2667. A bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to provide for State and Tribal regulation of hemp production, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2668. A bill to require a pilot program on the earning by special operations forces medics of credits towards a physician assistant degree; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 460. A resolution condemning Boko Haram and calling on the Governments of the United States of America and Nigeria to swiftly implement measures to defeat the terrorist organization; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. Res. 461. A resolution commending the University of Central Missouri Jennies for winning the national championship in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II tournament; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. WARREN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KING, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. Res. 462. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. Res. 463. A resolution authorizing a Senator to bring a young son or daughter of the Senator onto the floor of the Senate during votes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 661

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 661, a bill to assist entrepreneurs, support development of the creative economy, and encourage international cultural exchange, and for other purposes.

S. 814

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 814, a bill to require that States receiving Byrne JAG funds to require sensitivity training for law enforcement officers of that State and to incentivize States to enact laws requiring the independent investigation and prosecution of the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

S. 915

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms.

DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 915, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 974

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 974, a bill to promote competition in the market for drugs and biological products by facilitating the timely entry of lower-cost generic and biosimilar versions of those drugs and biological products.

S. 1086

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1086, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to remove the prohibition on eligibility for TRICARE Reserve Select of members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who are eligible to enroll in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code.

S. 1121

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1121, a bill to establish a postsecondary student data system.

S. 1572

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1572, a bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to provide that extraction of helium from gas produced under a Federal mineral lease shall maintain the lease as if the helium were oil and gas.

S. 2105

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2105, a bill to modify the presumption of service connection for veterans who were exposed to herbicide agents while serving in the Armed Forces in Thailand during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

S. 2128

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2128, a bill to improve the coordination and use of geospatial data.

S. 2269

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2269, a bill to reauthorize the Global Food Security Act of 2016 for 5 additional years.

S. 2506

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2506, a bill to establish an aviation maintenance workforce development pilot program.

S. 2580

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2580, a bill to amend title 13, United States Code, to make clear that each decennial census, as required for the apportionment of Representatives in Congress among the several States, shall tabulate the total number of persons in each State, and to provide that no information regarding United States citizenship or immigration status may be elicited in any such census.

S. 2607

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2607, a bill to provide family members of an individual who they fear is a danger to himself, herself, or others, or law enforcement, with new tools to prevent gun violence.

S. 2652

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2652, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Stephen Michael Gleason.

S.J. RES. 39

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 39, a joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

S. RES. 435

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 435, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the 85th anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933, known as the Holodomor, should serve as a reminder of repressive Soviet policies against the people of Ukraine.

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 435, *supra*.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2653. A bill to create a poverty relief benefit under title II of the Social Security Act for eligible individuals; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, every day, Social Security provides vital benefits to millions of Americans who worked and paid into the system, and I cannot overstate the important anti-poverty role that the program plays. Supplemental Security Income or SSI is the safety net of last resort for individuals who have not worked enough to qualify for Social Security. Even with these critical income support programs, more and more seniors and people with disabilities find themselves struggling to keep up with the costs of the things they need just to get by.

Although Social Security and SSI automatically increase each year when there is an increase in the cost of living, over time those increases do not allow beneficiaries to maintain their standard of living. Because Social Security provides an increasingly larger share of the elderly's income as they age, even a slight decrease in value of these lifeline benefits can lead to poverty and hardship. Too many seniors are walking on an economic tightrope, balancing their food bill against their rent against their utility bill. It's time to update Social Security's guarantee of a secure retirement, and this bill is a landmark step towards accomplishing that goal. I'm particularly hopeful about the benefits this bill will have for older American women, who live longer and often have less retirement savings.

To help combat the risk of poverty among the most vulnerable receiving Social Security and SSI, I, along with Senators BROWN and CASEY, are introducing the Elder Poverty Relief Act. This bill creates a monthly Poverty Relief Benefit for almost everyone over age 82, individuals who have been relying on Social Security or SSI for a long time, or who have worked in low-paying jobs and receive a very small Social Security benefit. The Poverty Relief benefit will also go to seniors who receive only SSI. If enacted, in 2019, the Poverty Relief Benefit would provide an additional \$85 a month to almost 14 million people. The Poverty Relief Benefit will grow by roughly 4 percent each year. SSA estimates that the enactment of the Poverty Relief Benefit would reduce poverty among seniors who received the benefit by almost 25 percent in 2030 which would lift 420,000 seniors out of poverty. Notably, the enactment of the Poverty Relief Benefit would not accelerate the depletion year of the Social Security trust funds. The bill has been endorsed by the Gray Panthers, Justice in Aging, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, Social Security Works, and the Strengthen Social Security Coalition.

For most seniors, Social Security is the only income they will receive that's guaranteed to last as long as they live. But despite these important benefits, poverty among seniors grows—with some studies showing the poverty rate among the very old is between 12 and 19 percent. We simply must do more to protect the financial stability of our elderly friends, neighbors, and relatives and enactment of the Poverty Relief Benefit would help reduce poverty among America's seniors. These are workers who sent a chunk of every paycheck to the Federal government with the understanding that they'd be getting it back in their later year when they needed it most. We must do right by them.

Mr. President: I ask unanimous consent that a letter from the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare be inserted into the

RECORD following my remarks about the Elderly Poverty Act.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE
SOCIAL SECURITY & MEDICARE®,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2018.

Hon. RON WYDEN,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR WYDEN: On behalf of the millions of members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I write to endorse your bill, the “Elder Poverty Relief Act.” We applaud your leadership in developing new and innovative approaches for alleviating poverty among America’s seniors.

The “Elder Poverty Relief Act” addresses the long-standing problem of seniors falling into poverty after being on the Social Security rolls for many years. This occurs when inflation, only partially offset by annual cost-of-living adjustments, gradually erodes the purchasing power of a Social Security benefit for beneficiaries who have participated in the program for several years.

The “Elder Poverty Relief Act” will help alleviate poverty among the elderly and the disabled by granting each beneficiary a monthly increase in their benefit equal to about \$85. This bump-up will increase for future beneficiaries in tandem with growth in wages in the economy.

Benefits under the “Elder Poverty Relief Act” will be paid to:

Social Security beneficiaries beginning at age 82 (or older) and to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients when they reach their full retirement age (currently 66, increasing gradually to age 67);

Social Security and SSI beneficiaries who have received benefits for 20 years; and to

Social Security beneficiaries with low monthly benefits (currently about \$944) when they reach their full retirement age.

The “Elder Poverty Relief Act” embodies legislation that the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare has supported for a number of years. In testimony given before the Senate Finance Committee at a hearing on December 9, 2014, Catherine Dodd, who is the chair of the National Committee’s board of directors, recommended increasing benefits for seniors who have received Social Security for many years.

For these reasons, the National Committee endorses your bill, the “Elder Poverty Relief Act.” We thank you for your leadership on this matter and look forward to working with you to enact this important improvement to Social Security.

Sincerely,

MAX RICHTMAN,
President and CEO.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2653

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 “Elder Poverty Relief Act”.

SEC. 2. POVERTY RELIEF BENEFIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“POVERTY RELIEF BENEFIT

“SEC. 235. (a) Subject to subsection (d), any eligible individual shall be entitled to a poverty relief benefit that shall be—

“(1) in addition to any other amounts to which the individual is entitled under this title;

“(2) certified and paid monthly in such manner as the Commissioner of Social Security (referred to in this section as the ‘Commissioner’) considers appropriate; and

“(3) equal to the monthly benefit amount determined under subsection (b).

“(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (4), the monthly benefit amount determined under this subsection for any calendar year shall be a dollar amount equal to 1/12th of 2 percent of the national average wage index for the year (as defined in section 209(k)(1)).

“(2) If the monthly benefit amount determined under paragraph (1) is not a whole dollar, such amount shall be rounded down to the next lower whole dollar.

“(3) The Commissioner shall determine the monthly benefit amount under this subsection for each calendar year not later than October 1 of the preceding calendar year, based on the most recent data that is available.

“(4) If the monthly benefit amount determined for a calendar year under paragraph (1) is less than the monthly benefit amount determined for any previous calendar year, the highest monthly benefit amount determined for a previous year shall be the monthly benefit amount for the calendar year involved.

“(5) For purposes of a monthly benefit amount payable to an eligible individual pursuant to this section, such amount shall be payable for each month during the 12-month period from the month of December of the applicable calendar year under such subsection through the month of November of the subsequent calendar year.

“(c)(1) For purposes of this section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means any of the following:

“(A) An individual who—

“(i) is entitled to a monthly benefit under subsections (a) through (h) of section 202 or section 223(a); and

“(ii) attains 82 years of age or 240 benefit months (as defined in paragraph (3)) on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of 1 individual, whichever is earlier.

“(B) An individual who—

“(i) is eligible for supplemental security income benefits under title XVI; and

“(ii) attains retirement age (as defined in section 216(l)) or 240 benefit months (as defined in paragraph (3)), whichever is earlier.

“(C) An individual who—

“(i) is entitled to a monthly benefit under subsections (a) through (h) of section 202;

“(ii) attains retirement age (as defined in section 216(l));

“(iii) has average indexed monthly earnings which do not exceed the amount specified in subparagraph (B) of section 215(a)(1) for the purposes of clause (i) of subparagraph (A) of such section 215(a); and

“(iv) has not less than 11 years of coverage (as defined for purposes of section 215(a)(7)(D)).

“(2)(A) An individual’s entitlement to a poverty relief benefit under this section shall be suspended if, during any month, the individual ceases to be an eligible individual.

“(B) In the case of an individual described in subparagraph (A) who subsequently satisfies the requirements under paragraph (1), such individual shall be reentitled to a poverty relief benefit under this section.

“(3)(A) Subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C), for purposes of this subsection, the term ‘benefit month’ means a month for which an individual has—

“(i) attained age 19; and

“(ii) been—

“(I) entitled to a monthly benefit under subsections (a) through (h) of section 202 or section 223(a); or

“(II) eligible for supplemental security income benefits under title XVI.

“(B) The term ‘benefit month’ shall not include any month in which an individual is—

“(i) entitled to a benefit under section 202 that is not payable or reduced to zero by application of subsection (k), (n), (t), (u), (v), or (x) of such section and is not eligible for a benefit under title XVI (or is eligible for a benefit under such title but the benefit is not payable or reduced to zero);

“(ii) eligible for a benefit under title XVI that is not payable or reduced to zero and is not entitled to a benefit under sections 202 or 223 (or is entitled to a benefit under such section 202 but the benefit is not payable or reduced to zero); or

“(iii) subject to a penalty under section 1129A.

“(C) In the case of an individual who is entitled to a monthly insurance benefit described in subclause (I) of subparagraph (A)(ii) on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of more than 1 individual, a benefit month shall be determined based on the wages and self-employment income that are the basis of the largest benefit to which such individual is entitled for such month.

“(d)(1) In no case shall an eligible individual be entitled to more than 1 poverty relief benefit under this section for any month.

“(2) For any month in which an eligible individual is entitled to a monthly benefit described in subsection (c)(1)(A)(i) on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of more than 1 individual, a poverty relief benefit under this section may only be paid for such month on the basis of the wages and self-employment that are the basis for the largest monthly benefit to which such individual is entitled for such month.

“(3) Any amounts provided to an eligible individual pursuant to this section shall not be regarded as income or earnings for purposes of determining the eligibility of the recipient for benefits or assistance, or the amount or extent of benefits or assistance, under any Federal program or under any State or local program financed in whole or in part with Federal funds, or the eligibility for or extent of benefits or assistance under such programs of any individual for whom the income of the recipient is counted.”.

(b) RAILROAD RETIREMENT ACT.—Section 19 of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 (45 U.S.C. 231r) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e);

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection:

“(d)(1) An individual entitled to an annuity component computed under section 3(a)(1), 4(a)(1), or 4(f)(1) of this Act shall be entitled to the benefit described in section 235 of the Social Security Act, subject to the requirements and conditions set forth therein.”; and

(3) in subsection (e), as so redesignated, by striking “subsection (a), (b), or (c)” each place it appears and inserting “subsection (a), (b), (c), or (d)”.

(c) SOURCE OF FUNDS.—Subsection (h) of section 201 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401) is amended to read as follows:

“(h)(1) Benefit payments required to be made under section 223, and benefit payments required to be made under subsection (b), (c), or (d) of section 202 to individuals entitled to benefits on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of an individual entitled to disability insurance benefits, shall be made only from the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund. All other benefit payments required to be made under this title (other than sections 226 and 235) shall be made only from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund.

“(2) Any benefit payment required to be made under section 235 to an individual entitled to

a poverty relief benefit under such section shall be made—

“(A) in the case of an individual who is also entitled to a benefit under section 202 or 223, from the same trust fund from which the individual’s benefit under section 202 or 223 is made; and

“(B) in the case of an individual who is not entitled to a benefit under section 202 or 223, from funds appropriated for such purpose pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in section 1601.”.

(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—Section 1601 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1381) is amended by striking “there are authorized” and all that follows through the period and inserting the following: “and to make poverty relief benefit payments under section 235 to individuals who are described in section 201(h)(2)(B), there are authorized to be appropriated sums sufficient to carry out this title and make such payments.”.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply to benefits payable for months beginning after November 2018.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TILLIS, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 2664. A bill to reform the GEAR UP program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2664

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 “GEAR UP for Success Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS AMENDMENTS.

Chapter 2 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–21 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 404A (20 U.S.C. 1070a–21)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of subsection (a)(1), by inserting “for college readiness” after “academic support”; and

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) **PRIORITY.**—In making awards to eligible entities described in subsection (c), the Secretary—

“(A) may give a competitive priority—

“(i) to eligible entities that—

“(I) on the day before the date of enactment of the GEAR UP for Success Act of 2018, carried out successful educational opportunity programs under this chapter (as this chapter was in effect on such day); and

“(II) have a prior, demonstrated commitment to early intervention leading to college access and readiness through collaboration and replication of successful strategies;

“(ii) to eligible entities that ensure that students served under this chapter on the day before the date of enactment of the GEAR UP for Success Act of 2018 continue to receive assistance through the completion of secondary school; or

“(iii) to eligible entities that meet the requirements of clauses (i) and (ii); and

“(B) shall not give a competitive priority on any other basis.”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) **MULTIPLE AWARD PROHIBITION.**—Any eligible entity described in subsection (c)(1) that receives a grant under this chapter shall not be eligible to receive an additional grant under this chapter until after the date on which the initial grant period expires.”;

(2) in section 404B(d)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1070a–22(d)(1))—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and” after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(C) by striking subparagraph (C);

(3) in section 404C (20 U.S.C. 1070a–23)—

(A) in subsection (b)(1)(A)—

(i) by inserting “matching funds” after “will provide”; and

(ii) by inserting “equaling” after “private funds.”; and

(iii) by striking “the cost of the program, which matching funds” and inserting “total Federal grant award, which”; and

(B) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

“(d) **PEER REVIEW PANELS AND COMPETITIONS.**—The Secretary—

“(1) shall convene peer review panels to assist in making determinations regarding the awarding of grants under this chapter; and

“(2) shall host a grant competition to make new awards under this chapter in any year in which there are funds available to make new awards.”;

(4) in section 404D (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24)—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “or former participants of a program under this chapter” and inserting “; former participants of a program under this chapter, or peers and near peers” after “adults”; and

(ii) in paragraph (3), by inserting “academic, social, and postsecondary planning” after “supportive”; and

(iii) in paragraph (10)—

(I) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) through (K) as subparagraphs (F) through (L), respectively;

(II) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

“(E) counseling or referral services to address the behavioral, social-emotional, and mental health needs of at-risk students.”;

(III) in subparagraph (I), as redesignated by subclause (I), by inserting “; cognitive, non-cognitive, and credit-by-examination” after “skills”;

(IV) in subparagraph (K), as redesignated by subclause (I), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(V) in subparagraph (L), as redesignated by subclause (I), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(VI) by adding at the end the following:

“(M) capacity building activities that create college-going cultures in participating schools and local educational agencies.”; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

“(16) Creating or expanding secondary school drop-out recovery programs that allow students who have dropped out of secondary school to complete a regular secondary school diploma and begin college-level work.

“(17) Establishing data collection and data sharing agreements to obtain, analyze, and report postsecondary outcome data for eligible students for a period of not more than 72 months after the end of the grant award period, which may include postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion data.

“(18) Establishing or maintaining an agreement with a consortium of eligible entities described in section 404A(c) to—

“(A) foster collaborative approaches to research and evaluation;

“(B) improve the quality of data collection, data sharing, analysis and reporting; and

“(C) apply evidence to improve programs and evaluation under this chapter.

“(19) Providing services under this chapter to students who have received services under a previous grant award under this chapter but have not yet completed grade 12.”;

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (3), by inserting “and technical assistance” after “support”; and

(ii) by striking paragraph (9); and

(C) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (3), by striking “or”; and

(ii) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(iii) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B Russell National School Lunch Act; or”;

(5) in section 404E (20 U.S.C. 1070a–25)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

(ii) by inserting before paragraph (2), as redesignated by clause (i), the following:

“(1) **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.**—

“(A) **PLAN FOR MAINTENANCE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**—An eligible entity proposing to establish or maintain a financial assistance program providing scholarships for students assisted by the program of the eligible entity under this chapter shall include a plan regarding the financial application program with the application submitted under section 404C.

“(B) **SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS.**—Under a plan described in subparagraph (A), an eligible entity—

“(i) may elect to offer 1 or more types of scholarships; and

“(ii) shall describe, for each type of scholarship—

“(I) the minimum and maximum awards for the scholarships, consistent with section 404E(d), based on criteria and disbursement priorities established by the eligible entity;

“(II) the duration of the scholarships, which may be single-year or multi-year awards;

“(III) the enrollment requirements for participating students, which may include providing scholarships for participating students who are enrolled in an institution of higher education on less than a full-time basis during any award year; and

“(IV) notwithstanding subsection (g), any additional student eligibility criteria established by the eligible entity for earning and maintaining scholarships under this section, including—

“(aa) financial need;

“(bb) meeting participation milestones in the activities offered by the eligible entity under section 404D;

“(cc) meeting and maintaining satisfactory academic milestones; and

“(dd) other criteria aligned with State and local goals to incentivize postsecondary readiness, access, and success.”; and

(iii) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by clause (i), by striking “may award” and inserting “may use not less than 10 percent and not more than 50 percent of funds made available under this chapter to award”;

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in the subsection heading, by inserting “STATE” before “LIMITATION”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking “eligible entity demonstrates” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: “eligible entity—

“(I) demonstrates that the eligible entity has another means of providing the students in this section or eligible students have reasonable access to State and local financial assistance programs; and

“(II) describes such means or access in the application submitted under section 404C.”;

(C) in subsection (e)—

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

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) SCHOLARSHIP PLAN.—Each eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) that receives a grant under this chapter shall hold in reserve, for the students served by such grant as described in section 404B(d)(1)(A) or 404D(d), an estimated amount that is based on the eligible entity’s scholarship plan described in subsection (a)(1).

“(B) INTEREST USE.—Interest earned on funds held in reserve under subparagraph (A) may be used by the eligible entity to administer the scholarship program during the award period and through the post-award period described in paragraph (4).”;

(ii) in paragraph (2)(B), by inserting “, or been accepted for enrollment,” after “enrolled”; and

(iii) in paragraph (3)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(II) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(III) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) the costs associated with enrolling in an institution of higher education; and”; and

(D) in subsection (g)—

(i) in paragraph (3)—

(I) by inserting “ or, if the eligible entity chooses, in another program of study or credential program for which an individual could use funds received under a Federal Pell Grant to attend,” before “that is located”; and

(II) by striking “except that, at the State’s option” and inserting “except that, at the eligible entity’s option”; and

(ii) in paragraph (4), by inserting “and qualifies for an award, consistent with the eligible entity’s scholarship plan as described in subsection (a)(1)” after “404D(a)”; and

(6) in section 404G (20 U.S.C. 1070a–27)—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(iii) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) include the following metrics:

“(A) The number of students completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid under section 483.

“(B) If applicable, the number of students receiving a scholarship under section 404E.

“(C) The graduation rate of participating students from high school.

“(D) The enrollment of participating students into postsecondary education.

“(E) Such other metrics as the Secretary may require.”; and

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) in the subsection heading, by inserting “AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE” after “FEDERAL EVALUATION”; and

(ii) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(I) by inserting “after consultation with the community of eligible entities receiving grants under this chapter and” after “Secretary shall.”;

(II) by striking “.075” and inserting “.1”; and

(III) by striking “evaluate the effectiveness of the program and, as appropriate, disseminate the results of the evaluation. Such evaluation shall include a separate analysis of”;

(iii) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and indenting the margins appropriately; and

(iv) before subparagraph (A) (as redesignated by clause (iii)), by inserting the following:

“(1) provide pre-application technical assistance workshops for eligible entities and potential applicants in any year in which new awards are expected to be made;

“(2) support initiatives designed to improve the research, data collection and infrastructure, and evaluation capacity of eligible entities; and

“(3) evaluate the effectiveness of the program and, as appropriate, disseminate the results of the evaluation. Such evaluation may include a separate analysis of—”;

(7) in section 408H (20 U.S.C. 1070a–28), by striking “2009” and inserting “2019”.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself,
Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, and
Mr. PAUL):

S. 2667. A bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to provide for State and Tribal regulation of hemp production, and for other purposes; read the first time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2667

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 “Hemp Farming Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. HEMP PRODUCTION.

The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Subtitle G—Hemp Production

“SEC. 297A. DEFINITIONS.

“In this subtitle:

“(1) HEMP.—The term ‘hemp’ means the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of that plant, including the seeds thereof and all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.

“(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’ has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

“(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Agriculture.

“(4) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means—

“(A) a State;

“(B) the District of Columbia;

“(C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and

“(D) any other territory or possession of the United States.

“(5) STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—The term ‘State department of agriculture’ means the agency, commission, or department of a State government responsible for agriculture in the State.

“(6) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘Tribal government’ means the governing body of an Indian tribe.

“SEC. 297B. STATE AND TRIBAL PLANS.

“(a) SUBMISSION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A State or Indian tribe desiring to have primary regulatory authority over the production of hemp in the State or territory of the Indian tribe shall submit to the Secretary, through the State department of agriculture (in consultation with the Governor and chief law enforcement officer

of the State) or the Tribal government, as applicable, a plan under which the State or Indian tribe monitors and regulates that production as described in paragraph (2).

“(2) CONTENTS.—A State or Tribal plan referred to in paragraph (1)—

“(A) shall only be required to include—

“(i) a practice to maintain relevant information regarding land on which hemp is produced in the State or territory of the Indian tribe, including a legal description of the land, for a period of not less than 3 calendar years;

“(ii) a procedure for testing, using post-decarboxylation or other similarly reliable methods, delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration levels of hemp produced in the State or territory of the Indian tribe;

“(iii) a procedure for the effective disposal of products that are produced in violation of this subtitle; and

“(iv) a procedure to comply with the enforcement procedures under subsection (d); and

“(B) may include any other practice or procedure established by a State or Indian tribe, as applicable, to the extent that the practice or procedure is consistent with this subtitle.

“(3) RELATION TO STATE AND TRIBAL LAW.—

“(A) NO PREEMPTION.—Nothing in this subsection preempts or limits any law of a State or Indian tribe regulating the production of hemp, to the extent that law is consistent with this subtitle.

“(B) REFERENCES IN PLANS.—A State or Tribal plan referred to in paragraph (1) may include a reference to a law of the State or Indian tribe regulating the production of hemp, to the extent that law is consistent with this subtitle.

“(b) APPROVAL.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after receipt of a State or Tribal plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

“(A) approve the State or Tribal plan if the State or Tribal plan complies with subsection (a); or

“(B) disapprove the State or Tribal plan only if the State or Tribal plan does not comply with subsection (a).

“(2) AMENDED PLANS.—If the Secretary disapproves a State or Tribal plan under paragraph (1)(B), the State, through the State department of agriculture (in consultation with the Governor and chief law enforcement officer of the State) or the Tribal government, as applicable, may submit to the Secretary an amended State or Tribal plan that complies with subsection (a).

“(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance to a State or Indian tribe in the development of a State or Tribal plan under subsection (a).

“(d) VIOLATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A violation of a State or Tribal plan approved under subsection (b) shall be subject to enforcement solely in accordance with this subsection.

“(2) NEGLIGENT VIOLATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A hemp producer in a State or the territory of an Indian tribe for which a State or Tribal plan is approved under subsection (b) shall be subject to subparagraph (B) of this paragraph if the State department of agriculture or Tribal government, as applicable, determines that the hemp producer has negligently violated the State or Tribal plan, including by negligently—

“(i) failing to provide a legal description of land on which the producer produces hemp;

“(ii) failing to obtain a license or other required authorization from the State department of agriculture or Tribal government, as applicable; or

“(iii) producing *Cannabis sativa* L. with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration

of more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.

“(B) CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN.—A hemp producer described in subparagraph (A) shall comply with a plan established by the State department of agriculture or Tribal government, as applicable, to correct the negligent violation, including—

“(i) a reasonable date by which the hemp producer shall correct the negligent violation; and

“(ii) a requirement that the hemp producer shall periodically report to the State department of agriculture or Tribal government, as applicable, on the compliance of the hemp producer with the State or Tribal plan for a period of not less than the next 2 calendar years.

“(C) RESULT OF NEGLIGENT VIOLATION.—Except as provided in subparagraph (D), a hemp producer that negligently violates a State or Tribal plan under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to any criminal or civil enforcement action by the Federal Government or any State government, Tribal government, or local government other than the enforcement action authorized under subparagraph (B).

“(D) REPEAT VIOLATIONS.—A hemp producer that negligently violates a State or Tribal plan under subparagraph (A) 3 times in a 5-year period shall be ineligible to produce hemp for a period of 5 years beginning on the date of the third violation.

“(3) OTHER VIOLATIONS.—If the State department of agriculture or Tribal government in a State or the territory of an Indian tribe for which a State or Tribal plan is approved under subsection (b), as applicable, determines that a hemp producer in the State or territory has violated the State or Tribal plan with a culpable mental state greater than negligence—

“(A) the State department of agriculture or Tribal government, as applicable, shall immediately report the hemp producer to—

“(i) the Attorney General; and

“(ii) in the case of a State department of agriculture, the chief law enforcement officer of the State; and

“(B) paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not apply to the violation.

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

“(f) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section prohibits the production of hemp in a State or the territory of an Indian tribe for which a State or Tribal plan is not approved under this section in accordance with other Federal laws (including regulations).

“SEC. 297C. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES.

“The Secretary shall have sole authority to issue Federal regulations and guidelines that relate to the production of hemp, including Federal regulations and guidelines that relate to the implementation of section 297B.”.

SEC. 3. FUNDING FOR HEMP RESEARCH.

(a) SUPPLEMENTAL AND ALTERNATIVE CROPS.—Section 1473D(c)(3)(E) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3319d(c)(3)(E)) is amended by inserting “(including hemp (as defined in section 297A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946))” after “material”.

(b) CRITICAL AGRICULTURAL MATERIALS.—Section 5(b)(9) of the Critical Agricultural Materials Act (7 U.S.C. 178c(b)(9)) is amended by inserting “, and including hemp (as defined in section 297A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946)” after “hydrocarbon-containing plants”.

SEC. 4. LEGITIMACY OF INDUSTRIAL HEMP RESEARCH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7606 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 5940) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (a) and (b) as subsections (b) and (a), respectively, and moving the subsections so as to appear in alphabetical order;

(2) in subsection (b) (as so redesignated), in the subsection heading, by striking “IN GENERAL” and inserting “INDUSTRIAL HEMP RESEARCH”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) STUDY AND REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a study of agricultural pilot programs—

“(A) to determine the economic viability of the domestic production and sale of industrial hemp; and

“(B) that shall include a review of—

“(i) each agricultural pilot program; and

“(ii) any other agricultural or academic research relating to industrial hemp.

“(2) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1).”.

(b) REPEAL.—Effective on the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, section 7606 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 5940) is repealed.

SEC. 5. FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE.

(a) DEFINITION OF HEMP.—Section 502(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1502(b)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (8) through (11) as paragraphs (9) through (12), respectively; and

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

“(8) HEMP.—The term ‘hemp’ has the meaning given the term in section 297A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946.”.

(b) INSURANCE PERIOD.—Section 508(a)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(a)(2)) is amended by striking “and sweet potatoes” and inserting “sweet potatoes, and hemp”.

(c) SUBMISSION OF POLICIES AND MATERIALS TO BOARD.—Section 508(h) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) by redesignating clauses (i) through (iii) as subclauses (I) through (III), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) in the matter preceding subclause (I) (as so redesignated), by striking “The Corporation shall” and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall”;

(C) in clause (i)(I) (as so redesignated), by inserting “subject to clause (ii),” before “will likely”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) WAIVER FOR HEMP.—The Corporation may waive the viability and marketability requirement under clause (i)(I) in the case of a policy or pilot program relating to the production of hemp.”; and

(2) in paragraph (3)(C)—

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

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

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) in the case of reviewing policies and other materials relating to the production of hemp, may waive the viability and marketability requirement under subparagraph (A)(ii)(I).”.

(d) AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—Section 518 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1518) is amended by inserting “hemp,” before “aquacultural species”.

(e) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.—Section 522(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

“(K) WAIVER FOR HEMP.—The Board may waive the viability and marketability requirements under this paragraph in the case of research and development relating to a policy to insure the production of hemp.”; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking “The Corporation” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Corporation”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) WAIVER FOR HEMP.—The Corporation may waive the marketability requirement under subparagraph (A) in the case of research and development relating to a policy to insure the production of hemp.”.

SEC. 6. CONFORMING CHANGES TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 102(16) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802(16)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(16) The” and inserting “(16)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the”; and

(2) by striking “Such term does not include the” and inserting the following:

“(B) The term ‘marihuana’ does not include—

“(i) hemp, as defined in section 297A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946; or

“(ii) the”.

(b) TETRAHYDROCANNABINOL.—Schedule I, as set forth in section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)), is amended in subsection (c)(17) by inserting after “Tetrahydrocannabinols” the following: “, except for tetrahydrocannabinols in hemp (as defined under section 297A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946)”.

SEC. 7. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act authorizes interference with the interstate commerce of hemp (as defined in section 297A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as added by section 2).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 460—CON-DEMNING BOKO HARAM AND CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND NIGERIA TO SWIFTLY IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO DEFEAT THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 460

Whereas Boko Haram is a Nigeria-based militant group with links to al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the so-called Islamic State;

Whereas Boko Haram is responsible for tens of thousands of deaths, including the targeted killings of civilians, in northeast and central Nigeria over the last several years, and, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has caused the displacement of 2,400,000 people in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger;

Whereas the Department of State designated Boko Haram a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2013 and supports efforts to defeat Boko Haram with security and development tools;

Whereas Boko Haram rejects modern education and science, is engaged in an armed

revolt against the Government of Nigeria, has carried out vicious campaigns of violence, including suicide bombings, against schools, public institutions, law enforcement, and civilians;

Whereas, since 2012, Boko Haram has conducted brutal mass kidnappings of women, girls, and boys and has abducted thousands of women and girls from schools and markets, during raids on villages and houses, and on public transportation;

Whereas Boko Haram continues its campaign of mass and systematic brutality against the people of Nigeria and the greater Lake Chad Basin;

Whereas, on April 14, 2014, Boko Haram militants attacked a boarding school in Chibok in Borno state, where girls from surrounding areas had gone to take final exams;

Whereas the Boko Haram terrorists arrived in Chibok late at night, firing their guns indiscriminately and burning down houses, raided the dormitories, and kidnapped 276 girls aged 12 to 17;

Whereas 57 girls escaped by jumping off the kidnappers' trucks as they were driving away or running into the forest;

Whereas the 219 kidnapped girls were held captive, abused, made to be slaves, forced into marriage with their abductors, repeatedly raped, starved, and, in some cases, forcibly converted to Islam;

Whereas the international community, including the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations Security Council, condemned the abduction and called for the immediate release of the girls;

Whereas Boko Haram ruthlessly killed some of the kidnapped girls for trying to escape, and some girls died during childbirth;

Whereas thousands of women, girls, and boys kidnapped by Boko Haram have endured similar horrific experiences;

Whereas the parents of the kidnapped girls and concerned citizens banded together and embarked upon a global awareness campaign to urge the rescue of the girls, using the Twitter hashtag #BringBackOurGirls, through which over 3,300,000 people around the world expressed their outrage at the abduction and continue maintaining a vigil for the girls' return;

Whereas the United States Government sent advisors to Nigeria and supplied surveillance and reconnaissance to help rescue the girls;

Whereas 21 girls were released in October 2016, 82 girls were released in May 2017, and four years since their abduction, over 100 girls distressingly still remain in captivity and are subjected to deplorable abuses as recounted by the returnees;

Whereas many of the returned girls are being kept in a government facility in Abuja away from their families;

Whereas the scourge of Boko Haram continues to menace the population of the Lake Chad Basin area, including northern Nigeria;

Whereas, on February 19, 2018, Boko Haram militants stormed the town of Dapchi and abducted 110 girls from the Government Girls Science and Technical School and two other children;

Whereas 106 of the children from the Dapchi kidnapping have been released and five are presumed to have perished;

Whereas Leah Sharibu remains a hostage because she refuses to convert to Islam;

Whereas the Government of Nigeria said Boko Haram had been defeated in 2015, but the terrorist organization continues to mount attacks against civilians, schools, and security forces;

Whereas the United States Government has provided assistance for several years for women and girls targeted by Boko Haram and individuals displaced by Boko Haram violence, as well as to combat Boko Haram;

Whereas educating girls transforms societies for the better by giving girls the knowledge and tools to make positive decisions about their futures, live healthier lives, provide nurturing environments for their families, and play active roles in their communities and economies;

Whereas the United States Government has provided significant financial assistance in recent years to support women and girls who are at risk from extremism and conflict;

Whereas child and forced marriage is a human rights abuse;

Whereas the United States Government has appropriated \$11,000,000 in both fiscal years 2017 and 2018 for programs to combat child marriage;

Whereas in section 2 of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-68; 131 Stat. 1202), Congress found that "women in conflict-affected regions have achieved significant success in . . . moderating violent extremism . . . and stabilizing societies by enhancing the effectiveness of security services, peacekeeping efforts, institutions, and decision-making processes";

Whereas in section 1(c) of Public Law 114-266 (130 Stat. 1383), Congress found that "lack of economic opportunity and access to education, justice, and other social services contributes to the ability of Boko Haram to radicalize and recruit individuals"; and

Whereas section 4 of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. 2152j) states that "[i]t shall be the policy of the United States to promote the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of overseas conflict prevention, management, and resolution, and post-conflict relief and recovery efforts": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the tragic fourth anniversary of the Chibok girls kidnapping and calls for the immediate release of all Boko Haram captives, especially the remaining Chibok girls and Leah Sharibu;

(2) applauds the extraordinary bravery of survivors of Boko Haram, who continue to come forward to share their stories and experiences at great risk to themselves;

(3) deplores Boko Haram for its destabilizing activities and extremist violence;

(4) acknowledges the efforts of the United States Government to defeat Boko Haram through development and security partnerships with Nigeria and other regional partners, and calls on the Department of State and the Department of Defense to rapidly implement the five-year regional strategy to address the grievous threat posed by Boko Haram and other violent extremist organizations;

(5) furthermore requests that the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development create a plan to address the needs of women and girls adversely impacted by extremism and conflict as required by section 7059(e)(2) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (division J of Public Law 115-31; 131 Stat. 699);

(6) commends the swift enactment of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-68), and encourages the President to release the Women, Peace, and Security Strategy by October 2018, as required by section 5 of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. 2152j-1);

(7) acknowledges the actions of the Government of Nigeria to combat Boko Haram, and encourages it to—

(A) provide the necessary counseling and support to those abducted by Boko Haram;

(B) allow returned women and girls to be reunited with their families when appropriate;

(C) appropriately channel the announced \$1,000,000,000 assistance from the Excess Crude Account to humanitarian assistance, development, education, and deradicalization programs; and

(D) accept international assistance in a timely manner when offered; and

(8) encourages continued cooperation between the Governments of the United States and Nigeria to defeat the violent extremist organization Boko Haram.

SENATE RESOLUTION 461—COM-MENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL MISSOURI JENNIES FOR WINNING THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP IN THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION II TOUR-NAMENT

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mrs. McCASKILL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 461

Whereas on March 23, 2018, the University of Central Missouri Jennies (referred to in this preamble as the "Jennies") women's basketball team defeated defending national champion Ashland University by a score of 66-52 in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II national championship game in Sioux Falls, South Dakota;

Whereas that victory marks the first Division II national championship for the Jennies since 1984;

Whereas the Jennies ended the 2017-2018 season with—

(1) an overall record of 30-3;

(2) a perfect record of 10-0 during away games; and

(3) a record of 18-1 in the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (referred to in this preamble as the "MIAA") conference;

Whereas the 2017-2018 season marks—

(1) the eleventh MIAA regular season championship win for the Jennies; and

(2) the seventh Central Region championship win for the Jennies;

Whereas the 30 season wins and 18 conference wins of the Jennies are program records;

Whereas the Jennies won 6 playoff games and outlasted 63 other teams in the Division II national championship tournament to end the 73-game winning streak of Ashland University;

Whereas all of the following 15 players on the Jennies roster should be congratulated: Paige Redmond, Gigi McAtee, Sydney Crockett, Kayonna Lee, Kendra Gladbach, Abby Gann, Kelsey Williams, Emilie Jobst, Megan Skaggs, Peyton Taylor, Morgan Fleming, Jolene Shipp, Sydney Skaggs, Madison Sandor, and Meghan Allen;

Whereas, during the Division II national championship game—

(1) the Jennies made 50 percent of shots taken; and

(2) the following 3 players scored points in the double digits: Paige Redmond, Megan Skaggs, and Kelsey Williams;

Whereas Paige Redmond—

(1) led the Jennies by scoring 16.3 points per game during the 2017-2018 season;

(2) recorded a championship game high of 22 points; and

(3) was awarded MIAA Player of the Year;

Whereas Kayonna Lee collected a team high of 11 rebounds and a game high of 3 blocked shots, and was awarded MIAA Defensive Player of the Year;

Whereas Paige Redmond and Morgan Fleming were selected to the All-MIAA team;

Whereas Kayonna Lee, Megan Skaggs, and Kelsey Williams received Honorable Mentions from the All-MIAA team;

Whereas Jennies Head Coach Dave Slifer was awarded MIAA Coach of the Year; and

Whereas Coach Slifer and all of the supporting staff of the Jennies should be congratulated: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the University of Central Missouri Jennies for the Division II national championship victory in women's basketball;

(2) recognizes the athletic prowess, hard work, and dedication exhibited by the players, coaches, support staff, and student body of the University of Central Missouri; and

(3) congratulates the city of Warrensburg, Missouri, and the University of Central Missouri Jennies fans and alumni around the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 462—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. WARREN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KING, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 462

Whereas the week of April 2, 2018, through April 8, 2018, is National Public Health Week;

Whereas the theme for National Public Health Week in 2018 is “Healthiest Nation 2030: Changing Our Future Together”, with the goal of making the United States the healthiest Nation in one generation;

Whereas there is a significant difference in the health status of individuals with different abilities and demographics, such as obesity, poor mental health and infectious disease, of people living in the healthiest States compared to people living in the least healthy States;

Whereas according to the National Academy of Medicine, despite being one of the wealthiest nations in the world, the United States ranks below many other economically prosperous and developing countries with respect to measures of health, including life expectancy, infant mortality and maternal mortality rates;

Whereas the life expectancy for the United States population declined for the second year in a row, and the leading causes of deaths are among the most common, costly, and preventable of all health problems;

Whereas despite having a high infant mortality rate compared to other economically prosperous and developing countries, and the death rate varying greatly among States, overall, the United States was making steady progress, until recently, with the infant mortality rate reaching a historic low of 5.8 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2016;

Whereas more women die from pregnancy-related deaths in the United States than any other developed country, and the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births has increased from 16.9 in 1990 to 26.4 in 2015;

Whereas the number of overdose deaths involving opioids was more than five times higher than in 1999 and 115 Americans on average die every day from an opioid-involved death requiring a comprehensive strategy across a range of sectors including robust efforts to prevent substance misuse disorders;

Whereas the percentage of adults using tobacco products in the United States, the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, accounting for more than 480,000 deaths every year including more than 41,000 deaths resulting from secondhand smoke, decreased from 20.9 percent in 2005 to 15.5 percent in 2016;

Whereas approximately 554,000 adults suffered from homelessness in the United States in 2017, an increase since 2010, with 35 percent of homeless individuals still living unsheltered;

Whereas the value of a strong public health system is in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, and the places where we all live, learn, work, worship, and play;

Whereas public health organizations use National Public Health Week to educate the public, policymakers, and public health professionals on issues that are important to improving the health of the people of the United States;

Whereas studies show that small strategic investments in prevention can result in significant savings in health care costs;

Whereas each 10 percent increase in local public health spending contributes to a 6.9 percent decrease in infant deaths, a 3.2 percent decrease in deaths related to cardiovascular disease, a 1.4 percent decrease in deaths due to diabetes, and a 1.1 percent decrease in cancer-related deaths;

Whereas public health professionals help communities prevent, prepare for, withstand, and recover from the impact of a full range of health threats, including disease outbreaks such as the Zika virus, natural disasters, and disasters caused by human activity;

Whereas public health professionals collaborate with partners that are not in the health sector, such as city planners, transportation officials, education officials, and private sector businesses, recognizing that other sectors have an important influence on health;

Whereas in communities across the United States, people are changing the way they care for their health by avoiding tobacco use, eating healthier, becoming more physically active, and preventing unintentional injuries at home and in the workplace; and

Whereas efforts to adequately support public health and prevention can continue to transform a health system focused on treating illness to a health system focused on preventing disease and promoting wellness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week;

(2) recognizes the efforts of public health professionals, the Federal Government, States, Tribes, municipalities, local communities, and individuals in preventing disease, injury, and promoting quality of life;

(3) recognizes the role of public health in improving the health of individuals in the United States;

(4) encourages increased efforts and resources to improve the health of people in the United States to create the healthiest Nation in one generation through—

(A) greater opportunities to improve community health and prevent disease and injury;

(B) strengthening the public health system in the United States; and

(C) using data to guide policies and behaviors that promote health and quality of life; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to learn about the role of the public health system in improving health in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 463—AUTHORIZING A SENATOR TO BRING A YOUNG SON OR DAUGHTER OF THE SENATOR ONTO THE FLOOR OF THE SENATE DURING VOTES

Mr. DURBIN (for Ms. DUCKWORTH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 463

Resolved,

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION FOR SENATORS TO BRING YOUNG CHILDREN ONTO THE FLOOR OF THE SENATE.

Notwithstanding rule XXIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a Senator who has a son or daughter (as defined in section 101 of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2611)) under 1 year of age may bring the son or daughter onto the floor of the Senate during votes.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2227. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund.

SA 2228. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2227 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 140, supra.

SA 2229. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 140, supra.

SA 2230. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2229 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 140, supra.

SA 2231. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2230 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the amendment SA 2229 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 140, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2227. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund; as follows:

At the end add the following:

“This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment.”

SA 2228. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2227 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund; as follows:

Strike “1 day” and insert “2 days”

SA 2229. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund; as follows:

At the end add the following.

“This Act shall take effect 3 days after the date of enactment.”

SA 2230. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2229

proposed by Mr. McCONNELL to the bill S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund; as follows:

Strike “3 days” and insert “4 days”

SA 2231. Mr. McCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2230 proposed by Mr. McCONNELL to the amendment SA 2229 proposed by Mr. McCONNELL to the bill S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund; as follows:

Strike “4” and insert “5”

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have 8 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Semi-Annual Report to Congress.”

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at 9:45 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “The 2018 Tax Filing Season and Future IRS Challenges.”

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at 10:15 a.m. to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing on S. 994 and the following nominations: John B. Nalbandian, of Kentucky, to be

United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit, Kari A. Dooley, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut, Dominic W. Lanza, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona, Jill Aiko Otake, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii, Michael Y. Scudder, of Illinois, and Amy J. St. Eve, of Illinois, both to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit, Charles J. Williams, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Iowa, and Joseph H. Hunt, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Timothy A. Garrison, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, Kenji M. Price, to be United States Attorney for the District of Hawaii, John Cary Bittick, to be United States Marshal for the Middle District of Georgia, David L. Lyons, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Georgia, and Rodney D. Ostermiller, to be United States Marshal for the District of Montana, all of the Department of Justice.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at 2 p.m. to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

The Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 12, 2018, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Reviewing the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.”

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my fellow, Sharmin Syed, be granted privileges of the floor for the duration of her service in my office.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Dustin Ellsberry, an intern in Senator SULIVAN's office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL MISSOURI JENNIES

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 461, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 461) commending the University of Central Missouri Jennies for

winning the national championship in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II tournament.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 461) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2667

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2667) to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to provide for State and Tribal regulation of hemp production, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2018

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, April 16; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed. Finally, I ask that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the House message to accompany S. 140 and that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture vote on the motion to concur be at 5:30 p.m., Monday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2018, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:54 p.m., adjourned until Monday, April 16, 2018, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JAMES H. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE ROBERT M. SCHER, RESIGNED.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

RUBYDEE CALVERT, OF WYOMING, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 31, 2022, VICE DAVID J. ARROYO, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

JENNIFER L. HOMENDY, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2019, VICE MARK R. ROSEKIND, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HEIDI R. KING, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION, VICE MARK R. ROSEKIND.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

LAURA GORE ROSS, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 31, 2022, VICE JANNETTE LAKE DATES, TERM EXPIRED.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BONNIE GLICK, OF MARYLAND, TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VICE ALFONSO E. LENHARDT.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

MARK ROSEN, OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS, VICE MARGRETHE LUNDSAGER, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

JOHN P. PALLASCH, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR, VICE PORTIA Y. WU.

THE JUDICIARY

RAUL M. ARIAS-MARXUACH, OF PUERTO RICO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO, VICE JOSE ANOTONIO FUSTE, RETIRED.

PAMELA A. BARKER, OF OHIO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO, VICE DONALD C. NUGENT, RETIRED.

KENNETH D. BELL, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA, VICE RICHARD L. VOORHEES, RETIRED.

STEPHEN R. CLARK, SR., OF MISSOURI, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI, VICE CAROL E. JACKSON, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CHARLES L. GOODWIN, OF HAWAII, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF HAWAII FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE GERVIN KAZUMI MIYAMOTO, TERM EXPIRED.

THE JUDICIARY

JAMES PATRICK HANLON, OF INDIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA, VICE WILLIAM T. LAWRENCE, RETIRING.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

SCOTT PATRICK ILLING, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE GENEVIEVE LYNN MAY, TERM EXPIRED.

JOHN D. JORDAN, OF MISSOURI, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE WILLIAM CLAUD SIBERT, TERM EXPIRED.

THE JUDICIARY

JONATHAN W. KATCHEN, OF ALASKA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF ALASKA, VICE RALPH R. BEISTLINE, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

SCOTT E. KRACL, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE MARK ANTHONY MARTINEZ, TERM EXPIRED.

R. DON LADNER, JR., OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE EDWARD M. SPOONER, RETIRED.

CHERYL A. LYDON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE WILLIAM N. NETTLES, TERM EXPIRED.

ERICA H. MACDONALD, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE ANDREW MARK LUGER, RESIGNED.

THE JUDICIARY

PAUL B. MATHEY, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT, VICE JULIO M. FUENTES, RETIRED.

MARY S. MCELROY, OF RHODE ISLAND, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND, VICE MARY M. LISI, RETIRED.

DAVID STEPHEN MORALES, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE JANIS GRAHAM JACK, RETIRED.

SARAH DAGGETT MORRISON, OF OHIO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO, VICE GREGORY L. FROST, RETIRED.

DAVID JAMES PORTER, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT, VICE D. MICHAEL FISHER, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

J. C. RAFFETY, OF WEST VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE GARY MICHAEL GASKINS, TERM EXPIRED.

GADYACES S. SERRALTA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE AMOS ROJAS, JR., TERM EXPIRED.

MARK F. SLOKE, OF ALABAMA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE CHARLES EDWARD ANDREWS, TERM EXPIRED.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 12, 2018:

THE JUDICIARY

JOHN W. BROOMES, OF KANSAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF KANSAS.

REBECCA GRADY JENNINGS, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

PATRICK PIZZELLA, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF LABOR.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

ANDREW WHEELER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE 20TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, this year the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture celebrates its 20th anniversary.

Our islands' only, locally-run museum is as much a tribute to the story of the people of the Marianas as it is to the resilience and determination of those who have led the Museum's operation. They have kept the Museum alive despite many years of inadequate funding, understaffing, and a destructive typhoon that could well have shut it down permanently.

The Museum is located in a 92-year-old hospital built during the time the Northern Marianas were under the administration of Japan. The structure itself is an artifact of our history, and before its renovation looked the part. Its concrete, paint-less exterior told the story of war and every typhoon that has passed through our islands in the last century.

Today, within the Museum a visitor can view artifacts from the time of the ancient Chamorro people, and of the Spanish, German, and Japanese occupations that descended upon us. These artifacts, and the paintings and photographs that are part of the displays, tell the story of how our people survived, adapted, and thrived throughout our history. They—and other objects stored away in the Museum—are lovingly preserved by their local conservators, who exhibit a profound dedication to keeping the memories of our people alive.

The NMI Museum of History and Culture is an independent program of our Governor's Office. Sadly, the facility fell on hard times in the mid-2000s, when massive budget cuts forced the lay-off of most staff. At this low point, the Museum had only one employee, whose availability determined when the museum would open and close. As a result, many a visitor was turned away who could have experienced the history of the Chamorro people.

In 2015, the Marianas were hit by Typhoon Soudelor, the most devastating typhoon in decades. That terrible storm could well have meant the end for our Museum. The typhoon left many artifacts damaged, the roof leaking, mold along the walls, floors flooded, and much of the plumbing a wreck. And the museum was forced to close its doors to visitors—definitely.

Into this scene of destruction a new energy arrived in the person of Mr. Danny Aquino. Appointed Executive Director last year, Mr. Aquino was tasked with the grueling repair of the museum.

And more help was on the way. An outpouring of financial and material support from IT&E, Saipan Stevedore, Saipan Shipping, CMS Trucking, Soudelor Corporation, Tropical Gardens, and other local businesses, a

\$55,000 appropriation from the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation, and \$50,000 from the Marianas Visitors Authority gave Aquino and his team the funds to start repairs.

Help from the staff of the Mayor of Saipan also moved the work along at a faster pace. The Mayor's team assisted museum staff with grounds maintenance, landscaping, and other outdoor work. Somehow, restoration took less than six months to complete; and the Museum reopened last November to its first visitors in a very long time.

I visited the museum in February to see this progress. I had been there shortly after Typhoon Soudelor; and I can report the difference between then and now is night and day. Mr. Aquino's can-do attitude, and the tireless work of his staff—James Cabrera, James Macaranas, Allan Lifofoi, and Wenny Haruo—drove the repair efforts and the result is a museum that the Marianas can truly be proud of.

Today, visitors to our islands can orient themselves to the three-and-a-half millennia of Marianas history at our Museum. Residents can take pride in who they are and where they come from by strolling through this beautiful facility. And students—many of whom are required to take a course on the history of our islands—can enlarge their vision of the future by learning about our past at the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture.

Please join me in congratulating the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture on 20 years of serving our islands and our people.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: AN UPDATE ON THE GOLDMAN ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we held a hearing on parental child abduction. International parental child abduction rips children from their homes and whisks them away to a foreign land, alienating them from the love and care of the parent and family left behind.

Child abduction is child abuse, and it continues to plague families across the United States.

According to State Department statistics, almost 800 children are today held hostage in a foreign country, separated from their American parent. Several hundred additional children join their ranks every year.

If past is prologue, only 16 percent of these children will be returned to the United States.

In 2014, Congress adopted legislation I wrote, the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act (Public Law 113–150) to change the status quo. Since 2014, we have seen a reduction in new abductions, but not an increase in percentage of returns in ongoing cases.

Despite the new legislation, the State Department has persistently refused to use the return tools in the Goldman Act as envisioned by Congress. Moving beyond letters and meetings, the Goldman Act is an enforcement tool for the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and leverage for return agreements with non-Hague countries.

The Goldman Act takes the lessons learned from the successful return of Sean Goldman from Brazil and lays out actions: a delay or cancellation of one or more bilateral working, official, or state visits; the withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of U.S. development, security, or economic support assistance; and extradition.

To my knowledge, extradition has been used once and the other options not at all. The Obama State Department said in the past that sanctions will not work. But in the one case where sanctions were tried by Congress, they worked.

The inaction by the Obama Administration has been noted and challenged. On February 14 of 2017, one month into the new Trump Administration, Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fumio Kishida, noted in a Diet discussion of abduction that, "until now there is not a single example in which the U.S. applied [Goldman Act sanctions] towards foreign countries." He went on to note that "according to the U.S. [Japan is] not included in the category of the non-compliant countries."

Three days later, the Osaka High Court overturned a return order for the four American children of James Cook in flagrant violation of the Hague Convention, Japan's own Hague implementation guide, and U.S. law. The court had reopened the case because Mr. Cook had moved into an apartment after the enormous legal bills from years in court in Japan. When did sharing a bedroom with a sibling become a grave risk to a child's physical or psychological well-being?

I urge and believe the new administration can and must do better.

At least 300 to 400 children have suffered abduction from the U.S. to Japan since 1994, and more than 35 currently await reunification with their American parent—most of these are left over from previous Administrations. In almost all cases, the child is completely cut off from contact with the left behind parent. Most have aged out of the system without ever being reunited with their left behind parent.

Some parents have won in court only to find that Japan's law enforcement could not return their children unless the taking parent agreed to abide by the decision, and the taking parent did not.

The systematic non-enforcement of access and return orders is so bad in Japan that 26 EU countries recently issued a joint demarche to Japan, asking Japan to fix the problem. Although non-enforcement has plagued many U.S. cases, the U.S. did not join the demarche.

However, in the upcoming Goldman Act report, the U.S. has the chance to hold Japan

• 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.

accountable for its failures in the Cook case as well as others, like that of the Elias children, taken from my home state of New Jersey after their mother obtained duplicate passports from the Japanese consulate in contravention of the judge's order. The report can and must better reflect the reality of the child abduction and the suffering of American children separated from their American parent every day in Japan.

According to the Goldman Act, a country can find itself on the "non-compliance list" and eligible for sanctions if a country regularly fails to enforce return orders. The State Department should also put the country on the list if the judiciary regularly fails to properly apply the Hague Convention—such as in the Cook case.

Finally, a country should be put on the "non-compliance list" if 30 percent or more cases in the country are unresolved cases—or cases that have been pending for more than a year.

Notably, the definition of an "unresolved" case makes no mention of a country's Hague status. In other words, all of the cases that began before Japan's accession to the Hague Convention and that were communicated to the Japanese government should be counted against Japan.

No child should be left behind.

We received assurances from the State Department years ago, as they myopically pursued Japan's accession to the Hague Convention knowing that the Convention would not cover the then existing cases of more than 50 children, that they would not leave these children behind.

That they would find ways to solve these cases.

How many of these children have come home four years later? How many even have access to their left behind parent now?

Almost zero.

The Goldman Act directed the State Department to develop an agreement with Japan for the precious children that were already abducted. The Goldman Act made a way for the State Department to hold Japan accountable for these cases.

Four years later, we have no agreement with Japan for these cases. We have no action against Japan for these cases or current cases. And we have yet to see the State Department even list Japan as "non-compliant" in the annual report.

Every day these children are separated from their US parent the damage compounds.

As the State Department's own 2010 Report on Compliance with The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction observes, "Abducted children are at risk of serious emotional and psychological problems. Research shows that recovered children often experience a range of problems, including anxiety, eating problems, nightmares, mood swings, sleep disturbances, aggressive behavior, resentment, guilt, and fearfulness. As adults, individuals who were abducted as children may struggle with identity issues, personal relationships, and possibly experience problems in parenting their own children."

We must do better by our children. We must not leave any abducted child behind.

Congress is currently looking at new ways to put pressure on countries with low resolution rates, like Japan, Brazil, and India.

Last year, I introduced H.R. 3512, the Bindu Philips and Devon Davenport International

Child Abduction Return Act of 2017 to amend the Generalized System of Preferences system so that any country named as "non-compliant" would lose their trade benefits. The loss of trade preference would be automatic and not dependent on the Administration choosing to apply sanctions. Currently, 11 of 13 non-compliant countries receive trade benefits from the United States. This has to change.

In addition, I am working on a bill that would limit H1-B and other business visas for countries that have low abduction resolution rates—this would affect Japan, Brazil, and India, among others.

We have 13 egregious long term cases pending in Brazil, including the Dr. Brann and Davenport cases. More than 90 American children are separated from their American parent in India—India will not even appoint a person to receive the applications and has refused to join the Hague Convention.

We asked in our hearing last year, when is enough, enough?

We hope that the State Department will do its job and implement the Goldman Act. We hope that the Trump Administration will be different than the last.

But we are prepared to go around the State Department in order to ensure no abducted child is left behind.

YADIRA TISCARENO ESCALERA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Yadira Tiscareno Escalera for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Yadira Tiscareno Escalera is a student at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Yadira Tiscareno Escalera 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 Yadira Tiscareno Escalera 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.

TRIBUTE TO IVY BOTTINI—28TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding

women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Ivy Bottini, of West Hollywood, California.

Ivy Bottini is a legendary activist, professional artist, mother, award-winning actress, and community leader. Renowned from coast to coast for her feminism and fight for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community, she paved the way for many of the advances in civil and human rights we enjoy today.

Ivy was a founding member of the first chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. She designed the iconic logo for the organization, which is still in use today. In August of 1970 Ivy and over 150 of her fellow activists made headlines by unveiling a banner reading "Women of the World Unite" over the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty.

Ivy moved to Los Angeles in 1971, and from the time she set foot in the community, she has been working to improve the quality of life for its people. She speaks her mind and amplifies the voices of those in need around her. She founded AIDS Network LA, Los Angeles' first AIDS organization and the Los Angeles Lesbian/Gay Police Advisory Board, co-founded AIDS Project LA and served for over 15 years on the West Hollywood Lesbian and Gay Advisory Board. In 1981, she was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to the California Commission on Aging making Ivy the first "out" lesbian or gay person to be appointed to a state board or commission. She was instrumental as an advocate for affordable housing for Gay and Lesbian seniors in the opening of "Triangle Square," the first in the nation assisted living, affordable income apartment complex for LGBT elders.

Over the years, Ivy has received numerous recognitions for her years of service and most recently, she was recognized as the 2016 Woman of the Year for the 3rd Supervisorial District of the County of Los Angeles and as the 2017 Woman of the Year for the 50th Assembly District of the State of California.

Ivy is an inspiration throughout the country. Her life's work is an example of finding one's voice and using it forcefully for the benefit of all Americans.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Ivy Bottini.

IN HONOR OF MS. SHERRY KOLBE

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable woman and native Iowan from Marshalltown, Iowa. Ms. Sherry Kolbe has dedicated her career to the National Association of Private Special Education Centers. NAPSEC advocates for the needs of children with severe disabilities. Having served as the Executive Director for 28 years, Ms. Kolbe has impacted the lives of hundreds of children.

We congratulate Ms. Kolbe as she prepares for retirement. After years of hard work, she deserves the utmost respect for her distinguished career and should be assured that new leadership at NAPSEC will benefit from her outstanding example.

CONGRATULATING DETECTIVE
SERGEANT RANDY GRAHAM FOR
HIS SERVICE WITH THE MICHIGAN
STATE POLICE

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it's my honor to recognize Detective Sergeant Randy Graham for his retirement from the Michigan State Police after 31 years of service. Through his exceptional leadership and steadfast devotion to his community, Randy has become an indispensable part of Northern Michigan.

D/Sgt. Graham began his career in Flint before moving to Newberry in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. For the past decade, he has led the Traverse Narcotics Team (TNT), a multi-jurisdictional drug team comprised of state, county, local, and federal law enforcement officers. This team builds on inter-agency cooperation and coordination to conduct investigations into narcotics in Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Benzie, Kalkaska, Wexford, Missaukee, and Antrim Counties. Randy was key in implementing an innovative Field Training Officer (FTO) program for new detectives within the Traverse Narcotics Team, and his unit has received numerous awards for its work in Northern Michigan.

The efforts of D/Sgt. Graham and his team over the last decade have been critical in our ongoing effort to combat the harmful effects of narcotics in Michigan's First District. His constant dedication to the people of our state is admirable. Outside of his service with the Michigan State Police, Randy holds an Associate's degree in Criminal Justice from Oakland University and is active in the Traverse City Elks Lodge. A retirement party for Randy will be held there on April 21 to celebrate his extraordinary career.

Mr. Speaker, it's my honor to congratulate Detective Sergeant Randy Graham for his 31 years of service to the people of Michigan through the Michigan State Police. Michiganders can take great pride in knowing the First District is home to such a devoted individual. On behalf of my constituents, I wish Randy all the best in his future endeavors.

JUDGE LISA BLOCH RODWIN—LOIS
HAIGHT AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
AND INNOVATION

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Judge Lisa Bloch Rodwin has dedicated her life defending individuals and families. Her extensive record in public policy on abuse, neglect, juvenile justice, custody and family violence has earned her national recognition. Lisa's unwavering support for victims is unparalleled and I am proud to honor her today.

During Lisa's storied career, she has worked with the Erie County District Attorney's office, served as Chief of the Domestic Violence Unit, and was most recently appointed by the New York State Governor as an Erie County Family Court Judge. She was unani-

mously confirmed by the New York Senate and was elected to a full term in 2008.

Lisa is just one of a few select judges chosen to serve on the New York State Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee, which is responsible for drafting and reviewing legislation on Family Law. She has also been appointed to the NYS Advisory Council on Immigration Issues in Family Court.

Before being appointed to the bench, Lisa was the founder of the New York State's first Domestic Violence Bureau outside New York City. She was responsible for the prosecution of more than 4,000 family and child abuse cases. Lisa helped develop protocols for the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence crimes for local police agencies and developed interview and investigation policies for child abuse investigations at the Child Advocacy Center in Buffalo.

Lisa's commitment to providing resources, services and protections for victims is unmatched. She has received numerous awards and acknowledgments for her efforts and there is no doubt she deserves every bit of that recognition.

Lisa continues to stand up for what is right and her efforts to promote respect and services for crime victims will no doubt stand the test of time.

Each year the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus honors outstanding individuals and organizations for their tireless efforts supporting and empowering survivors of crime. Co-chaired and co-founded by JIM COSTA (D-CA) and myself, the bipartisan caucus advocates for crime victims and protects programs that provide critical support for related services.

I am proud to announce Judge Lisa Bloch Rodwin as the recipient of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus Lois Haight Award of Excellence and Innovation. The Lois Haight award pays tribute to California Judge Lois Haight who, as an appointee of President Ronald Reagan and Chair of his 1982 President's Task Force on Victims of Crime, led pioneering efforts on behalf of crime victims that resulted in significant public policy advances to promote crime victims' rights and services. Judge Lisa Bloch Rodwin's efforts have had a significant impact on local, state, and national public policy development and implementation that promote dignity, respect, rights and services for victims of crime.

And that's just the way it is.

JOSE VILLEGAS GARCIA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jose Villegas Garcia for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Jose Villegas Garcia 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 Jose Villegas Garcia 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 Jose Villegas Garcia 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.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF REVEREND DR. FREDERICK DOUGLAS REESE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of renowned civil rights leader, Reverend Dr. Frederick Douglas Reese of Selma, Alabama who passed away on April 5, 2018, at the age of 88. Dr. Reese is best known for the pivotal role he played in the Selma to Montgomery March that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

It was Dr. Reese who as President of the Dallas County Voters League invited Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to Selma to organize and support their local voting rights campaign. As a longtime educator, pastor and civil rights activist, Dr. Reese's life and legacy stands as a testament to the power of one man's ability to change the world.

Dr. Reese was born in Selma on November 28, 1929, the only son of a strong matriarchal family led by his mother Ellie R. Reese and that included his older sister siblings—Doris Reese and Annie Ratliff. His strong educational and spiritual home environment coupled with the Christian education training received from his Green Street Baptist Church family propelled him to develop a firm faith that served as the solid foundation for his success.

An outstanding student, Dr. Reese graduated from Alabama State University and Livingston University with a degree in mathematics and a background that prepared him for political involvement. Believing knowledge is power, he continued his education at the University of Alabama, Southern University, and Auburn University before receiving his doctorate of divinity from Selma University.

Dr. Reese's teaching career began in Millers Ferry in Wilcox County, AL where he worked in the school system for nine years teaching science and eventually serving as assistant principal. It was there that Dr. Reese met his future bride, Alline Tougllass Crossing, a fellow teacher. The two were married on June 28, 1953 and she remained his life-long companion for 64 years.

In 1960, Dr. Reese returned to his hometown of Selma to teach at R.B. Hudson High School. A beloved educator, Dr. Reese challenged his students to excel and made learning fun with his unique teaching style that combined disciplined study with practical application.

By the mid-1960s, Dr. Reese was the president of the Dallas County Voter's League and president of the Selma Teachers Association. He used both leadership positions to actively educate Blacks in Selma about their right to vote. In fact, Dr. Reese's first act as President of the Teachers Association was to sign a

proclamation declaring that teachers should register to vote. He challenged his fellow teachers to exercise their right of citizenship, saying "How can we teach American civics if we ourselves cannot vote?"

With courage and tenacity, Dr. Reese led the first ever Teachers March to the Dallas County Court House in which a hundred black teachers demanded to register to vote. It was the first time in the Civil Rights Movement that teachers in the South publicly marched. Their actions were met with violence by the local sheriff Jim Clark and law enforcement. Nevertheless, Reese's persistent collaboration with league members notoriously called the "Outrageous Eight", now revered as the "Courageous Eight", fueled the movement with his nonviolent tactics and moral fortitude. Imbued by his faith and determination, it was Dr. Reese as president of the voter league who penned the invitational letter for Dr. King to come to Selma to bring his influence and support to the Selma voting rights campaign.

On March 7, 1965, led by our colleague John Lewis, Dr. Reese and more than 600 other activists marched over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma on what is famously known as "Bloody Sunday." During the march, protestors were beaten and sprayed with tear gas on the orders of Alabama Governor George Wallace.

Following the march, participants gathered at the Brown Chapel AME Church where Dr. Reese spoke to the crowd. Bloodied and beaten, the protestors committed to marching again for their right to vote. On March 21, 1965, after President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered the protection of the marchers, more than 50,000 people completed the 50-mile march from Selma to Montgomery. The Selma Marches prompted Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that still remains a keystone of federal voting rights protections for all Americans.

Dr. Reese also answered God's call to the ministry. He began his pastoral ministry by serving the congregations of Macedonia and Mt. Zion Selfield. Reverend Dr. Reese was the Pastor of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church for 50 years, making a lasting impact on the Selma community.

Dr. Reese was a true renaissance man. For his outstanding contributions, he has received numerous awards and honors. Dr. Reese was a civil rights icon, exemplary educator, beloved pastor, loving husband, doting father and grandfather. Dr. Reese brought Selma and this nation out of the turbulent darkness and then went on to be among its first African American city councilmen and rose through the ranks of the Selma School System to be principal of Eastside Junior High School, principal of Selma High School and eventually Assistant Superintendent from which he retired.

In his passing, Dr. Reese leaves behind his wife Mrs. Aline Reese; son Marvin (Frances), Conyers, GA; daughters Minister Valerie (Ed) Harris, and Minister Christa Reese; grandsons Marvin (Charlene) Reese Jr, Minister Alan (Kimberly) Reese and Frederick Reese, Conyers, GA; great grandchildren Kyla Russell, Zaria Reese, Jada Mains, Faith Reese, Jaylen Reese, Alan Reese Jr, and Maliyah Reese, Conyers, GA.

On a personal note, I will fondly remember Dr. Reese as my principal and mentor at Selma High School who always told me that anything was possible. I know that I am Ala-

bama's first Black congresswoman today because of the activism and influence of Dr. F.D. Reese. To say thank you does not adequately express my gratitude. One of my greatest honors as a Member of Congress was to present Dr. Reese with the gold medal at the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony that honored the foot soldiers on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights March. Dr. Reese's life and legacy stand as a testament to the power of one man's ability to change the world. His legacy will live on in the many people he impacted.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama, and a grateful nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life and contributions of Reverend Dr. Frederick Douglas Reese. Dr. Reese was an American hero, a national treasure and a beloved Selma native son whose life's fight for voting rights forever shaped the fabric of American history.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY ERIN DECKER—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Kelly Erin Decker of Kagel Canyon, a unique neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

After graduating from Princeton University with Bachelors of Arts degrees in Politics and in Visual Arts and Art History, Kelly pursued her love for the arts as a regional theater performer on the East Coast. With several years of theater experience under her belt, Kelly took a chance on herself for a future in film and television and embarked on a cross country journey that brought her to Los Angeles, where she enrolled at the Playhouse West School and Repertory Theater in North Hollywood. Ms. Decker has appeared in many stage performances, short films and movies, such as the Ghost of Christmas Past at the Sierra Madre Playhouse and as Michael Madsen's girlfriend in the movie Devil's Domain.

In 2009, Ms. Decker and her husband, Jeffrey Leeson, became Kagel Canyon residents and quickly became involved in their community by joining the Kagel Canyon Civic Association. For the last several years, Kelly has served on the Kagel Canyon Civic Association Board, first as Vice President and since 2015 as its President. Her chief mission is to expand community involvement in the association and community engagement in issues affecting the foothills area at large. She works closely with local, county, state and federal offices to advance the concerns of Kagel Canyon residents. Kelly is an ardent preservationist of the last remaining rural and equestrian communities in Los Angeles and serves on the board of Save Angeles Forest for Everyone.

A compassionate advocate for her Kagel Canyon community, Kelly's dedication to the residents is nothing short of extraordinary. As editor of The Hot Sheet, the Kagel Canyon monthly newsletter that is hand delivered to every home, she keeps residents informed about local issues. During the December 2017 Creek Fire, she quickly responded by serving as Kagel Canyon's unofficial community information officer, working day and night to provide residents with up-to-date information on the status of evacuations, organizations to reach out to for help and generally assisting with whatever was needed at the time. Ms. Decker's efforts did not cease after the fire was extinguished; and to this day, she continues to support and be an exceptional resource for all the residents of Kagel Canyon, but in particular for the sixteen Kagel Canyon families who lost their homes in the fire by organizing numerous fundraisers, coordinating efforts to collect food and clothing donations and providing resources to assist with the rebuilding process.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Kelly Erin Decker.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE GREEN BAY ELKS LODGE

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Green Bay Elks Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elk. Since March 15, 1893, members of the Elk Lodge have worked tirelessly to spread their core values of charity, justice, patriotism, and brotherly love in their communities through philanthropic and social engagement.

As the largest non-governmental scholarship provider in the United States, members of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elk provide the leaders of tomorrow with the resources they need to succeed. The Green Bay Elk Lodge awards the Most Valuable Student scholarship, Legacy scholarship, and State scholarship to deserving Wisconsin students every year to help them achieve their academic pursuits. The Green Bay Elk Lodge also champions many educational initiatives for Wisconsin youth including drug awareness campaigns and anti-bullying campaigns.

For 125 years, the Green Bay Elks Lodge has honored and supported the brave men and women serving our country. Today, the Green Bay Elk Lodge continues this legacy of helping veterans with events such as Soup for Vets, Heroes Closet, and Welcome Home Kits to provide Veterans with the services and support they need upon their return home. These events demonstrate the organization's commitment to spreading patriotism and respect to those who have sacrificed so much for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of this body to join me in applauding the Green Bay Elks Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elk and the organization's commitment to serving and empowering veterans and youth in the community of Green Bay.

IN HONOR OF THE TOWNS OF AURORA, HOLLAND AND WALES, NEW YORK BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARIES

HON. CHRIS COLLINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Towns of Aurora, Holland and Wales, New York on their bicentennial anniversaries.

The Towns of Aurora, Holland and Wales, New York were founded on April 15, 1818, when the Town of Willink, New York was split into three different towns. Each of the towns has their own rich history, and I am honored to represent them here in Congress.

The Town of Aurora was home to Millard Fillmore, twenty-seven years before he became the 13th President of the United States. Today, Millard Fillmore's home is currently a National Historic Landmark in Erie County, New York.

Holland, New York, named after the Holland Land Company, is home to the Holland Speedway. Here, families and NASCAR enthusiasts can spend an afternoon enjoying the races or racing their own cars for fun.

Wales, New York, named after the Wales of Britain for its rolling hills and green pastures, prides itself on its rural, dairying environment and family friendly atmosphere.

I thank the Towns of Aurora, Holland, and Wales for their commitment to preserving 200 years of history, and I congratulate them on their Bicentennial Anniversaries.

MIGUEL OLIVAS MALDONADO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Miguel Olivas Maldonado for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Miguel Olivas Maldonado is a student at Arvada K-8 and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Miguel Olivas Maldonado 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 Miguel Olivas Maldonado 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.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERAN EMPLOYMENT AND CHILD CARE ACCESS ACT

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, since January 2013, veteran unemployment decreased from just under 8 percent to where it is now at 2.7 percent—the lowest levels since 2001. Despite the progress, barriers to childcare services still exist for low-income and homeless veterans who are seeking employment.

Currently, it is optional for the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to provide childcare assistance under the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E). This means VA is not required to provide childcare assistance even if a veteran qualifies for assistance. According to the VA, during Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, over 131,000 veterans participated in the VR&E Program of which an estimated 43,000 of those veteran participants had one or more child dependents. Of the 131,000 veterans who participated in VR&E Program, only 17 veterans received childcare assistance. In FY2016, 12 veterans received child care assistance.

That is why, today, I am introducing the Veteran Employment and Child Care Access Act, which would expand child care services and enable veterans who are participating in VA and Department of Labor workforce development, job training, job placement services, or vocational rehabilitation programs to access childcare services while they participate. Specifically, this bill would make mandatory for VA and DOL to provide childcare services to eligible veteran who are participating in job training or vocational rehabilitation programs.

This is the same bill that Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH—a veteran and hero—introduced in the Senate. I am proud our legislation will ensure that veterans have access to affordable childcare services when they most need it. This bill will provide much needed childcare services to low-income and homeless veterans working towards finding a good and stable job.

TRIBUTE TO DONNA FORD—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Donna Ford of La Cañada Flintridge, California.

A civil litigator for several years in New York and Pennsylvania, Ms. Ford relocated to La Cañada Flintridge with her family in 2005. Since moving to California, she has been an active member of the local community, serving as a dedicated volunteer and board member of several non-profit organizations.

Believing that all children have tremendous potential regardless of their background or circumstances, Donna is a passionate advocate for young people and is committed to enriching the lives of children and adolescents. To that end, for twelve years, she has served on the board of directors of HillSides, an organization dedicated to fostering a stable, healthy environment for at-risk children and their families by providing a range of innovative services, including residential treatment, individualized education, counseling and adoption assistance. Ms. Ford currently serves as chair of the HillSides Board of Directors, co-chaired HillSides' annual gala in 2011, and has served on several committees over the years.

In addition to her work with HillSides, Donna is a longtime volunteer of the Cottage Guild at Rosemary Children's Services in Pasadena, which provides education, therapeutic support and permanency planning to children and adolescents, and residential housing at Rosemary Cottage for young girls between 13 and 18 years of age.

Donna has continued her commendable work with children by mentoring African American girls at John Muir High School in Pasadena and serving as a board member of the Institute for Educational Advancement, a Pasadena organization that assists gifted children in reaching their full potential, for a decade. In addition, she volunteers for the University of Southern California's Medical Faculty Family and Friends, which raises scholarship funds for medical students, and has served on the diversity committee for the Pasadena Playhouse.

Donna is married to Dr. Henri R. Ford and they have two children.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Donna Ford.

IN MEMORY OF MAYOR HECTOR F. GARCIA

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Mayor Hector F. Garcia. Mayor Garcia served the City of Watauga for more than 29 years. He passed away this year at the age of 78 after a lifetime of service to his community and our nation.

Mayor Garcia and his wife Wendy first moved to Watauga in 1968 to raise their family. In 1979, Mayor Garcia began his service as co-chair of Watauga's first charter commission. He was elected to the city council in 1980 and served until 1986. In 1994, he chaired the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Two years later, he was elected mayor of Watauga and served until 2002. After a brief hiatus, Mr. Garcia was elected for a second time as mayor in 2013 and served until his death.

In 1958, Mayor Garcia joined the U.S. Air Force and served our country for more than ten years. Following his service, he worked for General Dynamics, now Lockheed Martin, for more than 35 years. Initially hired as an aircraft assembler, he rose within the company, retiring from the engineering and planning department.

A lifelong North Texan, Mayor Garcia selflessly served not only the City of Watauga, but

our entire community. He will be deeply missed. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife Wendy, their family, and all who knew him.

TRIBUTE TO DEANNA CANTRELL—
CALIFORNIA'S 24TH CONGRES-
SIONAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Every year, we dedicate the month of March to give special recognition to the accomplishments and sacrifices made by America's women. I consider it an honor to highlight the extraordinary women who are making a difference in my District. I would like to recognize one outstanding woman Deanna Cantrell, of San Luis Obispo, California.

Deanna has served as the San Luis Obispo Chief of Police since January of 2016, making her one of less than 2 percent of female police chiefs in the nation. Before joining our Central Coast community, Deanna spent 21 years with the Mesa, Arizona Police Department where she held a variety of impressive positions. Since arriving in San Luis Obispo, Deanna has made immense strides in encouraging community engagement, particularly among marginalized groups. She started the PACT, a group comprised of local action groups such as Women's March SLO, RACE Matters SLO, Hispanic Leadership Council, the LGBTQIA community and more. She's assigned officers to various specific populations to be the liaison that supports those communities and enhances partnership and communication.

Deanna also started PEACE, a series of community workshops to increase understanding between PD and law enforcement. Additionally, she was invited to be a speaker at the inaugural Women's March in San Luis Obispo where she made the community feel both heard and protected.

Those who know her describe Deanna as someone who shares herself as a person, role model, and friend by visiting schools, sitting on panels, and always saying yes when called upon for support. She exemplifies the kindness, warmth, determination, intelligence, and caring we hope to see in every person in uniform. Deanna's tireless service to our district makes her someone who all young women and men can look up to with admiration.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 24th Congressional District, Deanna Cantrell, for her incredible service to her community. We thank Deanna for her service.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NORMA
ETHERIDGE THORN SARVER

HON. MARK DESAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Norma Etheridge Thorn Sarver. I join her family and friends to celebrate her life and service to the community.

Norma was born on October 21, 1921. She married Captain William A. Thorn (USN), who commanded the aircraft carrier USS *Antietam*, and they had two daughters. Captain Thorn was killed when his plane crashed into the Potomac River after taking off from the Naval Support Facility in Washington, DC.

Civic engagement, social responsibility, and service to her community were extremely important to Norma. She volunteered at DePaul Medical Center for more than 25 years giving nearly 10,000 hours of her time. Norma was a longtime member of Larchmont United Methodist Church, and active in the Lakewood Garden Club, Women of Wesleyan, and the Kings' Daughters Royster Circle. She was part of a group of pioneering women who responded to the needs of their community, especially during times of such hardships as war and economic depression.

In October of 1965, Norma married her second husband, Rear Admiral Ben W. Sarver (USN), a 1935 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. Ben served in the Pacific Theater during World War II on several destroyers, and was the recovery officer for the early Gemini space flights. Norma quickly took on the role of mother to his three children.

Norma's strength, conviction, and devotion could be felt by all who were lucky enough to know her. Through the loss of both husbands and as a survivor of ovarian cancer, she lived her life with grace and a fearless spirit. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, friend, and confidant who lifted people up, brought out the best in them, and always provided words of encouragement. Norma, and her infectious smile, will be dearly missed by both her family and the community.

HONORING FIREFIGHTERS IVAN
FLANSCHA AND ZACHARY AN-
THONY OF PENNSYLVANIA,
YORK CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I extend my heartfelt condolences to the family, loved ones and peers of my constituents, York City Firefighters Ivan Flansch and Zachary Anthony, who perished in the Line of Duty on Thursday, March 22, 2018. We grieve their passing and are forever indebted for their selfless, tireless and devoted years of service as firefighters.

I've long revered the commitment of people who devote themselves selflessly to serving our communities and fellow citizens. Ivan learned the importance of public service at an early age from his father, a dedicated police officer in Waterloo, Iowa who lost his life in an off-duty accident when Ivan was five years old. Ivan began his career with the York City Fire Department in 1999, where he earned the auspicious title of Firefighter of the Year in 2004. His colleagues recall his amazing and tireless work ethic, how dependable and reliable he was to all who knew him.

Zachary joined the York City Fire Department in 2010, and dedicated his life to public service, gladly helping others in the community—whether in the course of his official duties or in his private life. Zachary's colleagues recall his fantastic spirit and free will, as well

as his eagerness to embrace new opportunities and experiences.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, I am crestfallen at the passing of these brave Warriors, and offer my heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and loved ones of Ivan Flansch and Zachary Anthony on our tragic loss. While they died in service to our Commonwealth and Country, they were doing what they loved and what truly mattered to them; they set the standard for all to follow—in their lives and in their service. Ivan and Zachary will remain in my heart and prayers, and I wish them Godspeed and I'll see them on the High Ground.

KALEIGH MELINGER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kaleigh Melinger for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Kaleigh Melinger is a student at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kaleigh Melinger 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 Kaleigh Melinger 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.

TRIBUTE TO EMILY GLEICHER—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my congressional district. Today I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Emily Gleicher of Elysian Valley, a unique neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

Growing up in Queens, New York, Emily saw the need for sustainable living and gardening in major cities. She would walk the streets of New York and see empty parcels of land filled with garbage and dead weeds and she saw an opportunity to enhance urban areas with sustainable farming.

When Emily moved to Los Angeles in 2012, she and her husband, Arlen Jason Wood, decided to convert their front yard into a giant raised lima bean farm where they would later sell their crops to local farmer's markets. As

with New York, Ms. Gleicher saw empty pieces of land around Los Angeles that could easily be transformed into urban sustainable farms.

Emily and Jason decided to harness their passion for gardening and in 2015, they created Farm LA, a local 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is dedicated to transforming underutilized land in Los Angeles into sustainable energy projects and drought-tolerant agricultural farming. Since its inception, the goal of Farm LA has been to create food access and a cultural appreciation for sustainable living while enhancing the beauty of the city around us. Farm LA's programming includes: urban farming, fruit shares, sidewalk gardens, educating elementary schools and summer camps on growing food also known as "kindergardening," and selling their 9th generation lima bean seeds at local health fairs and farmer's markets.

Through her passion and dedicated service, Emily has created a Farm LA community of over 500 volunteers in the last three years as her organization continues to expand. Ms. Gleicher hopes that her work will help to provide food access in lower income residential neighborhoods while giving people a better understanding of the products they consume in an effort to address the prevalence of childhood obesity. Emily's passion for sustainable farming has brightened our community and she continues to serve as a role model for the citizens of this district.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Emily Gleicher.

JESSICA JOHNSON—ED STOUT MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING VICTIM ADVOCACY RECIPIENT

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Safety, Advocacy, Growth, and Empowerment (SAGE) program in Wenatchee Valley, Washington works to aid individuals who have experienced domestic abuse.

For the past 12 years, Jessica Johnson has gone above and beyond, serving SAGE to the best of her ability. Her hard work and dedication paid off. In 2016, Jessica was promoted to Executive Director, propelling Jessica to even greater heights. Her work with SAGE has helped to provide a safe-haven for those who faced sexual abuse, domestic violence, stalking, poverty, and sex trafficking in Central Washington.

During her time at SAGE, Jessica has overseen the creation of a 24-hour crisis line, a Crime Victim Service Center, and a Domestic Violence advocacy program. Each of these programs has been instrumental in providing aid to crime victims.

Jessica has not only focused her efforts on the larger central communities, but has implemented outreach to rural areas as well. This outreach has expanded opportunities for those who need assistance the most and helped victims reach the resources they desperately need. Jessica has also established group

counseling programs in high schools and worked with schools to ensure faculty and staff are given adequate training on spotting the signs of domestic abuse.

Perhaps some of the most important services SAGE and Jessica have provided is through the Child Advocacy Center. In the Child Advocacy Center, law enforcement agents conduct forensic interviews with children who have been victims of sexual and domestic abuse. This service has been an invaluable resource and helped create a safe environment to interview and assist vulnerable children.

Each year the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus honors outstanding individuals and organizations for their tireless efforts supporting and empowering survivors of crime. Co-chaired and co-founded by JIM COSTA (D-CA) and myself, the bipartisan caucus advocates for crime victims and protects programs that provide critical support for related services.

I am proud to announce Jessica Johnson as the recipient of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus Ed Stout Memorial Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy. The Stout Memorial Award is in memory of Ed Stout, the Director of Aid for Victims of Crime in St. Louis. The Honoree is a professional or volunteer whose efforts have directly benefited victims and survivors of crime.

I am honored to recognize Jessica and her relentless fight in advocating for crime victims. With the help of Jessica and SAGE, victims from all over Washington have access to resources needed to help rebuild their lives.

And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF MICHAEL AND FRANCES McDUGAL

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Michael and Frances McDougal of Conroe, TX, and congratulate them on their 50th wedding anniversary.

In 1964, Michael and Frances first met on the campus of Southwestern University, where Michael was pursuing a career in law and Frances was working to become an elementary school teacher. Despite their many personality differences, the two spent four years growing closer together, and on April 6, 1968, the two were finally married.

Soon after, Michael began to pursue his law degree at Southern Methodist University, and in order to support her husband's dream of becoming an attorney, Frances began teaching in Dallas, TX. Together, the two thrived during this difficult time, which culminated with the birth of their first child, Heather, and the grand opening of Michael's first law office in 1971.

Even with the stress of a new business and an infant child, the two stuck together. Michael worked long hours to ensure the success of their new business, and Frances split her time between teaching and helping in the law office—all while raising a baby girl.

In 1972, the young family relocated to North Houston in order for Michael to begin serving under the District Attorney in Conroe, TX—a community they quickly adopted as their

home. Michael and Frances welcomed the birth of their first son, Christopher, in 1976, and the birth of their second son, Kevin "Ryan", in 1979. The family took full advantage of living in their community—taking up horseback riding and becoming active in their church's congregation.

Ultimately, Michael rose to the level of Montgomery County District Attorney before opening his own firm with his son Ryan—McDougal and McDougal Law Firm. Frances continued teaching and, after her own fight with cancer, she found herself heavily involved with FAITH Fighting Cancer and volunteering with Memorial Hermann Hospital.

Despite their successful careers and tireless community service, Michael and Frances have always made their family the center of their life: their three children, Heather, Christopher, and Ryan; their son and daughter-in-law, Jason and Audrey; and their seven grandchildren, Lindsey, Travis, Ashley, Callum, Cadence, Abigail, and Max.

Michael and Frances McDougal's relationship serves as a perfect illustration of what a strong marriage and even stronger family should be. I am proud to join Michael and Frances' family, their friends, and the entire Eighth District of Texas in recognizing their 50th wedding anniversary and congratulating them on this momentous milestone in their relationship.

HONORING TWENTY-TWO TEACHERS OF THE GREATER BOCA RATON AREA

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the twenty-two outstanding teachers in South Florida who have been awarded the Teacher of the Year award from the Rotary Club of Boca Raton Sunrise.

For the past 32 years, the Rotary Club of Boca Raton Sunrise has offered this annual distinction to one teacher at each of the twenty-two schools in the greater Boca Raton area. Each awardee is selected by the school's principal. These teachers have dedicated their time to inspiring, empowering, and bettering the next generation of youth in our community. Their passion in this effort is truly worthy of our recognition.

These twenty-two exemplary teachers have made a profound impact on their students through their caring, commitment, and professionalism. They are a cohort defined by integrity, excellence, and the highest marks in all they do. The City of Boca Raton is fortunate to have such outstanding faculty.

Congratulations to Chayane Oliveira, Irene Gonedes, Patricia Fusco, Kerry Maione, Jaqua Lewis, Alexandra Mangogna, Meghan Moonney, Melissa Pierce, Thomas Simone, Gary Aronson, Joni Webster, Robyn Jones-Crockett, Deborah Straus, Susan Mallardi, Tara Clair, Josephine Saldana, Mary Shanty, Marcela Mendoza, Kathleen Loeffler, Karen Richards, Stephanie Stiepleman, and Danielle Alarcon on being nominated for this year's teacher of the year award.

I am pleased to honor them, and I thank them for their continued service.

IN MEMORY OF MR. EDWARD V.
SMITH, III

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Edward V. Smith, III, a dedicated North Texan who devoted his life to serving our community. In addition to many professional and charitable interests, Mr. Smith was a passionate alumnus of the University of North Texas, the former North Texas State College.

A fifth generation Texan, Mr. Smith maintained deep roots in the Dallas area. After graduating from North Dallas High School in 1955, he enrolled in then-North Texas State College. During Mr. Smith's time in college, he served as president of his class, attorney general of the student body, vice president of the student body, president of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity, and president of Blue Key. Even following graduation, he never stopped giving back to his beloved alma mater.

Mr. Smith generously volunteered his time and attention to serve as president of the University of North Texas Alumni Association, Chair of the UNT Foundation, Chair of the Professional Development Institute, and as a member of numerous committees. He served as membership chair for the State of Texas and as a Regent of the College. In recognition of this service, he was named a Distinguished Alumnus in 1992.

In addition to his charitable work for the University of North Texas, Mr. Smith excelled professionally as a Dallas attorney. After graduating from law school at Southern Methodist University, he began a long legal career. Mr. Smith served on many committees in the Dallas and Texas Bars, and he was awarded the lifetime achievement award from the probate sections of both the Dallas Bar and the State Bar of Texas. He also received the Professionalism Award from the Dallas Bar and the Texas Center for Legal Ethics.

Mr. Smith selflessly served his community as a member of the board of the United Way, Advisory Board member of both the Dallas Foundation and the Communities Foundation of Texas, and as Chairman of the Board of the Grace Foundation. A lifelong Presbyterian, he also served his church as a deacon, an elder and, for many years, as Clerk of the Session.

Mr. Smith has left a rich legacy of generosity, loyalty, and excellence. I extend condolences to his wife Nikki, their family, the University of North Texas community, and all who knew him.

TRIBUTE TO KILJOO LEE
KURUMADA—28TH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF
THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is

an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Kiljo Lee Kurumada of La Crescenta, California.

Kiljo was born in China and raised in South Korea. In 1967, she graduated from the Seoul National University College of Music and in 1969, she moved to the United States.

In 1983, Ms. Kurumada co-founded the Korean Resource Center (KRC), an extraordinary non-profit organization, whose goal is to empower immigrant, low-income, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and minority communities in Southern California. By using a holistic approach, this distinguished organization endeavors to support these communities by incorporating culture, services, education, coalition-building and organizing toward improving their lives.

Ms. Kurumada has taken on a prominent leadership role in the Korean-American community. She served as KRC board chair for more than two decades, and also served as founding board chair of the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC), a grassroots organization that promotes the active and organized participation of Korean and Asian Americans to achieve social and economic justice.

During her long tenure at the Korean Resource Center, where she currently volunteers two days a week helping low-income families and seniors with general inquiries, Ms. Kurumada and her colleagues have championed numerous causes, including access to health insurance, affordable housing, voter registration, senior advocacy, youth education and immigration reform.

Kiljo has lived in La Crescenta for over four decades. She is married to Stephen Kurumada, and they have two children, Jennifer and Michael, and four grandchildren.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Kiljo Lee Kurumada.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 5476 SPECIAL COUNSEL INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY ACT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior Member of the Judiciary Committee, and an original co-sponsor, I rise today to urge all Members to support and cosponsor H.R. 5476, "Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act."

When we were here in March, before the Easter Recess, I indicated that firing Special Counsel Robert Mueller would not be crossing a Red Line.

It would not be crossing a Blue Line.

It would be crossing a Red, White, and Blue line.

I have been concerned about this issue for a very long time—to me it was clear in August, and every day that passes is another where my first instincts about the President's desire to fire Special Counsel Mueller, are confirmed.

The importance of Special Counsel Mueller's investigation into the 2016 election,

and the nature and extent of Russia's interference, cannot be overstated.

The allegation that a foreign government—hostile or otherwise—played any part in the internal democratic processes of our country should shock every single American citizen.

It strikes at the heart of our democratic system of government.

We must come to terms with the fact that our very last national election is a crime scene.

The 2018 election could be one, too.

It was critical then, it is critical now, and it will be critical tomorrow that the Special Counsel be permitted to do his work unimpeded.

That is why last August I introduced H.R. 3654, "Special Counsel Independence Protection Act," which precludes the firing of the Special Counsel absent of substantial evidence, that there exists good cause to do so, and that determination accepted by a three-judge federal court.

H.R. 3654 has the support of 152 cosponsors and is also the subject of a discharge petition, and 144 members of the House of Representatives have signed the discharge petition.

I thank my colleagues who have supported H.R. 3654, to protect the Special Counsel's investigation recognizing that nothing less than our sovereignty, our democratic ideals, and our national dignity are at stake.

Today, I announce my support for new legislation protecting the Special Counsel, H.R. 5476, "Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act," introduced by Ranking Member NADLER, myself, and Mr. COHEN.

I am pleased that this legislation incorporates the core of my legislation to protect the Special Counsel.

The Nadler-Jackson Lee-Cohen bill constrains the Attorney General from damaging the Special Counsel's investigation, absent judicial ratification of any action to terminate the Special Counsel.

Under H.R. 5476, the judicial branch—yet another check on an unwieldy executive—would determine if the termination was appropriate.

The necessity of enacting this legislation is clear.

Seven times this year, the President has derided the investigation as a "witch hunt," including yesterday.

The New York Times has reported that the President has tried at least twice in 2017 to fire Special Counsel Mueller—once in June 2017, and once again in December 2017.

Now, this morning he is claiming, again over Twitter, that reports that he wanted to fire Special Counsel Mueller were more "fake news."

On Monday, after news that his lawyer's residence and offices were raided, the President openly mused, at a gathering of his war cabinet, about firing Special Counsel Mueller.

On Tuesday, the President asserted that he had the power to fire Special Counsel Mueller.

Yesterday on Twitter, the President called Special Counsel Mueller "the most conflicted of all."

He is wrong.

Last night, he advertised a program on his favorite cable network, and when that show aired, it consisted of a derogatory piece against the president's chief investigators: former FBI Director Comey and Special Counsel Mueller.

Last month, the President twice said he opposed the investigation, told an untruth about the political composition of the prosecutors in the Special Counsel's office, and has reiterated that it should never have been started.

Given the actions of the current President, it is appropriate to ask whether stronger legislation is needed.

But H.R. 5476 is an important compromise with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

We must step back and take off our partisan hats and approach this as Americans.

We, as Members of Congress, are Constitutional Officers.

This is an 'Article I' moment.

The People's House must exercise its constitutional prerogative and conduct oversight.

The framers of the Constitution prioritized the legislature branch over the executive branch.

Recent public opinion polls reflect that 70 percent of the American people want the Special Counsel to continue his investigation.

The Framers of our Constitution wisely divided power through a system of checks and balances.

They anticipated a moment like this and vested power in the Congress to address, deter, and remedy a crisis caused by a Chief Executive who held himself to be above the law.

When future generations look back on this moment, and they consider that our democratic ideals and institutions were under enormous pressure from unsuspecting places, they will ask what we did when it mattered.

We must act.

Now, while we as Americans have our differing views, they are ours to solve, amongst ourselves.

Unfortunately, for all of us, the scope of the Special Counsel's investigation also includes the question of the extent to which the Trump campaign was helped in any way by the Russians.

Congress must not abdicate its Article I responsibility.

We must get to the bottom of what happened in the 2016 election.

We must permit Special Counsel Robert Mueller to continue his investigation.

We must seize the moment and pass H.R. 5476, "Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act."

TYLER PITERA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Tyler Pitera for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Tyler Pitera is a student at Arvada K-8 and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Tyler Pitera 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 Tyler Pitera 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.

TRIBUTE TO LORI HARTWELL—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Lori Hartwell of Glendale, California.

A resilient survivor of chronic kidney disease (CKD), Lori has dedicated her life to the renal field and patients with chronic illness. In her lifelong struggle with CKD, which began when she was two years old, Ms. Hartwell received dialysis treatments for almost 13 years and has had four kidney transplants. Rather than capitulating to the obstacles of this debilitating disease, Ms. Hartwell chose to embrace her circumstances and motivate others like her to lead complete and productive lives. In her book *Chronically Happy—Joyful Living in Spite of Chronic Illness*, she narrates the challenges she overcame as well as the steps to achieving one's dreams.

After developing a comprehensive understanding of the American renal patient population as a sales specialist for HemaMetrics and sales manager for Medcomp, Ms. Hartwell became editor of the medical journal *Contemporary Dialysis & Nephrology* and established Hartwell Communications to consult on patient-related educational materials. In 1993, Lori founded the Renal Support Network (RSN), originally a Southern California-grassroots patient-led organization that has since expanded across the United States. The RSN endeavors to cultivate an emotional support network built on hope, knowledge, and peer connection to provide CKD patients with the tools to thrive despite their illness.

In addition to her work with RSN, Ms. Hartwell gives presentations locally, nationwide and globally at national nephrology conferences and events about patient engagement, overcoming adversity, and achieving goals. She also advises elected officials on the impact of legislative policies on people with chronic illnesses, and serves on multiple councils and boards in the renal field, including the National Quality Renal Forum and the Board of Directors for Kidney Care Partners. She is former chair of the Patient Advisory Committee for the Southern California Renal Disease Council and served on the Governor's Rehabilitation Council for the State of California.

Ms. Hartwell's impressive work has not gone unnoticed as she has been recognized with numerous awards, including the National Kidney Registry's "Patient Advocacy Award" in 2010 and being named "Woman of the

Year" in the 21st California Senate District by State Senator Jack Scott in 2005.

Ms. Hartwell's remarkable efforts on behalf of those diagnosed with kidney disease, as well as her resilience in her own battle, speak for themselves. She is a steadfast community leader with a long record of dedicated service and an inspiration to all.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Lori Hartwell.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 29TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EXPLOSION
ABOARD USS "IOWA"

HON. CHRIS COLLINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 47 brave young men who lost their lives on April 19, 1989 aboard the USS *Iowa*. It is important to remember those who were killed in the line of duty especially those serving in the United States Armed Forces. The deaths of the 47 sailors aboard the USS *Iowa* are truly a tragic and upsetting story.

The USS *Iowa*, originally constructed to fight in World War II, was modernized and recommissioned for battle in 1984. However, during the overhaul of the ship, many of the necessary repairs were either rushed or instead used to upgrade the ship's power plant. This led to serious maintenance issues with the main gun turrets.

On April 19, 1989, there were a series of explosions aboard the USS *Iowa* during a live-fire exercise off the coast of Puerto Rico. The first explosion came from the ship's second turret resulting from a maintenance problem, and due to a buildup of carbon monoxide gas, there was a second explosion and a fire. Tragically, all 47 members aboard the USS *Iowa* lost their lives.

One of the victims was Buffalo native, Nathaniel Clifford Jones, Jr. I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest condolences to the Jones family for the passing of Nathaniel. His service on behalf of the men and women of this country will not be forgotten. We should all commend the service that these brave young men made on behalf of the United States of America.

TRIBUTE TO BECKY JORGESON—
CALIFORNIA'S 24TH CONGRESSIONAL
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Every year, we dedicate the month of March to give special recognition to the accomplishments and sacrifices made by America's women. I consider it an honor to highlight the extraordinary women who are making a difference in my District. I would like to recognize one outstanding woman, Becky Jorgeson, of San Luis Obispo, California.

Becky Jorgeson is an outstanding activist who is working to establish sustainable community villages of tiny homes for chronically homeless people with little or no income. She is the Founder and President of Hope's Village of San Luis Obispo, which aims to provide safe, healthy and drug-free communities where people who are homeless can live in dignity and peace.

Through Becky's "RVs for Veterans" program, 74 motorhomes, travel trailers and fifth wheels have been passed on to local homeless veterans getting them off the streets and into their own tiny homes on wheels. 734 showers have been given through her mobile "Showers of Hope" program; and numerous sleeping bags, tents, tarps, blankets, jackets and food have been passed out down by the creek and on the streets of San Luis Obispo through their outreach program.

Becky also has worked closely with educators and students to bring more homes to those in need. She collaborated with the Cal Poly Construction Management department to build and donate two "cabins on wheels" for their soon to be community village. Currently, Nipomo Tech High School is building another tiny home for Hope's Village, and Cuesta College will begin building in the Fall.

Becky's work to support the homeless population of San Luis Obispo has been a tremendous asset to members of the community in need. I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 24th Congressional District, Becky Jorgeson, for her incredible service to her community.

ARIEN PAULS-EVA MURILLO
UNsung HERO AWARD

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Arien Pauls was excited for her graduation from Bullard High School in 2007 and even more excited to head off to Fresno City College. A hard worker, she took a part time job at Taco Bell to help pay her bills and tuition. After posting online about her lack of funds, she was contacted by her soon to be trafficker. She thought he wanted a simple relationship. However, when she finally agreed to meet him in person, he forced her into modern day slavery.

He moved her to Los Angeles and cut off all contact with her family and friends. For four years, Arien lived out of hotels and suitcases, her body being abused by strangers. After being forced to have an illegal abortion, she managed to escape with another trafficking victim. Luckily, her dastardly trafficker was charged with domestic violence.

Arien has faced many challenges throughout her life. She witnessed her mother use drugs and then, in her narcotic induced state, abuse her. She was molested by several male family members as a child, but she was determined to create a better life for her and her younger brother.

Arien refused to let her tragic past dictate her future. She became an advocate for human trafficking victims, using her experiences to relate to and help others. She volunteered with Breaking the Chains and the Cen-

tral Valley Justice Coalition, where she shares her story with hundreds of young women. Through this group, she is able to educate students about the dangers of human trafficking.

Arien is an unpaid volunteer and works as an assistant catering manager to support her 3-year-old daughter. Her dream is to one day earn a law degree and use her legal skills to further advocate for crime victims.

Arien's story is one of triumph. She may have endured horrific hardships, but she came out the other side stronger and more resilient.

Each year the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus honors outstanding individuals and organizations for their tireless efforts supporting and empowering survivors of crime. Co-chaired and co-founded by JIM COSTA (D-CA) and myself, the bipartisan caucus advocates for crime victims and protects programs that provide critical support for related services.

I am honored to announce Arien Pauls as the recipient of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus Eva Murillo Unsung Hero Award. The Unsung Hero Award is in memorial of Eva Murillo, a prominent crime victim advocate from California. Arien has utilized her experiences to promote public education and awareness, public policy development and greater awareness about crime victims' rights and needs, as well as her stunning achievements and passion for victims' advocacy here today.

And that's just the way it is.

RAEGAN SAWANO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Raegan Sawano for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Raegan Sawano is a student at Oberson Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Raegan Sawano 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 Raegan Sawano 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.

ELLA DINKINS

HON. VAL BUTLER DEMINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments and life of Ella Augusta Johnson Dinkins, as she celebrates her 100th birthday this year.

Mrs. Dinkins was born on April 20, 1918 in Orlando, Florida. She is the first child of Addie

Mae Gramling Johnson, a school teacher, and Augustus Newsome Johnson, an architect and builder.

When the onset of the Great Depression destroyed her family's financial security, she moved with her parents to Eatonville, the first black incorporated municipality in the United States of America. There, she attended and graduated from the Historic Hungerford School.

Mrs. Dinkins worked hard to support her family—as a domestic servant, truck farmer, insurance agent, hair dresser, and chicken farmer. During certain periods of her life, she worked three jobs at once. She retired in 1984 from her position with the United Telephone Company.

Mrs. Dinkins quickly built a reputation in Eatonville as a civic and faith leader. She is a member of Eatonville's oldest congregation—St. Lawrence African Methodist Episcopal Church—where she has served on countless committees and as Chair of the Board of Trustees.

In segregated Orlando, black women were forced to deliver babies in the basement of Orange Memorial Hospital. No incubators were available for children who needed them. Mrs. Dinkins helped to found Eatonville's Mothers' Club, which raised funds to buy incubators, saving the lives of vulnerable children in her community.

During the 1950s, Mrs. Dinkins joined Eatonville's Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary. In the 1960s, she worked to elect representatives who would work for equality, fairness, and progress.

In the 1980s, she became a Founding Member of the Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc. (PEC), and has spent thousands of hours organizing programs, volunteering at the Zora Neale Hurston National Museum of Fine Arts, and representing her community at historical preservation conferences nationwide. When Eatonville was designated the Historic Town of Eatonville, Mrs. Dinkins served on the first Historic Preservation Board. PEC continues to organize the ZORA Festival, STEM Initiative, and other community programs.

Today, Mrs. Dinkins is widely known as a volunteer, civic leader, and community voice, who attends every Town Council meeting and other official community gathering.

Mr. Speaker, the Historic Town of Eatonville is blessed to count Mrs. Dinkins as a resident. I am honored to represent her, and I congratulate her on her 100th birthday.

KATY ISD BRINGS HOME FOUR
TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate our Katy ISD track and field athletes for bringing home four championships at the 91st Clyde Littlefield Texas Relays.

Seven Lakes High School sprinters Thomas Pratt, Lance Broome, Chris Williams and Jahquan Bloomfield won the gold in the 400-meter relay with a time of 40.88 seconds. The Tompkins High School girls 3,200-meter relay

team of Alyssa Balandran, Grace Kohout, Marisa Marinchak and Gabriella Rico also brought home gold with a time of 9:52.68. Cinco Ranch High School freshman Heidi Nielson placed first in the 1,600-meter run with an incredible 4:53.43 time. Otito Ogbonnia, a senior at Taylor High School threw the discus an impressive 185 feet and 9 inches, bringing home the gold in this event.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to all of these incredible and talented athletes for these great achievements. We look forward to seeing what their bright futures hold.

TRIBUTE TO BRENDA LEVIN—28TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Brenda Levin of Los Feliz, a unique neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

Born in New Jersey, Brenda Levin lived on the East Coast until she was 30 and never expected to leave. After studying graphic design at Carnegie Mellon and earning her undergraduate degree at New York University, she worked for a few years before returning to school to earn a Master of Architecture degree from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design in 1976. There she met her future husband, David Abel, who was determined to go west and convinced Brenda there would be more opportunities for women in male-dominated fields such as architecture. Her first job in California was working with prominent residential architect John Lautner on his design of a Palm Springs house for entertainer Bob Hope.

From that day forward, Ms. Levin has touched the historic and cultural spirit and complexity of Los Angeles, significantly shaping the city skyline as we know it. For over 20 years her architecture and urban planning firm, Levin & Associates Architects, has pioneered, in collaboration with innovative developers, the process of historic preservation by the polishing the riches of the city with a new sheen, and her success in this effort has helped to energize the preservation movement in Los Angeles. Among the landmarks she has helped to preserve and revitalize are Grand Central and Chapman markets, the Oviatt, Fine Arts and Bradbury Buildings, the Wiltern Theater and Los Angeles City Hall. In the revitalization/preservation process are the Griffith Observatory, the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed buildings at Barnsdall Art Park and the Japanese American National Museum's National Center for the Preservation of Democracy, among others.

In the spring of 2000, the Boone Gallery designed by Brenda opened at The Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens in San Marino and Art, Design & Architecture Museum at the University of California, Santa

Barbara. Ms. Levin's housing projects include the nationally-recognized Downtown Women's Center for mentally-ill, homeless women in Los Angeles and the Adams Congress affordable apartments in south Los Angeles.

Ms. Levin's exceptional work has been recognized with numerous awards. She is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and the AIA/LA selected her as recipient of the 2010 Gold Medal for her contributions in the preservation and revitalization movement in Los Angeles. In addition, in 2014, she received the Rose Award from the Los Angeles Parks Foundation, and in 2017, Brenda was the recipient of the Los Angeles Architectural Angel Award from Project Restore.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Brenda Levin.

IN MEMORY OF MRS. JOHNIE MAE
SITTONEN

HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today alongside my friend, Congressman MICHAEL BURGESS, to pay tribute to Johnnie Mae Sittonen, a World War II veteran and Des Arc, Arkansas native who passed away in January of this year. Throughout her life, Johnnie Mae Sittonen served her country, her Arkansas community, and her family selflessly.

Johnnie Mae Sittonen was born in Biscoe, Arkansas in 1924. In 1942, she graduated from Des Arc High School as an exemplary student and enrolled at Arkansas State University. As a young woman, Johnnie Mae was one of the great Americans who volunteered to serve our nation. She joined the U.S. Navy in 1944, at the height of World War II. During her service, she met and married Paul Sittonen. After several years in Massachusetts, she and her husband Paul returned to Des Arc in 1959 to raise their five children and run a family farm.

Johnnie Mae Sittonen spent many years serving her Arkansas community. For more than 20 years, she worked in the Des Arc Schools as the cafeteria supervisor before retiring in 1986. A committed member of the First United Methodist Church in Des Arc, she taught Sunday School, sang in the choir, and served as an active member of United Methodist Women. She was a lifelong Democrat, and served as both the Chair of the Prairie County Democratic Women's Group and as an active member of the Retired Teachers Association.

Johnnie Mae Sittonen's hard work for those in her community did not go unnoticed. She was honored as the Outstanding Community Citizen in 1972 and the Des Arc High School Citizen of the Year in 1983, and later received Baptist Health's Amazing Spirit Award in 2006.

A member of the "Greatest Generation," Johnnie Mae Sittonen is an example of American excellence, servant-hearted kindness, and commitment to service. She will be deeply missed, not only by her family and loved ones, but also by the northeast Arkansas community she served throughout her life.

TRIBUTE TO GLORIA SOTO—CALI-
FORNIA'S 24TH CONGRESSIONAL
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Every year, we dedicate the month of March to give special recognition to the accomplishments and sacrifices made by America's women. I consider it an honor to highlight the extraordinary women who are making a difference in my District. I would like to recognize one outstanding woman, Gloria Soto, of Santa Maria, California.

Gloria Soto was born and raised in the Santa Maria and Guadalupe areas of Santa Barbara County. She comes from an immigrant family who instilled the value of hard work and determination, and made numerous sacrifices to ensure she would have a chance at a better life. Gloria took advantage of every opportunity and graduated from Pioneer Valley High School, Allan Hancock College, and then from Bradman University all while working full time.

Gloria started out as an educator about 6 years ago where she built up educational programs from Lompoc to Paso Robles. She initiated Young Advocates groups in Santa Maria and San Luis Obispo that encourage young people to speak up for reproductive rights. Gloria now works in the development department of Planned Parenthood of the Central Coast where she strives to protect and expand access to reproductive health care in her community. She also educates donors about the importance of their continued support.

In addition to her work for Planned Parenthood, Gloria also serves on the board of Future Leaders of America where she volunteers hundreds of hours training youth leaders and directing week-long youth leadership camps. She is also a board member of the Fund for Santa Barbara, a member of the Activist-Led Grant Making Committee, and a key organizer for the Latino Legacy Awards in Santa Maria.

Gloria's contribution to social justice for a more just community are immeasurable, she is not afraid to get her hands dirty and understands the importance of taking leadership roles in organizations so they can better serve our community. She is a champion for youth, immigrants, and women, and we are lucky to have her in our district.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 24th Congressional District, Gloria Soto, for her incredible service to her community.

JULIE M. NAUMAN

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Julie Nauman had dedicated her life to improving the lives of victims. Julie has been a tireless advocate for those who are less fortunate.

Her work on the Executive Office of the California Crime Compensation Board has led

vital victim compensation in California. Julie has strived to help crime victims sort through complicated legal matters and help them cope with the financial aftermath of the crimes in which they were involved. Julie has also been committed to conducting multi-lingual victim outreach and public awareness efforts to reach crime survivors in California.

After the mass shooting in Las Vegas in October of 2017, it was no surprise, Julie was right ready to help. With her assistance, along with the CCCB, they were able to reach across state lines to provide information, assistance and guidance regarding victim compensation to hundreds of survivors who call California home.

When there was a mass shooting in April of 2017 in Fresno County, Julie personally helped to provide compensation funding for funerals for the murdered victims. She also aided the Fresno Police Department providing resources to better fund future victim assistance services for Fresno County.

As a past member of the Board of Directors and a current member of the National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Board, Julie has vocalized the need to ensure violent crime victims are aware of the financial support and services available to them.

Julie's persistent support of crime victims is unparalleled. Julie is a superb leader and a truly compassionate person, who is committed to improving the lives of crime victims everywhere.

Each year the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus honors outstanding individuals and organizations for their tireless efforts supporting and empowering survivors of crime. Co-chaired and co-founded by JIM COSTA (D-CA) and myself, the bipartisan caucus advocates for crime victims and protects programs that provide critical support for related services.

I am proud to announce Julie Nauman as the recipient of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus the Suzanne McDaniel Memorial Award for Public Awareness. The Public Awareness Award is in memory of Susanne McDaniel, one of the first prosecutor-based victim advocates in Texas and the nation. There is no doubt, Julie has used her voice to promote and to bring about change at the National level for crime victims.

And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO ANASTASIA MANN—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Anastasia Mann of Hollywood Hills, a unique neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

Anastasia Mann founded Corniche Travel in 1987 and successfully launched a new division called Anastasia's Africa in 2004, which specializes in customized trips to southern and

eastern Africa. She later established Corniche Entertainment, which provides music and entertainment for private events around the world. Alongside the development of her own company, Anastasia has taken on several leadership roles in the travel industry, locally, state-wide, nationally and internationally. She is the founding chairman of the West Hollywood Visitors and Convention Bureau, and a founding member of the California Travel and Tourism Commission, where she served two terms as the sole representative for all travel management agencies in California and served on the Executive Committee. In addition, she is a member of the California Chamber of Commerce and spent ten years on the international board of directors of the Travel & Tourism Research Association, serving as President and Chair. Ms. Mann served as a California representative to the White House Conference on Tourism during the Clinton Administration and was a keynote speaker at both the 2003 International Conference on Peace through Tourism in Geneva, Switzerland and the 2005 IIPT African Conference in Lusaka, Zambia.

In addition to her impressive achievements in the travel industry, Ms. Mann is also actively involved in the community, serving as President of the Hollywood Hills West Neighborhood Council and as a Hearing Examiner for the Los Angeles Police Department's Board of Rights. She is a long-standing board member of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce and was involved with the Hollywood Arts Council. Anastasia and her company support several organizations, including the Fred Jordan Mission in downtown Los Angeles, Program for Torture Victims, OneLegacy Foundation and Disabled American Veterans.

Ms. Mann's noble deeds have not been overlooked as she has received numerous commendations by the Los Angeles City Council, Los Angeles Mayor, the Governor of California and the United States Senate for philanthropy and business achievements. She also received the Woman of Achievement Award from the Century City Chamber of Commerce in 2006, the prestigious Diamond Award from the Southern California chapter of the American Society of Travel Agents in 2017 and was the first recipient of the Anastasia K. Mann Leadership Award from the Travel and Tourism Marketing Association.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Anastasia Mann.

BILLIE DEAN

HON. VAL BUTLER DEMINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Vice Mayor Billie Dean, who will retire this month after serving the city of Apopka, Florida, for over twenty years.

Mr. Dean was born and raised in Clermont, Florida, across the lake from his current home. He attended Jones High School and Eustis Vocational High School, and earned a Bachelor's and Master's degree from Florida A&M University.

Mr. Dean also served our nation with honor and courage in the United States Army. A Ko-

rean War veteran, he received a Bronze Star for valor.

After settling in Apopka—where he has lived for over 35 years—Mr. Dean became a teacher and activist. He has served as a member of the Florida League of Cities, a Board Member of the Lake Apopka Natural Gas Board, a CARET Representative for Land Grant Colleges and Universities on behalf of Florida A&M University.

He has been a role model in his community, both through his example, and as a member of the 100 Black Men of Orlando, Inc., a long-term mentoring group for black children.

An active member and trustee of Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church in Orlando, he has put his faith into practice in his community.

In 1994, Mr. Dean was elected to the Apopka City Commission. In 2014, he became Vice Mayor—the honor bestowed upon the city's longest-serving Commissioner.

Mr. Dean was an educator. He knew that education is the key to success, and worked throughout his life to ready the next generation to thrive. He married Isadora Moye Dean, and together they have five children and three grandchildren.

In Mr. Dean, our children see a model for public, civic, and community service. While Apopka will miss him as a Commissioner, I am certain that his positive influence on our community will be evident for years to come. Mr. Speaker, I offer my heartiest congratulations to Mr. Dean upon his retirement.

RETIREMENT OF PHIL COYNE

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Phil Coyne, a Pittsburgh icon who has just retired after eighty-one years of service to our community as an usher for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Phil, the brother of Pittsburgh's former Congressman Bill Coyne, served generations of sports fans during his career, pausing only to serve his country in the military for four years during World War II.

At 99, Phil retired with a unique store of memories that spanned three different ballparks and six thousand games. Arguably the Pirates' biggest loss of the season, Phil leaves with his own Pirates jersey sporting the number 99, and his presence will be felt not only by the fans sitting along the third-base line in PNC Park, but by the whole city.

"Phil remains number one on our organizational seniority list and will always have a place on our team," affirmed Pirates President Frank Coonelly.

Phil also ushered at Steelers football games until he was 98—and at St. Paul Cathedral every Sunday.

Phil's long career is unlikely to ever be matched or exceeded.

While Coyne will not be there to usher for anyone any longer, he will still listen to games and even attend some of them—but now as a fan.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's 14th Congressional District, I want to commend Phil and thank him for his many years of dedication to

Pittsburgh sports and his community, and I am pleased to honor him as his 100th birthday approaches.

MEGAN SCHUELLER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Megan Schueller for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Megan Schueller is a student at Warren Tech North and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Megan Schueller 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 Megan Schueller 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 VICTIMS OF
THE SMOLENSK AIR CRASH

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I join in acknowledging the eighth anniversary of the Smolensk Disaster, a tragedy that claimed the lives of Polish President Lech Kaczynski, his wife Maria, and 94 others aboard a government aircraft on April 10, 2010. Among the victims were high ranking generals and government officials, clergy, anti-communist leaders and the family members of victims traveling to a ceremony for the 1940 Katyn Forest Massacre. Also on the plane was one American citizen on an official mission for the city of Chicago. This week, we offer our prayers for the souls of the 96 crash victims and honor those who served their country.

TRIBUTE TO BETH FARNSWORTH
WARD—CALIFORNIA'S 24TH CON-
GRESSIONAL WOMAN OF THE
YEAR

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Every year, we dedicate the month of March to give special recognition to the accomplishments and sacrifices made by America's women. I consider it an honor to highlight the extraordinary women who are making a difference in my

District. I would like to recognize one outstanding woman, Beth Farnsworth Ward, from Santa Barbara.

Beth Farnsworth Ward is an Anchor and Reporter for KEYT NewsChannel 3 in Santa Barbara. When the Thomas Fire broke out in December of 2017 and rapidly spread through two counties, Beth stepped up and took the lead covering the disaster and its aftermath, working tirelessly to bring important stories and up-to-date news to affected residents.

Beth provided vital TV news information for our community as evacuations and alerts came out from county officials. Her outstanding leadership and tireless work to help residents navigate information, warnings, and updates ensured residents all throughout the Central Coast were well-informed during the largest wildfire in California history and her work to keep residents safe cannot be understated.

She stepped up once again in January, when the deadly mudslides left many in Montecito in need of resources and information. Beth's tireless devotion, from telling compelling and hard-hitting stories from the field to delivering timely news on set was invaluable to our community as we joined together as a community to recover from two of the worst natural disasters our community has faced.

I am honored to recognize Beth for her commitment to our news operation and the residents of Santa Barbara county. Her news coverage is exemplary of the importance of journalism and local reporting to our community's safety and security.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 24th Congressional District, Beth Farnsworth Ward, for her incredible service to her community.

TRIBUTE TO ISA-KAE MEKSIN—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my congressional district. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Isa-Kae Meksin of Echo Park, a unique neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

Isa-Kae's family immigrated to New York from the Ukraine where her father was a concert pianist and her mother was a homemaker. Growing up, Isa-Kae's mother taught her to question authority and to think on her feet, guiding her towards her passion for local politics and historic preservation.

While in New York, Ms. Meksin received a Bachelor's Degree from Hunter College and soon after worked as a secretary for C.L.R. James, the visionary Afro-Trinidadian historian and journalist. It was during this time that she observed how workers, women, African-Americans and youth, were agents of change, and it was this work that led her to Los Angeles to connect with and observe the activities of the local factory workers.

Isa-Kae moved to California in 1953 where she attended California State University, Los Angeles and worked towards her teaching credential. As a teacher in the 1950's, she dedicated her time to working with students with disabilities, specifically the visually impaired, and she maintains life-long relationships with some of these past students. Ms. Meksin continued this incredible work for many years until she found a new passion: activism.

In 1978, Isa-Kae worked on opposing the discriminatory Briggs Initiative which would have banned gays and lesbians, and anyone who supported Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) rights, from working in California public schools. As someone who fought for and supported the rights of LGBT individuals, Isa-Kae testified to the horrific outcomes of such a potentially divisive initiative and how the legislation perpetuated grossly inaccurate portrayals of homosexuals, and through her dedicated efforts and those of others, the Briggs Initiative was defeated.

Isa-Kae continues her activist work by volunteering with various organizations like the Watts Gang Task Force, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Central City Action Committee, the Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park, the Studio for Southern California History and many others. Among her many accomplishments, Ms. Meksin works with California State University, Los Angeles to create opportunities for homeless youth to attend college and in 2017, she was awarded the Distinguished Educator Award from the university for her efforts.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Isa-Kae Meksin.

MEGAN RONDINI

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Megan Rondini was a young college student at the University of Alabama. She was a bright young woman with her whole life ahead of her. What happened next should have never transpired. Megan was raped by a man from a rich family in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. After Megan managed to escape Bunn by fleeing outside a second story window, she headed to a hospital for a rape kit. She did everything a victim should do.

But it was here the system began to fail her. The hospital did not have a sexual assault forensic examiner or SAFE on staff, so they had nobody trained to properly deal with a sexual assault victim or trained to properly collect DNA evidence.

When she went to the police station, she was treated with disdain and disbelief, dismissed and ignored. The police didn't believe her, and treated her like a criminal. They even read her—the victim—her Miranda Rights.

Megan was failed by the system at every turn. Feeling like she had no other option, she tragically took her own life.

The injustices she endured started a national dialogue about campus sexual assault, an issue that is extremely pervasive in our society, but one that very few people wanted to

talk about. The outrage generated forced many universities to re-evaluate and change how they handle victims of sexual assault. Legislators on both sides of the aisle came together on local, state and federal levels to try to come up with new laws and real solutions.

Many hospitals and university infirmaries have begun hiring and recruiting staff trained specifically to handle sexual assault cases. Countless future victims will benefit from the changes that have been implemented because of Megan Rondini. And those changes have only just begun. We will all continue to fight in her name to make the system better for victims.

Each year the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus honors outstanding individuals and organizations for their tireless efforts supporting and empowering survivors of crime. Co-chaired and co-founded by JIM COSTA (D-CA) and myself, the bipartisan caucus advocates for crime victims and protects programs that provide critical support for related services. Today, I am proud to announce Megan Rondini as the recipient of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus Suzanne McDaniel Memorial Award for Public Awareness. The Public Awareness Award is in memory of Suzanne McDaniel, one of the first prosecutor-based victim advocates in Texas and the nation. There is no doubt, Megan's story has overwhelmingly brought change at the National level for crime victims.

And that's just the way it is.

SUTTON SPARR

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Sutton Sparr for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Sutton Sparr 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 Sutton Sparr 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 Sutton Sparr 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 FRED DEL BARRIO

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Fred Del Barrio, who was recently named Business Man of the Year by the Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

In 1984, Fred Del Barrio, a high school senior at the time, reluctantly took his first job at the McDonald's on Conway Avenue in Mission, Texas. By the age of 20, he was the manager of the McDonald's at El Centro Mall in Pharr; by the age of 23 he was the supervisor of three stores; and by the age of 31 he owned his own franchise. Today, Mr. Del Barrio is the proud owner of 13 McDonald's franchises.

Mr. Del Barrio has been described by his peers as exceptionally humble and versatile. Moreover, when the Rio Grande Valley Chamber of Commerce chose him for Business Man of the Year they cited his knowledge of "the value of giving back to the community." Because he has been in their shoes, Mr. Del Barrio understands the importance of fostering relationships with his employees. Even though the job has changed over time, Mr. Del Barrio strives to give all of his employees the resources they need to get ahead.

Mr. Speaker, it is honoring to represent industrious and productive South Texan. Fred Del Barrio's business acumen and contributions to the community are a shining example of what the 15th District of Texas has to offer.

KASKASKIA COLLEGE—NATIONAL
COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to recognize Kaskaskia College as part of April's national Community College Month.

Kaskaskia College provides high quality and affordable services to over 7,000 students every year. Students can receive distinguished Associate Degrees and skilled labor training to propel themselves forward in higher education and the work force.

Kaskaskia College has doubled down on their mission to provide the most competitive education and technical training. KC has expanded access to their services through online programs, dual-credit courses, and six educational centers that complement their main campus. The services KC provides have become vital to the economic and educational growth in the communities it serves.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to send my congratulations to Kaskaskia College's faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees for their continued success and dedication to their mission.

MARCH FOR OUR LIVES

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the students, teachers, school districts, and advocates throughout Western Pennsylvania who participated in the March for Our Lives on March 24 in downtown Pittsburgh. It is estimated that about 30,000 people participated—a powerful demonstration of the movement against gun violence.

I especially want to recognize the students who have started and fueled this movement. Recently, my office has received many letters from students throughout the Pittsburgh area. These students have written that they are scared and frustrated. One of my constituents wrote, for example, that she sits in each of her classrooms throughout the day, planning out where to run or hide if a shooter enters. But these students have consciously turned their passion about this issue into action to improve their futures. This decision is admirable.

I was pleased to join these young people during the March for Our Lives in Pittsburgh on March 24, and I was inspired by their calls for legislative action on this issue. Congress must make greater efforts to ensure these young people see significant new gun legislation enacted. I will continue to support policies that can prevent gun violence tragedies in the future.

I would also like to recognize the teachers and school districts that have encouraged their students to think critically about the issues that impact their lives and about their roles in democracy. I applaud their efforts to protect their students and teach a new generation of leaders how to serve their communities.

Finally, I would like to recognize my constituents who have been vocal about this issue for many years. When I participated in the sit-in on this House Floor almost two years ago after the shooting in Orlando, we felt that enough was enough. That's so much more true today. I am committed to continuing this fight to curb gun violence as long as it takes, and I believe that the efforts of this new generation will finally tip the scales in our favor and enact new commonsense gun laws.

IN MEMORY OF MRS. JOHNNIE MAE
SITTONEN

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today alongside my friend, Congressman RICK CRAWFORD, to pay tribute to Johnnie Mae Sittonen, a World War II veteran and Des Arc, Arkansas native who passed away in January of this year. Throughout her life, Johnnie Mae Sittonen served her country, her Arkansas community, and her family selflessly.

Johnnie Mae Sittonen was born in Biscoe, Arkansas in 1924. In 1942, she graduated from Des Arc High School as an exemplary student and enrolled at Arkansas State University. As a young woman, Johnnie Mae was one of the great Americans who volunteered to serve our nation. She joined the U.S. Navy in 1944, at the height of World War II. During her service, she met and married Paul Sittonen. After several years in Massachusetts, she and her husband Paul returned to Des Arc in 1959 to raise their five children and run a family farm.

Johnnie Mae Sittonen spent many years serving her Arkansas community. For more than 20 years, she worked in the Des Arc Schools as the cafeteria supervisor before retiring in 1986. A committed member of the First United Methodist Church in Des Arc, she taught Sunday School, sang in the choir, and served as an active member of United Methodist Women. She was a lifelong Democrat,

and served as both the Chair of the Prairie County Democratic Women's Group and as an active member of the Retired Teachers Association.

Johnie Mae Sittonen's hard work for those in her community did not go unnoticed. She was honored as the Outstanding Community Citizen in 1972 and the Des Arc High School Citizen of the Year in 1983, and later received Baptist Health's Amazing Spirit Award in 2006.

A member of the "Greatest Generation," Johnie Mae Sittonen is an example of American excellence, servant-hearted kindness, and commitment to service. She will be deeply missed, not only by her family and loved ones, but also by the northeast Arkansas community she served throughout her life.

TRIBUTE TO DR. AMY ALZINA—
CALIFORNIA'S 24TH CONGRES-
SIONAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Every year, we dedicate the month of March to give special recognition to the accomplishments and sacrifices made by America's women. I consider it an honor to highlight the extraordinary women who are making a difference in my District. I would like to recognize one outstanding woman, Dr. Amy Alzina, from Montecito.

In her first year as principal/superintendent of Cold Spring School in Montecito, Dr. Alzina has had more to deal with than many principals will have to handle in a lifetime. Fortunately, her incredible spirit and strong leadership has been woven into the fabric of the school since she arrived.

Cold Spring School was particularly impacted by the aftermath of the Thomas Fire and subsequent mudslides, which devastated Montecito and took the lives of twenty one individuals. When Cold Springs School was forced the school to close for nearly six weeks and took the lives of two students, Dr. Alzina was a calming voice and a beacon of information for the students and families ensuring families felt understood and supported.

From meeting with families who lost their loved ones, to hosting school-wide movie nights so parents could have time to themselves knowing their children were safe, Dr. Alzina gave the community comfort and security during an incredibly difficult time. Her leadership and compassion was instrumental to helping Montecito recover from the devastation.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 24th Congressional District, Dr. Amy Alzina, for her incredible service to her community.

LYLA TAYLOR

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Lyla Taylor for

receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Lyla Taylor is a student at Oberon Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Lyla Taylor 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 Lyla Taylor 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.

U.S. CENTER FOR SAFESPORT—
ALLIED PROFESSIONAL

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Center for SafeSport is an outstanding organization that helps prevent child abuse within the governing bodies of the United States Olympic Committee. SafeSport was launched in March of 2017 and aims to empower athletes by developing a national sport culture of respect and safety.

SafeSport has a team of professionals specifically focused on developing best practices, policies, and programs to protect our children from predators and promote education and awareness about abuse.

Additionally, the Center's Response and Resolution Office is tasked with investigating and resolving policy violations of the SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement's 47 member National Governing Bodies. This will aid in investigations to identify trends and patterns across sport, which will help to strengthen prevention efforts.

Congress has recently recognized the need for keeping our young athletes safe, and SafeSport is committed to fighting alongside us to end the exploitation of young women and men in this country. SafeSport not only is committed to preventing sexual abuse but any form of emotional and physical misconduct. This also extends to bullying, hazing, and harassment.

With these policies put into place, SafeSport is effectively eradicating abuse from our sports programs. The organization is a shining beacon that empowers our youth to stand up for what is right.

Each year the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus honors outstanding individuals and organizations for their tireless efforts supporting and empowering survivors of crime. Co-chaired and co-founded by JIM COSTA (D-CA) and myself, the bipartisan caucus advocates for crime victims and protects programs that provide critical support for related services.

I am proud to award this amazing organization with the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus Allied Professional Award, recognizing the efforts of SafeSport and their leadership, creativity, and commitment in linking allied

professionals to improve the plight of crime victims in our Nation.

And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO CLAUDETTE NICOLE
SABA MONESTIME—28TH CON-
GRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN
OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my congressional district. Today I would like to recognize one remarkable woman, Claudette Nicole Saba Monestime of Atwater Village, a unique neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

Claudette Nicole Saba Monestime is a Palestinian American who was born in Wiesbaden, Germany, where her father was stationed serving the United States Army during the Vietnam War. Nicole, her parents and two sisters moved from Germany to Anaheim, California after her father's military service ended. She credits her amazing public school education in the Anaheim school system and the attainment of a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from California State University, Fullerton.

She moved to Atwater Village nearly twenty years ago to expand her career in marketing, and along the way met and married her husband, Rene Monestime. They had two sons, Reece and Micah. After having a successful career as a marketing manager at Princess Cruises and Cunard Line, she started her own marketing firm and immersed herself in her children's public school education.

Ms. Monestime helped create a technology vision for Glenfeliz Boulevard School for Advanced Studies, which has resulted in the consistent use of 75 iPads and 35 laptops by students throughout all grade levels. She continues to volunteer her time in the classroom by helping teach first, second, and third grade students about the intricacies of computer programming. Nicole is the president of the Glenfeliz Boulevard School for Advanced Studies' non-profit booster organization, Friends of Glenfeliz, which raises much needed funds to help to pay for programs that benefit the entire student body, and also participates in an ongoing community outreach campaign to ensure that local businesses play an integral role at the elementary school. Ms. Monestime serves as the president of the School Site Council, which works with the Los Angeles Unified School District to give parents perspective and feedback regarding decisions made at the district level.

Nicole's inspiration comes from the committed parents, administrators, teachers, business and non-profit leaders from the Atwater Village community who work in creative ways to make a difference. When they say, "It takes a village to raise a child," that is most certainly true and is happening in Atwater Village.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Claudette Nicole Saba Monestime.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM B. "BILL"
ZIMMERMAN, JR.

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor William B. "Bill" Zimmerman, Jr., of Covington. Bill passed away on November 6, 2017 at the age of 74. He was a fixture in the community who gave generously of himself to his fellow residents of the Alleghany Highlands.

Bill cared deeply about the place where he grew up and spent his life. He graduated from Covington High School in 1960, and later in life he advised the school's Jayteens. He worked as a Director of the Alleghany Highlands Office on Youth Program and as a diversion specialist for Alleghany County and the City of Covington.

Residents of Covington knew him as a long-time councilman who fulfilled his duties with integrity and dedication. From 1976 to 1980 and again from 1998 until his passing, Bill served as District 1's representative on the Covington City Council, and for a time also served as Vice Mayor.

Bill also contributed to various boards and organizations with his time and his talents. Among his contributions to the Alleghany Historical Society was a grand piano. Even as his health declined, he continued to sing in the Granbery Memorial United Methodist Church choir.

It is hard to think of Covington without remembering Bill Zimmerman. During parades in Covington, I grew accustomed to seeing him on the same street corner greeting people. I offer my condolences to his family, his friends (of which I was one), and the City of Covington on this great loss.

SERENITY TURNER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Serenity Turner for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Serenity Turner is a student at Arvada K-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Serenity Turner 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 Serenity Turner 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.

HONORING THE CAREER OF WINTER PARK FIRE CHIEF JIM WHITE

HON. STEPHANIE N. MURPHY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Jim White, chief of the Winter Park Fire Department, who will be retiring in May after over 35 years of public service in the firefighting profession.

Chief White began his career in firefighting only a few miles from here as a volunteer at the Arlington County Fire Department in Virginia before moving to Myrtle Beach, South

Carolina, where he worked for ten years as a professional firefighter. Chief White later established roots in Winter Park, where he has spent the last fifteen years as our city's top firefighter.

Some might say firefighting is the White family business. His father also volunteered as a firefighter, and his brother went on to become the deputy fire chief of the same Arlington fire station where White began his career. These men exemplify courage—running in while others are running out.

But whether it is because firefighting is in his family's DNA or because of his own passion for the job, it is clear that Chief White is both a capable leader and a dedicated public servant. During his tenure as the Winter Park Fire Chief, he oversaw the development of the city's first emergency management office, the improvement of several of the city's fire safety accreditations, and the construction of Winter Park's own public safety facility.

Chief White's achievements did not go unnoticed. In 2008, the International City Management Association awarded Winter Park its "Community Health and Safety Program Excellence Award" in recognition of an effort led by Chief White to modernize the city's fleet of ambulances, making it safer for rescue personnel to save lives. And, in 2014, Chief White received the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association's "Fire Chief of the Year Award" for his service to the public and his contributions to the fire service as a whole.

Although Chief White's leadership and experience will surely be missed at the department, he will leave an incredible legacy for others to follow. As a Winter Park resident myself, I want to personally thank Chief Jim White for his remarkable career in public service, and I wish Jim and his entire family all the best as they enter this new and exciting chapter in their lives.

May God bless Chief White and our brave firefighters and first responders across this nation who put their lives on the line to keep us safe.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2083–S2129

Measures Introduced: Sixteen bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2653–2668, and S. Res. 460–463. **Page S2120**

Measures Reported:

H.R. 2229, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide permanent authority for judicial review of certain Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, with an amendment. (S. Rept. No. 115–229) **Page S2120**

Measures Passed:

Commending the University of Central Missouri Jennies: Senate agreed to S. Res. 461, commending the University of Central Missouri Jennies for winning the national championship in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II tournament. **Page S2128**

House Messages:

Amending the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act—Agreement: Senate began consideration of the amendment of the House of Representatives to S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund, taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto:

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill. **Page S2111**

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill, with McConnell Amendment No. 2227 (to the amendment of the House to the bill), to change the enactment date. **Pages S2111–12**

McConnell Amendment No. 2228 (to Amendment No. 2227), of a perfecting nature. **Page S2112**

McConnell motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Indian Affairs, with instructions, McConnell Amendment No. 2229, to change the enactment date. **Page S2112**

McConnell Amendment No. 2230 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2229), of a perfecting nature. **Page S2112**

McConnell Amendment No. 2231 (to Amendment No. 2230), of a perfecting nature. **Page S2112**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, April 12, 2018, a vote on cloture will occur on Monday, April 16, 2018. **Page S2111**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Senate resume consideration of the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill at approximately 3 p.m., on Monday, April 16, 2018; and that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule XXII, the cloture vote on the motion be at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, April 16, 2018. **Page S2128**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 50 yeas to 48 nays (Vote No. EX. 69), Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Labor. **Pages S2083–84, S2129**

By 53 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. EX. 71), Andrew Wheeler, of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. **Pages S2084–S2110, S2129**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 53 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. 70), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S2084**

John W. Broomes, of Kansas, to be United States District Judge for the District of Kansas. **Pages S2011, S2129**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 74 yeas to 24 nays (Vote No. 72), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S2010–11**

Rebecca Grady Jennings, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky. **Pages S2111, S2129**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 94 yeas to 2 nays (Vote No. 73), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination.

Page S2111

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

James H. Anderson, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Rubydee Calvert, of Wyoming, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022.

Jennifer L. Homendy, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2019.

Heidi R. King, of California, to be Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Laura Gore Ross, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022.

Bonnie Glick, of Maryland, to be Deputy Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Mark Rosen, of Connecticut, to be United States Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund for a term of two years.

John P. Pallasch, of Kentucky, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Raul M. Arias-Marxuach, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

Pamela A. Barker, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Kenneth D. Bell, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of North Carolina.

Stephen R. Clark, Sr., of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

Charles L. Goodwin, of Hawaii, to be United States Marshal for the District of Hawaii for the term of four years.

James Patrick Hanlon, of Indiana, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Indiana.

Scott Patrick Illing, of Louisiana, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Louisiana for the term of four years.

John D. Jordan, of Missouri, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Missouri for the term of four years.

Jonathan W. Katchen, of Alaska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Alaska.

Scott E. Kracl, of Nebraska, to be United States Marshal for the District of Nebraska for the term of four years.

R. Don Ladner, Jr., of Florida, to be United States Marshal for the Northern District of Florida for the term of four years.

Cheryl A. Lydon, of South Carolina, to be United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina for the term of four years.

Erica H. MacDonald, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota for the term of four years.

Paul B. Matey, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Mary S. McElroy, of Rhode Island, to be United States District Judge for the District of Rhode Island.

David Stephen Morales, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

Sarah Daggett Morrison, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio.

David James Porter, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

J.C. Raffety, of West Virginia, to be United States Marshal for the Northern District of West Virginia for the term of four years.

Gadyaces S. Serralta, of Florida, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Florida for the term of four years.

Mark F. Sloke, of Alabama, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Alabama for the term of four years.

Page S2129

Messages from the House:

Page S2119

Measures Referred:

Page S2119

Measures Read the First Time:

Page S2119

Petitions and Memorials:

Page S2119

Executive Reports of Committees:

Page S2120

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages S2120–21

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:

Pages S2121–27

Additional Statements:

Page S2118

Amendments Submitted:

Pages S2127–28

Authorities for Committees to Meet:

Page S2128

Privileges of the Floor:

Page S2128

Record Votes: Five record votes were taken today. (Total—73)

Pages S2084, S2110–11

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:15 a.m. and adjourned at 5:54 p.m., until 3 p.m. on Monday,

April 16, 2018. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2128.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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 2019 for the Department of Labor, after receiving testimony from R. Alexander Acosta, Secretary of Labor.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2019 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Mark T. Esper, Secretary of the Army, and General Mark A. Milley, USA, Chief of Staff of the Army, both of the Department of Defense.

CFPB SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's semi-annual report to Congress, after receiving testimony from Mick Mulvaney, Acting Director, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

2018 HURRICANE SEASON

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the 2018 hurricane season, focusing on the status of preparation and response capabilities, after receiving testimony from Rear Admiral Timothy Gallaudet, USN (Ret.), Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, and Acting Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce; Rear Admiral Linda L. Fagan, Deputy Commandant for Operations Policy and Capability, Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security; T. Bella Dinh-Zarr, Board Member, National Transportation Safety Board; Jamie M. Miller, Mississippi Development Authority Deputy Director for Governmental Affairs

and Chief Innovation Officer, Jackson; Mayor Allen Owen, Missouri City, Texas; Charles Lindsey, City Manager, Marathon, Florida; and Jennifer Pipa, American Red Cross Central Florida Region, Washington, D.C.

2018 TAX FILING SEASON

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the 2018 tax filing season and future Internal Revenue Service challenges, after receiving testimony from David J. Kautter, Acting Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury.

NOMINATION

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State, after the nominee, who was introduced by former Senator Bob Dole, and Senators Roberts and Burr, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management concluded a hearing to examine the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, after receiving testimony from Neomi Rao, Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget; and Brent J. McIntosh, General Counsel, Department of the Treasury.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Jill Aiko Otake, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii, and Timothy A. Garrison, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, Kenji M. Price, to be United States Attorney for the District of Hawaii, John Cary Bittick, to be United States Marshal for the Middle District of Georgia, David L. Lyons, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Georgia, and Rodney D. Ostermiller, to be United States Marshal for the District of Montana, all of the Department of Justice.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 24 public bills, H.R. 2, 5480–5502; and 3 resolutions, H. Res. 822–824 were introduced. **Pages H3208–09**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H3210**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Chabot to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H3151**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:02 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H3158**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by voice vote. **Pages H3158, H3194**

Moment of Silence: The House observed a moment of silence in honor of those who have been killed or wounded in service to our country and all those who serve and their families. **Page H3158**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Torres wherein she resigned from the Committee on Natural Resources. **Page H3192**

Recess: The House recessed at 4:42 p.m. and reconvened at 5 p.m. **Pages H3192–93**

Suspensions: The House failed to agree to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

Proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States: H.J. Res. 2, proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ yea-and-nay vote of 233 yeas to 184 nays, Roll No. 138.

Pages H3162–92, H3193

Oath of Office—Eighteenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania: Representative-elect Conor Lamb presented himself in the well of the House and was administered the Oath of Office by the Speaker. Earlier, the Clerk of the House transmitted a copy of the Certificate of Election received from the Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor of Pennsylvania, and the Honorable Robert Torres, the Acting Secretary of the Commonwealth, indicating that, at the Special Election held on March 13, 2018, the Honorable Conor Lamb was elected Representative to Congress for the 18th Congressional District, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. **Page H3194**

Whole Number of the House: The Speaker announced to the House that, in light of the administration of the oath to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, the whole number of the House is 430.

Page H3194

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote developed during the proceedings of today and appears on page H3193. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Smithsonian Institution. Testimony was heard from David Skorton, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution.

INVESTMENTS IN OUR HEALTH WORKFORCE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing entitled “Investments in our Health Workforce and Rural Communities”. Testimony was heard from Tom Morris, Associate Administrator for Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration; and Luis Padilla, M.D., Associate Administrator for Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Testimony was heard from Robert M. Lightfoot, Acting Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a budget hearing on the U.S. National Guard and Reserve. Testimony was heard from General Joseph L. Lengyel, Chief, National Guard Bureau; Lieutenant General Charles D. Luckey, Chief of Army Reserve; Vice Admiral Luke M. McCollum, Chief of Navy Reserve; Lieutenant General Rex C. McMillian, Commander, Marine Forces Reserve; and Lieutenant General Maryanne Miller, Chief of Air Force Reserve.

APPROPRIATIONS—GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the Government Publishing Office. Testimony was heard from Andrew M. Sherman, Acting Deputy Director, Government Publishing Office.

APPROPRIATIONS—ENERGY, INSTALLATIONS, AND ENVIRONMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on Energy, Installations, and Environment. Testimony was heard from Lucian Niemeyer, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment, Department of Defense; Lieutenant General Gwen Bingham, Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, U.S. Army; Vice Admiral Dixon R. Smith, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Fleet Readiness and Logistics, U.S. Navy; Major General Vincent A. Coglianese, Commander, Marine Corps Installations Command, and Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics (Facilities), U.S. Marine Corps; and Major General Timothy S. Green, Air Force Director of Civil Engineers, and Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection, U.S. Air Force.

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT, AND U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a budget hearing on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Testimony was heard from Kevin K. McAleenan, Commissioner, Customs and Border Protection; Matthew T. Albence, Executive Associate Director for Enforcement and Removal Operations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and Derek N. Benner, Executive Associate, Director for Homeland Security Investigations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

APPROPRIATIONS—ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the Architect of the Capitol. Testimony was heard from Stephen T. Ayers, Architect of the Capitol.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Department of Transportation. Testimony was heard

from Elaine Chao, Secretary, Department of Transportation.

THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BUDGET REQUEST FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “The Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Department of Defense”. Testimony was heard from General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and James N. Mattis, Secretary, Department of Defense.

FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET REQUEST FOR COMBAT AVIATION PROGRAMS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request for Combat Aviation Programs”. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General Arnold W. Bunch, Jr., Military Deputy, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition; Rear Admiral Upper Half Scott D. Conn, Director of Air Warfare Division (N98), Headquarters, U.S. Navy; Vice Admiral Paul A. Grosklags, Commander of the Naval Air Systems Command, Headquarters, U.S. Navy; Lieutenant General Jerry D. Harris, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Requirements, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force; and Lieutenant General Steven R. Rudder, Deputy Commandant of the Marine Corps for Aviation, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.

355 SHIP NAVY: DELIVERING THE RIGHT CAPABILITIES

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled “355 Ship Navy: Delivering the Right Capabilities”. Testimony was heard from James F. Geurts, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition, Headquarters, U.S. Navy; Vice Admiral William R. Merz, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfare Systems, Headquarters, U.S. Navy; and Vice Admiral Thomas Moore, Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command, U.S. Navy.

THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE'S BUDGET AND ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “The Congressional Budget Office's Budget and Economic Outlook”. Testimony was heard from Keith Hall, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

**COMBATING THE OPIOID CRISIS:
IMPROVING THE ABILITY OF MEDICARE
AND MEDICAID TO PROVIDE CARE FOR
PATIENTS**

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health concluded a hearing entitled “Combating the Opioid Crisis: Improving the Ability of Medicare and Medicaid to Provide Care for Patients”. Testimony was heard from Kimberly Brandt, Principal Deputy Administrator for Operations, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; and public witnesses.

**THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY BUDGET**

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled “The Fiscal Year 2019 Department of Energy Budget”. Testimony was heard from Rick Perry, Secretary, Department of Energy.

**OVERSIGHT OF THE FEDERAL HOUSING
FINANCE AGENCY**

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Oversight of the Federal Housing Finance Agency”. Testimony was heard from Laura Wertheimer, Inspector General, Federal Housing Finance Agency.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade held a hearing on H.R. 4311, the “Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act of 2017”. Testimony was heard from Michael A. Brown, Presidential Innovation Fellow, Defense Innovation Unit Experimental; and public witnesses.

**BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE: EXAMINING
CHALLENGES FACING THE DEPARTMENT
OF HOMELAND SECURITY’S
CONSOLIDATED HEADQUARTERS PROJECT**

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency held a hearing entitled “Building for the Future: Examining Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security’s Consolidated Headquarters Project”. Testimony was heard from Thomas D. Chaleki, Chief Readiness Support Officer, Directorate for Management, Department of Homeland Security; Michael Gelber, Deputy Commissioner, Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration; and Christopher P. Currie, Director, Emergency Management, National Preparedness, and Critical Infrastructure Protection, Homeland Security and Justice Team, Government Accountability Office.

**EXAMINING THE PRESIDENT’S FY 2019
BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY
ADMINISTRATION**

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security held a hearing entitled “Examining the President’s FY 2019 Budget Request for the Transportation Security Administration”. Testimony was heard from David P. Pekoske, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 4631, the “Access to Congressionally Mandated Reports Act”; and H.R. 5305, the “FDLP Modernization Act of 2018”. H.R. 4631 and H.R. 5305 were ordered reported, as amended.

**EXAMINING THE ROLE OF SHARED
EMPLOYEES IN THE HOUSE**

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Examining the Role of Shared Employees in the House”. Testimony was heard from the following House of Representatives officials: Paul Irving, House Sergeant-at-Arms; Philip Kiko, Chief Administrative Officer; and Michael Ptasienski, Inspector General.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law held a hearing on legislation on the Permitting Litigation Efficiency Act of 2018; and H.R. 4423, the “North Texas Water Supply Security Act of 2017”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

**EXAMINING THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR
2019 SPENDING, PRIORITIES AND
MISSIONS OF THE BUREAU OF
RECLAMATION, THE U.S. FISH AND
WILDLIFE SERVICE, THE NATIONAL
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATION, AND THE FOUR
POWER MARKETING ADMINISTRATIONS**

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans held a hearing entitled “Examining the Proposed Fiscal Year 2019 Spending, Priorities and Missions of the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Four Power Marketing Administrations”. Testimony was heard from Mark Gabriel, Administrator, Western Area Power Administration, Lakewood, Colorado; RDML Timothy Gallaudet, Acting

Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Department of Commerce; Kenneth Legg, Administrator, Southeastern Power Administration, Elberton, Georgia; Timothy R. Petty, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, Department of the Interior; Elliot Mainzer, Administrator, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, Oregon; and Mike Wech, Acting Administrator, Southwestern Power Administration, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

THE BENEFITS OF THE NAVAJO GENERATION STATION ON LOCAL ECONOMIES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “The Benefits of the Navajo Generation Station on Local Economies”. Testimony was heard from Mark Finchem, Arizona Legislature, District 11, Phoenix, Arizona; and public witnesses.

IMPROPER PAYMENTS IN STATE-ADMINISTERED PROGRAMS: MEDICAID

Committee on Oversight and Government reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations; and Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Affairs held a joint hearing entitled “Improper Payments in State-Administered Programs: Medicaid”. Testimony was heard from Tim Hill, Deputy Director, Centers for Medicaid and CHIP Services, Department of Health and Human Services; Megan Tinker, Senior Advisor for Legal Review, Office of Counsel, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services; Carolyn Yocom, Director of Health Care, Government Accountability Office; Daryl Purpera, Legislative Auditor, Louisiana; and a public witness.

A ‘CARAVAN’ OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS: A TEST OF U.S. BORDERS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security held a hearing entitled “A ‘Caravan’ of Illegal Immigrants: A Test of U.S. Borders”. Testimony was heard from Carla L. Provost, Acting Chief, U.S. Border Patrol; Brandon Judd, President, National Border Patrol Council; Colonel Steven McCraw, Director, Texas Department of Public Safety; and public witnesses.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEYOND

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations held a hearing entitled “Community Support: Entrepreneurial Development and Beyond”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 5294, the “Treating Barriers to Prosperity Act of 2018”; H.R. 3288, the “Northern Border Regional Commission Reauthorization Act of 2017”; H. Con. Res. 115, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition; H. Con. Res. 113, authorizing the use of Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions; H.R. 4177, the “PREPARE Act of 2017”; H.R. 5319, to transfer Coast Guard property in the Town of Jupiter Island, Florida, for inclusion in Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge; H.R. 5326, the “Maritime Technical Corrections Act of 2018”; and H.R. 4673, the “Promoting Women in the Aviation Workforce Act”. H.R. 3288 and H.R. 4673 were ordered reported, as amended. H.R. 5294, H. Con. Res. 115, H. Con. Res. 113, H.R. 4177, H.R. 5319, H.R. 5326, and General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions were ordered reported, without amendment.

HEARING ON THE EFFECTS OF TARIFF INCREASES ON THE U.S. ECONOMY AND JOBS

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Hearing on the Effects of Tariff Increases on the U.S. Economy and Jobs”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY: LOCAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE JOBS GAP

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing entitled “Jobs and Opportunity: Local Perspectives on the Jobs Gap”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET HEARING

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Subcommittee on Department of Defense Intelligence and Overhead Architecture held a hearing entitled “Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Hearing”. This hearing was closed.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, p. D351)

H.R. 1865, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not

prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking. Signed on April 11, 2018. (Public Law 115–164)

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY,
APRIL 13, 2018**

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on the Federal Emergency Management Agency, 11 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Military Personnel, hearing entitled “Military Personnel Posture: FY 2019”, 9 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Environment, hearing entitled “High Octane Fuels and High Efficiency Vehicles: Challenges and Opportunities”, 9 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

3 p.m., Monday, April 16

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will resume consideration of the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to S. 140, Amending the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon at 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, April 13

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.R. 4790—Volcker Rule Regulatory Harmonization Act.

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