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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

Our Father God, in the fret and fever of these challenging times when we know not what a day may bring forth, we thank You for this quiet moment when all else is shut out and our hearts are uplifted to You. Lord, we cannot make better laws or a better world except as we are better people.

Inspire our lawmakers to make and keep their inner lives pure and kind and just. Show them what You desire for this Nation and world, and help them to be faithful agents for bringing Your will to pass.

Correct our mistakes, redeem our failures, and confirm our right actions. Lord, crown this day with the benediction of Your peace.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE REPUBLICAN-LED SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, over the past several years, we have seen a very disturbing practice which is becoming commonplace in the Republican-dominated U.S. Congress. Governing by brinkmanship, manufactured crisis, flirting with deadlines, a game of chicken—we can call it whatever we want, but Republicans are doing it. Governing by crisis is a modus operandi of the modern Republican Party. We saw it in 2011, as the newly elected Republican majority in the House pushed the U.S. Government to the threshold of shutdown and default, and again with the so-called fiscal cliff in 2012—financial brinkmanship for our whole country—and then, of course, the infamous government shutdown that actually did occur in 2013, and it occurred over a period of several weeks and was devastating to our economy.

But since the Republicans assumed control of the Senate earlier this year, the brinkmanship in the Halls of the Capitol has become unbearable. Recall what happened this past February. ISIS had just burned a man alive in a cage. We saw that. The world saw that. The tragic Charlie Hebdo shooting had just occurred a month earlier in France, and that spilled over into Belgium, where more people were killed. Belgium authorities were making sweeping arrests of terror cells, and ISIS was threatening us in our homeland. Three Brooklyn men were arrested for trying to join ISIS here in our homeland. Yet, in this tumultuous environment, Senate Republicans brought the American Government within hours of a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security. This is a Cabinet-level office that was created during the Bush administration, the Agency responsible for the safety of each American in our homeland. It was stunning.

But even more stunning is the fact that they keep doing it over and over again. This past week, it happened with the expiration of the important PATRIOT Act provisions. A few Senators wanted to offer some amendments on that legislation. That is all it was—amendments. In fact, on the Friday night of the debate, one Senator said: I will take two amendments. We on this side agreed—two amendments. Nope. Can't do that. And so, again, brinkmanship. The PATRIOT Act is a law that helps keep terrorists from attacking America. Would it have been asking too much to have a little bit of time to debate this issue? We were not given that time.

The Republican leadership knew for years that these programs were scheduled to expire on June 1, 2015. People who didn't like this act—and there were a number of them—gave speeches all over the country talking about the act. It was no secret that the act was not that popular in some people's minds.

Last year, Senator MCCONNELL knew this deadline was looming when he prevented the Senate from debating another version of the USA FREEDOM Act by conducting one of their hundreds of filibusters stopping President Obama's efforts. And the majority leader knew a month ago that the deadline was coming and chose to prioritize other legislation over these critical programs. So what happened? The authority for these sensitive programs expired.

Yesterday, we passed the USA FREEDOM Act, reestablishing these important terror-fighting provisions with some improvements in them. But for 2 days, America had its guard down. Every minute that passed from that lapse to passage of the USA FREEDOM Act was an unnecessary gamble with our national security. And for what? What did the Republicans achieve by letting these provisions lapse?

This is no way to govern—using legislative deadlines as some kind of ransom, staggering from one catastrophe to another.

Now on the horizon are two more important deadlines for legislation that is important to the American people—the Export-Import Bank and the Federal highway program. And what are we

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

doing? We are not doing these measures; we are on a bill that the President said he is going to veto. The Export-Import Bank expires at the end of this month, which is just a few weeks from now.

The Bank creates jobs by providing loans and loan guarantees to foreign customers who purchase American exports. This year alone, the Export-Import Bank supported 165,000 American jobs—165,000 jobs. What does it cost the American taxpayer? Zero. Nothing. In fact, it makes money for our country. Over the last 10 years, the Bank has returned more than $7 billion to the Treasury.

The majority leader should bring the Bank's reauthorization to the Senate floor for a vote before the charter expires at the end of this month, but it appears that is not going to happen. The senior Senator from Texas is already saying the Republicans have no intention of meeting that deadline. Instead, the American people will have to endure another manufactured crisis at the hands of Senate Republicans. Should we also assume the majority leader will do the same with the Federal highway program, which expires at the end of July? The Senate also faces a looming deadline for that program. It is critical that we craft a long-term solution to America's crumbling roads, highways, bridges, and rail systems.

Just a few miles from here, we have the Memorial Bridge. It is a beautiful bridge. It was built in the 1930s. The Memorial Bridge connects the Arlington National Cemetery to the Lincoln Memorial and the Mall. It is one of the busiest bridges in the whole DC area. Each day, 68,000 cars and buses cross that bridge, along with countless pedestrians and bicyclists.

Last week, Federal officials announced they will be shutting down two lanes of the bridge to repair the bridge, which is structurally deficient, which was caused by a number of problems, not the least of which is corrosion due to all of the moisture we have here. That is a problem we have with everything. And the problems, just minutes from the Capitol, are a daily reality for millions of Americans.

The Memorial Bridge is just one of the 64,000 structurally deficient bridges throughout our country. The people in Minnesota understand what this means. They had a bridge collapse, and 30-some people died as a result of that. That happened recently.

How long will we wait to fix these problems? What will it take before Republicans get serious about a solution to our crumbling highways, railroads, and bridges?

We understand. Democrats understand the urgency of the crisis facing our country, and we are ready to work with Republicans to rebuild our bridges, roads, and railway systems. We understand that investing in our surface transportation, including rail, can be a job creator and economy booster. For every $1 billion we spend on these roads, bridges, and rail systems, we employ 47,500 high-paying jobs and many other lesser paying jobs.

Before we left for recess a couple of weeks ago, we passed a short-term extension for the surface transportation programs. That is the 33rd time we have done that. Now that we are back in session, there appears to be no urgency from the Senate Republicans to schedule committee hearings, mark up the bill or to make the highway trust fund solvent.

Once again it seems the majority leader is content to let another vital program lapse, regardless of the harm it does or the American jobs he puts at risk.

How many more of these manufactured crises must the American people endure? How many more times would the majority leader let another vital program lapse regardless of the harm it does? It is imperative that Republicans not continue their assault on job creation in America. We should not let the Export-Import Bank or the Federal highway program expire, losing the millions of American jobs they create and sustain. It is beyond belief that on these two important legislative matters, Republicans will not help the American people with instant job creation. In the past, these two issues were never handled this way. The Export-Import Bank had three of its biggest cheerleaders: Reagan, Bush, and Bush. That is not the way it is anymore. The highway bill used to pass every 5 or 6 years, and it would be extended for 5 or 6 years. Until the Republicans changed the way the Senate operates, we used to pass these bills easily—but not now. We are having to address multiple short-term extensions each year and it seems every few months. This will be, as I indicated earlier, the 33rd short-term extension for the Federal highway program. This is not legislating. This is Republican procrastination.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know my good friend, the Democratic leader, is frustrated that he is no longer setting the schedule in the Senate. He seems to differ with the order of priorities that we deal with things here. Yesterday, he said debating the Defense authorization bill was ''a waste of time''—a waste of time to debate the Defense authorization bill in a time of high crisis for our country.

Nevertheless, a new majority sets the agenda of the schedule these days. Today, the Senate turns to the consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2016—in June, not in December, at the end of the year, in a situation in which no amendments are allowed.

This legislation, which authorizes funds and sets out policy for our military annually, is always important, but it is especially important now, given the multitude of threats that challenge us as a nation; for instance, the aggressive rise of ISIL, Iran's ambitions for regional hegemony and its accompanying quest for nuclear weapons, and both Chinese and Russian efforts to erode American influence and assert domination over their neighbors. It is also important, given the need to start thinking about preparing our armed services for the many global threats the next President will confront the day he or she takes office.

The reality is we have left behind the era of when Americans could withdraw from conflict overseas and escape to the comfort and security provided by vast oceans and isolation. We have lost the luxury of building our forces years after a war has begun. Most important, the simple tradeoff of guns versus butter, drawing down our conventional forces, hollowing them out, and standing behind our nuclear arsenal does not suit the strategic challenges we now face. We can no longer ignore ungoverned spaces. We have left the Cold War long behind. Tradeoffs have become more difficult to accomplish, and they require greater strategic thought than the President has provided, and we have seen the resilience of the terrorist threat.

Senator MCCAIN, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, is a man with the depth of experience to understand the need to modernize, refit, and prepare our military for the threats and operations in the coming years. Thankfully, for the Senate, he is also a man with vision to craft a bill that could put us on a path to address those challenges—legislation that could help equip the next President with adequate capabilities to address threats from adversaries like Russia, China, ISIL, and Al Qaeda, not to mention the unforeseen challenges that inevitably arise. That is just the course this Defense authorization bill proposes to put us on—the correct course. I would like to commend Senator MCCAIN, not just for crafting this bill but for working closely with Members of both parties to steer it through committee with overwhelming bipartisan support.

This legislation proposes to do a lot of things, but fundamentally it is premised on a commonsense idea that we should cut waste and redirect that authorized funding to where it is actually needed—such as meeting the needs of the men and women who put everything on the line—everything—to keep us safe.

In a time when missions are in imbalance with resources for a military that has already had to endure too many cuts in recent years, it just makes sense to do things such as taking on a growing bureaucracy in the Pentagon to make it more efficient and effective,

working toward reforming the way our military purchases weapons and equipment, and improving and modernizing the military retirement system in order to secure greater value and choice for servicemembers.

Overall, this bill authorizes about $10 billion in savings for actual military needs. These authorities will allow for improvements in the training and capability of our forces, and they will help us develop new technologies to maintain superiority on the battlefield. Our constituents stand to benefit from many of the provisions in this bill as well.

For instance, Kentuckians will be glad to know this legislation would authorize a new Special Forces facility at Fort Campbell. They will also be glad to hear it will authorize construction projects and an important new medical clinic at Fort Knox—an initiative I have championed literally for years.

It is no wonder why so many Democrats joined Republicans to support this bill on the floor of the House of Representatives or why they joined Republicans in the Armed Services Committee to pass this bill on an overwhelming bipartisan basis, too, which of course is the tradition, both of that committee and of the Senate as a whole.

Now we need to keep the momentum going because this defense policy bill cannot fall hostage to partisan politics. Too much is at stake.

We just heard more partisan saber rattling from the White House yesterday, which is now threatening to block a pay raise for our troops unless Congress first agrees to spend billions more pumping up bloated bureaucracies like the IRS. That is despite the fact that the funding level in this bill is exactly—exactly—the same as what President Obama requested in his budget. Let me say that again. The funding level in this bill is exactly what President Obama requested in his budget—$612 billion.

As I said earlier, the Democratic leader appeared to go even further, essentially saying that voting to support the men and women who protect us is now ''just a waste of time.'' It is just a waste of time, according to the Democratic leader, to be debating the bill about the men and women who protect us. The assumption, I guess, is his party isn't getting its way on other partisan demands completely unrelated to the bill, so they want to punish the men and women of our military.

Look, we understand that some of our Democratic friends might be so determined to increase spending for Washington's bureaucracies that to achieve it they would even risk support for our men and women in uniform in the face of so many global threats. I certainly don't love every aspect of the Budget Control Act, especially the effects we have seen on the defense side in hindering our ability to modernize the force and meet the demand of current operations. But to deny brave servicemembers the benefits they have earned putting everything on the line for each one of us, for these partisan reasons, would be profoundly unfair to our troops.

Blocking this bill is not in the national interest. So let's skip the partisan games and start working toward commonsense reforms, as this bill proposes. Let's work together to pass the best Defense authorization bill possible.

I urge Members of both parties who want to offer amendments to go ahead and do so and then work with the bill managers to get them moving. We have that opportunity this year because we returned to the regular order and because we are considering the NDAA at the appropriate time in the session, rather than at the very last minute with little time for thoughtful consideration of amendments, as had become the unfortunate norm under the previous majority. This positive turn is another credit to Senator MCCAIN's leadership.

Of course, no Defense authorization bill will ever be perfect, but this legislation reflects a good-faith effort to authorize programs in the political reality in which we live today. It is bipartisan reform legislation that proposes to root out waste, improve our military capabilities, support the brave Americans who protect us, and make preparations for challenges, both foreseeable and unforeseeable, in the years ahead.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein, with the time equally divided, with the majority controlling the first half and the Democrats controlling the final half.

The Senator from Wyoming.

FEDERAL WATER QUALITY PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last week, our Nation observed Memorial Day. We paid tribute to the sacrifices so many Americans have made to preserve our freedom. Also, last week, while Members were back home, the Obama administration snuck out a new rule that takes away freedom from Americans all across the country.

The Environmental Protection Agency released the final version of a new rule that will dramatically increase the agency's power and will devastate Americans' ability to use their own property and their own water. With this rule, President Obama's Environmental Protection Agency overreaches and ignores the American public. The rule is an attempt to change the definition of what the Clean Water Act calls waters of the United States.

There is bipartisan agreement that Washington bureaucrats have gone way beyond their authority with this new regulation. They have written this rule so broadly and with so much uncertainty that it is not clear if there are any limits on this Agency's power.

I agree with what the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee has to say. He wrote it in an op-ed that appeared yesterday. Senator INHOFE, chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, said:

> Not only does this final rule break promises EPA has made, but it claims federal powers even beyond what EPA originally proposed a year ago. This will drastically affect—for the worse—the ability of many Americans to use and enjoy their property.

This rule gives the Agency broad control over things such as any area within 4,000 feet of a navigable water or a tributary. Then, it defines tributaries to include any place where you can see an ''ordinary high water mark'' on what looks like—on what looks like—it was once the bank of a creek body of water—what looks like, not what is but what looks like.

Under the rule, the Environmental Protection Agency can regulate something as waters of the United States if it falls in a 100-year floodplain of a navigable water—not a navigable water but anything within a 100-year floodplain of a navigable water. The rule says the Agency has to find a ''significant nexus'' to navigable water.

What is a significant nexus to the EPA? Well, the Agency gets to make up its own definition. They say it includes something as simple as finding that the water provides—get this—''life cycle dependent aquatic habitat'' for a species that spends part of its time in a navigable water.

All of these terms are things that Washington bureaucrats are defining for themselves. They decide for themselves that they have the authority.

Let's say your property is within 4,000 feet of anything the Environmental Protection Agency decides is a tributary and your property has a natural pond or some standing water after heavy rain, and let's say a bird that spends part of its life on the Colorado River decides to hang out near that natural pond or some standing water after a heavy rain that occurred on your property, under this new regulation, the Environmental Protection Agency now has the power to regulate what you do on that land.

It is bad enough that this administration has taken this extraordinary step. It is bad enough that it has tried to sneak out its rule, hoping that nobody was paying attention over the Memorial Day time at home. There are now reports that the Obama administration may have broken the law. Here

is what the New York Times reported on May 18 under the headline on the front page: ''Critics Hear E.P.A.'s Voice in 'Public Comments.' ''

This is an article on the front page of the New York Times about the public comments that government agencies have to collect. They have to collect these comments from the public when they propose new regulations such as this one that they have done with the waters of the United States. The comment period is supposed to be an opportunity for people who might be harmed by the rules to have their say.

Well, according to this front-page article in the New York Times, the Environmental Protection Agency has twisted the public comment requirements into its own private government-funded spin machine. The article says: ''In a campaign that tests the limits of federal lobbying law, the agency has orchestrated a drive to counter political opposition from Republicans and enlist public support in concert with liberal environmental groups and a grass-roots organization aligned with President Obama.''

This tests the limits of Federal lobbying law. This government agency ignored the negative comments by Americans who were concerned about the law, who were hurt by the law. Then it used taxpayer dollars to lobby liberal groups to flood the Agency with positive comments. That is not me; that is what is written in the New York Times. These were the same phony, ginned-up comments it used to justify the dramatic overreach of its new regulations.

It is incredible. It is unacceptable. I believe it is illegal. The Environmental Protection Agency would rather skew public comments in its favor than acknowledge the real concerns that Americans and Members of Congress have with this destructive rule. These are the concerns of farmers, of ranchers, of hard-working families, and of small businesses all across the country.

There was an interesting column in U.S. News & World Report last Friday. The headline says: ''Stop Terrorizing Main Street.'' The column talked about the damage that all this redtape can do to small businesses. It says:

> When the EPA jumps up and yells 'boo', entrepreneurs cringe. They withdraw. They feel anxious and reconsider plans to start or expand a business. This is bad for our economy.

This is hurting our country. Well, I believe they are exactly right. That is what Washington does with the uncertainty and the overreach of rules such as this one. It is bad for the economy. It does nothing to improve the quality of our water or the quality of life.

There is universal agreement in this country that we should protect America's navigable waters. There is also bipartisan agreement on the best ways for Washington to help to do that. This is not just Republicans against President Obama. This is Republicans and Democrats working to protect America's waterways and President Obama working, instead, to expand the power of unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats.

Here is how the newspaper The Hill reported it last Thursday with an article with this headline: ''Democrats buck Obama on water rule.'' The article says: ''Dozens of Congressional Democrats are joining Republicans to back legislation blocking the Obama administration's new rule to redefine its jurisdiction over the nation's waterways.''

Now, it is talking about my bill, a bill called the Federal Water Quality Protection Act. The bill has 30 cosponsors in the Senate—Democrats and Republicans alike. A similar bill in the House actually passed with the support of 24 Democrats and every Republican. So what does the administration have to say to the dozens of Democrats in Congress, to the 24 Democrats who voted against the administration, to the millions of Americans who are concerned about this new regulation?

Well, according to the article in The Hill, President Obama's top environmental adviser said of the Democrats who voted for this: ''The only people with reason to oppose the rule are polluters.'' So the President believes that the 24 Democrats who voted to support it and the Democrats in the Senate who cosponsored my legislation are polluters who want to threaten our clean water. That is what the White House thinks of these Democrats in Congress. That is what the White House thinks of anyone who dares to suggest that this rule is bureaucratic overreach. That is such arrogance.

Well, there are a lot of Americans—Democrats and Republicans—who are not going to be intimidated by the Obama administration's power grab or its name-calling. The Obama administration has ignored the strong bipartisan consensus against this rule. It has once again taken its own radical approach. Instead of moving forward with a rule that fails to represent the interests of many Americans, we should act immediately to pass this bipartisan Federal Water Quality Protection Act. This legislation says yes to clean water and no to extreme bureaucracy.

It will protect America's waterways, while keeping Washington's hands off of the things that it really has no business regulating. The Environmental Protection Agency would have to consult with the States to make sure that we have the approach that works best everywhere—not just the approach that Washington likes best. They would not be able to just listen to the echo chamber of phony comments concocted by their own lobbying campaign.

Now, this bill gives certainty and clarity to farmers, to hard-working ranchers, to small business owners and their families. It makes sure that people can continue to enjoy the beautiful rivers and the lakes. They should be preserved and protected. This bipartisan bill protects Americans from runaway bureaucracy—unaccountable, unelected. It restores Washington's attention to the traditional waters that were always the focus before.

The American people do not need more bureaucratic overreach. We do not need more redtape. Congress should act immediately to stop this outrageous regulation before it goes into effect. The Senate should take up and pass this bipartisan Federal Water Quality Protection Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Montana.

(The remarks of Mr. DAINES pertaining to the introduction of S. 1487 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. DAINES. 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. DURBIN. 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a period of morning business.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was 3 years ago this month in June of 2012 that President Obama established the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, known as DACA, that provides temporary—underline the word ''temporary''—legal status to immigrant students who arrived in the United States as children.

DACA is based on the DREAM Act, a bill I introduced 14 years ago, to give undocumented students who grow up in this country a chance to earn their citizenship. These young people have come to be known as DREAMers, and this has become a term of art that is used now across the United States to capsulize the immigration dilemma we face.

While this DACA Program by President Obama has been an amazing success, more than 600,000 of these DREAMers have come forward, paid the filing fee, submitted themselves for background checks, and are now temporarily living in America, going to school and working. DACA has allowed these DREAMers to become part of our country as they strive for education in engineering, education in business—just about every profession you can think of.

This policy of giving people a chance to be part of America's future unfortunately infuriates my Republican colleagues. They have tried over and over and over again to stop the DREAMers,

to deport the DREAMers. I don't understand it.

President Obama established this new program called DAPA to build on DACA's success, which allows their parents, under certain circumstances, to stay in the United States on a temporary basis. Under the President's second program, DAPA, undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States at least 5 years and have American children are required to come forward, pay a filing fee, register with the government, pass a criminal and national security background check, and then pay their fair share of taxes. Those are the conditions. If they violate any of them, they are subject to deportation.

If the government determines that these parents have not committed any serious crimes, do not pose any threat to our safety, this new Executive order says, on a temporary basis, they will not be targeted for deportation.

I have seen this in Chicago, and I have seen it around Illinois. Many people think the undocumented live in a household full of undocumented people. That is almost never the case.

What I found over and over again is that perhaps one parent, usually the mother, is undocumented—the father, a citizen; kids born in America, citizens; the mother, undocumented. Are we really safer as a nation to break up that family and deport the mother if she is no threat to this country? I don't think so.

DAPA was scheduled to go into effect last month. That is what President Obama had hoped for—and I joined him—but it didn't. Why? Because some Republican Governors and attorneys general have filed a lawsuit to block this new program.

The Supreme Court has been clear that Presidents have the authority to set Federal immigration enforcement priorities. I am confident all of the President's decisions in this matter will be upheld. It is hard for me to understand or explain why the Republicans are so determined to stop any reform of our broken immigration system. For years, Republicans in Congress have refused to even consider legislation to fix our broken immigration system.

I spent a good part of my life, 6 months or more, working in a bipartisan group to write an immigration reform bill for Democrats, for Republicans. We brought it to the floor of the Senate. It passed with 68 votes. Fourteen Republicans, virtually all of the Democrats voted for it. It really addressed every aspect of immigration. Parts of it I didn't like, but overall it was a very good and balanced bill.

When it came to the floor, the Republicans said: Wait a minute. No immigration reform until you get tough at the border.

Well, the record says and shows we are already pretty tough at the border. Illegal immigration is down dramatically. But in an effort to make this bipartisan, we agreed to even more enforcement at the border. Think about this for a second. Today, there are more Federal law enforcement agents on our border with Mexico than the combined total of all Federal law enforcement agents in every other agency, and we increased it in this comprehensive immigration bill. So the argument that we are not getting tough at the border is kind of hard to make. We passed the bill with 68 votes. We sent it to the House 2 years ago. What did the House do? Absolutely nothing—they refused to call the bill. They refused to call any version of the bill. They refused to call their own bill. They refused to even debate the issue of immigration.

Everyone acknowledges our immigration system needs to be improved and changed. They wouldn't even take up the issue. And now, when the President tries, on a temporary basis, to say: I am not going to deport the mother in a family where everyone else is an American citizen or I am not going to deport children who were brought here at the age of 2, who have grown up in America and simply want to be part of our future, the Republicans have said: We will fight you to the death. We will challenge you in every court in the land. We want to deport these people.

What I have found is that it is best for Members of Congress, the Senate, and the American public to meet some of the individuals who are the target of these high emotions and negative feelings on the Republican side. I want to introduce one of them today.

This is Jean-Yannick Diouf. When he was 8 years old, his father, a diplomat from the African country of Senegal, brought his family to the United States. Unfortunately, Yannick's parents separated and Yannick's father returned to Senegal, leaving him and the rest of his family behind. Yannick was too young to even realize it at the time—he was just a little kid—but when his father left the United States, he lost his legal status to live in this country.

Yannick grew up in Montgomery County, MD. In high school, he was a member of the National Honor Society. He volunteered weekly at a homeless shelter. He organized soccer tournaments for 3 years to raise money for the Red Cross for Haiti earthquake relief.

After high school, Yannick wanted to continue his education. But remember, if you are undocumented in this country, you don't qualify for a penny when it comes to Federal assistance—no Pell grants, no Federal Government loans. So he went to Montgomery College, a junior college, and earned an associate's degree in business. He was on the dean's list.

Yannick then transferred to the University of Maryland, College Park. Again, he had to pay for it all. There was no government assistance since he is undocumented. He is working now on a bachelor's degree in business management. He runs the Achievers Mentoring Program. It is an after-school program to advise middle and high school students on how to get into college.

Yannick is also a volunteer for United We Dream, the largest organization of undocumented young people such as himself in this country. He was a leader of the campaign to pass the Maryland DREAM Act, which allows Maryland residents who are undocumented to pay in-State tuition. That is the only break he can get, and it comes from the State.

Keep in mind that Yannick is undocumented. So he doesn't qualify for any financial aid from the Federal Government. Yet he is trying to make a life. Here is what he said in a letter:

> DACA means dignity. More than making money, having a job gives you dignity and self-respect. I want to work for what I have. I don't look to anyone for pity. People should judge me based on what I do and what I stand for, not based on status. I want to be given a chance to prove that not only am I a functioning member of society, I am here to serve and share my talents with those in my community.

Earlier this year, Yannick was one of six DREAMers who met with the President of the United States in the Oval Office. Here is what the President said after he met with Yannick and the other five. He said:

> I don't think there's anybody in America who's had a chance to talk to these six young people who wouldn't find it in their heart to say these kids are Americans just like us, and they belong here, and we want to do right by them.

Well, I think President Obama is right. Yannick and the other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country. But sadly, Republicans in Congress have a different agenda. They want to shut down DACA, which allows this young man to go to school in the only country he has ever known, and they want to shut down the DAPA Program, which the President has instituted to try to protect the parents of those who have been here at least 5 years.

If they have their way, this young man will be deported to Senegal, a country where he hasn't lived since he was a little boy. Will America be better, if we get rid of folks such as him? Will it be a better country if we tear families apart? I don't think so.

Instead of trying to deport DREAMers and moms and dads, congressional Republicans should work with us to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill to fix our broken immigration system. The estimates are wide-ranging as to how many young people there are in America like Yannick. Some say 1.5 million. Some say 2.5 million. I have met so many of them.

It wasn't that long ago that we had a bill on the floor of the Senate, and that entire Gallery was filled with young DREAMers. They came wearing caps and gowns—that was their decision—to make the point that they are students—students who are learning and trying to improve their lives to be better and to be a better part of America.

That bill was defeated that day. It broke my heart. I went to meet with them afterwards, and I said to them: Don't give up. Don't give up on me, because I am not giving up on you.

I got started on this battle 15 years ago—15 years ago—when I met a young Korean girl in Chicago who was brought here at the age of 2 and who was a musical prodigy. She had been accepted at the Juilliard School of music, the Manhattan conservatory of music, but she was afraid she couldn't go. She was undocumented. Her mom and dad brought her here to this country at the age of 2, and they never filed the papers.

She grew up in a very poor family, but she went into the Merit Music Program in Chicago and became an accomplished musician. It was because of her that I started and introduced the DREAM Act.

There is good news. She went on to the Manhattan conservatory of music. A generous family in Chicago paid for it because she couldn't get any assistance.

She married a young man, became an American citizen, and played in Carnegie Hall. She is now pursuing her Ph.D. in music. Is America better because of that? Yes, it is. I have no doubt that it is.

Those who don't see the promise in the eyes of these young people and don't see what they can bring to America have forgotten who we are. We are a nation of immigrants. We are a nation that has allowed young people such as these a chance to succeed.

One of them happened to be my mother. My mother was brought here at the age of 2 by a mother who didn't speak English. My mother grew up in this country and raised a family, and I was one of the kids. Here I stand on the floor of the Senate. That is my story. That is my family's story. It is America's story.

The people who show such loathing for these young people and what they mean to us have forgotten that. They have ignored that. Let's rekindle our faith in what makes America great—our diversity, the ambition of young people such as Yannick, and the determination of our generation to open a door to give them a chance to prove themselves to make us better. That is what we are called on to do.

All the petty politics aside, we are talking about human lives and about an opportunity for this young man and so many others to prove to us what they can do for the future of America.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you had to characterize the current Congress with one symbol, I would tell you what I think it should be: an extension cord—you know what I mean?—an extension cord you use at home if the plug doesn't quite reach the outlet.

Why would I pick an extension cord? Because this year, under the leadership in Congress, all we have been doing is extending things a little bit—just a little bit—when we have to.

The Department of Homeland Security appropriation, one of the most important when it comes to the security and safety of the United States, had to be extended and extended and extended, sadly because many in the House wanted to fight the battle of immigration over that bill. Eventually, we prevailed and passed the appropriation after extension and after extension.

Then 2 weeks ago, here on the floor of the Senate, we extended the Federal highway trust fund. What is that? That is a fund where we collect gas taxes every time a gallon of gas is purchased and put it in a fund and then build highways and bridges. We count on that. It used to be a glorious program.

The inspiration for that program was President Dwight David Eisenhower. In the 1950s, President Eisenhower, who had come back from leading America to victory in World War II, remembered what he saw. He saw in Europe, particularly in Germany, an amazing highway system that did not exist in the United States. So President Eisenhower said: We need an interstate highway system in America. It was a bold idea—that the Federal Government would lead in creating an interstate highway system to link every corner of our Nation.

There is not a State that I know of, certainly not in my State, where the interstate highway system hasn't had a dramatic positive impact on the economy. So with the Federal highway trust fund, we built the interstate highway system, we extended the highway system, and now we are in the process of making bridges safer, making certain the highways are extended where they need to be to keep businesses thriving and to create new businesses and jobs in America.

But along comes a group in Congress, a conservative group, that says this is all wrong. Some of them question whether the Federal Government should even have a role in transportation. For them, I have three words: Dwight David Eisenhower, Republican President, who showed the way. Some say it is just impossible to figure out how to fund the building of highways. Well, we have done pretty well so far with the Federal gas tax that is collected. Clearly, we need to look to other forms of revenue. But do we need to give up on the Federal highway program?

Two weeks ago on the floor of the Senate we had the 33rd short-term extension of that program. What it means is we extended it this time for 60 days.

The Federal highway program used to be a 6-year program. Why was it 6 years? Think about the planning, the engineering, acquiring land and building a highway. You can't do it in 60 days, not 6 months, not even in a year. You have to have a commitment of funds that are coming back to the States. In my State, in Illinois, about 75 percent of all the highway construction comes from Federal funds. So when we do short-term extensions, it really says to the States that they can't count on us.

This money will run out at the end of July. Maybe we will extend it again, maybe we won't. Is that any way to run a nation? Is that any way to run a transportation system—again, using the extension cord example, this time for 60 days?

Just a week or so ago, we had another effort on the floor of the Senate here to extend the PATRIOT Act—FISA—which keeps America safe and gives us the power to ferret out those who threaten us. The suggestion was made by the majority leader that we extend it for a few days—a few days. This has become a pattern, and it is a troubling pattern.

One aspect of this that is particularly troublesome is that at the end of June, unless there is a sincere bipartisan effort, we are going to lose the Export-Import Bank. I have heard a lot of speeches in the Senate about how the United States businesses, especially small businesses, are really the backbone of our economy. Oh, we all give those speeches. As these businesses grow and expand, they often look to foreign exports.

We know that every $1 billion in new export sales supports at least 6,000 new jobs in this country. So every opportunity to export U.S. products helps communities and families. The primary Federal program that allows most of these very small businesses to export is about to expire. It is about to expire at the end of this month.

The Export-Import Bank provides financing insurance so that U.S. companies, many of them very small, can compete in the global economy. Here is how it works. The Export-Import Bank makes loans to firms exporting American-made goods. This allows businesses, including 3,340 small businesses across the United States, to sell their goods and services to businesses all over the world. They support about 164,000 jobs.

More than 100 of these companies are located in Illinois, and more than 80 of them are small. The Export-Import Bank supports $27.4 billion in exports. And guess what. It doesn't cost the taxpayers a penny. It actually makes money—money that is returned to the U.S. Treasury for other purposes or to reduce our debt. Over the past two decades—20 years—the Export-Import Bank has returned $7 billion to the U.S. Treasury. It is a moneymaker. It goes directly to deficit reduction.

One of the companies the Bank helped is the NOW Health Group in Bloomingdale, IL. It is a natural food and supplement manufacturer with 640 employees, 35 of whom work in exports. According to their chief operating officer, Jim Emme, ''the flexibility in the payment terms we can offer through

our Export Import Bank policy has allowed us to grow our business in existing markets as well as open new ones.''

This company has grown its exports from 2 percent of its business to more than 10 percent. They could not have done it without the Export-Import Bank.

There are thousands of stories just like that all over the United States.

I am a cosponsor of Senator SHAHEEN's bill that would increase the lending cap for the Bank to $160 billion and reauthorize it through 2021—not these short-term, 30-day, 60-day, 6-month extensions we have seen under this leadership in Congress.

In the past, reauthorizing the Ex-Im Bank was a bipartisan measure. Republicans used to support it as much as Democrats. But now there is a small group of Republicans, inspired by the Heritage Foundation, who have decided: Let's put an end to this Bank. Let's put an end to the opportunity for small businesses to hire Americans and export goods overseas.

Their hatred of government blinds them to the reality of this Bank and the thousands of jobs that will be lost if they have their way and eliminate the Ex-Im Bank.

They also refuse to recognize that by failing to reauthorize this Bank, U.S. businesses can't compete with businesses in other countries that will still have access to their own export financing agencies. Do you think China is going to put its export-import bank out of business? No. They just increased its size. Our major competitor has stepped up. In this case, many of the leaders in Congress are stepping back. So we are not only hurting ourselves if we can't find a way to go forward.

The Bank is set to expire at the end of the month, which is less than 4 weeks from now. I hope we can come to an agreement by then to pass a bill to reauthorize a program that is critically important to U.S. exports. I hope reasonable voices in the Republican Party will not allow a vocal minority to prevent us from reauthorizing this important program.

PATRIOT EMPLOYER TAX CREDIT ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, as the number of candidates grows for the office of President, we are hearing a lot of proposals for changes in the Tax Code. Many of them are interesting, and some of them are damaging when it comes to working for middle-income families.

Sadly, we are seeing a race to the bottom on who can propose the lowest corporate tax rate, giving huge breaks to the very companies that shift jobs overseas. Most Americans don't realize this. If you want to move your production from the United States to another country, you can deduct the moving expenses from the taxes you owe America. We are subsidizing your decision to pick up and move jobs overseas. American workers—some of them are given the sad responsibility to train the supervisors at the new overseas companies while American workers are checking out their last paychecks.

I have a different idea. Instead of rewarding corporations with lower tax bills, we should reward those companies in America that maintain their commitment to this country and its workers and give fair wages and benefits to the American workers. We call it the Patriot Employer Tax Credit Act. It is very basic.

When you look at the Tax Code, it is a huge document full of incentives and disincentives for businesses. We will reward certain things; we won't reward other things. Well, this is something we should consider rewarding.

Senator SHERROD BROWN and I have introduced the Patriot Employer Tax Credit Act, which would provide a tax credit to American companies that treat American veterans and workers the best. It puts the Tax Code on the side of these companies. These patriot employers would be eligible for a tax credit equal to 10 percent of the first $15,000 of qualified wages for American workers, which is about $1,200 per worker.

In order to qualify for this tax credit, these companies would have to meet five criteria. See if you think, as I do, that these are good ideas.

First, the company has to invest in American jobs. Businesses must remain headquartered here in the United States if they have ever been headquartered here before. The company would also have to maintain or increase the number of workers in the United States compared to the number of workers overseas, and not decrease the number of workers through the use of contractors. The company can't pick up and leave, move to a foreign capital to avoid paying its fair share of U.S. taxes.

First, invest in American jobs located in America.

Second, pay fair wages. A patriot employer under our bill would have to pay at least 90 percent of its employees $15 an hour. Why do we pick $15 an hour? Do the math: $15 an hour, 40 hours a week, about $30,000 a year. Why? Because if you make that amount of money, you qualify for virtually no Federal subsidies, Federal programs. You are earning a paycheck and you are supporting your family. If you make less than that, you qualify for Federal Government assistance. So we are saying to employers: If you will pay at least $15 an hour, we will give you this tax credit.

Third, provide quality health insurance for your employees consistent with the Affordable Care Act.

Fourth, help your employees prepare for retirement. We want to reward companies that offer at least 90 percent of their employees a defined benefit plan, such as a pension plan or a defined contribution plan with decent employer contributions.

Fifth, employ a diverse workforce. We want companies to have a plan in place to help veterans and people with disabilities. I don't think that is too much to ask. We grab our flags and march in parades as politicians and thank the veterans over and over. Why don't we thank them with a job? And let's reward the companies that do.

That is it, five conditions. And with these five conditions, these patriotic American companies would get a tax break. Wouldn't it be better for us to incentivize American companies to do the right thing rather than pay the moving expenses for those that want to leave the country? That is a choice. I think it is pretty simple.

I know it can be done because in Skokie, IL, there is a company doing it. It is called Block Steel. The company started 100 years ago and has grown to be the largest distributor of aluminized steel in the Nation. It is a family-run business. It has ensured that 77 employees are treated fairly. Each of their employees is paid more than $15 an hour, has good health care, and a good retirement. Block Steel should be rewarded for its efforts. Under the Patriot Employer Tax Credit Act, Block Steel could qualify for a tax credit of up to $100,000. That is money they can invest in their business and grow it, with even more people working.

As this debate about tax reform continues, I hope we focus on rewarding companies that really care about America. We shouldn't be blindly focused on a race to the bottom to the lowest wages. And, I might add, this is paid for. It is paid for by eliminating the deduction for moving businesses overseas that is currently part of the Tax Code.

So let's reform the Tax Code the right way, with an eye on helping the workers get a decent paycheck, decent benefits, and rewarding the companies that put American workers first.

I thank Senators SHERROD BROWN, ELIZABETH WARREN, JACK REED, TAMMY BALDWIN, and BERNIE SANDERS for lending their support to this important bill. I look forward to continuing our fight for working families here in the Senate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 1735, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1735) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 p.m. will be for debate only and equally divided between the bill managers or the designees.

The Senator from Arizona.

AMENDMENT NO. 1463

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1463, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN] proposes an amendment numbered 1463.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, 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 printed in the RECORD of June 2, 2015, under ''Text of Amendments.'')

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to rise with my friend and colleague from Rhode Island to speak about the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016. For 53 consecutive years, Congress has passed this vital piece of legislation, which provides the necessary funding and authorizes—I repeat, authorizes—our military to defend the Nation. The NDAA is one of few bills in Congress that continues to enjoy bipartisan support year after year. This is a testament to the legislation's critical importance to our national security and the high regard with which it is held by the Congress.

Last month, the Senate Armed Services Committee voted 22 to 4 to approve the NDAA, an overwhelming vote that reflects the committee's proud tradition of bipartisan support for the brave men and women of our armed services.

I thank the committee's ranking member, the Senator from Rhode Island. Despite his failure of education at our Nation's military academy, I appreciate the thoughtfulness and bipartisan spirit with which he approaches our national security. It has been a pleasure to work with Senator REED over the last few months and years on this legislation and today as we appear on the floor on behalf of this legislation.

We have worked through some of the toughest issues facing our military today. We have our differences on some aspects of this legislation, but those differences have never interfered with the search for common ground and consensus. This is a much better bill thanks to the Senator from Rhode Island.

I also thank the majority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, for his commitment to resuming regular order and bringing the NDAA to the floor this week. Under the leadership of the Senator from Kentucky, the Senate will be able to take up this critical national security legislation on time, allowing for thoughtful consideration and amendments and giving our military the certainty they need to plan and execute their missions.

That stands in stark contrast to the last 2 years under Democratic leadership, when this body failed to take up the NDAA until the very end of the year, at the last minute, with no amendments allowed.

Just yesterday the Democratic leader said considering this vital Defense bill is just a ''waste of time''—waste of time. Those comments must be very disappointing to the servicemembers, retirees, and their families in his home State of Nevada who clearly understand the importance of this legislation.

The fiscal year 2016 NDAA is a reform bill. It tackles acquisition reform, military retirement reform, personnel reform, commissary reform, headquarters and management reform. This legislation delivers sweeping defense reforms that can enable our military to rise to the challenges of a more dangerous world, both today and in the future. The Armed Services Committee identified $10 billion of excess and unnecessary spending from the President's defense budget request, and we are reinvesting it in military capabilities for our war fighters and reforms that can yield long-term savings for the Department of Defense. We did all of this while upholding our commitments to our servicemembers, retirees, and their families.

This legislation is a reflection of the growing threats we face in the world. Over the past few months, the Senate Armed Services Committee has received testimony from many of America's most respected statesmen, thinkers, and former military commanders. These leaders had a common warning: America is facing the most diverse and complex array of crises since the Second World War. Just consider some of the troubling events that have transpired over the past year.

In Ukraine, Russia has sought to redraw an international border and annex the territory of another sovereign country through the use of military force. It continues aggressively to destabilize Ukraine, with troubling implications for security in Europe. Yet the President continues to refuse to provide Ukraine with the defensive weapons they need and have repeatedly requested to defend their sovereign nation from Russia's onslaught.

In the Middle East, a terrorist army, with tens of thousands of fighters, many holding Western passports, has taken over a vast swath of territory and declared an Islamic State in the heart of one of the most strategically important parts of the world. Nearly 3,000 U.S. troops have returned to Iraq to combat this threat, with U.S. aircraft flying hundreds of strike missions a month over Iraq and Syria. Unfortunately, as recent reports suggest, nearly 75 percent of those air missions never even dropped weapons, and meanwhile ISIS is taking territory on the ground, most recently in Ramadi and Palmyra.

At the same time, amid negotiations over its nuclear program, Iran continues to pursue its ambitions to challenge regional order in the Middle East by increasing its development of ballistic missiles, support for terrorism, training and arming of pro-Iranian militant groups, and other malign activities in places such as Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, Bahrain, and Yemen.

Yemen has collapsed, as a Shia insurgency with ties to the Iranian regime has toppled the U.S.-backed government in Sana'a. Al Qaeda continues to use parts of the country to plan attacks against the West, the U.S. Embassy has been evacuated, and a U.S.-backed coalition of Arab nations has intervened militarily to reverse the gains of the Houthi insurgency and to restore the previous government to power.

Libya has become a failed state, beset by civil war and a growing presence of transnational terrorist groups, such as Al Qaeda and ISIL, similar to Afghanistan in 2001.

In Asia, North Korea continues to develop its nuclear arsenal and ever-more capable ballistic missiles, and late last year it committed the most destructive cyber attack ever on U.S. territory.

China is increasingly taking coercive actions to assert expansive territorial claims that unilaterally change the status quo in the South and East China Seas and raise tensions with U.S. allies and partners, all while continuing to expand and modernize its military in ways that challenge U.S. access and freedom of movement in the western Pacific. A recent report in the Wall Street Journal described how China has taken steps to militarize the vast land features that it is actively reclaiming in the South China Sea.

Unfortunately I could go on, but these are just some of the growing threats our Nation faces—threats that are far more serious than they were a year ago and significantly more so than when Congress passed the Budget Control Act in 2011. That legislation arbitrarily capped defense spending

and established the mindless mechanism of sequestration, which was triggered in 2013. As a result, with worldwide threats rising, we as a nation are on a course to cut nearly $1 trillion of defense spending over 10 years.

The Committee on Armed Services has conducted wide-ranging bipartisan oversight on the effects of sequestration-level spending on our national defense, and every single military and national security leader who has testified before the committee this year has denounced sequestration and urged its repeal as soon as possible. Indeed, each of our military service chiefs testified that continued defense spending at sequestration levels would put American lives at risk. I want to repeat to my colleagues: Our armed services leaders have told the Armed Services Committee that American lives are at risk if we continue mindless sequestration. Don't we care about the risks and the lives of the young men and women who have volunteered to serve in our military? Don't we care about them?

I urge my colleagues in the Senate and in the House to come together and repeal sequestration, and however that is accomplished, I will be glad to discuss, but our first priority has always been and always will be American security, our national security and the lives of the men and women who have volunteered to defend it.

Unfortunately, this legislation doesn't end sequestration. Believe me, our committee would have done so if the NDAA were capable of it, but it is not. The NDAA is a policy bill. It deals only with defense and national security issues. It does not spend a dollar. It provides the Department of Defense and our men and women in uniform with the authorities and support they need to defend the Nation.

Although the committee could not end sequestration, we did the most we could to authorize necessary levels of funding for the Department of Defense and our men and women in uniform. As a result, the NDAA fully supports President Obama's budget request of $612 billion for national defense, which is $38 billion above the spending caps established by the Budget Control Act. Let me repeat that. This legislation gives the President every dollar of budget authority he requested. The difference is our legislation follows the Senate budget resolution and funds that $38 billion increase through overseas contingency operations—or OCO—funds.

This is not my preferred option. It is not anybody's preferred option that I know of. I recognize that reliance on OCO spending limits the ability of the Department of Defense to plan and modernize our military. For this reason, the committee included a special transfer authority in this legislation that allows the Department of Defense to transfer the additional $38 billion from OCO to the base budget in the event that legislation is enacted that increases the statutory limitations on discretionary defense and nondefense spending in proportionately equal amounts.

This was the product of a bipartisan compromise, and it was the most we could do in the NDAA to recognize the need for a broader fiscal agreement without denying funding for our military right now. Nevertheless, the White House threatened yesterday to veto this legislation over its additional OCO spending and because the Congress has not provided for similar increases in nondefense spending. This is misguided and irresponsible. With global threats rising, how does it make any sense to oppose a defense policy bill—legislation that spends no money but is full of vital authorities that our troops need—for a reason that has nothing to do with national defense spending? The NDAA should not be treated as a hostage in a budget negotiation.

The political reality is that the Budget Control Act was signed by the President and remains the law of the land. So faced with a choice between OCO money and no money, I choose OCO. And multiple senior military leaders who testified before the Armed Services Committee this year said they would make the same choice for one simple reason: This is $38 billion of real money that our military desperately needs and without which, our top military leaders have said, they cannot succeed. Military leader after military leader has testified before our committee that they cannot carry out their obligations in their various commands to defend the Nation if the Budget Control Act—also known as sequestration—continues.

My message is simple: Let's have our fights over government spending, but let's keep those fights where they belong—in the appropriations process, where money is actually spent. The NDAA is not the place for it. If the President and some of my colleagues oppose the NDAA due to concerns over nondefense spending, I suspect they will have a very difficult time explaining and justifying that choice to Americans who increasingly cite national security as a top concern.

I care about nondefense spending. I really believe we need to fund many of the areas, such as the FBI, Border Patrol, and others. But to somehow equate that with national defense with the world as we see it today is either out of ignorance or partisanship—I don't know which, but neither is a valid ambition or reason.

The NDAA is a policy bill, and this year's version is an incredibly ambitious one. It advances major reform initiatives that can make more efficient use of our precious taxpayer dollars while increasing military capability for our warfighters.

In recent years, the Defense Department has grown larger but less capable, more complex but less innovative, more proficient at defeating low-tech adversaries but more vulnerable to high-tech ones. No one is more cognizant of this unfortunate fact than those of us whose responsibility it is to oversee our defense budget on the Armed Services Committee.

It is a top priority for me, my colleague from Rhode Island, as well as all of my fellow committee members to ensure that every dollar we spend on defense is used wisely, efficiently, and effectively. The fiscal year 2016 NDAA makes important contributions to this reform effort. This legislation contains sweeping acquisition reform.

Many of our military's challenges today are the result of years of mistakes and wasted resources. One recent study found that the Defense Department had spent $46 billion between 2001 and 2011 on at least a dozen programs that never became operational. I will repeat that—$46 billion on programs that never became operational. What is worse, I am not sure who, if anyone, was ever held accountable for these failures. At a hearing 2 years ago, I asked the Chief of Naval Operations who was responsible for $2.4 billion in cost overruns on the USS *Gerald R. Ford* aircraft carrier. He had no answer.

In today's vast acquisition bureaucracy where personnel and project managers cycle through rapidly, everyone is accountable and no one is accountable. We need acquisition reform now because our senior leaders must be held accountable for responsible stewardship of taxpayers' dollars.

But this is not just about saving money. Acquisition reform is needed immediately to preserve U.S. technological and military dominance and is therefore a national security imperative. Over the last decade, our adversaries have invested heavily in modernizing their militaries with a focus on anti-access and area-denial technologies designed specifically to counter American military strengths. Meanwhile, an acquisition system that takes too long and costs too much is leading to the erosion of America's defense technological advantage. If we continue with business as usual, I fear the United States could lose this advantage altogether. In short, our broken defense acquisition system itself is a clear and present danger to the national security of the United States.

The acquisition reforms in this legislation center on five principle objectives.

First, the legislation establishes effective accountability for results. We give greater authority to the military services to manage their own programs, and we enhance the role of the service chiefs in the acquisition process. In exchange for greater authority, the bill demands accountability and creates new mechanisms to deliver it. Service chiefs, service secretaries, service acquisition executives, and program managers would sign up to binding management, requirement, and resource commitments.

The bill also creates new incentives for the services to deliver programs on

time and on budget. If military services fail to manage a program effectively, they will lose authority and control over that program, and they will be assessed an annual cost penalty on their cost overruns, with those funds directed toward acquisition risk reduction efforts across the Department.

Second, the legislation supports the use of flexible acquisition authorities and the development of alternative acquisition paths to acquire critical national security capabilities. The bill establishes a new streamlined acquisition and requirements process for rapid prototyping and rapid fielding within 2 to 5 years. It expands rapid acquisition authorities for contingency operations and cyber security missions, and the legislation allows the Secretary of Defense to waive unnecessary acquisition laws to acquire vital national security capabilities.

Third, the NDAA improves access to nontraditional and commercial contractors. To give our military the necessary capabilities to defend the Nation, the Department of Defense must be able to access innovation in areas such as cyber, robotics, data analytics, miniaturization, and autonomy—the innovation that is much more likely to come from Silicon Valley, Austin or Mesa than Washington. But our broken acquisition system, with its complex regulation and stifling bureaucracies, is leading many commercial firms to choose not to do business with the Defense Department or to limit their engagement in ways that prevent the Department from accessing the critical technologies these companies have to offer. The NDAA creates incentives for commercial innovation by removing barriers to new entrants into the defense market. By adopting commercial buying practices for the Defense Department, the legislation makes it easier for nontraditional firms to do business with the Pentagon. The legislation also ensures that businesses are not forced to cede intellectual property developed at their expense to the government.

Fourth, the NDAA streamlines the process for buying weapons systems, services, and information technology by reducing unnecessary requirements, reports, and certification. The legislation retains positive reforms made in the Weapons System Acquisition Reform Act of 2009, but streamlines processes to support more rapid and efficient development and delivery of new capabilities. It would also establish an expert review panel to identify unneeded acquisitions regulations.

Fifth, the legislation reinvigorates the acquisition workforce in several ways, including by establishing several direct-hire authorities for science and technology professionals to join the acquisition workforce. The legislation seeks to improve the attractiveness of acquisition functions to skilled military personnel through credits for acquisition-related assignments, creation of an enhanced dual-track career path to include acquisition, and increased business and commercial training opportunities.

In a Statement of Administration Policy released yesterday, the White House asserted that transferring some acquisition authority back to the services is somehow inconsistent with the Secretary of Defense's exercise of authority, direction, and control over all of DOD's programs and activities. I could not disagree more with this assertion. What this legislation does is merely switch who does what in certain circumstances from different people who all directly report and serve under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense. In this legislation, for a limited number of programs to start with, the Secretary of Defense will look to the service Secretaries directly for management of these acquisition programs rather than looking to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics or AT and L. This is not usurpation of the Secretary of Defense's power. It is called streamlining of authorities and reducing layers of unnecessary bureaucracy. There is a section in the legislation that would allow the Secretary of Defense to continue to rely on more layers of management if he chooses but only if he certifies to Congress that this makes sense. There simply is not any undermining of the Secretary of Defense's authority here.

Another concern raised has been that the transfer of milestone decision authority to the services would reduce the Secretary of Defense's ability through AT and L to guard against unwarranted optimism in program planning and budget formulation. Unwarranted optimism is indeed a plague on acquisition, and there is not a monopoly of that in the services. Yet there is nothing in this bill that overrides the requirement to use better cost estimates from the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation. In fact, new incentives and real penalties imposed on the services in the bill are designed to put some of this optimism in check.

There is also belief manufactured in parts of the Department that the current system is working. They are saying the current system is working. That is laughable. The statistics are improving, first of all, because Secretary Gates canceled over 25 programs. It is easier to make your numbers when you are unilaterally disarming and buying less. Still, all of the programs that are left under the U.S. Defense Department AT and L management have over $200 billion in cost overruns. I want to repeat—$200 billion in cost overruns under the current setup. That is why it is imperative we change it. There are a lot of words to describe this, but success is not one of them. The USD AT and L is trying to have it both ways: claiming credit for all the improvements in the acquisition system while blaming the services for its long list of failures. This is exactly the problem this legislation is trying to address—blurred lines of accountability inside the Defense Acquisition System that allow its leaders to evade responsibility for results.

Then, there is the issue of process and documentation. Defenders of the current acquisition system say they have it right. They might have it right if our adversary were the old Soviet Union and their centralized planned economy. The reality for the modern world is that under USD AT and L management process takes too long and adds costs and looks like it was designed by a Soviet apparatchik. For example, an Army study looked at the time it would take to go through all of the U.S. Defense Department AT and L reviews and buy nothing. What was the answer? Ten years to buy nothing.

The Government Accountability Office looked at the much wanted milestone reviews that the office of the Secretary of Defense is touting as a success. Just one review takes on average 2 years. A similar review at the Missile Defense Agency takes about 3 months. Our adversaries are not shuffling paper, they are building weapons systems. It is time for us to do the same. The first step is to eliminate unnecessary calls for data from those outside the program office, just as David Packard recommended 30 years ago. This legislation does that.

The acquisition reforms in this bill are sweeping, but there is much more work to do to transition what is in essence a Cold War management system into one that is more agile and nimble to meet the challenges of a globalized information age. This legislation marks the beginning of a multiyear process to change the acquisition system to be more open to next-generation technologies that can enable the United States to outpace its adversaries.

Acquisition reform is part of a larger effort to reform the management of the Department of Defense. This bill seeks to ensure that the Department and the military services are using precious defense dollars to fulfill their missions and defend the Nation, not to expand their bloated staffs. While staff at Army headquarters increased 60 percent over the past decade, the Army is now cutting brigade combat teams. The Air Force avoided mandated cuts to their headquarters personnel by creating two new headquarters entities, even as it complained it had insufficient personnel to maintain combat aircraft.

I want to repeat that. The Air Force mandated cuts of headquarters personnel, not reducing by a single person but by creating new headquarters entities, even as it complained it had insufficient personnel to maintain combat aircraft. From 2001 to 2012, the defense civilian workforce grew at five times the rate of the Active-Duty military. I repeat that. From 2001 to 2012, the defense civilian workforce grew at five

times the rate of the Active-Duty military.

This legislation initiates a reorganization of the Department of Defense in order to focus limited resources on operations rather than administration, to ensure military personnel can develop critical military skills, and to stabilize organizations and programs. The NDAA mandates a 30-percent cut in funding for headquarters and administrative staff over the next 4 years. These reductions generate $1.7 billion in savings for fiscal year 2016. As the Department implements these reductions, this bill authorizes the Secretary of Defense to retain the best talent available, rather than just the longest serving.

Contrary to the Statement of Administration Policy that the White House issued yesterday, the reductions to Pentagon overhead and management staff are neither arbitrary nor across the board. These cuts are targeted to administrative functions, but they do not inflict unintended harms on functions such as mortuary affairs or sexual assault prevention. The legislation does not seek to micromanage the Defense Department. It cuts money from broad headquarters and administrative functions, but it defers to the Secretary of Defense on how, what, and where exactly to cut, and it instructs him to devise a plan to make these cuts wisely.

Beyond management reform, the NDAA also puts forward wide-ranging and unprecedented reform to the military retirement system. Under the current 70-year-old system, 83 percent of servicemembers leave the service without any retirement assets. This system excludes the vast majority of current servicemembers who will not complete 20 years of uniformed service, including many veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The legislation creates a modernized retirement system and extends retirement benefits to the vast majority of servicemembers through a new plan offering more value and choice. Under the new plan, 75 percent of servicemembers would get retirement benefits. In many cases, the overall benefit of those serving at least 20 years will be greater than the current system. This new modernized retirement system will apply to members first joining a uniformed service on or after January 1, 2018. Current members are grandfathered but may choose to be covered by the new plan. The retirement reforms in this legislation will enable servicemembers to save for retirement earlier in their careers, create a new incentive to recruit millennials, and increase retention across the services. That is why these reforms are supported by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Reserve Officers Association, the National Guard Association, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard, and the Air Force Association, among others.

In addition to retirement reform, the NDAA focuses on sustaining the quality of life of our military servicemembers, retirees, and their families. The legislation authorizes a 1.3-percent pay raise for members of the uniformed services in the grade O–6 and below. The bill authorizes $25 million to support local educational agencies that serve military dependent children, and $5 million in impact aid for schools with military dependent children with severe disabilities.

The NDAA includes many provisions to improve the military health care system and TRICARE. The legislation allows the TRICARE beneficiary up to four urgent care visits without making them get a preauthorization. It requires DOD to establish appointment access standards and wait-time goals, and if a patient can't get an appointment within standards, the military hospital must offer an appointment in the TRICARE network. The legislation requires DOD to focus more on health care quality, patient safety, and beneficiary satisfaction by making them publish health outcome measures on their Web sites, and it requires a plan to improve the delivery of pediatric health care, especially for children with special needs. Furthermore, as military families frequently move from one location to another, their health care coverage must be seamless and portable, but too often families have to leap over several hurdles to get health care in a new location. This has to stop. We take care of that problem in this legislation.

The NDAA also builds on the work of the past few years to prevent and respond to military sexual assault. The legislation contains a number of provisions aimed at strengthening the authorities of special victims' counsel to provide services to victims of sexual assault. The legislation also enhances confidential reporting options for victims of sexual assault and increases access to timely disclosure of certain materials and information in connection with the prosecution of offenses.

This is a fiscally responsible NDAA. I have said that my top priority as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee is to repeal sequestration and return to a strategy-driven defense budget. But I have also made clear that repealing sequestration must be accompanied by a vigorous effort to root out and eliminate Pentagon waste. Given the fiscal constraints and global challenges confronting our military, we simply cannot afford to waste precious defense dollars.

Our committee identified over $10 billion in excessive and unnecessary spending in the President's budget request: headquarters and administrative overhead, troubled information technology programs, weapons systems that are over budget and underperforming, among other items. The NDAA reinvests those savings in providing critical military capabilities for our warfighters and meeting unfunded priorities of our service chiefs and combatant commanders.

Even as challenges to maritime security increase in the Middle East and the western Pacific, our Navy remains well below its fleet-size requirement of 306 ships. Moreover, our shipbuilding budget will experience even greater pressure at the end of this decade, as the Navy procures the replacement for the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine. The NDAA directs savings identified in the budget request to accelerate Navy modernization and shipbuilding to mitigate the impacts of the *Ohio*-class replacement and to increase the Navy to meet rising threats.

The legislation adds $800 million for additional advanced procurement for *Virginia*-class submarines, and $200 million for the next amphibious assault ship. The bill provides incremental funding authority for one additional Arleigh Burke-class destroyer. The bill accelerates the Navy LX(R) Amphibious Ship Program, shipbuilding for the afloat forward staging base, and procurement of the first landing craft utility replacement.

The NDAA upgrades an additional guided missile destroyer with ballistic missile defense capability and funds advanced undersea payloads for submarines.

Across the services, our military faces dangerous strike fighter capacity shortfalls. For example, we have seen delivery of the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter fall well short of projections, even as the Air Force has retired hundreds of aircraft.

Indeed, the President's budget request proposed cutting the Air Force down to 49 fighter squadrons, of which less than half would be fully combat mission ready. The NDAA addresses these shortfalls, and it is all the more urgent in view of the ongoing and anticipated operations in Iraq and Syria against ISIL, as well as a potential delay of force withdrawals from Afghanistan.

The NDAA fully restores the planned retirement of the A–10 aircraft. The Air Force itself has said in its posture statement this year:

> There was a time when the Air Force could trade some capacity in order to retain capability. But we have reached the point where the two are inextricable; lose any more capacity and the capability will cease to exist.

The Armed Services Committee agrees. That is why divesting the A–10 capability at this time incurs unacceptable risk in the capacity and readiness of the combat air forces without a suitable replacement available. The NDAA authorized procurement funding for 12 additional F–18 Super Hornets for the Navy and 6 additional F–35B Joint Strike Fighters for the Marine Corps. The legislation also procures an additional 24 MQ–9 Reaper unmanned aircraft for the Air Force to support increased combatant commander requirements for medium-altitude intelligence, surveillance, and reconciliation support.

The committee was similarly concerned about munitions capacity

across the services. So the NDAA adds funding for additional PAC–3 missiles for ballistic missile defense and additional AMRAAM missiles. The legislation also increases Tomahawk missile production to the minimum sustaining rate and procures TOW tube-launched, antitank missiles to mitigate shortfalls for the Marine Corps.

The NDAA supports modernization across the services. The legislation invests in lethality by enhancing the firepower of Stryker combat vehicles and increasing the survivability of the Apache attack helicopter against new threats. The NDAA fully supports the President's request for the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter Program and provides all executable funding for the Long Range Strike Bomber Program.

In addition, the legislation authorizes $6.1 billion for *Virginia*-class submarines, $3.5 billion for Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, and $1.4 billion for the *Ohio*-class replacement program.

While the NDAA supports our military commanders' most urgent priorities, the bill also contains rigorous oversight measures to prevent further cost growth in major acquisition programs, including the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter, the *Ford*-class aircraft carrier, and a littoral combat ship.

As adversaries seek to counter and thwart American military power, the NDAA looks to the future and invests in the technologies that will maintain America's military technological superiority. The NDAA provides $400 million in additional funding to support the so-called third offset strategy to outpace our emerging adversaries. The legislation funds a cyber vulnerability assessment, a new initiative to enable the services to begin evaluating all major weapons systems for cyber vulnerabilities. It also increases investment in six breakthrough technologies: cyber capabilities; low-cost, high-speed munitions; autonomous vehicles; undersea warfare; intelligence data analytics; and directed energy.

Similarly, our Nation has only begun to realize the potential of unmanned combat aircraft, especially in a maritime environment. In the past 2 years, the Unmanned Combat Air System Demonstration Program, or UCAS–D, has achieved a number of historic firsts: the first carrier-based catapult launch, the first arrested landing on a carrier, the first cooperative operations with manned aircraft aboard a carrier, and the first autonomous aerial refueling.

The NDAA funds the remaining research and development work to be completed on UCAS–D, while directing the Secretary of Defense to develop competitive prototypes that move the Department toward a carrier-based, unmanned, long-range, low-observable, penetrating strike aircraft that can enhance the capability of the carrier air wing to meet future threats.

The NDAA supports our allies and partners with robust training and assistance initiatives. The legislation authorizes nearly $3.8 billion in support for the Afghan National Security Forces as they continue to defend their country and the gains of the last decade against our common enemies. The legislation also authorizes the provision of defensive lethal assistance to Ukraine to help it build combat capability and defend its sovereign territory.

The legislation supports efforts by Lebanon and Jordan to secure their borders against ISIL, and it creates a new initiative to provide equipment, supplies, and training to Southeast Asian nations in order to support them in building maritime domain awareness capabilities and addressing growing maritime sovereignty challenges in the South China Sea.

Finally, this legislation contains a bipartisan compromise on how to address the challenge of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. President Obama has said from day one of his Presidency that he wants to close Guantanamo Bay. But 6½ years into his administration, the President of the United States has never provided a plan to do so.

The NDAA would require the administration to provide a comprehensive plan to the Congress on how it intends to close Guantanamo, which would then have to be approved by both Houses of Congress. That plan would have to include a case-by-case determination on the disposition of each detainee at Guantanamo Bay, including a discussion of the legal challenges of bringing detainees to the United States and any additional authorities that might be needed.

The plan would also have to address how the Department would ensure the continued detention and intelligence collection from future combatants captured under the laws of war. If such a plan is approved, the Congress would provide the President the authority to proceed with the closure of the facility. If the Congress does not approve the plan, nothing would change. The ban on domestic transfers would stay in force, and the certification standards for foreign transfers included in the NDAA would remain.

This is an ambitious piece of legislation. It recognizes that in order to ensure that the Department of Defense is prepared to meet our present and future national security challenges, we must champion the cause of defense reform, rigorously root out Pentagon waste, and invest in modernization and next-generation technologies to maintain our military technological advantage.

America has reached a key inflection point. The liberal world order that has been anchored by U.S. hard power for seven decades is being seriously stressed and with it the foundation of our security and prosperity. It does not have to be this way. We can choose a better future for ourselves but only if we make the right decisions now to set us on a better course. That is what this legislation is all about—living up to our constitutional duties to provide for the common defense, increasing the effectiveness of our military, restoring America's global leadership, and defending a liberal world order.

This legislation is a small step toward accomplishing those goals. But it is an important step that the Congress must take now and take together. For 53 consecutive years, Congress has passed a National Defense Authorization Act. This year should be no different. I am hopeful that the bipartisan spirit that has carried this legislation for over half a century will prevail once again.

Ultimately, we owe the brave men and women in uniform, many of whom are still in harm's way around the world today, nothing less.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the fiscal year 2016 national defense authorization bill, which was recently reported out of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

I want to begin by commending the chairman, Senator MCCAIN, for his extraordinary leadership. I also want to reflect—because both the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Alaska, and I had the privilege of being with Senator MCCAIN in Vietnam last week—that to recognize firsthand the heroic service of CDR JOHN MCCAIN is to recognize an extraordinary individual whose service, whose sacrifice, whose valor, whose fidelity to the principles of our military and to our Nation are virtually unique. But more important than that, it is to recognize that after observing the horrors and brutality of war, as few people have, he was able to summon the courage and the capacity to bring two countries together. Without Senator MCCAIN's active participation—not alone but absolutely essential and perhaps the most essential part—the Government of the United States and the Government of Vietnam would not have diplomatic relations today. We would not have been at a university in Vietnam listening to young people talking about their future—a future that is not clouded by war but has the opportunity for peace and prosperity, working with us and working with the world community.

I can't think of any historical examples of individuals working so hard to defeat each other, then so hard to embrace each other, save, of course, General Grant and General Lee. But I know the Senator would be offended by being compared to two West Point graduates, so I will simply say that he has made historic contributions to this country in so many ways. It is no surprise that he has taken the leadership of this committee and made a remarkable contribution. His vision to engage us in a strategic dialogue with some of the most sophisticated and experienced individuals in the country—Henry Kissinger, Madeleine Albright, and a host

of others—gave us the perspective to begin to look at the issues we face in a much more comprehensive and a much more thoughtful way. I have had the privilege of serving on the committee for many years. No one has done that. No one has set the stage so well. And then to bring our DOD witnesses together in that context of both the strategic vision and the operational budgetary requirements was absolutely incredible. All of this has made us better prepared on the committee to write this bill which is before us today.

(Mr. SASSE assumed the Chair.)

Let me also take a moment to thank the professional staff on both sides of the aisle. Their willingness to work together to tackle the hard issues has been the key to this authorization bill. I thank them in advance because their work has just begun. The hours they will spend over the next several days to go through the significant number of amendments—all of that will be unnoticed by many but appreciated certainly by me, the chairman, and all of us on the committee. Thank you.

As the Senator from Arizona pointed out, this is basically a good bill. It has many provisions that were requested by the Department of Defense. It has many necessary reforms. The chairman has highlighted many of them. I think it will further our national security in many dimensions, and most importantly it will provide the training, equipment, and support our men and women in uniform deserve. I will try to focus on some of these important developments.

However, there are some provisions in this bill that cause me concern—indeed, grave concern. One problem, I fear, is the familiar, oft-debated, and very complicated challenge of Guantanamo. While we have had some very carefully crafted compromise language in the bill, there are other provisions that reverse progress, particularly on the overseas transfer of detainees.

We have a number of individuals who have been vetted for overseas transfer—not to the United States—that is not appropriate at this moment—but overseas. I think we have to continue that effort to repatriate these individuals outside of the United States, in areas in which their security and their activities can be appropriately monitored. I will spend a few more minutes—and in a few minutes, I will discuss an amendment that I may propose with respect.

Despite all of these good provisions, however, I was ultimately unable to vote for the bill. After working closely and sincerely, with the leadership of the chairman, I am reluctantly unable to vote for the bill because at the heart, the funding mechanism to provide a significant portion of the resources—$39 billion—is, I think, an unsustainable aspect of the legislation.

As the Senator pointed out, the legislation before us does not end the Budget Control Act's arbitrary caps on spending, and, as he also said, every major military official, every major senior defense official came and told us: We have to end the Budget Control Act caps and the prospect of sequestration. We have not done that.

What the bill does is adopt a device—some have said a gimmick—that uses the overseas spending account to fund base activities of the Department of Defense. As I have indicated and as the chairman has suggested, the one request consistently received—in fact, just a few days ago, the commander of the Pacific forces indicated the same thing—is to end sequestration. We have not been able to do that.

What the President's budget did is he sent up a request for $38 billion above the budget cap levels in the base—not overseas defense spending but in the base. He requested $50.9 billion for contingency operations, overseas operations. We have been funding overseas operations since 9/11. This funding was designed to do what it suggests in the title. We have forces deployed overseas in combat, in contact with our enemies—Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere—and this funding was to provide for those forces and indirectly for our supporting mechanisms, but the key was to support these forces overseas.

Now what we have done—and it was done because we were unable to eliminate the budget caps under the Budget Control Act—is we have taken this OCO account and we have grossed it up dramatically.

This approach has several problems. First, it doesn't solve—in fact, in some cases it complicates the DOD's budget problems. OCO, as I said, was created and should be used for war costs only. OCO has limits and restrictions. There are very strict rules that have to be followed. It is not flexible funds that can be moved around at will.

Defense budgeting needs to be based on a long-term military strategy, which requires the DOD to focus at least 5 years ahead. OCO money is 1-year money. It is just this year. There is no commitment statutorily that it will be available. There is no presumption, because it is in the base, that it will be the starting point of discussions for the next budget. Frankly and obviously, we cannot fight a multigenerational war with 1-year money. And we are in a multigenerational conflict. It has been more than a decade since we started our efforts in the wake of 9/11, and we have challenges that will not resolve themselves in a year. To adopt a major part of our budget, roughly $39 billion, as one-time—supposedly—funds is not a wise, sensible, and appropriate way to fund our security going forward.

Another aspect is it doesn't reduce the deficit; it adds to the deficit. This is all deficit funding, so this is not a way to avoid tough decisions about how we are going to deal with our deficit.

It also does not reach other vital aspects of national security that are housed in domestic agencies which are also critical for our national defense—the FBI, Homeland Security, the Coast Guard. All of these agencies contribute dramatically to our national defense. In fact, particularly with the threat of ''lone wolves''—and that is increasingly more of a concern to all of us—these agencies play an even more significant role in our overall national security. When you are talking about a national security strategy, it is not just the Department of Defense; it is the Department of State and it is engagement overseas.

Again, as we were in Vietnam, we were talking to the Defense Minister, and one of his key priorities is a project to eliminate toxins in Bien Hoa airfield, an airfield we used extensively in Vietnam. To him, that would be a hugely significant indication of our support for their efforts. That is not funded through the Department of Defense; that would be principally funded through the AID. And you could go on and on.

The approach we offer in the bill does not go to the heart of the problem that faces the Department of Defense and every other Federal agency, and that is the BCA caps and the steep cuts that will come into effect if sequestration is invoked. That is the heart of the matter. I offered an amendment in committee to address this problem, and unfortunately it failed. That was one of the reasons I reluctantly—very reluctantly—chose not to support the bill, because there are so many, as the chairman indicated and as I will indicate, important provisions in this bill.

What I tried to do was to say: Let's leave this money on the books, but let's fence it off until we can fix the real problem, which is the Budget Control Act and sequestration, which affects defense and nondefense alike.

In the context of this floor debate, I hope to be able to once again rejoin that issue and ask my colleagues to recognize the heart of the matter—not the consequences affecting defense but the heart of the matter, which is the Budget Control Act.

As I said, this is a bill with many laudatory provisions reflecting in large part bipartisan cooperation. Some of them have been discussed by the chairman, but I would also like to mention them.

The bill provides key funding and authorities for the two major U.S.-led coalition operations: the mission in Afghanistan and the counter-ISIS coalition in Iraq and Syria. Critical to both of these operations are our efforts to build the capacities of our partner nations.

With regard to Afghanistan, the bill includes the full $3.8 billion requested by the President to support the Afghan army, police, and other security forces fighting to secure the hard-fought gains of the past decade and to ensure that Afghanistan does not once again become a safe haven for Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups seeking to attack America.

The bill would also increase the total number of visas for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program by 3,000, providing a path to safety for Afghans who have put themselves at risk by serving as translators or otherwise helping our coalition efforts.

For coalition efforts against ISIS, the bill provides additional funding for training and equipping the Iraqi security forces and other associated forces in Iraq, including the Kurdish Peshmerga and Sunni tribes, who are confronting the threat of ISIS in heavily contested Anbar Province and in other parts of Iraq. It includes $80 million for the Office of Security Cooperation in Iraq. It also provides an additional $600 million for the Syria Train and Equip Fund, to build the capabilities of a vetted, moderate opposition to fight ISIS in Syria. Additionally, $125 million is authorized to reimburse Lebanon and Jordan for operations that help secure their borders against ISIS.

The bill includes funding for an initiative to expand the U.S. military presence and exercises in Eastern Europe, reassuring allies and countering the threat of hybrid warfare tactics like those used by Russia in the Crimea and eastern Ukraine. The bill also authorizes additional military assistance for Ukraine—including lethal assistance—to build the capabilities of Ukrainian security forces to defend against further aggression and ceasefire violations by Russian-backed separatist forces.

With respect to counternarcotics, which is another national security threat, the bill expands an existing authority to permit counternarcotics assistance to the Governments of Kenya, Tanzania, and Somalia. This expansion would allow for additional nonlethal assistance to those nations as they combat illicit trafficking in the region. In Latin America, the bill would provide assistance to support the unified counterdrug and counterterrorism campaign of the Government of Colombia. This assistance remains a key element of our bilateral security operation in Colombia and enables the commander of SOUTHCOM to provide critical enabling support upon request.

The bill also provides an additional $50 million to address unfunded priorities identified by SOUTHCOM, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, as well as maritime interdiction support operations in Central America.

As the chairman indicated, the bill adds over $400 million in additional readiness funding for the military services across all branches, Active, Guard, and Reserve. These increases will provide resources for crucial programs aimed at improving our military readiness in many areas, including depot readiness, flying operations, cyber training, reducing insider threat attacks, behavioral health counseling, and other important programs.

With respect to our nuclear deterrence, the committee bill fully authorizes the program for modernizing our triad of sea, ground, and airborne platforms. The last B–52 was produced in the 1960s, and by the time the Long-Range Strike Bomber, its replacement, begins to be fielded in the mid-2020s, the B–52 will be flown in some cases by the grandchildren of its first pilots.

Turning to the undersea deterrent, the current *Ohio*-class submarine, which will ultimately carry upward of two-thirds of our strategic arsenal, is to be replaced by the *Ohio* replacement submarine. If we are to maintain a sea-based deterrent, the current *Ohio* fleet of 14 subs must be replaced starting in 2027 due to the potential for hull fatigue. By then, the first *Ohio* sub will be 46 years old—the oldest submarine to have sailed in our Navy in its history.

Now, the third aspect of our triad—those of our land-based ICBMs—will not need to be replaced until the 2030 timeframe. We have authorized a concept development for replacement of this most responsive leg of the triad which acts as a counterbalance to Russian ICBMs.

As Secretary Carter noted in his confirmation hearing, our nuclear deterrence forms the bedrock of our defense policy. This is an essential mission which must not be neglected.

In the area of technology and innovation, I am pleased this bill takes a number of steps to ensure that DOD has access to the most innovative minds in the private sector and to strengthen DOD's in-house laboratories. It significantly increases funding for university research programs as well as authorizing $400 million to support Secretary Carter's efforts to identify and fund new technologies that will help offset the advancing military capabilities of peer nations, invest in technologies such as lasers, unmanned systems, and undersea warfare.

The bill also supports the DOD's laboratory enterprise by improving their ability to attract and hire the world's best and brightest scientists and engineers. These labs help DOD act as smart buyers and builders of the most advanced weapon systems on the planet and are often underappreciated for their endeavors.

It also improves their ability to build world-class modern research infrastructure, encourages them to hire selected students from friendly foreign nations, and strengthens their ability to partner with industry, allowing small businesses to have access to the great intellectual property coming from DOD labs, as well as access to their research and technical equipment. I believe these policy changes and funding increases will continue to strengthen the technological dominance of our military forces while reducing the costs to build and maintain weapon systems in the future.

There are also specific recommendations on hardware programs that will help the Department to improve management and cope with shortfalls, such as providing an additional 12 F–18 Super Hornets for the Navy and an additional 6 F–35B aircraft for the Marine Corps. These aircraft will help deal with the Department of Navy shortfall in strike fighter aircraft.

It adds $800 million in Virginia-class advance procurement to provide flexibility to begin building Virginia-class boats with the enhanced payload module as soon as that version is ready for production and to help mitigate pressure on shipbuilding funds coming from the Ohio-class replacement program.

It accelerates several other ship programs, including amphibious assault ships, the dock landing ship replacement, the next afloat forward staging base, the new salvage ship/fleet tug replacement, and the landing craft utility replacement.

As the chairman indicated, this bill also includes critical authorities for our men and women in uniform. They are the heart and soul of our military. All the equipment in the world, as sophisticated as it is, will not make the difference that the young men and women who wear the uniform of the United States make each and every day. So this bill includes a 1.3-percent pay raise for most servicemembers, the reauthorization of over 30 types of bonuses and special pays to encourage enlistment and reenlistment in the military, and funds to provide health care to the force, retirees, and their families.

Notably, this bill includes important benefit and compensation reforms either requested by the Department or recommended by the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission that helps to ensure the long-term viability of the all-volunteer force.

For example, the bill includes a new retirement system for servicemembers joining after January 1, 2018, as recommended by the Commission, which grandfathers in the current force. For most servicemembers, this new system will provide a greater benefit at less cost to the government and will address perhaps the grossest inequity of the current system, as highlighted by the chairman—the fact that 83 percent of all servicemembers leave military service with no retirement benefits at all. This is especially challenging, difficult, and in some cases even galling for those who have deployed multiple times and leave the service simply because they cannot endure the strain any longer. We essentially ask them to choose between retirement benefits or their mental health or the unity of their family. Under the new system contained in our bill, anyone who completes 2 years of service will be eligible to walk away with something.

Notably, the bill does not include the overall TRICARE system recommended by the Commission. We have heard from the President with respect to TRICARE and agree these recommendations require more study. These reforms are vital. In a budget-

constrained environment, with hard spending caps, it is critical we strike the right balance between a military compensation package that provides a high quality of life for military families and training and modernization funding that provides a high quality of service and a ready force.

As senior Department officials have testified, if we don't have enough money to provide our troops the latest technology and the training they need, we are doing them a disservice. When we send them into harm's way under these conditions, that disservice quickly translates into a breach of trust.

The Department has assumed approximately $1.7 billion in savings in its 2016 budget relating to these benefit proposals and $25.4 billion over the entire FYDP. The committee supported these proposals and has redirected that funding to readiness and modernization accounts to restore those deficits. Difficult choices need to be made and this bill makes them. We might not yet have it perfectly right, but as we move through the legislative year, we will continue to work to ensure that we pay our servicemembers a fair wage while delivering the training and equipment necessary to succeed.

This bill begins a process, long overdue, for reviewing different options, for example, for providing the commissary benefit to our servicemembers—another important aspect of quality of life. Included in one of these options is at least the consideration of privatization. I understand some Members may have some difficulty supporting these provisions, but the bill simply requires a number of studies to generate and evaluate new ideas, and a pilot program to test them, without requiring the actual privatization of the system. This is an experiment which I think is worth conducting, and I believe the chairman's leadership on this point was extraordinarily valuable.

The bill also addresses the Department's management of its civilian workforce in two ways—one of which I agree with and one of which I will raise some questions. We have long heard from the Department that it lacks certain authorities to effectively manage its civilian workforce. This bill includes new authorities which will enable civilian managers to more effectively retain their best performing employees while divesting their poorest. These reforms, while painful for some, are sensible and necessary.

However, this bill also mandates a management headquarters reduction of 7.5 percent in 2016 and 30 percent over 4 years. I am concerned that such deep, and at this point generalized, cuts to the civilian workforce may create more problems than it will solve. I am hoping we can take a more careful approach to headquarters reform and look forward to working with my colleagues on this issue as we move through the floor and through the conference to final passage.

Again, as the chairman highlighted, this bill also contains roughly 50 provisions on acquisition reform, and I commend the chairman for his efforts. The provisions will help streamline acquisition processes, allow DOD to access commercial and small businesses, and improve the acquisition workforce. They build on the successes of the reforms led by Chairman MCCAIN and Chairman Levin in the Weapons System Acquisition Reform Act of 2009.

I did have concerns about one provision in this area, and I thank the chairman for working with me to address it. I am sure we will be continuing this discussion of acquisition reform throughout the year and in the future. I expect the Department of Defense will have concerns over some of the provisions as well, so I look forward to working with the chairman and soliciting the best advice from acquisition experts in the government and industry so we can continue to improve our stewardship of taxpayer dollars and deliver the best technologies to our fighting forces.

Now, let me turn to an area of concern which the chairman has highlighted and on which I may be offering an amendment; that is, Guantanamo. Over the past few years, the Senate Committee on Armed Services has led the way on Guantanamo-related issues, giving careful consideration to our detention policies and finding bipartisan solutions.

In certain ways, this bill continues that tradition of bipartisan progress on Guantanamo issues. For example, it includes the authority, carried in our bill over the last 2 years, for the Secretary of Defense to approve the temporary transfer of Guantanamo detainees to a military medical facility in the continental United States to provide medical treatment in a life-threatening emergency, when that treatment cannot be provided on-island without unreasonable or excessive cost. The detainee would be required to return to Guantanamo at the conclusion of the medical treatment.

Most importantly, the bill contains a provision that would clear a path for closing Guantanamo, including the option of bringing detainees to the United States for detention, civil trial, and incarceration. Under this approach, the current prohibitions on Guantanamo transfers to the United States would remain in place until the President submits to Congress a detailed plan on the disposition of these detainees and Congress votes, under expedited procedures, to approve that plan. If Congress approves the plan, the bans on transfers to the United States would be lifted and the President would have the authority to implement this plan for closing Guantanamo.

I particularly want to thank Chairman MCCAIN and Senator MANCHIN, who worked closely to craft this compromise, which was approved by a significant vote in the committee—19 to 7. This is an example of bipartisan work at its best.

At the same time, on other Guantanamo policies, I must note they take us backward. This is particularly the case with regard to overseas transfers of Guantanamo detainees—not transfers into the United States but to third countries. In the fiscal year 2014 National Defense Act, the committee's bipartisan efforts resulted in real progress on overseas transfers, granting the Secretary of Defense more flexible and streamlined authorities for overseas transfers of detainees, consistent with our national security interests and with measures to substantially mitigate the risk of Guantanamo detainees reengaging in terrorist activities.

Unfortunately, the bill before us today would undo that progress and reimpose restrictions which date back to 2013 that include a burdensome checklist of certifications that the Secretary of Defense would be required to fulfill for any overseas transfers and a prohibition on transfers to any country where there was a prior case of detainee recidivism.

These provisions make it nearly impossible to transfer Guantanamo detainees overseas to a third-party country. In fact, during the 3 years these certifications were previously in place, no detainees were transferred under these certification restrictions. During this period, a total of 11 detainees were transferred out of Guantanamo overseas, 6 under an existing national security waiver and 5 under an exception for court-ordered transfers. This is a fraction of the over 30 detainees who have been transferred under the more recent 2014 transfer authority.

These backward-looking restrictions on overseas transfers create an unnecessary roadblock for disposing of the 57 detainees currently at Guantanamo who have been approved for overseas transfer, most of whom were approved nearly 5 years ago. My hope is that we can work with our colleagues across the aisle to craft a compromise that brings us more in line with present law.

Finally, I wish to discuss more in-depth the reason I was unable to support the committee's bill and why I think we need to have a very serious debate on the underlying financing of this legislation.

Our national defense decisions should be based on actual needs, not on spending caps and ways around the spending caps that don't change the BCA but simply use a device—some have labeled a gimmick—to get us money, not to fix the fundamental problem but to get us money.

The President's fiscal year budget 2016 requested $38 billion above the Budget Control Act spending caps. Senator MCCAIN and I wrote a letter to the Budget Committee that also asked to go above those budget caps because we understand the best approach is to put within the base funding of the Department of Defense those functions which are essential, not just to the year-to-year operations but to the long-term

operations of the Department of Defense and to our long-term national security. The President requested this $38 billion be authorized as part of the base budget.

The request from the President also contained—as Presidential requests have contained since 2001–2002—OCO funding; OCO funding being for those unique, we hope, one-of or at least yearly expenditures that we have to make with respect to current operations overseas. That is why this is called the Overseas Contingency Operations. For some time now, the President and all of our Secretaries—Secretary Carter, Secretary Hagel, Secretary Gates, Secretary Panetta, and Secretary Hagel—have implored Congress to end the damaging effects of the Budget Control Act's sequester and spending caps. However, this bill, following the budget resolution, does not clearly address the BCA issue. Instead, it turns to this OCO fund. This mark transfers $39 billion from the base budget to the Overseas Contingency Operations budget, leaving the base at, surprisingly, the BCA level, and it raises several concerns. I mentioned these concerns, but let me mention them again.

First, adding funds to OCO does not solve, and actually complicates, the DOD's budgetary problems. Defense budgeting needs to be based on our long-term military strategy, which requires DOD to plan at least 5 years ahead. When you are doing technology innovation, when you are investing in programs that are not going to come off the shelf in 6 months, you can't rely on 1-year money. It doesn't provide DOD the certainty and stability it needs. It has to have money in the base.

This instability can undercut the morale of our troops and their families. If vital programs are subject to year-to-year appropriations, if they are not considered to be the norm, if they are not where we begin but are sort of put in at the end, that affects the morale and confidence of our military.

It also affects our defense industry partners. If their funding is in the category of Overseas Contingency Operations, that is less certain to them than money that is in the base and will likely remain in the base for 5 years or beyond that they need.

Then, the second aspect of this is that our national security is more than just the Department of Defense. The Department of Defense is critical. Ask Americans: Where does our national defense come from? Well, it is those men and women in uniform. That is absolutely true. But we need domestic agencies. We can't defend the homeland without the FBI, which is funded through the Department of Justice, which will not have access—direct access—in the way we are proposing, to OCO or the Transportation Security Administration that screens individuals coming in or Customs that additionally screens people or the Coast Guard. All of these are in the Department of Homeland Security.

Furthermore, without adequate support for the State Department, then we can't present the kind of comprehensive approach overseas to national security issues that are essential to success. Gen. James Mattis, whom the chairman and I both know, said: ''If you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition.''

There is a symbiotic relationship between our diplomatic activities, our national defense activities, our law enforcement activities, and our Treasury activities, because if we are truly to interrupt these terrorist networks, we have to go after their financing. That is done through the Department of Treasury. This whole-of-government approach to national security has to be recognized, and it is not recognized if we allow the Budget Control Act to continue to be operational on the nondefense side but avoid it on the defense side because we have access to the overseas contingency fund.

Also, I think we are going to see going forward, as we have seen before—and we are saying this OCO funding is for 1 year. But I think we are doing a little bit of a wink-wink, don't worry; we are not going to pull $40 billion out of the Defense bill in the 2017 budget. We couldn't do that. What we are doing, though, is we are sort of inviting the ingenious use of OCO funding in the years ahead, and I think we will see increasingly more esoteric and exotic things in OCO funding because that is where the money is.

If you have a program that you need to get funded and it has a connection to Defense—and in some cases doesn't even need to be Defense. Senator MCCAIN and I were chatting at the hearing about the significant amount of medical research run through the Department of Defense. One reason is because there was money available back in the 1980s for defense spending that wasn't available on the domestic side, and that funding found its way into Defense.

So I think there are several reasons we have to take a different approach. My approach in the committee was, I thought, straightforward. The President recognizes we need these resources for national defense. We recognize we need the resources for national defense, but I believe we should budget honestly and directly, and initially that was our approach in the Budget Committee. Let's put it in the base, and let's take the President's $50 billion—which is the best estimate by the Department of Defense of what we really need for overseas contingency—and let's do that.

So my proposal is certainly just to fence the additional OCO funds until we could, in fact, collectively, as a Congress—what we have to do and what so many people on both sides have argued—until we could repeal, reform, modify, extend the Budget Control Act, much as we did through the great efforts of Senator MURRAY and Congressman PAUL RYAN, which gave us the head room to actually pass legislation—not just the Department of Defense but other agencies—that allowed us to continue the work of the government and allowed us to protect the Nation. My proposal in committee did not succeed, but I would renew that request.

I think we have made great progress in the legislation. I think the last step is to get us to a position where we have essentially recognized that the BCA caps and sequestration have to be eliminated.

I would conclude by commending the chairman for all he has done to get us here, but, second, to repeat what has been said to us by every military leader. What is their first request? It wasn't for more OCO money. Their first request was to eliminate the BCA caps, eliminate the threat of sequestration. I think we have to do this, and I think we can start this process now. In fact, I would say that if we don't start this process now, if we don't send a strong signal—and my proposal would send that strong signal—then I am afraid we will just be victims of the calendar. Before we get to the BCA, we will have tough choices to make about this bill that we don't have to.

So I urge consideration when the amendment comes up.

I yield back to the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island, my friend Senator REED, for his thoughtful analysis of the legislation before us. Again, it has been not only a pleasure but an honor for me to have the opportunity to work with him on the issues that are so important to our Nation—none more important.

I am told by the majority leader that he would like to have this legislation completed by the end of next week. That means we have a lot of work to do. We already have a number of amendments that have been filed. I would ask my colleagues to have their amendments in, hopefully, by, say, tomorrow afternoon, when the Senator from Rhode Island and I will ask unanimous consent that no further amendments be considered. We want to give every Senator an opportunity to have their amendments thoroughly vetted and debated and voted on, if that is their desire. That means we have a lot of work to do. I think we will be considering an amendment this afternoon from Senator PORTMAN, and we would like to move forward from there.

So I ask the indulgence of my colleagues that if they do want debate and a vote on their amendments, that they be prepared to come to the floor to do so. Again, on filing of amendments, we would like to have all pending amendments in, in the next 24 hours, so we can have a finite number of amendments for the legislation that is pending today.

I thank all of my colleagues for their cooperation. We look forward to discussion and debate and, I am sure, will come out with a better result.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I agree with the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED, the ranking member. There is a lot of good stuff in here, but there is budgetary fakery in here. I want to, in my words, describe this budgetary fakery. But before I do, I want to commend the chairman, Senator MCCAIN, and Senator REED for how they have conducted the committee. I thank them for their professionalism. They show how two leaders of opposite parties can get along, and Lord knows we need a lot more of that around here.

But for this budgetary issue, Senator REED and I would be voting for this on the final passage coming out of the committee. I, too, will be supporting Senator REED's amendment to try to straighten out some of this budgetary trickery. Let me say that in front of our committee, we have had general after general and admiral after admiral and the top enlisted folks come in and say that sequestration is harming the national security of this country. When we do that, it puts us at a risk that the American people would find intolerable if they knew what was going on. Now, let me see if, in my words, I can describe what this is.

After Senator MURRAY and Congressman RYAN put together a bipartisan budget—and for 2 years this artificial ceiling, like a meat-ax approach, sequestration, across the board was enacted to be implemented over the next several years, not a budgetary strategy of program by program but a meat-ax approach across the board, regardless of the importance of the program.

Their bipartisan budget lifted that for 2 years. We are at the end of that 2-year period, so that sequestration is kicking back in. That is why we need to get rid of it. We need to get rid of it not only for defense but nondefense as well. I will talk about that in a second. But in defense, it now kicks in and limits the overall spending for the Department of Defense. But we know we have to spend more than that.

So this defense bill, which Senator REED and I voted against, takes operational and readiness funds out of the Department of Defense request, which is a major part of the defense of the country. You want your troops to be operationally ready so that we can fight two wars if we have to simultaneously. But they take that money—that funding—out of the defense budget, and they put it over here in this special account that is not counted against the budget caps, which is an account for conducting the war originally in Iraq, then Afghanistan, and primarily for purposes of funding Afghanistan now.

As Senator REED has very appropriately and accurately discussed, if you do that, first of all, this is nothing but budgetary fakery to meet an arbitrary cap on budgets, because you are spending a lot more than that ceiling. You are just spending it over here on something that is off budget, and the total amount that is moved over is about $39 billion. In that account, there is approximately $50 billion already for conducting the war in Afghanistan. But now we are going to take operational readiness for the entire Department of Defense and pull it over here.

If we are going to be straight with what we are spending so that we really know what we are spending, why don't we keep it in the budget and let the total budget rise instead of having an artificial ceiling so we know what we are spending? Senator REED is concerned that if you do that and you are spending it over here, then in future years, as this continues to stay there, we are not going to be able to show that operational readiness is something that ought to be a normal part of the funding of the Department of Defense, as it has been for years and years.

That is basically what is going on. Military strategy is not just dependent on defense spending, but it is also dependent upon nondefense national security spending, which at this point is not even being addressed. What will the generals and the admirals tell you? They will tell you that a strong national economy is one of the most important of all the strengths of our country to be able to project American military strength. And as a result, if we continue to budget like this, not only in defense but in nondefense as well, in nondefense areas that directly affect defense—I mean the Coast Guard, the CIA, the FBI, the DEA, Customs and Border Protection, air traffic control, TSA—then all of these areas in the Federal Government are going to be under this artificial meat-ax approach of cutting across the board, and all of those agencies directly affect the national security.

So what we have been doing is artificially avoiding what is the obvious. It is sequestration. It is this meat-ax cut across the board. I want us, as we discuss this budget—now highlighted first by Senator REED—to start talking about how we are going to get rid of the sequester. We did it in the bipartisan Murray-Ryan budget over 2 years ago. We need to do it again. Otherwise, we are going to be wasting our time working on bills that at the end of the day may well not get the 60 votes to proceed to final passage or we will have a veto by the President. So we need to fix the budget caps for defense and nondefense spending. If we have bleeding in an artery, we do not need a Band-Aid.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

USA FREEDOM ACT

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, yesterday we passed the USA FREEDOM Act, and it was quickly signed by our President because it was so important to put it into place. It contained two items that I want to draw particular attention to. One is that there should be no secret spying on U.S. citizens here in the United States of America. The second is that there should be no secret laws here in the United States of America.

These two items are very closely connected together. Our Nation was founded upon the principles of liberty and freedom. Fundamental to the exercise of those principles is the right to privacy, to be free from unreasonable intrusions. This right is central to all other rights protected in the Constitution, especially to the freedom of speech, the freedom of assembly, and the freedom to petition our Government.

Our sense of privacy and to be secure in our homes and secure with our records goes back to common law in England. It was in 1767 that the Earl of Chatham, when he was debating the cider tax, said:

> The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the Crown. [His cottage] may be frail, its roof may shake; the wind may blow through it; the storms may enter, the rain may enter, but the King of England cannot enter.

Certainly, that is the spirit that infused the Fourth Amendment of our Constitution. That amendment says: ''The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated. . .''

We need to ensure that our security apparatus, our law enforcement, and our intelligence officers have the tools they need to enact the efforts to keep America secure. But in the process, we cannot sacrifice our constitutional rights as American citizens. There should be no secret spying on Americans and no secret law in a democracy. So how did we end up in that place—the place that I am so glad we took a major stride toward remedying yesterday?

It goes back to section 215 of the PATRIOT Act. This Act was passed after the attacks on 9/11. I was not here in the Senate, but it said that our government can access business records or tangible things if it shows that there is a statement of facts showing that there are reasonable grounds to believe that those things are relevant to an authorized investigation.

That certainly mimics the second half of the Fourth Amendment, which goes on to say that ''no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.''

The responsibility of the government was to prepare a statement of facts, and those statements of facts had to show reasonable grounds and had to show that the things sought were relevant to an authorized investigation.

Each one of those words had a significant influence in constraining the potential for the government to collect business records or, particularly, as we came to learn, to collect phone records on American citizens. However, a problem developed, and that is that a secret court was created here in America, a secret court called the FISA Court, or the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. That secret court could interpret the common language of the law, and its interpretations were not disclosed to the U.S. public. So in that process of taking the language of the law that has a clear set of standards and then interpreting it, the court created secret law—secret law that was not disclosed to the citizens of the United States.

This is an enormous risk to democracy—a court with no scrutiny and, quite tragically, no presentation of opposing views from the position presented by the government. What kind of court is it that allows no presentation of an opposing view to the view of the government? That is a court that can create tyranny of the government by secretly reinterpreting the plain language of the law. That is exactly what happened.

Let's think about how this then went forward. Back in December 2012, I proposed an amendment, and that amendment said that there can be no secret law in America; that if the FISA Court makes an interpretation of terms, that interpretation of those terms has to be made public.

Here we have a representation of the importance of shining a light on that secret court, disclosing to the public how it interprets the law and thereby changes the meaning of the law. And what did this court do? This court tipped those terms and said ''authorize investigation.'' That can mean anything that happens in the future, which, of course, makes that term meaningless. It means that there is no authorized investigation. It is just a fictional possibility of the future—nothing existing right now. And then it took the term ''relevant to an authorized investigation,'' and it said that relevant is irrelevant. You have to show no connection, one or two places removed, in order to secure the right to access the papers, the business records, the phone records of U.S. citizens.

So this secret court here in America, the FISA Court, created secret law, wiped out the plain meaning of section 215, put its own interpretation in place, and told no one. This is absolutely unacceptable. That is why I put forward the amendment in December of 2012 that there is no secret law amendment, that this is unacceptable, that we must have disclosure of whatever that court finds so that the public can be informed, so that legislators can be informed, so that we can have a debate on whether that interpretation is consistent with what the legislature intended—what the Senate and the House intended—and consistent with what the President intended when he signed that law.

That amendment did not get a debate at that time in 2012, but the chair of the Intelligence Committee pledged to work with me to ask our government to declassify those opinions of the FISA Court, and she did. I thank very much the senior Senator from California, the former chair of the Intelligence Committee, for her help in doing that. And some of those records, some of those opinions, and some summaries of the interpretation of the law were declassified. That was a step forward, but it should not be dependent on the whim of the executive branch as to whether secret law exists in our country.

So I continued to press forward. And then we had a situation occur. In June 2013, Edward Snowden disclosed the existence of the cell phone program. I could not explain in December of 2012 why it was so important to end secret law, but after Edward Snowden's disclosures, I could explain it.

In fact, when the National Security Agency chief, Keith Alexander, was testifying, which was shortly after that disclosure, I proceeded to pull out my cell phone and ask the chief: What authorized investigation gives you the authority under section 215 to access my, Senator MERKLEY's, cell phone records? He was unable to answer that question but said he would seek legal consultation in order to explain what investigation showed that there was a relevant connection and what statement of facts would justify it. But I never got an answer because there was no answer because the government was collecting everything under this secret reinterpretation of law.

Yesterday, we ended the era of secret law in America. Yesterday, my no secret law act was incorporated into the USA FREEDOM Act and was signed by the President of the United States. This law says the executive branch must declassify opinions of the FISA Court or, if they find that the exact opinion poses a security risk because of details enclosed therein, must declassify summaries or at a minimum must summarize the significant constructions and interpretations of law found by the FISA Court. That is the heart of it. We are not asking that classified information about facts of a case that could endanger our national security be disclosed. We are asking that interpretations and constructions of law be disclosed so that we have no secret law in America, and that is what is required by the act we passed yesterday.

In conclusion, we must not have secret laws in America. We must not have a secret court that has no opposing point of view presented. And when it makes interpretations of law, it must be disclosed to American citizens, who have every right as citizens to know what the law means and to be able to argue whether they like that interpretation, dislike it, think the law should be supported or the law should be changed.

May we never again allow a secret court to authorize secret spying on U.S. citizens under the cover of secret law.

What we did yesterday—incorporating the no secret law act into the USA FREEDOM Act—was important. To paraphrase William Pitt, the humblest American, no matter his wealth or her income or his status within the community—that no American may be in a situation where he may be unable to say to the U.S. Government: Here in my home, within these walls, however modest, you, the government, may not enter.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate remain in session for at least 5 additional minutes while I speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I couldn't let the statements that were just made go without a degree of fact check. There is no secret court. A secret court means we don't know it exists. Every Member of the U.S. Senate and every American knows that the FISA Court exists. The FISA Court exists because when the Senate of the United States takes up classified, top-secret legislation, we shut these doors, we clear the Gallery, and we cut the TV off because it can't be heard in public. As a matter of fact, every court in the country operates in secret when they have sensitive information that can't be shared.

I wish my colleague would stay.

The information can't be shared because it can't be public. There are some things that don't meet that classification.

And to get up here and talk about secret courts and secret laws—we pass the laws. The courts enforce the laws, and they are challenged. We have committees and Members who do oversight. It is unfactual to stand on this floor and say we have secret courts and secret laws. That is why the Senate and the House made a mistake this week.

If the Senator were really concerned about privacy, my friend would be on the floor arguing that we eliminate the CFPB, a Federal agency created—not even funded by Congress—that collects every piece of financial transaction on the American people today. They get every data point from credit card companies and the credit bureau, they search the student loan information, and they download all of that into metadata within the CFPB. No Member is down here complaining about that. That is the greatest intrusion of privacy on the American people that could ever happen. It was known upfront, so they made sure it wasn't funded by Congress and made sure we didn't have any oversight responsibilities. That is why they put it under the guidance of the Federal Reserve.

The President of the United States could have ended section 215 at any

time. He had the power. But the President understands that this program works and that there was public pressure to move this data from the NSA to the telecom companies, which is probably a greater concern about privacy than to have this controlled and supervised within the NSA.

The Senator mentioned Edward Snowden—a traitor to the United States. My colleague held him up as though he were a prize because he had come out with this publicly. What do the American people think when we come out here and take some of the most sensitive information and suggest everybody ought to know it? The American people look at us and ask us to keep them safe and do whatever is within the law to accomplish that.

And there is one thing that has never been contested on section 215: It lived within the letter of the law or it lived within the letter of the Presidential directive.

We had a debate, and that is behind us. But to come out here and suggest that there is a secret court and that there are secret laws and that yesterday they eliminated all of that—no, they didn't. No administration in their right mind is going to publicly release those classified and top-secret documents that go to the FISA Court because it would put Americans and foreigners at risk.

I have tried to explain to my colleagues that terrorists are not good people. We can't hug them and all of a sudden change their intent. They want to kill people. And in most cases, we don't find them through association with Boy Scouts; we find them by actually putting agents into a system where they work sources and collect intelligence. Why would we go out and give terrorists the roadmap of how we do things?

I will end on this. As everyone can tell, when somebody gets up and talks about something that just is not true, it can't go without correction.

What we have done in the last 2 months is given every terrorist in the world a roadmap as to exactly how the United States picks up individuals in the United States who might communicate with terrorists abroad.

I will say for the last time what section 215 did. Section 215 was a database that stated the NSA—the only way that any number could ever be queried was if we had a foreign telephone number that we knew was a terrorist telephone number, we could go to the FISA Court and say: We would like to test this against telephone numbers—not Americans; telephone numbers. It was a database that only had telephone numbers, the date of the call, and the duration of the call. The court would give us permission when we were looking to see if there was an American telephone number that actually talked to a known terrorist. And if it did, we turned it over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and said: You might want to look at this person. They then went through a normal court process. If they wanted to find the person's name and get additional information, that is what they did. Some called that an invasion of privacy. I will tell everyone that is not the courts' interpretation. The courts ruled that when my telephone information goes to a telephone company, I have no expectation of privacy. None. That is the law.

The reality is that we are collecting telephone numbers. It has no personal identification on it. I don't know how it would be an invasion of privacy when we don't know who it is. And that threshold is met when the Bureau goes to the court and says they have a different concern about the individual, and the court will then rule on it.

But to believe that the FISA Court does anything different from the Senate of the United States or different from any court in the country when they are faced with classified or secret information—and that is, they shut it down—is wrong. It is just plain wrong. It is important for the American people to understand that there are ramifications to stupid decisions, even by Congress.

It is my hope that this program will work as it is currently designed. But there is no mistake that we have given terrorists every reason to never use a cell phone or a landline again, especially those who are in our country and intend to carry out some act like the gentleman from Boston did yesterday. He pulled a knife on two officers who just wanted to talk to him because he had been under 24/7 surveillance for days. If the news reports were correct, he intended to behead a Boston police officer.

I think the American people want our law enforcement folks to be in that position. If we take away their tools, we will not be able to do it. What we did yesterday was we took some of the tools away. We didn't take all of them away. My hope is that this body will think clearly in the future about the tools we provide to allow this to happen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

For the Senator's information, the Senate has an order to recess until 2 p.m.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, when colleagues come to the floor and contend that there have been no secret courts in America, that there has been no secret law in America, that the administration of section 215 matched the plain language of the laws adopted by this body, they are wrong on all three counts.

Mr. BURR. Will the Senator entertain a question?

Mr. MERKLEY. When I have completed my remarks, I will be happy to take a question.

And so my colleague comes to the floor and says that there is no secret law. But the fundamental understanding of law is that there is the plain language of the law and there is the interpretation of that by the court. It is only through the combination of those two things that you can know what a law means. So if you have the plain language but you don't have the interpretation that has been assigned by the courts and used to adjudicate cases, then in fact you have secret law because none of us know what the words mean.

If you look at the plain language of section 215, it doesn't say: Here are restrictions on how the government examines a body of information, interrogates that body of information, and analyzes that body of information. No. The language is completely about how the government collects that information and whether they can collect that information. It sets a series of clear standards for collecting that information. It says that information cannot be collected unless there is stated analysis, a set of facts that show there is evidence that the information being sought is relevant to an authorized investigation.

Now, any common citizen knows, therefore, that the government has to do a statement of facts. They have to state what is the specific investigation, has that investigation been authorized, and is the assorted information relevant that is being requested?

Well, ''relevant'' is a very powerful term in the law. It means one or two steps removed. And that is exactly what the Second Circuit found when they looked at this issue just recently.

The court's opinion explained that as the program is being implemented, the records demanded are not those of suspects who are under investigation, which would certainly be relevant, or of people or businesses that have contact with suspects under investigation, which is one step removed and certainly would be relevant, or even, the court went on to say, of people or businesses that have contact with others who are in contact with the subjects. That would be two steps removed, and that is stretching the boundaries of what is considered relevant under the definition of the law.

The court found that the implementation of the program has extended to every record that exists. The Court found that the implementation of the law extended to every record that exists.

So if the implementation by the administration so diverged from the language of the law passed and debated in this Chamber, how did the government—the executive branch—justify its gross deviation from the plain language of the law? Well, here is how they did it. They went to a court that had been created, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, and they

said: We would like to be able to collect all the information, whether or not it is relevant, because some day, under some situation, we may want to analyze that information, and we would like to have it right at hand.

Now, had there been an adversary in this court, the adversary presenting an opposite point of view would have said: Well, not so quick, because there are standards in the case law for relevance. There are standards for what constitutes an authorized investigation. There are certainly standards for what are the means to present evidence to document this. But there was no contrary opinion in this court because the only one arguing the case with no rebuttal and no examination by any group was the government. So we have the government and a judge. That is not really the theory behind the courts. The idea is that we have an examination of an issue with both sides presented so there can be full articulation and full examination of the issues, and then a judge can decide based on full input. But, in this case, we didn't have that input. The government asked for an interpretation that would allow them to do something far different from the plain language of the law, and they got it from this secret court.

So, yes, we do have secret courts, operated with no input, and they disclose no opinions. And yes, we did have a secret law, and that ended yesterday, as it should have.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. BURR. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MERKLEY. I will yield.

Mr. BURR. I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute before the Senate adjourns.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURR. My question to the Senator is this: Did he know the FISA Court existed?

Mr. MERKLEY. The existence of the court——

Mr. BURR. It is a simple yes or no answer. Did the Senator from Oregon know the FISA Court existed?

Mr. MERKLEY. The Senator from North Carolina can ask a question, and I get to answer the question.

Mr. BURR. Well, no, you don't. I asked the question, but I did not yield the Senator from Oregon the time.

Mr. President, regular order.

I don't want to take any more of the Senate's time, and I certainly don't want to take any more of my colleague's time.

The fact is that he knows the court existed. Congress has reauthorized section 215 of the PATRIOT Act. The FISA Court has reauthorized it. They reauthorized it. They are asked every 90 days, and they ruled 41 times to allow section 215 to exist.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, will my colleague yield for a question?

Mr. BURR. I will be happy to yield for a question.

Mr. MERKLEY. Were the opinions of this court, established by law—and, yes, it is transparent to the public that the court exists. But the question of secrecy is not one of whether it exists; it is a question of whether the process is open in any feasible way to debate between two points of view. Did the Senator from North Carolina know that the opinions of the court, including interpretations of the law, were never disclosed to the American public and were, in fact, kept secret?

Mr. BURR. I actually do know that.

Mr. MERKLEY. Well, thank you, because that does show that in fact there were secret——

Mr. BURR. The Senator asked his question, and I answered, and I still control the time. Thank you.

Now, clearly, it is evident that if we say something wrong enough times, people start to believe it. It is not a secret court. It is not a secret law. The President knows about it, and Members of Congress know about it. We have voted on it. We know what goes on. Fifteen Members of this body have oversight responsibility over the program. We do our job, and we do it well.

Now, we may disagree with what tools we use to try to defeat terrorism in this country, and clearly the Senator and I have a big canyon between us. But I have to tell my colleagues that America expects the Senate and the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States to defend them. I am going to continue to do everything I can to make sure law enforcement and the intelligence community have the tools to do their job because their job is a big one and the threat is big, and for people to ignore that today is irresponsible.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the people of the United States expect the Constitution to be upheld and the principles of the Fourth Amendment. They expect that the law that is passed on this floor will be implemented in an appropriate fashion and consistently, and when it is not, our liberty is diminished, our freedom is diminished, and our privacy is diminished.

Indeed, what we did yesterday with the USA FREEDOM Act was to end a system in which a court, in secrecy, changes the meaning of the law and does not expose it to the American public. That is a very important improvement, taking us back to the democracy that we are all a part of and that we all love.

Thank you, Mr. President.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:21 p.m., recessed until 2:01 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. TOOMEY).

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

(The remarks of Mrs. MURRAY pertaining to the introduction of S. 1494 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mrs. MURRAY. 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.

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 ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor, and I know we are talking about the Defense bill. I know my colleagues are trying to work things out as it relates to the Defense bill, but I am just as concerned about the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank—a credit agency that helps small businesses in the United States of America—which is expiring at the end of this month, June 30.

As we had discussions on the trade promotion authority act, I was very concerned that we were going to be passing trade policy while at the same time allowing very important trade tools to expire. I still remain very concerned about the small businesses that are here in the Capitol today and that have given much testimony at various hearings—yesterday in the Senate Banking Committee and today in the House Financial Services Committee—about the need for this type of credit agency that helps small businesses ship their products to other countries that are new market opportunities for them.

The reason why this is so important is because other countries have credit agencies—if you will, credit insurance. You are a small business. You want to get your products sold in developing markets. You can't find conventional banking or you can find conventional banking but that bank says it is not going to insure these losses. Thus, what has emerged for the United States of America, Europe, China, Asia, many parts of the world, is what is called credit insurance.

That credit insurance takes the conventional banking and says: We will help secure that conventional banking loan. So that if you are a manufacturer in, say, Columbus, OH, making machinery and you are selling that in China, you actually have an opportunity to sell that product, use commercial banking in Ohio, have that guaranteed

through credit insurance. A lot of business gets done on behalf of the United States of America.

We know this well in the Pacific Northwest because we do a lot of international trade. There are a lot of companies that have learned that the best way for them to grow small business is to become an exporter. So, yes, it may have started with our agricultural economy, where people started trading our agricultural products, but many of our agricultural markets are big export markets. Washington wheat, 90 percent of it is exported. Obviously, people know a lot about aerospace and the fact that the aerospace market is also an export market.

But what people do not realize is a lot of small businesses also became exporters, and they understood that the big market opportunities that are out there for their products are in growing economies around the globe. In fact, there is going to be a doubling of the middle class around the globe in the next several years. There are huge opportunities as those economies have higher income individuals to buy products and services.

So it is natural for us to want to increase exports. That is why the President has had an initiative to double exports over the last several years. I think he has set it for a 5-year period. We made good progress toward that growth in exports. So it really remains one of the biggest economic opportunities for our country, which is to have U.S. companies grow jobs by becoming exporters.

The Import-Export Bank costs zero to the U.S. Treasury. In fact, it actually generates money to the U.S. Treasury. So the notion that we would let a tool of the American economy expire, which literally helps us grow small businesses in the United States and throughout our country, when it actually generates money to our economy and costs us nothing, is something that is pretty hard to believe.

In fact, I do not know where my colleagues are going to come up with the money to pay for the $670 million hole that you will have in the Treasury if you do not do the Export-Import Bank. It has been a great tool for growing that economy. What we have heard from small businesses now is that they are actually seeing their deals affected. They are in the process of trying to negotiate with a country. Maybe it takes months and months to negotiate a final sale. They are showing up for those negotiations, and the businesses are saying: We are going to buy from somebody else. We are not going to buy from you, U.S. manufacturer. We are going buy from an Asian manufacturer because it is clear their credit insurance company still works and we don't have to wait. We don't have to wait for the uncertainty of the U.S. Senate or the House of Representatives, so we are going to go ahead and do that business deal with them.

In fact, we have U.S. manufacturers on the Hill today saying they are losing business because the U.S. Senate will not vote on the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. So we worked very hard during the trade discussion to guarantee that we would get a vote on the Export-Import Bank before June 30 on a vehicle mutually agreed upon by the supporters here of the Export-Import Bank and Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate leader.

I think what we are saying is we do not think the Defense authorization bill is that vehicle. Obviously, the Defense authorization bill, now under criticism by the White House and threatened to be vetoed, is not a vehicle that is going to get done any time soon, certainly not by June 30, and that is when the Bank expires.

So I guess to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who continue to hide behind the Heritage Foundation and will not declare whether they support the Export-Import Bank or don't support the Bank, the attempt to put it on another vehicle that is not going anywhere is not going to help American business and the American economy.

The Export-Import Bank in the State of Washington has helped generate $102 billion in exports and has helped over 230 exporters in our State. Those companies have grown their businesses. We have heard from one. In fact, there is a Web site you can go to for Manhasset Specialty Company, which makes music stands. You can hear a lot about them and how they have grown their business around the globe because they have used the export credit agency.

They do not understand why this Agency is about to collapse. They are concerned about their business. What we hear from a lot of businesses is, if this credit agency is curtailed—which is the wish and desire of the Heritage Foundation, an organization that does not even support our export agenda—basically, about 25 percent of their business, on average, is related to the export market. They say that about roughly 25 percent of their employees will then end up being laid off as those business deals are unwound over the next several months. That means they will not be able to keep and retain current workers.

So my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, by refusing to bring up the Export-Import Bank on a vehicle that could be voted on by the House of Representatives before the end of June, are literally saying to small businesses across America: Go ahead and lay off workers; we don't care.

Now, the reason I have been so passionate about this and out here fighting is not because I don't think the aerospace industry can take care of itself—there is a lot of discussion that the aerospace economy can be built where there are economies that will support credit agency financing—but why I am here is because there are a lot of small businesses that are crafting their products every single day to be the best on the globe. They are working hard to figure out how to stay ahead of the competition. In fact, we had a hearing when I was the chair of the small business committee with one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle whose constituents said to us: You know, small business exporting is not for wimps.

I thought that was a great statement. Because what they were saying is it is hard enough to be a small business person, take the financial risk, build a company, have employees, but then you have to go to the point of saying: Well, OK. I am going to ship my product to a new or developing market. How am I going to make that work? It is not like you can just go down the street and figure it out.

So this employer, a big manufacturer—medium-sized, small business manufacturer but big in this small town said: You know, exporting is not for wimps. You are taking risks. One of the things that we have done as a country to help minimize the risk of that small business owner who is helping the U.S. economy grow by expanding his market and hiring new employees is to have a credit agency that provides the insurance to his local bank so the deal can actually get executed.

Well, for some reason, many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, after years and years and years of supporting the Export-Import Bank, now all of a sudden do not want to support it anymore because the Heritage Foundation is saying it is something they should not support. In fact, they are giving bonus points on a ranking system as a way to say: We will reward you for trying to get rid of what has been a viable tool for small businesses in our economy.

So we hope our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will soon wake up to the fact that the expiration of such an important tool is not in the interests of our economy and not in the interests of small businesses and will come up with a vehicle for this to get done.

Those on the other side of the aisle who think it is OK that the Bank lapses are putting about $18 billion of deals at risk that are before the Bank but will not get executed if the Bank closes at the end of this month. So I hope my colleagues will work toward a solution on this issue. I hope they understand the export credit agency is a job creator for small business and will come up with a vehicle so that it must pass by June 30.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I want to express my appreciation to Senator MCCAIN and Senator JACK REED for their leadership on the Armed Services Committee. It is unusual, indeed, and good for the Republic that both of them are Academy graduates—though, the Navy and Army Academies sometimes can be quite competitive. They get along very well and respect each

other, and the committee has done a very good job.

I understand there is some concern by some of our Members concerning the desire to spend more on nondefense money and perhaps use this bill as a hostage to force the Congress to spend more money on other pieces of legislation. I think that would be a very grievous mistake. I have served on the Armed Services Committee now for 18 years, for quite a long time on the Budget Committee. I have spent a lot of time looking at the challenges we face.

I think the world has changed since the Budget Control Act was passed in 2011. In 2011, the President told us: Don't worry. We are pulling everybody out of Iraq and there are not going to be any more problems in Iraq. He did not mention ISIS. In 2011, we did not have the Russian invasion of Crimea. We did not have the continued vicious, violent fight in Syria. We did not have the chaos that is happening in Libya. We did not have the threat to the Iraqi Government's existence—we thought it was on the right path. We did not have the problem in Yemen.

So this is just a different world. Unfortunately, we are going to have to spend some more money for national defense. That is just the way it is. I am a budget hawk. I have looked at the numbers. We are going to have to spend some more money. However, what kind of argument can be made, that if you have to spend more on national defense—and we do have to make some tough choices on national defense—we have to spend more on nondefense? What kind of an argument is that, just for commonsense sake? If you were in a household budget and you had to spend more money on one item, you would probably spend less on the other items. So I would just say that the nondefense discretionary spending that some of my colleagues are insisting need more money before they would vote for the Defense bill, basically has flat funding this year. There is not a cut in nondefense spending. It grows the next 4, 5 years at 2.5 percent growth a year, which is faster than the economy has been growing, frankly. Last quarter the economy was negative.

So we just have to understand that we cannot hold this bill hostage to that kind of argument. I believe we are on the right track with a good armed services bill, with very strong bipartisan support. Apparently, over this budget issue, we lost a few votes in the Committee, but it was a strong bipartisan vote for the bill. As far as I can tell, there are few, if any, big differences on any provisions that are in the bill. So that is good. I think America is going to be pleased that our committee was able to work effectively. So we will spend about $612 billion for Department of Defense and Department of Energy defense issues. That is a large sum of money. It includes a base budget of $497 billion and $89 billion in the Overseas Contingency Operations fund. It is an increase in OCO over last year, but it is still well below the peak of OCO's funding that we had in years past.

I just have to say, the world is a more dangerous place than it has been. The legislation authorizes $135 billion for military personnel, including pay, allowances, bonuses, death benefits, and permanent change of station moves. It authorizes an across-the-board pay increase of 1.3 percent for uniformed servicemembers in grades O–6, colonel and below.

The legislation authorizes $32.2 billion for the defense and health programs, authorizes fiscal year 2016 Active-Duty strength for the Army—475,000. Some are saying we are going to have to go to 450,000. Maybe we will have to go to 450,000. But right now, we need to slow that reduction based on the world situation. The Navy forces will be 329,000; Marine Corps, 184,000; Air Force, 317,000. So this is a good markup. I think it moves us in the right direction.

The strategic forces provisions contained in the 2016 authorization bill are important. As chairman of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, I am pleased to inform my colleagues that the bill before them represents a bipartisan consensus in support of the President's plans and the Congress's plans to modernize nuclear forces and improve and expand U.S. missile defense capability.

I want to express my particular appreciation to the ranking member, Senator DONNELLY of Indiana, who approaches these sometimes difficult and controversial issues in a nonpartisan, constructive manner. He has been closely involved in every aspect of the work of the subcommittee, from the hearings we have held to the bill's final markup.

This year, the portion of the budget request falling under the subcommittee's jurisdiction for missile defense, nuclear forces, military space, and the Department of Energy atomic defense activities included a total of $70.5 billion, including $22.5 billion for procurement, $27.8 billion for research and development, $1.4 billion for operations and maintenance, and $18.7 billion for the Department of Energy.

The Missile Defense Agency. In the area of missile defense, the bill fully funds the President's request of $8.2 billion for the Missile Defense Agency. I think we agree with that. It recommends an increase of $330 million for Israeli cooperative missile programs, including U.S. coproduction of the David's Sling and Arrow systems of Israel, and recommends an increase of $50 million to support modernization of the interceptor used for the U.S. ground-based midcourse defense system that would protect the homeland.

So this needs to be done. We have to get our interceptor systems at the highest level, and there are some difficulties we face now with that system. I think some of the criticisms or concerns are overstated, but it is not where we want it to be, and we need to be moving in that direction. It can be fixed. We know that. And there are just some things we need to work on there.

The bill recommends an increase to facilitate MDA's ongoing development of laser programs, which is a new system. It is different from what it has been in the past. And I am proud—I believe it has real potential and a lot of other things.

The nuclear forces issue is significant. The bill would fully fund the President's budget request to operate, maintain, and modernize the nuclear triad and associated systems. This is essential. We must modernize these weapons, many of which are 40 years old and utilize vacuum tubes in their systems.

The bill includes an additional $1 billion in 2016 to support the recommendations of the nuclear enterprise review completed in 2014. We need to listen to those review systems and respond appropriately. I believe this mark does.

To ensure that the Department is planning for the full range of nuclear conflict scenarios, the bill includes a provision that would direct the Department of Defense to conduct a net assessment of the global nuclear security environment, including the range of contingencies and scenarios where U.S. nuclear forces might have to be used.

I would just say personally that I think it is time for us, in this dangerous world, to quit talking about nuclear zero—people who doubt our resolve sometimes doubt that we are willing to follow through. I wish zero would happen. It is not going to happen anytime soon, that is for sure, so we are going to have to maintain a nuclear arsenal. We need to talk about maintaining it, modernizing it, making it safer, and making it more reliable and more accurate. Maybe we can reduce the numbers some more, but we need to be talking less about reducing numbers and more about assuring the world that we have the best nuclear capabilities anywhere on the planet and that they are ready to be deployed and can be deployed, Heaven forbid that would be necessary. That is just why we have these forces.

The bill includes a provision that would require the Secretary of Defense to develop options to respond to the Russian violation of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, including countervailing, counterforce, and active defense programs. We have violations going on; those can't just be accepted.

The Department of Energy gets funding for its defense nuclear capabilities, and we continue rigorous oversight of the warhead life extension and construction program that would support a reliable and modernized nuclear stockpile. I think we are on the right track there for sure.

The bill includes a number of provisions to improve congressional oversight of NNSA activities and track the

recommendations of the Congressional Advisory Panel on the Governance of NNSA.

We need better coordination with the Department of Energy. I think we are moving in that direction. Over the last several years, I have pushed for it aggressively, and I think progress is being made. More needs to be done.

Military Space. Our whole Defense Department depends more than most people realize on our ability to maintain space capabilities, and I think this bill funds those programs effectively. The bill would require the Secretary of Defense, in a new idea, to designate one individual to serve as the principal space control adviser who shall act as the principal adviser to the Secretary of Defense on space control activities. I think that will help.

With respect to program oversight, the bill would prohibit the use of funds for the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program or the launch of the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program satellite number 20 until the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs provide a certification that nonmaterial or lower cost solutions are insufficient. Senator MCCAIN has challenged us all to maintain oversight of these programs and to contain costs. I think this can help do that.

In conclusion, I restate my belief that our committee has worked in a positive way. We have taken the advice of the President and of the Defense Department. We have examined it in an appropriate way and produced this bill that I believe will strengthen our national defense, with strong backing to modernize and expand our missile defense capabilities and to strengthen our deployed forces, allies, and partners.

So I hope we don't have a fuss over demands to increase spending for nondefense when we are supposed to be funding the Defense Department. If there are arguments to be made in that regard, they should be made on another bill when those bills come up and ought to be brought forth in that fashion. I think it would be wrong and a big mistake to use the Defense appropriations and authorization bills in any way as some sort of a hostage to force spending in other areas.

The bill is a good bill. It puts us on the right course. It has broad bipartisan support. If we can avoid those kinds of political gymnastics, I think we will be in a good position to properly take care of the people we have deployed to defend our country and to maintain the security of our homeland.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

AMENDMENT NO. 1456 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1463

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1456, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN] proposes an amendment numbered 1456 to amendment No. 1463.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, 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:

(Purpose: To require additional information supporting long-range plans for construction of naval vessels)

At the end of subtitle C of title X, add the following:

SEC. ___. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SUPPORTING LONG-RANGE PLANS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NAVAL VESSELS.

Section 231(b)(2)(C) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''by ship class in both graphical and tabular form'' after ''The estimated levels of annual funding''.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, in consultation with Senator REED, I ask unanimous consent that the next amendments in order be Reed No. 1521, Portman No. 1522, Reed or designee amendment, followed by Cornyn No. 1486—whether those amendments will require yeas and nays or voice vote we will figure out as we move through the amendments; further, that the regular order with regard to these amendments be the order as I stated regardless of the order offered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

AMENDMENT NO. 1521 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1463

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I call up Reed amendment No. 1521.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. REED] proposes an amendment numbered 1521 to amendment No. 1463.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, 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:

(Purpose: To limit the availability of amounts authorized to be appropriated for overseas contingency operations pending relief from the spending limits under the Budget Control Act of 2011)

At the end of subtitle B of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1523. LIMITATION ON THE AVAILABILITY OF OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATION FUNDING SUBJECT TO RELIEF FROM THE BUDGET CONTROL ACT.

(a) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, of the total amount authorized to be appropriated by this title for overseas contingency operations, not more than $50,950,000,000 may be available for obligation and expenditure unless—

(1) the discretionary spending limits imposed by section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended by section 302 of the Budget Control Act of 2011 (Public Law 112–25), on appropriations for the revised security category and the revised nonsecurity category are eliminated or increased in proportionally equal amounts for fiscal year 2016 by any other Act enacted after December 26, 2013; and

(2) if the revised security and the revised nonsecurity category are increased as described in paragraph (1), the amount of the increase is equal to or greater than the amount in excess of the $50,950,000,000 that is authorized to be appropriated by this title for security category activities.

(b) USE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE UNDER SATISFACTION OF LIMITATION.—

(1) TRANSFER.—Any amounts authorized to be appropriated by this title in excess of $50,950,000,000 that are available for obligation and expenditure pursuant to subsection (a) shall be transferred to applicable accounts of the Department of Defense providing funds for programs, projects, and activities other than for overseas contingency operations. Any amounts so transferred to an account shall be merged with amounts in the account to which transferred and available subject to the same terms and conditions as otherwise apply to amounts in such account.

(2) CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority to transfer amounts under this subsection is in addition to any other transfer authority in this Act.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am prepared to debate this. I have talked about it before, but I am prepared to debate it extensively over the next several days, and my colleagues are also.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

AMENDMENT NO. 1522 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1463

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the National Defense Authorization Act and offer a bipartisan amendment with Senator PETERS that will strengthen this very important underlying legislation we are working on.

As you know, the security threats around the world continue to grow. A lot of experts believe that ISIS is now the best trained, best equipped, and best financed terror organization we have ever seen. Al Qaeda continues to threaten our own country. If you look at what is going on around the world, Hamas and Hezbollah are constantly looking to wage war on Israel. The regime in Iran remains the world's No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism, and they are pursuing nuclear weapons. China continues to intimidate its neighbors in the South China Sea.

We live in a dangerous and volatile world. As a result of these international events and developments, among others, it is absolutely imperative that we maintain a strong national defense to protect our homeland and to defend our allies.

With all these crises around the world competing for our attention, we sometimes neglect another crisis, one that Chairman MCCAIN has constantly reminded us about, and that is the situation in Ukraine, which could easily spin out of control at any time. In fact, news out of eastern Ukraine this morning is particularly troubling. It appears that the latest Russian and separatist attacks on Ukrainian positions this morning may be the final blow to what was, in fact, a ceasefire in name only.

Russia is increasingly aggressive on the European continent. We need to be acknowledging that and dealing with that in this underlying legislation.

I just returned from a trip to Ukraine in April, a year after I had the privilege to be there leading the congressional delegation to monitor the election of President Poroshenko. I went with my friend and colleague, Senator BEN CARDIN. A lot has happened since that last election. I learned about this in my meetings most recently with Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, President Poroshenko, and other Ukrainian individuals. They have reached a pivotal moment in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian people have sacrificed in hopes of securing a democratic future for their country. However, they need our help. They need sustained economic, military, and political support from the United States and from our NATO allies. It is absolutely critical to this vision of a democratic Ukraine, a free Ukraine, coming to fruition.

In my view, the people of Ukraine have made a very clear and unequivocal choice, and we need to stand with them. Their choice is to pursue a pro-Western, democratic path. Their government has been responsive to that choice by making progress in fighting decades of endemic corruption that has left the country weak and, frankly, unprepared for the Russian aggression that has occurred. However, none of these reforms will mean much if Ukraine is unable to secure its borders or defend its sovereignty.

The NDAA before us has a lot of important provisions related to this crisis in Crimea and along the eastern border of Ukraine. I applaud Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED for their efforts on it. I hope we will be able to entertain a few other amendments in this process that will even strengthen the U.S. posture and support of Ukraine.

I look forward to being on the floor later this week to talk about this situation in Ukraine in more detail. This afternoon, however, I have come to the floor to talk about a related amendment that is of great importance as this situation in Eastern Europe continues to destabilize.

Following my visit to Ukraine this spring, I visited Latvia. I went there because I wanted to spend some time with U.S. soldiers from an Abrams tank company who were there on a NATO mission. I am sure most of my colleagues know that recent force structure changes moved our two heavy armored brigades out of Europe. This armored unit I saw in Latvia and the other two companies in the Baltics today are only there on a rotational basis this spring, and they will soon return home to the United States, in this case to Fort Stewart.

These units are sending an important message to our allies, such as those in the Baltics—and, believe me, the Latvians are extremely appreciative—but they are only temporary. What they are really looking for is a permanent presence. That is what sends the stronger message.

The big news when I was over there was that there was a road march being conducted by the 2nd Calvary Regiment through Central and Eastern Europe. The 2nd Calvary Regiment is in Europe, but they were taking this road march through Central and Eastern Europe. This was taking their Strykers, which is the only permanently stationed U.S. armored vehicle in Europe, on roads and through small towns—towns that fear an increasingly aggressive Russia on their doorstep.

The unit was doing all it could to help reassure our allies and demonstrate U.S. resolve, but, frankly, they were doing all they could with what they have, and what they have is not enough. They do not have what they need.

This unit has communicated this urgently to us here in the Congress. Their weapons systems are, frankly, inadequate to meet their potential mission requirements if they are called upon. They need a more powerful gun. They need to replace their .50-caliber machine gun with a 30-millimeter cannon. The soldiers understand that. The Army understands that.

The Army has already identified this requirement, and prior to the deteriorating situation in Europe, they slated to field this improved weapons systems to these Strykers starting in 2020. So they knew it was a problem. They knew they had to address it. Then we saw this deteriorating situation in Europe caused by Crimea's being annexed and now the situation on the eastern border of Ukraine.

The soldiers manning these Strykers today know that 2020 is just too far in the future, and Army leadership agrees with them. On March 30 of this year, U.S. Army Europe submitted an operational needs statement to Army Headquarters to address this urgent capability gap in the 2nd Cavalry Regiment. Specifically, according to the needs statement, the unit lacks ''the lethality of a direct fire weapons system to engage similar units or those supported by light-armored vehicles.''

On April 22, Army Headquarters validated this high priority need and assigned this requirement to the program manager for execution. To shave several years off of the fielding timeline, however, the Army needs additional funding in fiscal year 2016. They need it now.

That is exactly what this amendment does. The review of these requirements by the Army was occurring while the Defense bill was being marked up in committee. The House appropriators, the first to mark up since the Army communicated its requirement, have fully funded the need.

I want to thank Chairman MCCAIN and the ranking member for their consideration and for including this important funding into this bill, even though the urgent need was communicated only very recently.

By the way, just to be clear, because I have heard discussion about this on the floor today, this turret and gun system—the cannon itself—will be competed, and that is appropriate.

This increase in funding is fully offset by taking additional reductions from the expected surplus from the foreign currency fluctuations as identified by GAO. The additional reductions taken by this amendment still won't match the reductions, by the way, that the House has taken from these accounts.

I want to thank the Members of our body here in the Senate for their support of this amendment. Senator PETERS, my colleague from Michigan, has been my partner on the other side of the aisle in this effort. He has been a strong supporter of giving our soldiers what they need in Europe and sending that strong message we talked about earlier.

Senator COTTON talked about this issue in the Armed Services Committee. He is chairman of the Airland Subcommittee, and he has worked hard on this, as well as have other Armed Services committee members, including Senator INHOFE, Senator SESSIONS, Senator WICKER, Senator TOOMEY, who is our Presiding Officer, and, of course, Senator MCCAIN.

This amendment is of vital importance for our forward-deployed troops. It also sends a critical message at this time of great uncertainty in Europe. I urge my colleagues to support this. It is bipartisan and it is needed, and I urge its swift adoption.

Because of that, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up amendment No. 1522.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Ohio [Mr. PORTMAN] proposes an amendment numbered 1522 to amendment No. 1463.

Mr. PORTMAN. 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:

(Purpose: To provide additional amounts for procurement and for research, development, test, and evaluation for Stryker Lethality Upgrades, and to provide an offset)

At the end of title I, add the following:

Subtitle E—Army Programs

SEC. 161. STRYKER LETHALITY UPGRADES.

(a) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR PROCUREMENT, ARMY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by section 101 for procurement is hereby increased by $314,000,000, with the amount of the increase to be available for procurement for the Army for Wheeled and Tracked Combat Vehicles for Stryker (mod) Lethality Upgrades.

(2) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—The amount available under paragraph (1) for

procurement for Stryker (mod) Lethality Upgrades is in addition to any other amounts available in this Act for procurement for the Army for Stryker (mod) Lethality Upgrades.

(b) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR RDT&E, ARMY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by section 201 for research, development, test, and evaluation is hereby increased by $57,000,000, with the amount of the increase to be available for research, development, test, and evaluation for the Army for the Combat Vehicle Improvement Program for Stryker Lethality Upgrades.

(2) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—The amount available under paragraph (1) for research, development, test, and evaluation for Stryker Lethality Upgrades is in addition to any other amounts available in this Act for research, development, test, and evaluation for the Army for Stryker Lethality Upgrades.

(c) OFFSET.—The aggregate amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by division A is hereby reduced by $371,000,000, with the amount of the reduction to be achieved through anticipated foreign currency gains in addition to any other anticipated foreign currency gains specified in the funding tables in division D.

Mr. PORTMAN. I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, 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. REED. 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. REED. Mr. President, while the Senator from Ohio is here, I want first of all to commend him for his interest in the Stryker program. It is one of those vehicles that have been extraordinarily effective in protecting our soldiers in their efforts both in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is a critical program.

The amendment would add $371 million of funding. We all understand this is a very difficult budget environment, and I would point out that the Army submitted their unfunded requirement list to the committee in March. This was not on their request. However, it is my understanding that the request for additional funding is driven by a new requirement that actually became evident in April of 2015. So the issue could have been that they weren't as aware of it as they should have been. But for the record, this is not part of the unfunded requirement list of the Army.

We did not have the chance, as a result, to look at this as an approach that we would include in our Defense appropriations bill. It was not literally on the radar screen until April, and it didn't come up formally with their unfunded request. So I am concerned that these lethality improvements have not been fully vetted by the committee, by the Department, and also by the Department of Defense.

There is another issue here, too. This is a first step in a multiyear program, and we are not quite sure at this point, over the next several years, how much more money we would have to commit to production, testing, training, and logistics.

The other area of concern—not just in terms of looking closely at the program, the need, and the long-term budgetary effects—is the pay-for, which is an offset for foreign currency accounts. The Department's request has already been reduced by $550 million. We have literally taken that money from their currency accounts, and now we are going to take another $371 million. So we are really getting very, very close to what this account can bear in terms of costs added to it.

Again, I think since it is O&M—that is the basic account we are taking it from to put in a platform—it raises the other issue that is so central to everything the chairman and many of us have been doing, which is how do we keep the Army ready, and there is a trade-off. There is a trade-off between new platforms and making sure the soldiers we have are training on the existing platforms and doing their work.

So I would express some strong reservations. I would be happy to work with the Senator from Ohio. I understand this is driven by his commitment to making sure our soldiers have the best equipment in the world.

I yield the floor.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, first, I appreciate the ranking member's comments, and I look forward to working with him on this. We talked about this on the floor a moment ago. This is something the Army has requested. They came late; he is absolutely right. They did make a request in March, in terms of submitting this operational needs statement, but it wasn't until April 22 that they actually validated this high priority need and assigned it to the program manager. So the committee didn't have the opportunity to look at it as they have others.

I will say it is urgent, and having just been over there and seeing one of those temporary armored companies about to leave, they need this badly. What they are saying is that the 30-millimeter cannon is necessary to go up against any potential enemy, and the .50-caliber machine gun simply is not. So this is not moving more Abrams tanks into the area. It is taking these Strykers and upgrading them, and they have identified this as an urgent need.

So I look forward to working with the ranking member on this. I hope we can work through this, even in the next several days here, to get this done, because it is so important. It will be competed. It is a turret and gun system. It is something that does require an offset, and that offset—by the way, the account the GAO has identified as having a certain amount of funding does have that much room left in it and more, we are told. And also the House has already taken more out of this currency fluctuation account than the committee has.

So I again thank the ranking member for working on this. I know he too has a strong commitment to our soldiers who are there to be sure they have what they need in order to complete their mission in an increasingly volatile environment in Europe.

With that, I yield back for my colleague from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

AMENDMENT NO. 1486 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1463

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as we begin this very important discussion about how we go about the business of defending our country and preserving the peace and our national security, I think it is really important we look at all of the elements of American power. We are very familiar with the fact that we have the world's best military—best equipped, best trained, with the most technologically advanced weapons systems. But we also ought to look at America's other sources of great power, and that means things such as soft power.

Let me explain. Here is the problem. Many NATO countries—our allies in Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries—many of which are former satellites of the Soviet Union and are now being intimidated by the Russian Federation, rely heavily on energy resources from Russia, creating what I think can euphemistically be called a strategic vulnerability. Many of them are just downright scared about what it means in terms of their ability to survive a Russian intimidation.

According to a recent Wall Street Journal op-ed by former National Security Advisor Steven Hadley and former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, 14 countries that are a part of NATO buy 15 percent or more of their oil from Russia.

The distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee, who is not on the floor right now, famously said: Russia is a gas station masquerading as a nation. It produces prodigious sources of energy, but, unfortunately, they view energy as one of their weapons.

So the fact that 14 of these NATO countries buy 15 percent or more of their oil from Russia is a real vulnerability for them. Several other countries in Eastern and Central Europe buy more than 50 percent of their energy supply from Russia. As I said, Russia has huge sources of oil and gas, but they are using them not only as a source of economic strength and to provide for the Russian people, but they are using them as a source of intimidation and coercion.

For example, in January of 2009, Russia effectively turned off the natural gas to Ukraine. This affected at least 10 countries in Europe that rely upon natural gas that crosses Ukraine from Russia. According to a report released last fall from the European Commission, several countries in Europe could

lose up to 60 percent of their gas supply if their supply lines from Russia are disrupted. That is the problem.

Here is what I propose is one of the things we can do about it. The United States, of course, has experienced an energy renaissance in recent years, thanks to the technology produced by the private sector—most specifically, the use of fracking in conjunction with horizontal drilling—which has turned America into an energy powerhouse. Not that many years ago, people were talking about peak oil. In other words, they basically were making the argument that all the oil that could have been produced was being produced, and we would now then be in a period of decline. That proved to be wrong.

Now, thanks to this huge production of American energy, we know we can use our ample energy resources not only to supply our own needs here at home but to use the surplus to reassure our allies and our partners and to reduce their dependence on bad actors, such as Russia and Iran.

If we think about it, some of the sanctions which we have deployed against both Iran and Russia for their bad behavior—one of the most effective ones is the indirect sanction of lower oil and gas prices because, frankly, Mr. Putin has calculated that oil prices would remain very high, and when they get low, that means he doesn't have the financial wherewithal in order to make some of the mischief that he and Iran are so noted for.

The United States, of course, has significantly diversified our energy resources. The United States has consumed the lowest level of imported petroleum in the last 30 years. That was this last year. Let me repeat that lest it be lost.

Last year, the United States consumed the lowest level of imported petroleum in the last 30 years. According to the International Energy Agency, today the United States is the largest oil and natural gas liquids producer in the world, surpassing Saudi Arabia, for example.

I have filed a number of amendments, and I intend to call up one of those in a moment, but let me describe briefly the amendments we have filed that I think help provide some progress toward a solution for the problem I have described.

In light of this new geopolitical landscape, I have offered several amendments that would further our strategic position in the world while also strengthening our allies, making them less vulnerable to the intimidation and bullying tactics of the Russian Federation under Vladimir Putin. These amendments aim to help NATO and our other allies in Europe diversify their energy resources and lessen their dependency on energy supplies of some of our major adversaries such as Russia and Iran.

The first amendment would point out the existing authorities the President already has under current law related to energy exports if he determines it is in our national interests. Of course, this is an authority under current law that applies not only to the present occupant of the White House but would also apply to his successor.

This amendment expresses the sense of the Congress that the President should exercise these current authorities to aid our allies and partners in Europe and elsewhere. To help the United States get smart on how Russia currently uses its energy program as a weapon against our allies and partners, this amendment would mandate also an intelligence assessment to better understand the vulnerabilities of NATO and our other allies and partners in Europe. Then, it would also expand the requirements of the Pentagon's annual Russia military power report to mandate analysis of Russia's ability to use energy supplies as a tool of coercion or intimidation against our allies and partners in Europe.

So this would restate the present authorities the President of the United States currently has to produce and sell oil and gas to our allies in Europe, such as Ukraine and other NATO allies. It would require an additional intelligence assessment to make sure we understand fully the implications of this vulnerability that Europe and our NATO allies have to Russia and its intimidation tactics. Third, it would expand the requirements of a current report that the Pentagon makes on an annual basis called the Russian military power report to mandate an analysis of Russia's ability to use energy supplies as a tool of coercion or intimidation.

Two other amendments which we filed—which I will not call up at this time—would help reduce the need for U.S. allies to purchase energy from Russia and Iran. It would do this by adding a specific exception to the law that would allow crude and natural gas exports to allies and partners when their energy security is compromised.

For example, if a NATO ally or partner—such as Ukraine or Japan—requests additional energy exports from the United States, the President must approve it in a timely fashion if he finds it to be in the national interests of the United States. This would provide our allies and our partners with an additional source of fuel and a little additional reassurance that if they are subjected to the kind of intimidation and coercion I mentioned a moment ago, that we, as their friend and their ally, would supply them with an alternative source of energy they need in order to keep the lights on and keep their economy running.

Finally, we filed an amendment that would amend the Natural Gas Act to require the Secretary of Energy to approve liquefied natural gas exports to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries and other named partners and allies. This uses the same preferential treatment that is already given to our free-trade agreement partners, which are automatically deemed to be in the public interest.

In conclusion, these amendments are designed to address a very specific problem and a very specific vulnerability of some of our closest allies in Europe and to relieve them from some of the pressure of Russian intimidation and coercion when Russia attempts to use energy as a weapon. We can use this as an important element of our soft power to help our allies relieve this coercion and intimidation.

These amendments would strengthen the strategic hand of the United States in a world that grows more complicated by the day, not to mention more dangerous.

I encourage my colleagues to support them and, by doing so, take a long-term view of our own national security as well as the peace and stability of some of our most trusted allies and partners.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up amendment No. 1486.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. CORNYN] proposes an amendment numbered 1486 to amendment No. 1463.

Mr. CORNYN. 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:

(Purpose: To require reporting on energy security issues involving Europe and the Russian Federation, and to express the sense of Congress regarding ways the United States could help vulnerable allies and partners with energy security)

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1257. REPORTING ON ENERGY SECURITY ISSUES INVOLVING EUROPE AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) ADDITIONAL MATTERS IN ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.—Section 1245(b) of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291; 128 Stat. 3566) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (15) as paragraph (16); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following new paragraph:

''(15) An assessment of Russia's ability to use energy supplies, particularly natural gas and oil, as tools of coercion or intimidation to undermine the security of NATO members or other neighboring countries.''.

(b) REPORT ON EUROPEAN ENERGY SECURITY AND RELATED VULNERABILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report assessing the energy security of NATO members, other European nations who share a border with the Russian Federation, and Moldova.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include assessments of the following issues:

(A) The extent of reliance by these nations on the Russian Federation for supplies of oil and natural gas.

(B) Whether such reliance creates vulnerabilities that negatively affect the security of those nations.

(C) The magnitude of those vulnerabilities.

(D) The impacts of those vulnerabilities on the national security and economic interests of the United States.

(E) Any other aspect that the Director determines to be relevant to these issues.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. _____. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON WAYS THE UNITED STATES COULD HELP VULNERABLE ALLIES AND PARTNERS WITH ENERGY SECURITY.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (Public Law 94–163) gives the President discretion to allow crude oil and natural gas exports that the President determines to be consistent with the national interest;

(2) United States allies and partners in Europe and Asia have requested access to United States oil and natural gas exports to limit their vulnerability and to diversify their supplies, including in the face of Russian aggression and Middle East volatility; and

(3) the President should exercise existing authorities related to natural gas and crude oil exports to help aid vulnerable United States allies and partners, consistent with the national interest.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I appreciate the courtesies of the chairman and the ranking member to allow this amendment to be called up and to give me a chance to explain its importance and how it fits into the national security strategy of the United States. I know we don't typically tend to think of our energy resources as being an element of our national strength and power that we can project beyond our borders in a way that helps aid our allies and friends and reduces the influence of our adversaries, such as Iran and Russia, but I hope my colleagues will take a close look at this amendment and, when the time comes, vote to support it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. 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. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1540 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1463

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and, on behalf of Senator BENNET, call up amendment No. 1540.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so orderd.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. REED], for Mr. BENNET, proposes an amendment numbered 1540 to amendment No. 1463.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, 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:

(Purpose: To require the Comptroller General of the United States to brief and submit a report to Congress on the administration and oversight by the Department of Veterans Affairs of contracts for the design and construction of major medical facility projects)

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. COMPTROLLER GENERAL BRIEFING AND REPORT ON MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) BRIEFING.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall provide to the appropriate committees of Congress a briefing on the administration and oversight by the Department of Veterans Affairs of contracts for the design and construction of major medical facility projects, as defined in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the administration and oversight described in subsection (a).

(c) ELEMENTS.—The briefing required by subsection (a) and the report required by subsection (b) shall each include an examination of the following:

(1) The processes used by the Department for overseeing and assuring the performance of construction design and construction contracts for major medical facility projects, as so defined.

(2) Any actions taken by the Department to improve the administration of such contracts.

(3) Such opportunities for further improvement of the administration of such contracts as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(d) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

Mr. REED. 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. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, once again, the truth proves elusive when we are dealing with Iran's unpredictable regime. I refer to a New York Times article that is entitled ''Iran's Nuclear Stockpile Grows, Complicating Negotiations.'' Among elements of the article—and I know the article is being disparaged by the State Department; I will talk about that in a moment—but among the elements of the article is the fact that Iran's stockpile of nuclear fuel has increased about 20 percent over the last 18 months of negotiations—increased—increased 20 percent in the last 18 months of negotiations.

In essence, we are to be convinced ''that Iran will have to shrink its stockpile by 96 percent in a matter of months after a deal is signed, even while it continues to produce new material and has demonstrated little success in reducing its current stockpile.''

I am reading from the Times article.

It goes on to say, in part, ''That means Iran . . . would have to rid itself of more than nine tons of its stockpile in a matter of months.''

In a matter of months.

Now, this is a continuing challenge that we have as we look at these negotiations. We are supposedly in the final months. The end of this month is when we are hopefully going to come to some type of an agreement. We see what has been a challenge from the very beginning. It is a challenge I have cited time and time again.

How much of these numbers are done because of Iran's desire to push the numbers upward? Is that for a political purpose? Is it for a negotiating purpose? Is it for a technological inability? Whatever it is, the numbers published Friday by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the independent agency for which so much of the Joint Plan of Action and any future agreement that might be consummated—this is the entity we are depending upon. Well, this entity has said that Iran has continued to enrich uranium aggressively, even though it knew it was not meeting its goals of converting its stockpile into reactor rods. This is a real question that I have.

Another independent group, the Bipartisan Policy Center, said in February that Iran has failed to do the conversion.

We knew from the beginning it was going to be difficult for the Iranians to blend down rather than ship out because they have this aversion to shipping out. This was all possible if they would ship out, but they have consistently said they will not ship out their fuel. We knew it would be a concern if they weren't able to do what they pledged to do and, frankly, I am concerned.

I am concerned this is just another diplomatic sleight of hand by an untrustworthy negotiating partner. I am concerned Iran is still saying it will not ship out excess low-enriched uranium but rather blend it down and

store it. I am concerned this is more of an issue than the administration is willing to concede, particularly if there is no deal, and we, in essence, with sanctions relief have paid them to convert, and then they walk away with massive amounts of low-enriched uranium that can be fed into their centrifuges and converted to highly enriched uranium.

Let's be clear. The tracking and verification of uranium mines and mills—which were often talked about as part of why we will have a safeguard if there is a deal—to centrifuges only works if Iran gets rid of its stockpiles. It doesn't work any other way. It does not work any other way. The New York Times has identified a real problem with the mechanisms being used to control Iran's nuclear stockpile. The simplest solution would be to ship Iran's stockpile out of the country. This would prevent any question of a buildup of material. However, Iran has refused to do this—at least to this date publicly—and opened the potential for Iranian manipulation about what is going on.

There may be technical reasons for the 20-percent increase in low-enriched uranium, but one certainly has to wonder: Are they delaying? Are they really having problems building a conversion facility—something I specifically expressed concerns about early in the process—or is this simply another attempt to play fast and loose with the truth, cover it up, and buy time? Is it a negotiating posture? So as they come closer and closer to the deadline, they have all of this enriched uranium, and there is this compulsion to strike a deal—not a good deal but a deal at any cost.

While this may not be a technical violation of the Joint Plan of Action, the Iranians were supposed to have reached the agreed-upon goal. The fact is, midway through the process, we are told there could be a delay. But clearly the timetable has slipped even further away.

I know the State Department has gone after the article, which, in part, is based on facts from the International Atomic Energy Administration. The administration has gone out of their way to attack the premise of the article because I guess anything that would upset the fundamental belief that we have to have a deal at any cost is problematic for the State Department.

But I have to be honest with you. As I read the State Department's response, it means to me that their main response appears to be that Iran is not in technical violation of the Joint Plan of Action because it still has a month left to transform all of the extra low-enriched uranium that it has created in recent months into oxide.

This pushback is pretty much something we should have expected because it is the only argument the administration actually has available to it to explain this, and it is the same argument they used when many of us were raising the concerns that Iran was busting through their oil export caps set under the Joint Plan of Action every month. We were consistently told: Well, next month the Iranians will ship even less, and therefore it will all even out. Well, the fact is that when time ran out, the exports of Iran remained way above what was allowed, and then the administration shifted to an explanation only to suggest that certain types of oil just do not count. There is always a reach here to try to get a justification for Iran.

I think the State Department's response totally misses the point of the New York Times article. The upshot of the piece is not that there is no way for Iran to meet its Joint Plan of Action obligations in theory—in theory; it is that Iranians have stockpiled so much low-enriched uranium that it is all but impossible for them to meet those objectives in practice. The Iranians may have calculated that they do not have to do so and that the administration is not about to blow up an impending nuclear deal over a violation of past agreements if those violations bear directly on Iranian intentions and capabilities to implement the agreement.

There is another group who has been before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. When I was the chairman, we called them several times, and I think Senator CORKER, the new chair, has a deep respect for them as well—the Institute for Science and International Security. They have posted their analysis of this specific question: Will Iran be able to meet its obligation regarding its 5 percent low-enriched uranium?

In the response to that question, the Institute for Science and International Security, David Albright, who is arguably one of the most respected voices on Iran's nuclear program, comes to this conclusion: Iran has fallen behind in its pledge to convert its newly produced low enriched uranium hexafluoride into oxide form. There are legitimate questions about whether Iran can produce all of the requisite LEU oxide.

Iran has fed a total of 2,720 kilograms of 3.5 percent low-enriched uranium hexafluoride into the EUPP—the vehicle by which they ultimately have the conversion—but it has not fed any 3.5 percent low-enriched uranium hexafluoride into the plant since November of 2014—November of last year.

By the end of June—they go on to say—in order to meet its commitment under the Joint Plan of Action, Iran must finish converting the 2,720 kilograms of low-enriched uranium into oxide, introduce it into that vehicle and convert it into oxide.

They go on to say: Thus, Iran has clearly fallen behind in its pledge under the Joint Plan of Action.

On a policy level, the institute's analysis emphasizes that Iran's refusal to meet its obligation ''show the risk posed by relying on technical solutions that have not yet been demonstrated by Iran''—so technical solutions that we say: If, in fact, they can do this, this may be part of our way in which we can strike a deal, but Iran has not demonstrated meeting those technical solutions. Iran is under sanctions and in the middle of negotiations. Yet, we still cannot rely upon them.

I think this is a serious concern not to be minimized. This is at the same time that Iran is boarding commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, firing at some of them. This is the same Iran that is in the midst, as a country, of going ahead and is engaged as the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, in Lebanon, in Syria, in Iraq, in Yemen. Yet, even as we are in the midst of the negotiation, all of these things are taking place, and even if we want to wall off all of the nonnuclear acts of Tehran that have to worry us and concern us in terms of our national security and international order, as it relates to the nuclear portfolio, they do not seem to be headed in the direction of what is clearly necessary in order to meet their obligations under the Joint Plan of Action. They do not seem, at least in this point in time, to be technically capable of doing that even though these are the fixes we are looking for.

At the end of the day, you have to really wonder why we continue to find a way to excuse Iran in every element. We had something that was found independently and reported to the United Nations Security Council commission that deals with questions. They were ultimately fueling one of their rods. This was raised and, again, it was responded to. It was deemed de minimis. We had oil exports greater than what they were allowed. We explained it away, saying: Well, certain types of oil were not counted. We have a set of circumstances where they have raised their fuel capacity, not lowered it, even as they are headed toward an agreement in which they have to dramatically reduce it.

So I have a real problem in consistently seeing the willingness to stretch to allow Iran to get where it is today. It is that view which let the world, unfortunately, allow Iran to get to the point of a precipice of having nuclear power that it can convert to a nuclear weapon. That is not in the national interests and security of the United States.

I have the intention in this period of time to consistently come to the floor and raise these issues as they evolve and rear their heads at a critical moment. I think we have to be very committed to knowing the truth here.

While all of us aspire to have an agreement that can truly stop Iran's path toward a nuclear weapon and that that be something which is not just limited in time because the Persians have for 5,000 years been trying to have the power in the hegemonic interests they have—they are closer to it, from my perspective, than at any other

time. If they already have their people suffering under sanctions as a result of their actions and they are using the resources they have not to help their people but to continue to spread terrorism throughout the region, then we can only wonder, when a deal is struck and large flows of money begin to return to Iran, what they will do with that money. It seems to me that you would have a strategy set up to think about that before you even get to a deal, assuming you can achieve a good deal.

But when I see them taking actions that, in my view, may not be a technical violation but are contrary to everything they are supposed to do, when you have independent groups such as the Institute for Science and David Albright and when you have the IAEA making these observations, for me, it has alarm bells and those alarm bells are worrying.

I think it is incredibly important, on what I believe is one of the most significant national security and international security order questions that will come before the Senate, that we not just look the other way but that we challenge, when these facts continue to come forward, about what is the truth behind them and what does it mean for any potential agreement and how we continue to judge Iran's actions in light of any potential agreement.

I know we are told constantly: This is not on hope, and that it is all going to be verified. It is not on trust, but it is all going to be verified. But I have to be honest with you—it depends when you keep defining what is or is not permissible. From my perspective, where we are headed is not what I think is in the national interest and security of the United States.

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. INHOFE. 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. INHOFE. Mr. President, I know that we have a lineup of speakers. We have a speaker from Hawaii who is going to be here shortly, at which time I would be very pleased to yield, but I wish to make a couple of comments.

First, the fact that we are getting to this bill is great, because if you look at the last few years, we have not had a chance to do this until late in the year. The last 2 years it was December before we actually got around to it. It could have been a real crisis, because I think most of us in the Senate know that if we had gone to December 31, all kinds of things would have stopped—funding for a lot of our reenlistment bonuses and other things.

I applaud the chairman for using his influence to get this bill on floor so we could go ahead and get it passed. It is something that we need to make sure the people who are out there risking their lives on a day-to-day basis know and that they know we are having this as our top priority.

I want to make one comment about sequestration. People are talking about putting equal amounts of increases—not just in the military or in the defense portion but also in the other portions of government, such as the IRS and the EPA—without recognition that as we went through the funding mechanism, we were taking money out of military on a 50–50 basis with nondefense moneys, while the military is only 16 percent of the budget. So we have already started at a great disadvantage.

As far as the OCO is concerned, that is kind of a desperate effort. It is not the way we should be doing it, but we must have the support and keep the readiness up with our troops.

We do have some good things that are in this bill, such as funding for the KC–46, the Paladin Integrated Management Program, the Long-Range Strike Bomber, and the F–35. So we are at least treading water here.

I wish to say one thing, though, that I didn't approve of in this bill, and we may try to make some changes on the floor. It is the BRAC process. I think we all know that the base realignment and closing process has been going on since 1987. This is no time to be doing something with that. I am very pleased that we are able to continue that and not see one for a period of time.

One thing that is consistent about BRAC rounds is that they all cost a lot of money in the first 5 years. People, if there is ever a time in the history of this body and of the military when we can't afford to take money out, it is now.

We have addressed a couple of things. There are some things that need to be fixed as we move on to the floor. I know that our chairman, Senator MCCAIN, has been asking people to bring down their amendments. I think we should be doing that, and I anticipate a lot of amendments will be coming down.

I wish to say one thing about Gitmo. There is this myth out there that somehow the terrorists think that we hurt people at Gitmo. Somehow they think it is something that should be altered and should be changed, but I don't believe that is the case.

I see the Senator from Hawaii is on the floor. I am cutting into his time right now. So I am going to continue comments throughout the rest of the afternoon, tomorrow, and yield back the time to him, which I have taken away from him for a few minutes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee for his gentlemanliness and for our ability to work together in spaces where we agree and when we have to disagree, to be agreeable about it. I really appreciate that relationship.

Mr. President, I wish to talk about climate change, and I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, climate change is real, it is caused by humans, it is urgent, and it is solvable. Climate change is real, it is caused by humans, it is urgent, and it is solvable. This year we have had some debates about climate change on the Senate floor and a majority of Members, including more than a few Republicans, have admitted that climate change is real and caused by humans. We have passed bipartisan amendments calling for the United States to reduce carbon pollution and to fight human-induced climate change. That is a necessary step in the right direction, but it is not enough.

We need to take real action. We need to focus on real solutions, and here is the exciting part. There are plenty of real-world cost-effective solutions to climate change. A lot of them empower every day Americans, giving them more control in terms of how they get their energy.

One of these solutions is distributed energy generation, or DG. DG is creating a real revolution in the energy sector by putting individuals and homeowners in control. The ability to own carbon-free power generation is helping everyday Americans realize that even though Washington is slow in the extreme on these questions, they can be part of the solution.

DG systems are small, but they provide major benefits. They can be more efficient, help promote national security, reduce electricity and fuel bills, and provide power during blackouts. Most important for fighting climate change, distributed generation lets us take advantage of major advances in clean energy. Through the use of renewable DG, such as small-scale wind, solar, and geothermal, Americans can take simple steps to reduce their carbon footprint.

This is the important thing about distributed generation, and we are seeing it across the country in red States and blue States, among conservatives and liberals. You don't have to be as passionate as I am about climate change to be enthusiastic about distributed generation, because nobody wants to pay more than is necessary on their electricity bill. The idea of generating your own electricity is very attractive to individuals—regardless of their ideology, regardless of their partisan affiliation. This has tremendous potential to save individuals, business, and institutions real money.

DG is changing the nature of the U.S. energy system. It is especially true in Hawaii, where more than 12 percent of our residents have rooftop solar, which is by far the highest rate in the United

States. Rooftop solar is the most well-known renewable DG resource—and for good reason. The price of solar panels has come down 80 percent since 2008, and the cost to install residential systems has dropped by about half since 2010—80 percent cheaper since 2008 for the panels and about half as expensive just to get them on a roof since 2010. The prices are going down and down, and the economics are changing. What we thought was possible with respect to distributed generation a couple of years ago is changing everything we know about the U.S. energy system.

In 2006, about 30,000 homes in the United States had rooftop solar. By 2013, that number had risen to over 400,000 homes. According to the Energy Information Administration and the Department of Energy, as many as 4 million homes could have solar panels within 5 years. But DG is far more than just rooftop solar. Small wind systems sized for homes, schools, farms, and remote communities are taking off, with over 74,000 turbines installed in all 50 States.

One family in upstate New York installed a small wind turbine on its farm in 2012. Rated at 50 kilowatts, it will actually run at 60 or 70 when the wind is strong. They liked it so much, three branches of the family decided to lease three 10-kilowatt turbines for their homes, expecting to make back their initial investment within 5 years and to make a profit after that.

Ed Doody, one of those farmers, says:

My wife says it's like change in your pocket. When it's running, you make a little money.

Small-scale biogas systems offer farmers and ranchers opportunities to save money on energy and reduce methane emissions. Over 250 farms in the United States have made this investment, and the economics work for many more.

One dairy farm in California has installed a system that uses manure to create and capture gas to run a 700-kilowatt generator. The farm saves $800,000 per year in electricity and propane expenses and will earn back the money from its initial investment in just 4 years.

As you know, I am passionate about climate change, but you don't have to care about climate change to be excited about distributed generation. This is going to save people money, and that is the exciting thing about it.

There are many factors that are adding to the dramatic growth of distributed energy, including evolving State-level incentives and interconnection standards. But the most important reason has been the reduction in cost, especially when it comes to solar. It is simply getting cheaper for a homeowner or a farmer to see real savings by investing in clean energy.

A major reason for these cost reductions has been consistent, predictable, Federal and State support. From about 2005 until recently, Congress has done a fairly good job of providing consistent support for clean energy and distributed generation. We provided long-term tax credits that helped industries scale up and appropriated funds for the DOE necessary to spur real innovation and bring down the costs.

But that consistent support has tapered off in recent years with the expiration of a number of important credits. The clean energy industry will suffer further when the business and homeowner tax credits for renewable energy expire at the end of next year. That is why I plan to introduce, in the coming weeks, a bill that would extend the homeowner tax credit for solar, wind, and geothermal. This credit allows Americans to take control of their own energy futures, and Congress should extend it.

The explosion in DG does pose real challenges. Electric utilities must adjust to a world where power flows in all directions, and the lines between ratepayers and generators become blurred. This challenges the traditional utility business model, and there is nowhere that is facing this challenge more seriously than the State of Hawaii, where we have a series of island grids and we have unprecedented penetration of renewable energy into the grid. The old standard used to be a maximum of 15 percent of intermittent energy onto the grid, but we have parts of our grid that are in the 25 to 35 percent intermittent energy. So there are real challenges in upgrading our grid system, upgrading our electricity system, and creating a smart grid that can accommodate all of this distributed generation.

But it also provides opportunities for innovation and the development of new American markets. This is not in the distant future, this is happening now. Each home, each business, each farm is now within reach of controlling its own energy future, often with carbon-free clean energy.

Distributed energy is a real solution to climate change, both in the United States and around the world. It has created a revolution in energy production that we must harness and accelerate for the challenge of climate change, but it is a challenge we meet.

What excites me so much about distributed generation is that as much as we were fighting about Keystone several months ago, as much as we are likely to have a fight over the Congressional Review Act, having to do with the President's Clean Power Plan, as much as I am, with Senator WHITEHOUSE's leadership, going to introduce a carbon fee, there are lots of things where we are, frankly, not going to be able to find agreement any time soon, there are spaces where we can work together. Allowing individuals to generate their own electricity and reduce their power bills seems to be a good place to start in terms of bipartisan energy legislation.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the time to speak about this exciting new possibility, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING ELDER L. TOM PERRY

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Elder Perry passed away on Saturday, May 30, 2015, at the age of 92.

L. Tom Perry was a giant of a man with an even larger soul. His enthusiasm for life energized and inspired all who came under his extraordinary influence. It has been said that ideas go booming through the world like cannons, thoughts are mightier than armies, and principles have achieved more victories than horsemen or chariots. Inspiring ideas, transformational thoughts, and powerful principles—these were the driving forces in Elder Perry's life and ministry and what made him such a positive force for good throughout the world.

It is true Elder Perry's booming voice carried his words far and wide, but it was his spiritual strength and positive perspective that set his cherished ideas on faith, family, and freedom booming to the four corners of the world and into the hearts of millions.

As a marine, as a businessman, and as an ecclesiastical leader, Elder L. Tom Perry was committed to helping people elevate their thoughts and lives. He was a man who knew what it meant to dream big, to be bold, and to never accept anything less than your best. His passion for life, people, and service was contagious. He was among the wave of marines to arrive in Japan as World War II drew to a close. Though he entered as a member of the occupation forces, his thoughts were focused on elevating those around him. He convinced a number of his fellow servicemen to spend their free time rebuilding a decimated Protestant chapel. Later, while in Saipan, he similarly lifted others by repairing a Catholic orphanage. Throughout his service as an LDS apostle, he was known for praising positive performance. Yet he also made sure that thoughts and sights were forever lifted up so individuals, families, and entire communities would strive to do, be, and become better. Elder Perry proved that thoughts are indeed mightier than armies.

L. Tom Perry was a man of principle and a man who recognized that believing in, living by, and teaching true principles was the key to success in every area of life. He taught that the family is the bulwark of society and central to the strength and vitality of

communities and nations. He believed the principle of freedom was universal and that all people should have the privilege to live in liberty. He declared that freedom was not a spectator sport and that we all have a sacred duty to defend and protect it. His faith carried him through difficult days and trying times. The principle of faith helped him help others. Elder Perry simply believed. He believed simply and showed that positively and enthusiastically believing was simply a better way to live. He believed in people, even—no, especially when they didn't have the faith to believe in themselves. His life demonstrated that true principles have achieved more victories than horsemen or chariots.

Elder Perry often claimed he was just an ordinary man. Yet his ideas, thoughts, and principles enabled him to live an extraordinary life. As an apostle in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he traveled the world sharing his profound testimony of Jesus Christ and his love for people from every walk of life. Elder Perry reminded us that we are to live our lives not by days but by deed, not by seasons but by service.

I am thankful for the life and ministry of Elder L. Tom Perry. He made a difference for his family, his community, his church, and our Nation.

Mr. President, I would like to finish where I began: Ideas go booming through the world like cannons, thoughts are mightier than armies, and principles have achieved more victories than horsemen or chariots. The booming legacy of Elder L. Tom Perry will echo in the hearts, reverberate in the minds, and warm the souls of many for generations to come.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold?

Mr. LEE. I will.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am going to seek recognition.

Mr. TILLIS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, we do have Senator ALEXANDER scheduled briefly. Could I have a moment before the Senator seeks recognition?

Mr. DURBIN. I will be seeking about 5 minutes, no more. So if Senator ALEXANDER comes to the floor, he will not have to wait long.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the ranking member of this important committee, the Armed Services Committee, Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island, will be offering an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, which I support. I hold the title of vice chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense and have served as chairman of that subcommittee as well.

This is an awesome responsibility—to handle the authorization bill for the greatest military in the world, and I salute both my friend Senator REED and my friend Senator MCCAIN for the hard work they have put into this bill, but there is a fatal flaw in this bill. Senator JACK REED addresses it, and I want to speak to it for a minute.

Senator MCCAIN has stated publicly, with others on the Republican side, a sentiment that is shared on the Democratic side. We have to do away with sequestration once and for all. Sequestration is a bad idea. It was supposed to be so bad that we would never see it. It was supposed to be such an extreme, outrageous idea that it would never happen, but it did—because when we fail to hit the budget numbers, we automatically go into sequestration, which leads to across-the-board cuts, mindless across-the-board cuts. Those cuts hurt every agency of government when we did it, but most of all it hurt the Department of Defense.

If there is one agency that needs to be thinking and planning ahead, it is the Department of Defense, and sequestration, sadly, made cuts making it impossible for the planners at the Department of Defense to think ahead, to plan ahead.

So Senator MCCAIN has said—Senator REED has joined him and others have been in the chorus, me included. Senator MCCAIN has said: Once and for all, we need to get rid of sequestration. We need to have a budget process here that befits a great nation, and we don't.

Unfortunately, this authorization bill perpetuates some of the fundamental flaws of sequestration instead of solving the problem.

I am cosponsoring the amendment of Senator JACK REED. I believe we have to eliminate the budget gimmicks that are cooked into this Defense authorization bill. It doesn't do our servicemembers any service or our country any good for us to perpetuate this.

For the entire Federal Government to still face ultimately the threat of sequestration, across-the-board cuts—as vice chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I have heard testimony from the leadership of the Army, the Navy, Air Force, Marines, our Guard and Reserve that sequester-level budgets really harm our national security, and it makes sense.

How can you plan acquisition of important equipment? How can you be sure you can train our courageous young men and women if there is so much uncertainty with the budget? We know these cuts are going to have a dramatic negative impact on training for our servicemembers, grounded planes, wasted wrongheaded impacts to acquisition programs and more.

The National Defense Authorization Act includes the same budget gimmick that was offered in the Republican budget resolutions. It increases spending on something called overseas contingency operations by the same amount as sequestration would cut from the budget of the Department of Defense.

Let me explain. We fought two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and we didn't pay for them. We added the cost of those wars to the national debt.

So this President came in and said we have to put an end to that. So we have to have actual appropriations, and we have to accept the reality that we may face future wars. They created an account called the overseas contingency operations account anticipating that wars might come along. Well, thankfully we have brought our troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan but for the limited commitment of troops to fight ISIS in Iraq at this moment.

What we have seen in this budget is the attempt to take these overseas contingency funds and take what was an emergency expenditure and build it into this budget, which is the problem. It was the wrong way to fix the problem earlier this year. It is the wrong way to try to fix sequestration now. Cranking up OCO spending on a 1-year basis just to get us through in the Department of Defense does nothing but add to our deficit and create a bigger problem next year. What are we going to do next year? No answer. That is why this is a gimmick. It is not fixing the sequestration challenge.

What do the Department of Defense leaders say? Are they celebrating because they are going to get this emergency money to come ride to the rescue this year? No. Secretary Ash Carter testified last month to the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee. He criticized this approach which is part of the bill before us. He called it ''managerially unsound'' and ''unfairly dispiriting to our force.'' He then went on to say:

> Our military personnel and their families deserve to know their future, more than just [one budget] one year at a time. . . . [O]ur defense industry partners—

Think about the contractors, for example, who are building the planes, the tanks, and the ships of the future—

> [O]ur defense industry partners, too, need stability and longer-term plans, not end-of-year crises or short-term fixes, if they're to be efficient and cutting edge as we need them to be.

That is what the Secretary of Defense said.

Then General Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, came in uniform. What did he say about the budgetary approach we have before us in this bill? He emphasized that it, too, created problems because of the lack of predictability in defense budgets.

In testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, Admiral Gortney of Northern Command and General Kelly of Southern Command pointed out that numerous domestic agencies also contribute to our national security, and they noted the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and other law enforcement agencies that are all subject to these across-the-board cuts. So if we say that in the name of America's national security defense and security, we are going to take care of the

Department of Defense and then subject all these other agencies to across-the-board cuts, we will diminish protection for America. These agencies are important, too, not just the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, but also the FBI. For goodness' sake, they fight terrorism every day. The Department of Homeland Security has the same responsibility, the same type of mission. As we go through the list on the so-called nondefense side, we find a lot of agencies that are critically important to keeping America safe, and this approach in this bill does nothing for them.

This gimmick will also come at the expense of other programs not directed exclusively at homeland security and national defense.

So if the Department of Defense gets relief from sequestration by using this overseas contingency operations maneuver, what are the odds that we are going to do the same for the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Veterans' Administration, the National Institutes of Health, or America's infrastructure?

Let me say a word about that. The last time we did sequestration, I am embarrassed to say that we did an across-the-board cut at the National Institutes of Health. It was so damaging to NIH—which is the premier medical research agency in the world—it was so damaging that they are still trying to recover today. Before we went into sequestration—consider this—if you had an application for a medical grant at NIH, your chances before sequestration were one out of three. One out of three. After sequestration and the cuts that took place—one out of six.

There was recently a Fortune magazine which had a cover story about the Alzheimer's crisis facing America. I have done a little work in this area, and it is frightening to think about what we face. One American is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease every 67 seconds in our Nation. I didn't believe that number and challenged my staff. They are right. Once every 67 seconds.

Last year, we spent $200 billion in Medicare and Medicaid when it came to the Alzheimer's patients across America. That didn't even touch the amount of money families put into the care of their loved ones who are suffering from this disease. The projection of the rate of growth of Alzheimer's in America says that in just a few years, we will be spending more than $1 trillion a year on that disease alone—the government, over $1 trillion a year.

The Fortune magazine article—and the reason I rushed to buy it—says that at least two major pharmaceutical companies are starting to develop research that is promising to treat the onset of Alzheimer's, the early stages, and perhaps to alleviation some of the suffering. We have new imaging devices that are coming through that really can show Alzheimer's in living human beings at the earliest stages when it can be treated or at least ultimately should be treated—let me make certain I say that correctly.

But if you look at these breakthroughs, as promising as they are, you will find that in every single instance, the National Institutes of Health was there before, doing the basic research leading to the new drugs that are being developed, leading to the new technology. What happens when you go through sequestration and cut the National Institutes of Health? You stop the research. You slow it down, at least, and in some areas actually stop it. Is that really in the best interests of this country?

So when we come to the rescue of the Department of Defense, as we should, and we say that the Budget Act—sequestration—has to come to an end when it comes to the Department of Defense, we can't ignore what sequestration's across-the-board cuts will do to so many other critically important agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health. Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, is going to offer an amendment to try to address this honestly and directly, and I am going to support him.

Let's talk about infrastructure for a minute. Two weeks ago on the floor of the Senate, we gave the 33rd short-term extension of the Federal highway program, a short-term, 60-day extension. Let me ask, if you are planning to build an interstate highway, is 60 days enough? Hardly. Most of our Transportation bills have been long-term bills, 5- and 6-year bills, as they should be.

There are some Members of the Senate who question whether there should be a Federal program, but most of us believe there should be. And if there is going to be one, we can't limp along every 60 days or 6 months in funding it. Keeping this Budget Control Act and sequestration guarantees we are going to face this over and over again until Congress faces its responsibility.

The unfortunate reality is, if Congress cannot tackle the issue of sequestration honestly, directly, and head-on, our domestic agencies will likely be stuck with these artificial caps for years. America will pay a heavy price for our inability and unwillingness to tackle this challenging issue.

The Senate should be providing real sequestration relief not only to the Department of Defense but to all of the agencies of our government that do such important work. That should be our focus—not a budget gimmick using overseas contingency funds to get through 1 year with the Department of Defense but something more befitting of a nation like ours that deserves real leadership.

I urge my colleagues to support Ranking Member JACK REED's critical amendment so that we can begin to get serious about the challenges that face us.

I yield the floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TILLIS. 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. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Thursday, June 4, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 1735; that there then be 30 minutes equally divided in the usual form on the following amendments; and that following the use or yielding of time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed: Portman No. 1522; Bennet No. 1540. I further ask that there be no second-degree amendments in order to any of these amendments prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators SHAHEEN and TILLIS or their designees be permitted to offer the next first-degree amendments during today's session of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TILLIS. Senators should expect up to two votes tomorrow morning at 10:15. There are several more amendments in the queue, and my colleagues should expect votes throughout the day tomorrow to make progress on the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 1506 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1463

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up my amendment No. 1506.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Carolina [Mr. TILLIS] proposes an amendment numbered 1506 to amendment No. 1463.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, 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:

(Purpose: To provide for the stationing of C–130 H aircraft avionics previously modified by the Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) in support of daily training and contingency requirements for Airborne and Special Operations Forces)

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. 141. STATIONING OF C–130 H AIRCRAFT AVIONICS PREVIOUSLY MODIFIED BY THE AVIONICS MODERNIZATION PROGRAM (AMP) IN SUPPORT OF DAILY TRAINING AND CONTINGENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR AIRBORNE AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES.

The Secretary of the Air Force shall station aircraft previously modified by the C–130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) to support United States Army Airborne and United States Army Special Operations

Command daily training and contingency requirements in fiscal year 2017, and such aircraft shall not be required to deploy in the normal rotation of C–130 H units. The Secretary shall provide such personnel as required to maintain and operate the aircraft.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1494 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1463

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside and, on behalf of Senator SHAHEEN, call up amendment No. 1494.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. REED], for Mrs. SHAHEEN, proposes an amendment numbered 1494 to amendment No. 1463.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, 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:

(Purpose: To revise the definition of spouse for purposes of veterans benefits in recognition of new State definitions of spouse)

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. DEFINITION OF SPOUSE FOR PURPOSES OF VETERANS BENEFITS TO REFLECT NEW STATE DEFINITIONS OF SPOUSE.

(a) SPOUSE DEFINED.—Section 101 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''of the opposite sex''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (31) and inserting the following new paragraph:

''(31)(A) An individual shall be considered a 'spouse' if—

''(i) the marriage of the individual is valid in the State in which the marriage was entered into; or

''(ii) in the case of a marriage entered into outside any State—

''(I) the marriage of the individual is valid in the place in which the marriage was entered into; and

''(II) the marriage could have been entered into in a State.

''(B) In this paragraph, the term 'State' has the meaning given that term in paragraph (20), except that the term also includes the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.''.

(b) MARRIAGE DETERMINATION.—Section 103(c) of such title is amended by striking ''according to'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''in accordance with section 101(31) of this title.''.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that in order to maintain the practice of alternating between Republican and Democratic amendments, that the Shaheen amendment be considered as having been offered prior to the Tillis amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to add Senator MURPHY, Senator MARKEY, Senator CASEY, Senator MURRAY, and Senator FRANKEN as cosponsors of the Reed amendment No. 1521 to H.R. 1735.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REED. 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. REED. Mr. President, if I may take this opportunity to urge all of my colleagues to submit whatever amendments they may have to the underlying legislation as quickly as possible. We have made some progress today, and we want to continue to make progress in terms of offering the amendments as well as setting up votes so we can continue to move the legislation along. That would require that we get, as quickly as possible, all of the possible amendments from both sides.

I particularly want to ask that my Democratic colleagues do so and that they also be prepared if they wish to comment and speak on the amendments if called upon to do so or at their convenience. I hope that advice will be followed.

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. TILLIS. 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. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I have also been asked to announce that there will be no rollcall votes this evening.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

THE COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the managers of the bill for allowing me a few minutes to report on a very interesting hearing we had this morning before our Senate education committee. It is a different subject than the one on the floor right now, but it is one that both Senator REED and Senator MCCAIN have been interested in over time. It has to do with whether 22 million undergraduate students in America can afford to go to college and whether millions more high school students can look forward to going to college, and then we have millions more in graduate school who are continuing their education.

This affects our country as vitally as any subject, and I thought I would report to the full Senate and to the American people on the excellent, bipartisan hearing we had. This was the fourth hearing we have had in Congress on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Our committee has already come to an agreement on a bill to fix No Child Left Behind that includes continuing important measurements of how we measure the progress of students in schools in America and then restore to States the responsibility for figuring out what to do about that.

We have 22 members on our committee, and we represent as much diversity of opinion in the Senate as exists, which is a lot of diversity of opinion. Yet, our work on fixing No Child Left Behind was unanimous.

Our next step will be to reauthorize the Higher Education Act that affects more than 6,000 colleges and universities in America. I am working with Senator MURRAY, the Senator from Washington, who is the ranking Democrat on the committee, and we hope to have that bill ready for the committee's consideration in early September.

The question before us this morning was, Can you afford to pay for college? I believe the answer for most Americans is yes, and for millions of Americans 2 years of college is free. It is never easy to pay for college, but it is easier than many think, and it is unfair and untrue to make students think they can't afford college. We should stop telling students they can't afford college.

Four weeks ago, I spoke at the graduation of 800 students from Walters State Community College in Morristown, TN. Half of those students were low income. Their 2 years of college was free or mostly free because taxpayers provided them a Federal Pell grant of up to $5,700 for low-income students and the average community college tuition in the country is about $3,300. So for the nearly 4 out of 10 undergraduate students in our country who attend roughly 1,000 2-year institutions, college is affordable. That is especially true in Tennessee, where our State has made community college free for every student who graduates from high school.

In addition to that 40 percent of students who attend the 2-year colleges, another 38 percent of undergraduate students go to public 4-year colleges and universities where the average tuition is about $9,000. For example, at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville,

one-third of the students have a Federal Pell grant to help pay for their tuition, and 98 percent—virtually all—of the instate freshmen have a State HOPE Scholarship, which provides up to $3,500 annually for freshmen and sophomores and up to $4,500 for juniors and seniors. So for most students, 4 years at a public university is affordable, and these include some of the best colleges and universities in the world.

What about the 15 percent of students who go to private universities where the average tuition is $31,000? Well, I will give an example of one of those universities. I had dinner this week with Jack DeGioia, the president of Georgetown University. He told me that the cost at Georgetown is about $60,000 annually. Here is how they deal with that.

He said: First, we determine what a family can afford to pay. Then we ask students to borrow $17,000 over 4 years from the Federal Government, to which they are entitled. Then we ask the student to work for 10 to 15 hours under our work-study program.

President DeGioia said: Then we pay the rest of the $60,000, which costs Georgetown University about $100 million a year.

He said that 21 other private universities that work together on financial aid policies have about a similar policy. He also said that Harvard, Yale, Stanford, and Princeton are even more generous. So even these so-called elite universities may be affordable for students in America.

Finally, another 9 percent of students will go to for-profit colleges where tuition averages about $15,000 a year.

Despite all of this, let's say your family is still short on money to pay for college. Well, taxpayers will loan you money on generous terms. We hear a lot about student loans. These are some of the questions being asked: Are taxpayers being generous enough? Some Senators say we need to be more generous. Is borrowing for college a good investment? Are students borrowing too much? One way to answer these questions is to compare student loans to automobile loans.

When I was 25 years old, I bought my first car. It was a Ford Mustang. The bank made my father cosign the loan because I had no assets and no credit rating. It made me mad, but I had to do it. I had to put up the car's collateral and I had to pay off the loan in 3 years.

Compare that to your opportunity if you are an undergraduate student today. You are entitled to borrow $5,000 or $6,000 from the taxpayers each year. It doesn't matter what your credit rating is, you don't need collateral, and the fixed interest rate for your loan is 4.29 percent this year.

It gets better. When you pay your loan back, you don't have to pay more than 10 percent of your disposable income each year, and if that rate of payoff doesn't pay it off in 20 years, the loan is forgiven.

The next question I hear is, Is your student loan a better investment than your car loan? Well, cars depreciate the minute you drive them off the lot. The College Board estimates that a 4-year degree will increase your earnings by $1 million on average over your lifetime.

A third question I hear is, Is there too much student borrowing? The average debt of a graduate from a 4-year institution is about $27,000 or about the same amount as the average new car loan. About 8 million undergraduate students will borrow about $100 billion in Federal loans next year. The total amount of outstanding student loans is $1.2 trillion. That is a lot of money, but the total amount of outstanding auto loan debt in the United States is $950 billion. I don't hear anyone complaining that the economy is about to crash because we have nearly $1 trillion worth of auto loans, nor do I hear that taxpayers should do more to help borrowers pay off their auto loans.

You might ask: What about all of those students with over $100,000 in student loan debt we hear about? The answer is that student loan debt of over $100,000 make up only 4 percent of student loans, and 90 percent of those are doctors, lawyers, business men and women, and others who have earned graduate degrees.

Nevertheless, it is true that college costs have been rising and that a growing number of students are having trouble paying back their debts. According to the U.S. Department of Education, about 7 million or 17 percent of Federal student loan borrowers are in default, meaning they have not made a payment in at least 9 months. The total amount of loans currently in default is $106 billion or about 9 percent of the total outstanding balance of Federal student loans. The Department says that most of these loans get paid back to the taxpayer one way or another.

The purpose of our hearing this morning was to find ways to keep the cost of college affordable and to discourage students from borrowing more than they can pay back. Here are five steps the Federal Government can take to accomplish that:

No. 1, stop discouraging colleges from counseling students about how much they should borrow. The Federal law and regulations actually prevent colleges from requiring financial counseling for students, even those clearly at risk for default who may be overborrowing.

At a March 2014 hearing before our committee, we heard from two financial aid directors who said that there was no good reason for this. One said:

> Institutions are not allowed to require additional counseling for disbursement. We can offer it, but we're not allowed to require it. And without the ability to require it, there's no teeth in it.

No. 2, help students save money by graduating sooner—for example, our bipartisan FAST Act that Senators ISAKSON, BURR, and I on this side of the aisle and Senators BENNET, CORY BOOKER, and ANGUS KING on that side of the aisle have sponsored, would make Pell grants available year-round to students so they can complete their degrees more quickly and start earning money more rapidly with their increased knowledge and skills.

No. 3, make it simpler to pay off student loans. There are nine different ways to pay off student loans. The Federal Government offers very generous repayment options. One allows you to pay 10 percent of your disposable income every year, and if that doesn't pay it off after 20 years, the loan is forgiven. Last week, I met a college president from Tennessee who said he spent 9 months trying to help his daughter pay off her student loan, and he needed the help of a financial aid officer.

We have legislation introduced by Senator BURR and Senator KING and sponsored by others, as well as those of us I just mentioned, to simplify the application and the repayment options for Federal student loans.

No. 4, allow colleges to share in the risk of lending to students. If colleges have skin in the game—a concept that Senator REED of Rhode Island and I with others have suggested should be seriously explored—it could provide an incentive to colleges to keep costs down and ensure students borrow no more than they can pay back. Senator DURBIN and Senator WARREN have also worked with Senator REED on introducing legislation on this subject.

No. 5, point the finger at ourselves. Congress is the culprit for the high cost of tuition across this country more than many Members of Congress would like to admit. The main reason State aid to public universities is down is the imposition of Washington Medicaid mandates and a requirement that States maintain their level of spending on Medicaid.

For example, in the 1980s when I was the Governor of Tennessee, Medicaid was 8 percent of our State budget and the State was paying 70 percent of the cost to go to the University of Tennessee. Today, Medicaid is 30 percent of Tennessee's State budget and the State is paying roughly 30 percent of the cost to go to the University of Tennessee.

It is pretty simple. Lower State support has caused higher tuitions, and the decrease in State support, in my opinion, is mainly because the Federal Government's Medicaid mandates have made the Medicaid Program so expensive while tying the hands of States so much that Governors have to take money from higher education and direct it toward Medicaid; therefore, tuition is up.

That isn't the only thing the Federal Government does to cause the cost of college to go up. A couple of years ago, four of us on the education committee—Senators MIKULSKI and BENNET, Democrats; and Senator BURR and I, Republicans—invited a group of distinguished educators to do a study of

the cost of Federal regulations on the over 6,000 higher education institutions. The group did an excellent job and came back with 59 specific recommendations about how to simplify the Federal regulation of colleges and universities, saving money, saving time. Time and money that would be better spent on education.

Chancellor Zeppos of Vanderbilt University and Chancellor Kirwan of the University System of Maryland were the two leading this project. Chancellor Zeppos described the Federal regulation of higher education as having ensnared colleges in a jungle of red tape.

Chancellor Zeppos took another step: He hired the Boston Consulting Group to tell Vanderbilt University how much Federal regulation of colleges and universities cost Vanderbilt during the year 2014. The answer was $150 million in order to comply with well-intentioned rules and regulations from the Federal Government.

What does that have to do with tuition? Well, spread that out among Vanderbilt students, and it equates to $11,000 in additional tuition for each of Vanderbilt's students. Mr. President, $11,000 per student is $2,000 more than the average tuition at State universities across this country. That is the average tuition for institutions like the University of Georgia, the University of Tennessee, and the University of Florida. So the Federal Government, through its Medicaid mandates and excessive regulation of colleges and universities, is driving up tuition and increasing college costs and discouraging students from going to college.

We should take steps to make college more affordable, but we should also cancel the rhetoric that is misleading and causes many students and families to believe they cannot afford college. It is untrue and unfair to say this. It is untrue because if you are a low-income community college student, your education may be free or nearly free thanks to a Federal Pell grant. And 38 percent of our college students attend those 2-year schools.

If you are an in-state low-income student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, between a Pell grant and a HOPE Scholarship, you have already covered 75 percent of your tuition and fees. That is the opportunity for another 40 percent of our students who attend public universities.

Even at elite, private universities, if you are willing to borrow $4,500 a year and work 10 to 15 hours a week, many of these universities will help pay the amount your family isn't able to pay, so you can afford what would appear to be an insurmountable sticker price of $50,000 or $60,000.

If you still need to borrow money in order to help pay for a 4-year degree, your average debt is going to be roughly equal to an average, new car loan, and your college loan is a better investment than your car loan. Student loans are also a better investment for our country. As Dr. Anthony Carnevale of Georgetown University says, without major changes, the American economy will fall short of 5 million workers with postsecondary degrees by 2020.

So I urge my colleagues to follow the Senate education committee. The Committee is well on our way to preparing legislation that we hope to have ready for the full Senate early in the fall to reauthorize the higher education system in America.

We hope to simplify college regulations. We hope to make it simpler to apply for a Federal grant or loan to pay for college. We hope to make it simpler for students to pay off their loans. We hope to instill year-round Pell grants so students can go through college more rapidly and get into the workforce. We hope to allow students to be able to apply for student aid in their junior year of high school rather than their senior year, which will permit them to shop around and make it easier to obtain the information they need. We will also take a look at accrediting, and we will try to understand better ways to accommodate the tremendous amount of innovation that is coming our way because of the Internet in terms of new ways of learning.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a 1-page summary of the FAST Act, which was introduced by Senator BENNET and myself, along with Senators BOOKER, KING, BURR, and ISAKSON, to simplify and reform the Federal student aid process.

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

FINANCIAL AID SIMPLIFICATION AND TRANSPARENCY (FAST) ACT

Eliminates the Free Application for Financial Student Aid, or FAFSA by reducing the 10-page form to a postcard that would ask just two questions: 1—What is your family size? And, 2—What was your household income two years ago?

Tells families early in the process what the federal government will provide them in a grant and loan by using earlier tax data and creating a simple look-up table to allow students in their junior year of high school to see how much in federal aid they are eligible for as they start to look at colleges.

Streamlines the federal grant and loan programs by combining two federal grant programs into one Pell grant program and reducing the six different federal loan programs into three: one undergraduate loan program, one graduate loan program, and one parent loan program, resulting in more access to college for more students.

Enable students to use Pell grants in a manner that works for them by restoring year-round Pell grant availability and providing flexibility so students can study at their own pace. Both provisions would enable them to complete college sooner.

Discourages over-borrowing by limiting the amount a student is able to borrow based on enrollment. For example, a part-time student would be able to take out a part time loan only.

Simplifies repayment options by streamlining complicated repayment programs and creating two simple plans, an income based plan and a 10-year repayment plan.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, in the middle of the last century, our Michigan automakers were selling thousands of cars and trucks to an outstanding and expanding American middle class. We are proud to build those automobiles in Michigan.

Unfortunately, the roads of that day were too narrow, and it took drivers and truckers much too long to get to their destinations. Our Nation's leaders recognized that these delays were hurting our workers' productivity and stifling the American economy.

In October of 1964, President Dwight D. Eisenhower made a trip to Detroit and speaking in Cadillac Square he declared: ''We are pushing ahead with a great road program that will take this Nation out of its antiquated shackles of secondary roads and give us the types of highways we need for this great mass of automobiles.''

Of course, this vision gave rise to the interstate highway system which ignited the American economy, and by the late 1950s, our new interstate highways were responsible for 31 percent of the annual increase in the American economy. That is quite amazing, when we think about that. Our highways were the envy of the world, which is why other nations that aspire to be like us, now as economic superpowers, are investing in their infrastructure—from China to Brazil and everywhere in between—in roads and bridges and airports and seaports and all of the other infrastructure they know supports a robust, growing economy.

President Eisenhower, the architect of our interstate highway system was, of course, a Republican. So it is ironic that 60 years later my Republican colleagues are the ones blocking us from building on President Eisenhower's legacy for growing the economy by investing in long-term infrastructure—not 60 days, not 30 days, not 6 months, but long-term infrastructure investment.

Over the last 6 years, Congress has passed short-term extensions over and over again, repeatedly patching over the shortfall in the highway trust fund. Today, we are actually at a point where we are 57 days away from the highway trust fund actually going empty—shutting down—57 days before the highway trust fund is empty.

This is no way to invest in our country and jobs and the roads and bridges and other infrastructure we need to support a thriving economy. It makes it hard for States and for local transportation agencies to plan. The uncertainty drives up costs, as we all know.

The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report from 2014 to 2015 ranked America 16th in the quality of our roads—16th in the quality of our roads in the world—one spot below Luxembourg and just a little bit ahead of Croatia. Now, if that isn't something that motivates all of us to come together around a long-term plan for investing in our roads and bridges and other infrastructure, I don't know what should. America, the world's superpower, is 16th in the world today in terms of investing in the future of our economy and what we need for fixing roads and bridges and other infrastructure investments.

The American Society of Civil Engineers' most recent report card for America's roads and bridges gave our roads a D—a failing grade. We talk about the importance of education and striving for excellence for our children in schools, yet we have been given—the Congress—a failing grade of D for lack of action and vision and investment in long-term infrastructure spending in our country. It said that 42 percent of the major urban highways are congested, that this costs $101 billion in wasted time and fuel every year—$101 billion every year, year after year that we don't address this—and countless jobs. And on the other side, we all know that investing in long-term infrastructure creates good, middle class jobs. Why in the world we are not coming together and making this a top priority is beyond me.

Since we can't afford to effectively repair and replace our bridges, engineers have to add plywood and nets—if you are driving along and look up and see the plywood and nets—to the bottom of bridges so they don't crumble and fall on to cars. We have had pieces fall down on to the road over the last number of years. In fact, that is what happened to a motorist in Maryland back in February.

Just a few miles from here, the Arlington Memorial Bridge, a historic bridge, has corroded support beams and columns and big signs on it now with lane closures in both directions for the next year because of emergency repairs. This is the Capital of the United States of America we are talking about and the Arlington Memorial Bridge.

Across the country, potholes are getting bigger, freeways are getting more congested, and our workers, our schoolchildren, our products—agricultural products, manufacturing products—and small businesses and large businesses trying to get to market are caught in gridlock.

In my home State of Michigan, the average person pays $154 a year to pay for improvements to roads and bridges. That is actually the lowest in the Nation, not nearly enough for what we ought to be doing to invest in improvements. Because of the poor road conditions in Michigan and the damage to cars, the average person spends $357 a year to fix their car—more than a lot of the efforts we have talked about in terms of looking for a long-term solution to be able to fund the highway trust fund when it runs empty in 57 days.

I have heard from workers in Michigan who hit potholes on their way to work and had to stop on the way to work to go to a repair shop. Some tell me they have to swerve around major potholes. I drive, of course, Michigan roads all of the time, going home almost every weekend, and I am constantly doing that. I have had to take my car in as well to get major repairs—realignments, new tires—because of what is happening on the roads.

This is a case where we know what the cure is for the disease, but instead we are treating the symptoms. Instead of fixing the roads, we are fixing our cars. That makes no sense. It is shortsighted. Our economy depends upon having roads and bridges and rail that is safe and effective across the country—short rail, by the way, for our farmers and agriculture and the passenger rail that is so critical. We have seen what happens when there are not safety provisions and when tragedies occur.

Our infrastructure is crumbling in the United States of America. Who would ever have thought we would have gotten to this point, 57 days until the highway trust fund is empty—57 days?

A previous generation of Americans responded to this challenge to invest and to build America by making bold investments that powered our economy into the 20th century, that made us an economic powerhouse, that created the greatest middle class in the world. Now, the question is how our generation will respond to the challenges of putting in place the investments, the plans, the commitments to not only fix our roads and bridges but to be able to create the infrastructure that will take us to the next level in terms of spurring jobs in the economy.

There is talk that once we get to the end of 57 days, we will just kick the can down the road again. How about this time until December? That is a good time for finding some patch of putting together $10 billion or $11 billion to be able to get us to the end of the year. And of course what do we say to communities, to cities, to States? What do we say to the county road commissions in Michigan? What do we say to those who are trying to negotiate contracts and are spending more money because of the stop-start short-term efforts? What do we say to those spending hundreds of dollars a year trying to fix their cars and wondering what in the world is going on with something so basic—so basic—as roads and bridges and other infrastructure? And yet every time we get to a place where a decision needs to be made, the decision gets kicked down the road.

If there is one thing we have learned, it is that short-term patches don't fix long-term potholes. It is time to step up now. We are tired of seeing this happen over and over. Where are the hearings? Where are the bills on the floor? We have 57 days. That is enough time to get a long-term plan together, to find a bipartisan plan. There are a number of different alternatives. Colleagues on both sides of the aisle have proposed solutions, and 57 days is enough time for us to be able to come together.

First, we need to have hearings, and we need to see bills reported to the floor. Where is the activity going on, the sense of urgency about the fact that in 57 days the highway trust fund will be empty?

We are committed to working with colleagues in a bipartisan way to find solutions. Every time we see a short-term patch, a short-term extension happen, we are letting down our businesses, our workers, our farmers, and the next generation of Americans. It is time—it is pastime—to have a long-term fix.

Frankly, I know what difference it makes when we can put in several years of policy in funding in an area of the economy. We came together to do that last year, and I am very proud of the work that we all did together on a bipartisan basis for rural America—for farmers, for ranchers—when we put together the farm bill, a 5-year bill of economic policy, funding, and investments that allowed people to plan, allowed communities to grow, allowed rural development to happen, and businesses to be able to invest, providing the economic certainty that they needed for looking longer than 2 months or 6 months. We need to do that as it relates to the highway trust fund. We are long past doing that.

The time has come for a long-term fix. It is time for our generation, and it is time for our Republican colleagues who have traditionally worked with us on a bipartisan basis to emulate the bold action of the previous generation. President Eisenhower said in 1952: ''A network of modern roads is as necessary to defense as it is to our national economy and personal safety.'' Fixing roads and bridges, expanding the ability for business to move and for agriculture to move and to create jobs should not be a partisan issue. We should not be at an impasse here. We should not be coming to the floor every day—which we will be doing—to count this down. What we ought to be doing is sitting together in committee, sitting together and working on a solution to get it done in the next 57 days. That is what we need to be doing.

I think it is important for each of us to answer this question: Are you happy with the D on America's report card on the roads? Is D enough? We would certainly not say that to our kids. Are you willing to let Croatia pass America in the Global Competitiveness Report? Croatia with better roads and better bridges than the United States of America—really?

Are we willing to spend the resources that we need to work together to find

a bipartisan solution to fix our roads and bridges, to invest in safe rail and in opportunities for us to have the infrastructure and transportation we need? Are we going to force American drivers to pay even more on repairs year after year after year? Are we going to be like Ike or are our Republican colleagues in the majority going to just kick the can down the road one more time?

In Eisenhower's time there was a bipartisan agreement for investing in America's infrastructure. We can do that again. There is absolutely no reason why we should not be able to do that. We have to come together. Republican colleagues who chair the committees need to be sending us a signal. We need to be holding hearings and working together to develop bills and bringing bills to the floor and debating them and making clear that now is the time to get it done.

Don't kick the can down the road again. Step up. Let's fix our roads and bridges. Let's invest in rebuilding America for the future. Let's create jobs and send a signal that we can work together to get that done in the 57 days until the highway trust fund is empty—57 days. It is enough time to do it if people think this is important. I hope they will.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this evening to join my colleague Senator HEITKAMP from North Dakota and to follow Senator CANTWELL from Washington, who spoke earlier this afternoon to talk about the importance of taking action to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank before that Bank expires at the end of this month.

At the end of June, the charter for the Export-Import Bank will expire, and that means billions of dollars of lending by the Bank to support American manufacturing and exports will come to a halt. I am sad to say that what we face right now is a completely unnecessary crisis. There is bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate for the Export-Import Bank, but we have just days until the charter expires. We need to begin now the process of reauthorizing this critical job-creating program.

I know there may be some different ideas in this Chamber about what the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank should look like. I have introduced a bill that would reauthorize the bank for 7 years instead of 4, which has been one of the proposals. My bill would raise the cap on the lending for the Export-Import Bank instead of keeping it flat, and I know there are other discussions around language that addresses the financing of coal-fired powerplants abroad. But regardless of our different views on the specifics of the reauthorization bill, Democrats and Republicans should all be able to agree that letting the Bank expire would be bad for America's businesses, bad for the employees of those businesses, and bad for our economy. That is because the Export-Import Bank supports American jobs at zero cost to taxpayers.

Let me just say that again, because I think there is this perception in some quarters that because we don't have an agreement on reauthorization, there must be some huge cost involved to the Export-Import Bank. In fact, it is just the opposite. The Export-Import Bank puts money into the Treasury of the Federal Government. It doesn't take money out.

In New Hampshire the Bank has supported $314 million in export sales for our businesses since 2009. That support translates into more exports, into more manufacturing, and ultimately into more jobs.

Just this morning we had a number of businesses that rely on the Export-Import Bank come in to speak to some of the Senators. One person who was very eloquent with his comments was Michael Boyle from Boyle Energy in New Hampshire. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Michael Boyle's statement be printed in the RECORD.

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

EXAMINING THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK'S REAUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN EXPORT FINANCING

BES&T is an exporter of U.S. Patented Commissioning Technology know as SigmaCommissioning. The most advanced equipment and engineered process available in the world today. BES&T and Sigma significantly helps its clients (global energy companies) start (commission) their energy infrastructure projects for far less cost, fuel, water and time.

In short, we convert the largest power plants and refineries from a construction environment into an operating environment faster, less costly and with a higher degree of quality than is available anywhere else in the world.

In the first 10 years of BES&T's history we did 90% of our work in the US.

We then spent 4 years inventing and perfecting our new commissioning technology before declaring our services, equipment, and engineering to be out of the R&D stage and therefore commercially viable.

We began exporting the work. Foreign companies had very limited technical support for our work and the competition for technical services was very weak. This meant that our clients would most likely be first adopters of this new technology. We were right. We also wanted to be tested, to apply our services in remote locations, in extraordinary terms on the toughest projects.

To be certain we could pay our people and vendors should clients not pay in far off lands, we insured our work with the EXIM bank. We sought to protect against major cash-flow disruption as we had little knowledge of collection, legal recovery, or any other understanding of the commercial codes of the countries where we were deploying our services. We could do the work but did not know what we would do if a foreign buyer did not pay us.

As our service became accepted and our abilities grew, so did our receivables. We solicited a National US Bank to provide us with the needed credit to support our working capital. They were agreeable to it domestically but we were informed that they had no means of securing our collateral to perfect full collection from foreign countries if we were to default. Even though those receivables were insured. So we worked with them to apply for a working capital guarantee package with EXIM much as we had done when we bought our first building using 504 support through the SBA. We were approved and fees were required and paid. Since the time we began with the credit insurance and the working capital LOC we have had neither claims nor losses that required EXIM support to the bank.

Here are some of the results. In the 7 years since we began exporting and working with EXIM we have:

Become known as the most advanced technical commissioning service company in power in 22 countries

Spent $71 million on the cost of producing our work:

Trucking, Pipe and materials, Valves, Pumps, Filters, Manpower, Airfare, Fabrication, Chemicals, Hoses, Fittings, Ocean Freight, Air Freight

Spent $25 million on back office or SGA support.

Paid 25% of our profits in federal taxes to the Treasury Department

Repatriated all of our profits.

Increased our revenue 4x

Increased our employment 6x

Paid 100% health insurance for all our workers.

Paid Christmas and Profit sharing bonuses

Provided an average wage of $100K USD over our entire employment force

Increased benefits by adding dental, 401k, Life insurance, PTO, Family Leave etc.

Worked in 22 countries

Filed for and received further US Patents

Received an Audit by the IRS with received a notice of no changes or faults.

Donated $218,000 to local charities and nonprofits in New Hampshire

Successfully completed 60 projects

Completed 5x the revenue in the second 10 years of the company as was completed in the first 10 years

Eliminated 80,000,000 gallons of hazardous chemical waste in foreign countries.

Opened new markets in Oil and Gas production to augment power plant work.

Commissioned more than 27,351 megawatts of power and 200,000 barrels of oil per year from natural gas.

I personally have so enjoyed, and our company has benefited so much from the experience of and value derived from the EXIM bank that I was honored to be asked to volunteer my time to serve on the Advisory Committee of the bank, and have cosigned the 2013 and 2014 Competitiveness Report to the Congress of the United States. During that time I was chosen to serve as Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Public Engagement to the Advisory committee. I have also worked and consulted directly with Chairman Fred Hochberg on the issues impacting small business. I have also been asked to consult on the operational content and usability of the website offered by the bank. I have given voice to my experience to members of Congress, regional resource and economic development offices in New Hampshire, to local businesses thinking of working with EXIM. I have even been so honored as to join Chairman Hochberg in a discussion of the EXIM bank in the Roosevelt Room of the Whitehouse. To date my finest hour.

I can therefore state that I have been witness to positive changes in the bank's operating approach since my colleagues and I

volunteered to serve on the advisory committee. We, and the information we have imparted, have had a direct impact on the bank because the bank's leadership was fully intent on providing the best support not just to small business, but to all businesses using the bank's services. The bank and each and every employee of the EXIM bank I met and worked with cared greatly about our concerns and took action to make the experience and value greater.

I have very good knowledge of the value of this bank to both the US exporter companies using the bank and the taxpayers in the US.

While I wish that there were no ECA global competition for credit support, there is. In as much as I have read and been required to review and make comment on the OECD and Non-OECD research of the activities of the global competitors to US exporting I am fully aware that both good and bad actors are in abundance across the world, and that their supporting ECAs are outspending in both percentage and real dollars the EXIM bank of the US. These actions are deliberate and these organizations will go to great lengths to create the unbalanced competition that we would like to have eradicated.

Until such time as there is no further need for global ECA competition, I would therefore ask the House and Senate of the United States to consider the following actions.

1. Re-authorize the EXIM bank for 7 years.
2. Add an additional 20 billion USD authority to the Bank
3. Allow the bank greater flexibility to advertise its existence and benefits.
4. Allow the bank greater budget flexibility to conduct regional training and recruitment of customers.
5. Establish treaties with Non-OECD countries to severely restrict and penalize unfair ECA support or non-competitive actions related to exports
6. Ensure 100% compliance with the law of the United States and all foreign Borrower nations.
7. Ensure that US policy support by the bank is fair and equally balanced.
8. Promote the establishment of a global Uniform Commercial Code or similar instrument for the security of international assets derived from commercial transactions.
9. Empower domestic banks to further support export credit of viable receivables and exported collateral under some strict country limitation schedule.
10. Negotiate ECA interest rates worldwide to stabilize differentials.
11. Vigorously promote the bank to small businesses.

In conclusion, we, as American business people value our support from our government. I personally have benefited from being a citizen of the United States. When I was young my mother reached out for food stamps and welfare to assist us till we could get on our feet. I had school lunch programs in the public schools I attended. Not being able to afford college I joined the United States Navy. I was trained to be a boiler technician over a 6 year period. I traveled the world on 3 destroyers and a tender and earned a great education in life, leadership, steam, and boilers. I was honorably discharged and have gone on to build a family and a company. My company has 60 families employed and we all still travel the world and we still work on boilers. I have been blessed to have the people and government of these United States beside me then and beside me now. I have estimated that my work in this regard has returned many times over the money given to my mother for my benefit and the salary I earned in the Navy. I have visited the White House, and am now here in the Capitol speaking to our Congress. Beyond all that I have accomplished, my mother and father are proud, my wife and sons too.

So I will make you a promise. When I don't need to use the EXIM bank any longer, when we have grown our business and employed hundreds more people, I will stop using the bank. But even then, I will volunteer my time to defend this organization and its people, and to help each and every small business that asks me to help them learn to export and how to do so with EXIM.

I love my country, am grateful to have its help, and wish to thank the Congress for making this valuable tool available.

Thank you for the honor of participating in this discussion.

God Bless the United States of America.

MICHAEL P. BOYLE,
President and CEO.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Michael Boyle is the CEO of Boyle Energy Services and Technology. They have a facility in Concord, NH, which I have had the good fortune to visit. They do great work. This testimony is what Michael gave before the House Committee on Financial Services this morning at a hearing that examined the Export-Import Bank's reauthorization request and the government's role in export financing.

As I said, Boyle Energy does impressive work. They optimize energy performance in power and energy infrastructure construction projects. Their services have reduced greenhouse gas emissions and eliminated millions of gallons of hazardous waste at facilities around the world. It is a great American small business story. Boyle Energy got connected with the Export-Import Bank a number of years ago at a forum in New Hampshire where the Ex-Im Bank announced its Global Access for Small Business Program to help small businesses export.

Right now, about 40 percent of large businesses export, but only 1 percent of small and medium-sized businesses export in the United States. Yet 95 percent of markets are outside of America. We need to help businesses such as Boyle Energy get into those international markets. That is exactly what the Ex-Im Bank has done. With the Export-Import Bank's support, Boyle Energy has grown its international sales 75 percent over the last 3 years.

Before using the Export-Import Bank's credit insurance, the company shipped just to Mexico and Canada. But now Boyle has customers in over a dozen countries. Their exports comprise 60 percent of the company's $15 million in sales, and 10 of its 50 employees support their increase in international sales. Without the Bank, Boyle Energy's success just wouldn't be possible.

Last year the Ex-Im Bank supported $10.7 billion worth of exports by American small businesses. So this is not just the big guys. It is not just the General Electrics and the Boeings. It is small businesses such as we have in New Hampshire where 96 percent of our employers are small businesses. We should not take this important tool—this financing tool for our small businesses—away from America's job creators.

I think it is important to note that it is not just the direct users of the Bank's products that will suffer. It will also hurt those smaller companies that sell to larger companies who use Ex-Im Bank financing, for example, manufacturers such as Albany Engineering in Rochester, NH, which makes parts for airplane engines. Timken in Keene and Lebanon sell their products to Boeing. When we cut off financing for those products, it is going to have a real impact on American manufacturing. It is going to have an impact on jobs in New Hampshire and across this country.

Now is the time for us to come together. We can do this. We can get this authorization done. We have support in this Chamber to reauthorize the Ex-Im Bank, to help our small businesses so we can get them into the international markets. We need to do this reauthorization before the Bank charter expires at the end of this month, and I urge my colleagues to join us in taking action.

I yield the floor, and I thank Senator HEITKAMP for her leadership on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, this is a story and a movie we see all too frequently in this Chamber and in the Congress—manufactured crisis after manufactured crisis after manufactured crisis. Here we are a few short days away from actually seeing the charter of the Export-Import Bank expire.

Think about that—a 70-year institution, a critical piece of trade infrastructure. We spent the better part of the last work period talking about trade promotion authority, and for very many of us this was a very difficult vote. It was a conflicting vote. At the end of the day, the one argument that sells the day is that 95 percent of all consumers in the world live outside the United States.

If we are not participating in trade, if we are not working to make sure our exports are competitive, if we are not making a difference for American manufacturers, we are going to lose the competition for the customer. We are going to lose the opportunity to grow our manufacturing base.

So the Export-Import Bank—not a lot of people know what it is, but the people who do and the businesses that do know this is a critical piece of trade infrastructure. The irony perhaps of this whole issue is there is no one—there is no group outside of conservative think tanks that does not agree the Export-Import Bank needs to be reauthorized.

We have the U.S. Chamber of Commerce begging us in the Banking Committee to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank. We have the National Association of Manufacturers that tells us overwhelmingly—the people who support that trade association, who are represented by that trade association, want reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. We know the unions that

represent the workers who work in these industries have been asking us to do the right thing.

So here we are, once again, at the eleventh hour. Last year, we agreed to a short-term extension, 6 months, believing we would not be in this spot today, believing we would not be at the last minute threatening the charter of the Export-Import Bank. So guess what. We have over $15 billion of credit in the pipeline. Think about 15 billion dollars' worth of manufacturing exports in this country. I want you to think not about the manufacturing exports, I want you to think about what that means, what that means for the American worker who works in those manufacturing facilities. They look at this and they say that you are all about the economy. You all run saying that we are all about jobs, we are all about improving the economy, creating opportunity by getting American manufacturing back on its feet. Yet we cannot do something that has been done for 70 years and frequently by unanimous consent in this body.

So where is the opposition? The opposition is nothing more than ideology. The opposition comes from conservative think tanks that score this, that scare Members and say that if you agree to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, that will be a black mark on your record. You will not be with us. You know what. It is time we were with the American workers. It is time we were with the small businesses. It is time we dispel the myth of this institution, the Export-Import Bank, and start talking about this as a job-creating entity.

I have a chart here. It is a theme that Senator KIRK and I are sounding. Senator KIRK and I have the bipartisan bill that we would like to see advanced in this body to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank. We have tried very hard to balance the concerns people have for reform with a reauthorization that gives some level of certainty to American manufacturing, to the institutions that finance them. Make no mistake, it is not that this is public money. Simply what we are saying is, if a bank gives a loan to an American manufacturer, if a smalltown bank gives a loan to an American manufacturer, we will help guarantee that loan. It is like an SBA—it is like an SBA for manufacturing exports.

What is next? We are going to take on the SBA because they are doing too much good to help American businesses? So I want you to think about this: 164,000 American jobs. Those are direct American jobs, not the secondary jobs that we know come from this primary sector, development. When you look at economics, you think about those jobs that are secondary and those jobs that are primary sector.

Every manufacturing job that deals with exports is a primary sector job. It is new wealth creation for our State. Economically, that is manna from Heaven because that new wealth comes here in the payments for exports. It circulates around our economy, allows our retail businesses to thrive, allows our restaurants and our secondary businesses, whether they are dry cleaners, whether they are people in the service industry, to support those primary sector jobs.

So 164,000 primary jobs, exports of $27.5 billion—$27.5 billion—those are all U.S. exports supported by the Ex-Im Bank. When we look at it, guess what. People say: Well, it must cost us something to do this. It must cost the American taxpayers something to fund the Export-Import Bank if we are seeing those kinds of results. Guess what. Not only does it not cost us, it returned $7 billion to the Treasury.

Think about that. What is wrong with this? What is bad about this? Where is this failing the taxpayers of this country? Where is this failing the American worker? The simple answer is it is not. What is failing the American worker is this institution, the United States Congress, because we are failing to hand the tools to those businesses that can, in fact, create jobs, create economic wealth, and move our country forward. People will say: Oh, my goodness. It is all of those big companies. It is GE, it is Boeing, and that is really whom we are talking for.

Well, I want to kind of look behind the curtain of that a little bit, not just talk about small businesses in my State that are going to benefit and the agricultural producers that benefit from this institution. Think about the literally thousands of small businesses that support Boeing, the thousands of small businesses that support the folks at GE. Think about the businesses that actually are the contractors with these large institutions that make parts, that make the sandwiches that feed the employees. This is primary sector growth. We know that adds to the benefit of the entire economy.

So let's talk a little bit about why someone from North Dakota cares about the Export-Import Bank. If you look at more than 58,000 small businesses around the country depending on the Export-Import Bank to finance the export deals, they will all lose if we do nothing. There is $15.9 billion, as I said, in the pipeline.

The Export-Import Bank has supported $139 billion in sales in North Dakota alone, since 2007, and $102 million in exports from our State. Think about that—the little State of North Dakota, how significant this institution is.

I want to tell the story of a small business. We heard just heart-wrenching stories, one from California, an entrepreneur who gave his all in Vietnam, 100-percent disabled. He has a small business, had a dream, living the American dream, serving his country. Guess what. He lost. Because of the uncertainty here, he lost a $57 million contract putting over 100 people out of work. Right now, he is challenged because he has a $200 million contract on the line waiting for reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. Because—guess what—the people he is selling to are not going to wait to find out if he has financing. They are going to turn to the next manufacturer. Do you know who that next manufacturer is? That next manufacturer is China.

Do you think our competitors across the world, whether it is India or China, who are not looking at reforming their export credit organization—guess what they are doing. They are pumping billions of dollars more. They are taking advantage of this. They are taking advantage of this opportunity. This is a sign in the Beijing airport: ''The Export Import Bank of China. Want to be the best in a better world?''

They are not hiding this. They are not saying that is inappropriate. They are bragging about it. They are bragging where they think those businessmen are coming in and taking a look at where that financing opportunity is. You might say: Well, the private sector can do it. That is not true. That is absolutely not true. We have had representation from almost every financial organization in this town saying we need the Export-Import Bank to support our customers who need to have that credit for their exports.

So I want to close talking about a great business in Wahpeton, ND, a town I grew up very close to. WCCO Belting in Wahpeton, ND, is a great example. It is a 60-year-old, family-owned rubber supply company, which started out as a shoe repair business and diversified into repairing parts for farm trucks and then into new seats for tractors, canvass belting, and wooden slats.

Today, the company provides rubber products used in farm equipment, such as belts for harvesting grain or producing round bailers or tube conveyers to move seeds and grain. Those are supplied to major farm equipment companies around the world. You know what. The simple fact is—and they will tell you if they were standing right here—that company could not have done it without the Export-Import Bank 12 years ago, which allowed WCCO Belting to pursue export opportunities it had been ignoring. The Bank has supported more than $830,000 in exports from WCCO since 2007. The Export-Import Bank helps make sure small businesses get paid in a timely fashion for what they sell. Not getting paid in a timely manner from foreign entities very quickly can put a small business out of work.

The company now has 200 employees who generate more than 60 percent of their annual sales from revenues from customers who are located outside of the United States, all possible because of the Export-Import Bank. Without the Bank, they would be unable to compete in this global marketplace. This is one of those stories in Washington, DC, that makes the rest of the world believe Washington does not get it, that the United States Congress

does not get it. Because they do not live in their world, they live in the real world, where you have to finance what you have, where those challenges get harder and harder every day, and where you are competing in a market where people do this.

There are 70 export credit agencies in the world, all competing for the same business, all helping their homegrown businesses compete for the same business we are competing for. Unilateral disarmament. So it was not for any other purpose than the passion we have for this institution that Senator CANTWELL and I started talking about this during the TPA discussion, started saying: We need a path forward so the charter of the Bank does not expire, so that we actually reauthorize the Bank before the end of this month.

I would like to tell you that the prospects are great, that the overwhelming economic logic of the Export-Import Bank has overcome all of the ideological discussions. I would love to tell you that. I would love to tell you we are absolutely doing something in a timely fashion, we are doing something that makes common sense. Guess what. We are not. We are going to see the charter expire unless we, every day, come here and beg for a vote, unless we see movement in the House of Representatives, so that the charter does not expire. I am saying: Do not leave the small businesses of this country, the hope of this country behind. Let's reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, let's do it sooner rather than later, and let's actually respond to the concerns of the American manufacturing population.

I yield the floor.

URBAN FLOODING AWARENESS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, big storms and heavy rain often lead to flooding in cities. It seems like that is happening more frequently and the floods have been more damaging. In May we saw the extent of the damage that can be done when flood waters inundate a city. Twenty-seven people died in Houston, TX as a result of the rainfall and flooding there. Eleven people are still missing. The truth of the matter is, we don't have very much data on frequency, severity, or how we might better prepare for the kind of weather that turns into flooded streets, businesses, and homes.

I introduced a bill this week, with Senator WHITEHOUSE and Congressman QUIGLEY in the House, to address that. The Urban Flooding Awareness Act calls for a study to document the costs to families, business, and government associated with urban flooding. There are many ways we can do a better job of preparing for storm flooding—including creative, environmentally sound, ''green infrastructure'' approaches—but first we need to have a firm understanding of the scope of the problem.

Stronger, more destructive storms are pounding urban areas at an alarming rate. They threaten the quality of drinking water. Urban floods erode river banks and spread pollution. They bring massive damage to homes and businesses. When you consider events like Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Katrina, it is clear we need to do more to understand how flooding can be predicted and prevented.

In Illinois we have had more than our fair share of urban flooding in recent years. Chicago has seen three ''hundred year floods'' in the last 5 years.

Just a few inches of water can cause thousands of dollars in damage for both home and small business owners. Wet basements from flooding events are one of the top reasons people do not purchase a particular home. Industry experts estimate flooding can lower property values by 10 to 25 percent. Moreover, nearly 40 percent of small businesses do not reopen following a disaster, according to FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Most homeowners in urban areas do not have Federally backed flood insurance through FEMA's flood insurance program. They are not able to participate in the flood insurance program because it focuses entirely on designated floodplains along rivers, not in urban areas. With the frequency and severity of storms growing year by year, we need to gain a better understanding of flooding in our cities.

A clear definition of urban flooding—which this legislation would establish—would allow experts to understand the scope of the problem, develop solutions, and consider more than just coastal and river flooding when designing flood maps. The bill also would require FEMA to coordinate a study on the costs and prevalence of urban flooding and the effectiveness of green and other infrastructure.

The Urban Flooding Awareness Act will help American communities identify ways to protect our investments and our environment. I urge my colleagues to support it.

REMEMBERING MARSELIS PARSONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to pay honor to a Vermont legend who passed away last month. Marselis Parsons, known to friends as ''Div,'' was a deeply respected newsman in my home State. His low, steady voice in anchoring the evening news became a mainstay in living rooms for decades. Div Parsons knew news. He knew the importance of having personal connections, and he built trust based on his integrity and fairness.

Div Parsons rose through the ranks at Vermont's CBS affiliate, WCAX Channel 3, and he never became too important in his own mind that he wouldn't report on a fire or track down a lead. In short, he knew the pulse of the State, and he reported on what he knew. He also shared his years of experience with young reporters, many of whom he hired straight out of college and gave them the break they needed.

When he wasn't working long hours at the station, he was known to take to the waters of the great Lake Champlain, either on his antique power boat or, if the winds held up, under full sail. In retirement, he still relished tracking the latest political news.

I am grateful for our friendship and our many conversations over time, and I am grateful that he was able to cherish the recent birth of his granddaughter, Pippa. Div Parsons' death will leave a void, no doubt, but we'll have many memories to share.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a fitting tribute to Div Parsons that ran in the Times Argus newspaper.

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

[From Barre Montpelier Times Argus, June 1, 2015]

'DIV' DEPARTS

This last week saw the departure of Bob Schieffer from the anchor desk of the CBS show ''Face The Nation,'' and closer to home, the passing of a Vermont television icon, Marselis Parsons. While Schieffer occupied a place in the national consciousness, it is not a mistake to place the two men in company. They represent the best of an era in television that is rapidly receding into history.

For Vermont, Parsons was the face that a generation of Vermonters grew up with, in an era when the habits of the populace were still to turn on the local news at 6 p.m., followed by the national report at 7 p.m. He was both larger than life, and unassuming in a way that led us to welcome him into our homes. ''Div,'' as he was nicknamed through obscure origins, was for many the one and only local news anchor they knew.

Because of the vagaries of television transmission over the hills of Vermont, many children in rural homes—and their parents—had just one or two options on the dial beyond the local PBS station. Even then, the reception was sometimes tricky leading to elaborate coat hanger antennas on the TV and ''snow'' making the picture a bit fuzzy. But the television was often the window to the wider world—both the world at large, and because of Parsons and family-owned WCAX, the world in the next town over, or in the state of Vermont at large.

He was the guide to the stories that connected Vermont and gave us a sense of shared identity, whether we turned on the evening news in Derby Line or in Tinmouth. He reported on the first Green Up Day, in 1970, on the return of hostages from Iran in 1980, and was the anchor the day that Dick Snelling died and Howard Dean was sworn in as governor. Parsons became synonymous with Channel 3, and both remain Vermont institutions.

He looked us in the eye and told us the bad news when tragedy had struck; he also shared the triumphs of the day, or narrated some kind of community gathering in one of the tiny towns that Vermont is known for. He often shared a chuckle with his co-anchors, but never allowed his personality—of which there was plenty—or his demeanor to outshine the efforts of the team as a whole.

He could be, as his former colleague Kristin Carlson recalled, unscripted and direct on live television, meaning the reporters in the field had better know their story and be able

to go off the script. Carlson grew up watching Parsons, and like dozens of television reporters, was mentored by him and grew to serve the state of Vermont better because of it.

After his start in television in 1967, Parsons worked as a reporter for years, and only took over the anchor desk in 1984, on the death of his predecessor, Richard Gallagher. By then much of the most tumultuous period in Vermont's modern history was over: Act 250 was in place, Vermont had rapidly transitioned from a conservative, rural state to a politically diverse, rural state, and the social and governmental change ushered in by the '60s and '70s was in full swing. There was much to come, however, and Parsons was a constant throughout—the rest of the Kunin years, the rise of Howard Dean, civil unions and the Jim Douglas era.

The days of the network evening news are rapidly passing on. The news world has further fragmented with the rise of the Internet. In some ways, the new world is better. We have many choices now, and our ability to connect to others around the state and the world has never been greater. Our choices for information are more diverse.

In other ways we feel the pangs of nostalgia for times gone by, when there was a constant presence who would share the news of the day before saying ''Good Night''. The sense of loss is for one of our familiar community, and of a person who did not put himself before the news.

There are many examples of the anchor desk lending too much ego to the occupant. Often today an anchor desk is almost like a podium or a stage. But Parsons had no need to exaggerate or embellish who he was. He was a different kind of anchor. In the current era of flamboyance and exaggeration, his humility, compassion and honesty stand out. Parsons was not a ''personality.'' He was not acting or putting on a show while on air—the man he was was what you saw. He was steady and sometimes deadpan, and committed entirely to the Green Mountain State.

While we are grateful to have had him, it is our great loss that he is gone.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING JIM WEBER

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Jim Weber, a welding and machining teacher at Capital High School in Helena, MT. Mr. Weber uses Mastercam CAD/CAM software to give his students real world, practical skills, as well as the work ethic necessary to complete any task. His instruction helped lead one of his students to victory at the National Machining Competition for creating a custom fly fishing rod and display case.

Mr. Weber's fly fishing rod project not only leads to great and necessary personal skills, but he inspired this years' senior class to make an even bigger impact with their fly fishing rods. Mr. Weber's class designed and machined 15 custom fly fishing rods for the Big Hearts under the Big Sky project which helps to create free and gratifying opportunities for service men and women, life-threateningly ill children, and women battling breast cancer to explore the vast and beautiful Montanan outdoors. Not only was he able to teach high school students how to make rings, knives, and fishing rods, he was also able to motivate his students to help themselves by helping others.

The ability to educate students and make them ready to take on the challenges that our world contains is a valuable asset to the young adults. Each and every day Mr. Weber provides a great service to our future leaders that words cannot adequately express. I am excited to see what comes of the great men and women Jim Weber is able to teach and inspire.●

TRIBUTE TO JOE DOWLING

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Joe Dowling, the outgoing artistic director of the Guthrie Theater. For 20 years, Mr. Dowling has served the Guthrie with integrity, creativity, and style. His passion, talent, and years of international theater experience have added so much to the Guthrie Theater and the entire Twin Cities theater community.

Mr. Dowling joined the Guthrie Theater as artistic director in 1995. Since then, he has directed 48 plays and build relationships with esteemed theater artists, such as Angela Bassett, the late Arthur Miller, and T.R. Knight, just to name a few. But his legacy reaches far beyond the plays he has directed and the relationships he has formed. Under Mr. Dowling's leadership, the Guthrie moved into its beautiful new building, allowing the company to expand its repertoire and reach over 400,000 patrons each year.

Joe Dowling has also focused on developing the next generation of theater artists. He led the development of two new actor training programs at the Guthrie and initiated the WorldStage Series, a program that invites international theater companies to perform on Guthrie stages. His vision and leadership have brought tremendous positive change to the Guthrie Theater, and his legacy will be felt long after he has gone.

Tyrone Guthrie founded the Guthrie Theater with a specific goal in mind—to create a first-rate regional theater that would nourish the minds and souls of artists and audiences alike. In the 52 years since its founding, the Guthrie Theater has become just that—a shining example of everything regional theater is and can be. Whether producing Shakespeare's ''Hamlet'' or more contemporary fare, the Guthrie has tackled some of humanity's most pressing issues with innovation, compassion, and professionalism. On its stages and in its classrooms, the Guthrie brings people of all walks of life together to laugh, cry, and contemplate some of life's deepest questions.

I hope you will join me as I say thank you to Joe Dowling for his 20 remarkable years of service to the Guthrie Theater, the people of the State of Minnesota, and the United States of America.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURMENT

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate on January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on June 2, 2015, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 802. An act to authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to provide assistance to support the rights of women and girls in developing countries, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2048. An act to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the enrolled bills were signed on June 2, 2015, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. DAINES).

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, June 3, 2015, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 802. An act to authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to provide assistance to support the rights of women and girls in developing countries, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–1777. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the global defense posture (OSS–2015–0825); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1778. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General James M. Kowalski, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1779. A communication from the Acting Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Offset Costs'' ((RIN0750–AI59) (DFARS Case 2015–D028)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1780. A communication from the General Counsel of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Minimum Requirements for Appraisal Management Companies Joint-Agency Rule'' (RIN2590–AA61) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29,

2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1781. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updated Statements of Legal Authority for the Export Administration Regulations'' (RIN0694–AG62) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1782. A communication from the Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's 2014 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1783. A communication from the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's 2014 management report; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1784. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Russian Sanctions: Revisions and Clarifications for Licensing Policy for the Crimea Region of Ukraine'' (RIN0694–AG54) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1785. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to the Congress on the Profitability of Credit Card Operations on Depository Institutions''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1786. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Communications Reliability Standards'' ((RIN1902–AE92) (Docket No. RM14–13–000)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 28, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1787. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Real Power Balancing Control Performance Reliability Standard'' ((RIN1902–AE94) (Docket No. RM14–10–000)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1788. A communication from the Director of Human Resources, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, seventeen (17) reports relative to vacancies in the Environmental Protection Agency, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1789. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—June 2015'' (Rev. Rul. 2015–14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 1, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1790. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Purchase Price Safe Harbors for sections 143 and 25'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–31) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 1, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1791. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Credit for Renewable Electricity Production and Refined Coal Production, and Publication of Inflation Adjustment Factor and Reference Prices for Calendar Year 2015'' (Notice 2015–32) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 1, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1792. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress: The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Evaluation of For-Profit PACE Programs under Section 4808(b) of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1793. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0828); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1794. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0829); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1795. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0827); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1796. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0826); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1797. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–014); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1798. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1799. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The Opportunity to Develop Alternative Fuels and Dual Fuel Technologies for Class 8 Heavy-Duty Long-Haul Trucks''; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–1800. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Biennial Report to Congress on the Food Safety and Food Defense Research Plan''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1801. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2010 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Report; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1802. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Requirements for Blood and Blood Components Intended for Transfusion or for Further Manufacturing Use'' ((RIN0910–AG87) (Docket No. FDA–2006–N–0040; formerly Docket No. 2006N–0221)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1803. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at the Dow Chemical Company in Pittsburg, California, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1804. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report on FDA Advisory Committee Vacancies and Public Disclosures''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1805. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at the Hanford site in Richland, Washington, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1806. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Institute of Museum and Library Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 28, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1807. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at the Grand Junction Facilities site in Grand Junction, Colorado, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1808. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''ANC 7F Did Not Fully Comply with the ANC Act''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1809. A communication from the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1810. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Veterans Affairs' Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1811. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1812. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–67, ''Prohibition of Pre-Employment Marijuana Testing Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1813. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–69, ''Workforce Job Development Grant-Making Reauthorization Temporary Amendment Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1814. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–70, ''Soccer Stadium Development Technical Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1815. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–71, ''Medical Marijuana Supply Shortage Temporary Amendment Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1816. A communication from the Chairman and Members of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General Semiannual Report for the period of October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1817. A communication from the Director of the Office of Government Relations, Corporation for National and Community Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Corporation for National and Community Service's Report on Final Action for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1818. A communication from the Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1819. A communication from the Director, Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1820. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2015 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals through the 2nd Quarter of Fiscal Year 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1821. A communication from the Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1822. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administrator's Semiannual Management Report to Congress for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1823. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1824. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Met Many Requirements of the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 but Did Not Fully Comply for Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1825. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–68, ''Events DC Technical Clarification Amendment Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1826. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the sixth annual report relative to the Department of Justice's activities regarding pre-1970 racially motivated homicides, as required by the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crimes Act of 2007; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1827. A communication from the Program Manager of Regulation Policy and Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Grants for Adaptive Sports Programs for Disabled Veterans and Disabled Members of the Armed Forces'' (RIN2900–AP07) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–1828. A communication from the National Chairman, Naval Sea Cadet Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, two reports entitled ''2014 Annual Report of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps'' and ''2014 Financial Statement of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1829. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–72, ''Jubilee Maycroft TOPA Notice Exemption Temporary Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1830. A communication from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Local Number Portability Porting Interval and Validation Requirements, Telephone Number Portability, and Numbering Resource Optimization'' ((RIN3060–AJ32) (DA 14–842)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 1, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1831. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program; Amendment 45; Pacific Cod Sideboard Allocations in the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–BD61) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1832. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries'' (RIN0648–XD902) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1833. A communication from the Deputy Chief Counsel for Regulations and Security Standards, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Adjustment of Passenger Civil Aviation Security Service Fee'' (RIN1652–AA68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 2, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1834. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; West Coast Salmon Fisheries; 2015 Management Measures'' (RIN0648–XD843) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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–29. A resolution adopted by the Legislature of Rockland County, New York, urging the United States Department of Transportation and the United States Department of Energy to immediately enact rules that mandate the stabilization and reduction in volatility of Bakken crude oil to be transported by rail and urging the United States Congress to pass the Crude-By-Rail Safety Act of 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

POM–30. A communication from a citizen of the State of Illinois memorializing a resolution adopted by the Senate of the State's General Assembly urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to review the national tariff policy on steel goods and take action similar to the 2002 actions of President George W. Bush and Congress; and urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to consider all possible trade and economic policies to protect this vital American industry and minimize the financial impact on these hardworking men and women; to the Committee on Finance.

POM–31. A concurrent memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the United States Congress to enact legislation that confirms that state law determines the entire scope of R.S. 2477 right-of-way; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL 1002

Whereas, in order to promote settlement of the American West in the 1800s and provide access to mining deposits located under federal lands, the United States Congress granted rights-of-way across public lands for the construction of highways by a provision of the Mining Law of 1866, now known as Revised Statute (R.S.) 2477; and

Whereas, the United States Congress repealed R.S. 2477 in 1976 as part of its enactment of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, along with the repeal of other federal statutory rights-of-way, but it expressly preserved R.S. 2477 rights-of-way that already had been established; and

Whereas, in its entirety, R.S. 2477 provided that ''the right of way for the construction

of highways over public lands, not reserved for public uses, is hereby granted''; and

Whereas, R.S. 2477 was self-executing and did not require government approval or public recording of title, which resulted in uncertainty regarding whether particular rights-of-way had in fact been established; and

Whereas, in April 2014, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a decision in San Juan County v. United States in which the court rejected the notion that state law should determine the entire scope of R.S. 2477 rights-of-way, holding that state law has provided ''convenient and appropriate principles'' for determining the scope and validity of an R.S. 2477 right-of-way, but it can be dismissed when it ''contravenes congressional intent''; and

Whereas, in October 2014, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a decision in County of Shoshone v. United States in which it confirmed that state law controls, or is ''borrowed,'' in determining what constitutes sufficient public use, reflecting a rejection of the approach taken by the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Juan County v. United States; and

Whereas, outdoor recreation is an essential industry in Arizona, generating $10.6 billion in consumer spending, 104,000 direct Arizona jobs, $3.3 billion in wages and salaries and $787 million in state and local tax revenue; and

Whereas, the reduction of public roads in this state would diminish access to and enjoyment of outdoor recreation opportunities on public lands, detrimentally impacting Arizona's economy.

Wherefore your memorialist, the Senate of the State of Arizona, the House of Representatives concurring, prays:

1. That the Members of the United States Congress enact legislation that is consistent with the decision of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in County of Shoshone v. United States and that confirms that state law determines the entire scope of R.S. 2477 rights-of-way.

2. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.

POM–32. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to review the national tariff policy on steel goods and take action similar to the 2002 actions of President George W. Bush and Congress; and urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to consider all possible trade and economic policies to protect this vital American industry and minimize the financial impact on these hardworking men and women; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 0335

Whereas, The Granite City Works steel mill has operated since 1878: it was originally founded by brothers William and Frederick Niedringhaus as the Granite Iron Rolling Mills, and most recently, owned by United States Steel Corporation; and

Whereas, The Granite City Works has been an industry leader in sheet steel products for customers in the construction, container, piping and tubing, service center, and automotive industries; and

Whereas, Granite City Works has an annual raw steelmaking capability of 2.8 million net tons; and

Whereas, Global influences in the market such as reduced steel prices, unfair trade practices, & imports, and fluctuating oil prices, continue to have a dramatic negative impact on the steel production industry: and

Whereas, Domestic steelmakers continue to lose substantial sales to foreign countries, particularly China and South Korea, which have ''dumped'' their steel products into the United States market at prices below fair market value; and

Whereas, Due to these disruptions in the steel market, on March 25, 2015, United States Steel Corporation announced that it will temporarily idle the Granite City mill and lay off 2,080 steel workers by or after May 28, 2015; and

Whereas, Granite City Works is a vital part of the Metro-East economy, and the loss of this mill would be devastating to thousands of families and the financial well-being of the entire region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Ninth General Assembly of the State of Illinois, That we urge the President of the United States and Congress to review the national tariff policy on steel goods and take action similar to the 2002 actions of President George W. Bush and Congress; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge the President of the United States and Congress to consider all possible trade and economic policies to protect this vital American industry and minimize the financial impact on these hardworking men and women; and be it further

Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution be presented to the President and Vice-President of the United States, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, and the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives.

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. DAINES (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 1487. A bill to require notice and comment for certain interpretative rules; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1488. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow for fair application of the exceptions process for drugs in tiers in formularies in prescription drug plans under Medicare part D; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. HATCH, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 1489. A bill to strengthen support for the Cuban people and prohibit financial transactions with the Cuban military, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1490. A bill to establish an advisory office within the Bureau of Consumer Protection of the Federal Trade Commission to prevent fraud targeting seniors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 1491. A bill to provide sensible relief to community financial institutions, to protect consumers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN:

S. 1492. A bill to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. HELLER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TESTER, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 1493. A bill to provide for an increase, effective December 1, 2015, in the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 1494. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize and update the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative for grants to address the problems of individuals who experience trauma and violence related stress; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions .

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 1495. A bill to curtail the use of changes in mandatory programs affecting the Crime Victims Fund to inflate spending; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 1496. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to retain a copy of any reprimand or admonishment received by an employee of the Department in the permanent record of the employee; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 1497. A bill to exempt the Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and certain other programs for Indians from sequestration; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 1498. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to require that military working dogs be retired in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 1499. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to provide eligibility under certain highway programs for projects for the installation of vehicle-to-infrastructure communication equipment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 1500. A bill to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 1501. A bill to promote and reform foreign capital investment and job creation in

American communities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. Res. 190. A resolution encouraging reunions of Korean Americans who were divided by the Korean War from relatives in North Korea; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. REID, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 191. A resolution relative to the death of Joseph Robinette Biden, III; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 30

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 30, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 48

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 48, a bill to prohibit discrimination against the unborn on the basis of sex or gender, and for other purposes.

S. 202

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 202, a bill to provide for a technical change to the Medicare long-term care hospital moratorium exception.

S. 311

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 311, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to address and take action to prevent bullying and harassment of students.

S. 314

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 314, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to end discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in public schools, and for other purposes.

S. 469

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.

S. 498

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 498, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 539, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 637

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 637, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 746

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 746, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer.

S. 751

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 751, a bill to improve the establishment of any lower ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes.

S. 804

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 860

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 860, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

S. 1073

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1073, a bill to amend the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, including making changes to the Do Not Pay initiative, for improved detection, prevention, and recovery of improper payments to deceased individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1082

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1082, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes.

S. 1119

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1119, a bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission.

S. 1121

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1121, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1126

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1126, a bill to modify and extend the National Guard State Partnership Program.

S. 1140

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1140, a bill to require the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to propose a regulation revising the definition of the term ''waters of the United States'', and for other purposes.

S. 1159

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1159, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand tax-free distributions from individual retirement accounts for charitable purposes.

S. 1170

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1170, a bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research, and for other purposes.

S. 1190

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1190, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure equal access of Medicare beneficiaries to community pharmacies in underserved areas as network pharmacies under Medicare prescription drug coverage, and for other purposes.

S. 1193

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1193, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent and expand the temporary minimum credit rate for the low-income housing tax credit program.

S. 1211

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1211, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide that payment under the Medicare program to a long-term care hospital for inpatient services shall not be made at the applicable site neutral payment rate for certain discharges involving severe wounds, and for other purposes.

S. 1214

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1214, a bill to prevent human health threats posed by the consumption of equines raised in the United States.

S. 1252

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1252, a bill to authorize a comprehensive strategic approach for United States foreign assistance to developing countries to reduce global poverty and hunger, achieve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive, sustainable, agricultural-led economic growth, improve nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children, build resilience among vulnerable populations, and for other purposes.

S. 1270

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1270, a bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to reauthorize hydroelectric production incentives and hydroelectric efficiency improvement incentives, and for other purposes.

S. 1324

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1324, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to fulfill certain requirements before regulating standards of performance for new, modified, and reconstructed fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes.

S. 1364

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1364, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require the payment of an additional rebate to the State Medicaid plan in the case of increase in the price of a generic drug at a rate that is greater than the rate of inflation.

S. 1385

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1385, a bill to prohibit the Federal Government from requiring race or ethnicity to be disclosed in connection with the transfer of a firearm.

S. RES. 87

At the request of Mr. VITTER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 87, a resolution to express the sense of the Senate regarding the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and to encourage greater cooperation with the European governments, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in preventing and responding to anti-Semitism.

AMENDMENT NO. 1466

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1466 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1735, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1468

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1468 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1735, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 1487. A bill to require notice and comment for certain interpretative rules; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I often hear from Montanans how Washington, DC, regulations stifle the ability to create jobs and prevent our small businesses from reaching their full potential. Too many Montana businesses face regulatory burdens that hinder innovation and block opportunities for growth. In fact, when I drive around Montana, I have yet to hear a small business owner stop me and say: You know, we would like to see more regulations from Washington, DC.

In today's environment, business owners are left with few options. They either struggle to keep up with frequent regulatory changes or they suffer the penalty of regulatory fines. That is unacceptable. There is something fundamentally wrong when your business owners spend more time adapting to Washington regulations than focusing on their business's growth and their job creation.

We need to reduce the redtape that is holding our small businesses back and work towards commonsense regulations that don't place unnecessary burdens on Montana families and small business. Today, I have introduced legislation to help fix the regulatory burdens facing Americans. My bill facilitates public input on Federal rulemaking and provides a more predictable regulatory environment so that businesses can make plans to expand and have a predictable environment to create good high-paying jobs.

Currently, bureaucrats in Washington, DC, can issue interpretative rules without warning and without public input. In fact, oftentimes, interpretative rules are dramatically changed at the whim of the President.

I would also like to thank Senators LANKFORD and BLUNT for joining me in introducing this critical piece of legislation. The Regulatory Predictability for Business Growth Act will ensure that Americans' voices are heard in the rulemaking process, providing a crucial planning period for individuals and businesses. I want to give a special thanks to Senator LANKFORD and his staff for his leadership on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management Subcommittee. Our staffs worked closely

to make this piece of legislation possible today.

For far too long, government bureaucracy has stifled our small businesses' potential. With commonsense reforms such as this bill, we can encourage both innovation and job growth. The Regulatory Predictability for Business Growth Act will decrease regulatory uncertainty, and it will empower Montanans and their businesses to grow again.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 1494. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize and update the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative for grants to address the problems of individuals who experience trauma and violence related stress; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am here this afternoon to talk about an issue that is so important to my State and to communities nationwide; that is, how do we help children and families rebuild and recover when they face serious trauma? As we have seen all too often in recent years, traumatic events can impact children at any time and in any part of our country. If children don't get the support they need in the wake of a hardship such as a natural disaster or violence at school or stress related to a family member's military deployment, those experiences can be even more difficult to recover from and they can leave our children with serious and long-lasting challenges such as depression, anxiety, and difficulty maintaining employment.

An estimated two-thirds of our children experience traumatic events before the age of 16. Their need for support and treatment after trauma is something that simply cannot go unmet. That is why I am very proud to introduce the Children's Recovery from Trauma Act. This bipartisan legislation would continue support for child trauma centers across the country which help make sure that as children in families face difficult times, our Nation's health care system is better prepared to provide support and help ease that burden.

Child trauma centers have played an important role in my home State of Washington. For example, when the State Route 530 mudslide caused unthinkable devastation in Oso and Darrington, the Washington State University CLEAR Center stepped in to help children and families who were impacted by that horrific tragedy. Staff at the CLEAR Center held parent nights at Darrington Elementary School and worked with the teachers there to help make sure students got the right kind of support they needed. They even helped teachers explain to students how the brain operates under stress and how that might influence their behavior. As a mom and former preschool teacher, a school board member, and a Senator from the great State of Washington, I believe this support can make a world of difference in this kind of scary and stressful time for our kids.

I am very proud that under the Children's Recovery from Trauma Act, the CLEAR Center would continue to receive critical Federal investment. In addition, I am very proud that other child trauma centers, such as those that mobilized after the 2001 terrorist attack and natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and Sandy and the shootings at Virginia Tech and in Newtown, would continue to get those investments as well.

As I have said before, I am inspired by the strength and resilience of communities in Washington State that were impacted by the tragedy of the State Route 530 mudslide and the shootings recently at Marysville-Pilchuck High School. Children in these communities and communities like them across the country face hardships that can't always be predicted or prevented, but they do need and deserve our support. The Children's Recovery from Trauma Act would take some critical steps forward in this effort, and I hope all of my colleagues will join me in supporting it.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 1498. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to require that military working dogs be retired in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, since World War I, military working dogs have worked side-by-side with our men and women in uniform in various roles and operations. Today military working dogs routinely assist U.S. troops on dangerous front-line assignments, helping to detect roadside bombs and improvised explosive devices, saving hundreds of American lives and preventing countless injuries. Moreover, both on and off the battlefield, these dogs represent critical partners, invaluable team members, and cherished companions.

Unlike traditional soldiers, a canine's service does not necessarily end when it reaches retirement. Instead, military working dogs often continue to support our nation by acting as service dogs for veterans suffering from mental and physical disabilities. Because of the close bond forged by their shared experiences in the military, these dogs can play a unique and important role in for our veterans—quite literally saving lives even once they return to the home front.

Unfortunately, it is not always so easy for former dog handlers to be reunited with their four-legged comrades-in-arms. Because of the way the law is currently written, the Department of Defense is not required to bring military working dogs back to the United States upon retirement. As such, most military working dogs end up being retired overseas wherever they end their service. As a result, former handlers, veterans, and other members of the military community wishing to adopt a dog may be forced to cover the cost of transporting the dog halfway across the world.

Our Nation's veterans deserve to be reunited with their canine counterparts and they should not have to shoulder the official costs and fees associated with doing so. To correct this situation, I am introducing the Military Working Dog Retirement Act. By requiring the Department of Defense to arrange and pay for the transportation of retiring military working dogs to the United States, this bill is a key step to ensuring former military dog handlers may benefit from the continued partnership and service of these loyal canines. It is my hope that the Senate will pass this legislation swiftly.

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. 1498

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REQUIREMENT FOR RETIREMENT OF MILITARY WORKING DOGS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2583 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as subsections (g) and (h), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection (f):

''(f) RETIREMENT OF MILITARY WORKING DOGS WITHIN THE UNITED STATES.—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the retirement of a military working dog under this section shall occur at a location within the United States.

''(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the retirement of a military working dog abroad if a United States citizen living abroad adopts the dog at the time of retirement.

''(3) Amounts available to the military department concerned shall be available for the costs of the transport of military working dogs to the United States for retirement in accordance with the requirement in paragraph (1).''; and

(3) in subsection (g), as redesignated by paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''the Secretary of the military department concerned'' and all that follows through ''may'' and inserting ''a military working dog is to be retired in accordance with the requirement in subsection (f)(1) and no suitable adoption is available at the military facility where the dog is located at the time of retirement, the Secretary of the military department concerned shall''; and

(B) by inserting ''within the United States'' after ''another location''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply to retirements of military working dogs pursuant to section 2583 of title 10, United States Code, that occur on or after that date.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 1501. A bill to promote and reform foreign capital investment and job creation in American communities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today I am proud to introduce the bipartisan American Job Creation and Investment Promotion Reform Act of 2015, which will extend and significantly improve the EB–5 Regional Center program. Since its inception in 1993, the EB–5 Regional Center program has generated billions of dollars in capital investment and created tens of thousands of jobs across the country, much of which has occurred in areas that traditionally struggle to attract investment and jobs. The program's authorization is set to expire at the end of September. My legislation would reauthorize it for 5 years while enacting broad reforms to enhance the program's integrity. I am proud to be joined by Senator GRASSLEY in this effort.

The EB–5 Regional Center program faces significant challenges. I have always been supportive of its ability to create American jobs but the program has experienced some problems in recent years. There have been troubling reports of fraud and abuse, concerns regarding onerous processing delays for developers and investors, and questions over whether the program is truly benefiting those that Congress intended. These concerns can overshadow the many success stories, and have led some to understandably lose faith in the program.

I have not seen any flaw inherent to the EB–5 Regional Center program that could not be remedied, and I strongly believe that this is a program worth fixing. Over the last two decades this program has proven it can result in significant investment and jobs in communities that desperately need both, all at no cost to American taxpayers. While our immigration system as a whole is broken, and only comprehensive reform will remedy its many injustices, reforming and reauthorizing the EB–5 Regional Center program warrants our immediate attention because the program is set to expire in a matter of months.

In Vermont, this program revitalized rural communities during the worst of economic times. At the height of the recession, Country Home Products was able to speed up its engineering initiative to develop a new line of equipment in the power tool market. Sugarbush ski resort invested in new facilities and resources to increase visitors and keep its doors open. Without EB–5 capital, these manufacturing, construction, and hospitality jobs would likely not exist in Vermont. The state-run Vermont Regional Center continues to attract substantial capital investment and—with the Department of Financial Regulation now joining the Agency of Commerce and Community Development in overseeing the program—also provides unparalleled oversight of EB–5 projects.

I have long sought substantial reforms to the EB–5 Regional Center program at the Federal level. Last Congress, my EB–5 amendment to Comprehensive Immigration Reform provided the Department of Homeland Security the authority to revoke suspect regional center designations or immigrant petitions. This amendment, which was unanimously approved by Senate Judiciary Committee, also provided for increased regional center reporting, background checks, and oversight related to the offer and sale of securities. Sadly these improvements have all had to wait, as the House of Representatives failed to allow a vote on the bipartisan immigration reform bill that passed the Senate last Congress.

Fortunately, however, the agency that administers EB–5 has not stood idly by waiting for Congress to strengthen the program. I credit Alejandro Mayorkas, the former Director of United States Citizenship and Services, with bringing many concerns to light. The agency has since transformed its review of EB–5 applications. Staff levels have increased nearly tenfold, in-house economists now analyze proposed business plans, and fraud detection and national security staff now sit side-by-side with adjudicators. These actions have all helped the agency to guard against abuses.

However, as Congress now faces reauthorizing this job-creating program, I have listened to concerns raised about how the program functions. I believe we must do more, which is why I have been working for over a year to further reform and modernize the Regional Center program. The bill I introduced today builds upon what the Senate passed last Congress as part of Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

This legislation, if enacted, would provide the Department of Homeland Security additional, much-needed authorities, including further expanding background checks, conducting a more thorough vetting of proposed investments earlier in the process, and providing for the ability to proactively investigate fraud, both in the United States and abroad, using a dedicated fund paid for by certain program participants. The bill would also provide investors with greater protections and more information about their investments. It would provide project developers clarity and shorter processing times in order to make the program more predictable and functional. It would raise minimum investment thresholds so more money goes to the communities that need it. It would help to restore the program to its original intent, by ensuring that much of the capital generated and jobs created occur in rural areas and areas with high unemployment.

Taken together, the oversight tools, security enhancements, and anti-fraud provisions included in this legislation provide the framework for a complete overhaul of the EB–5 Regional Center program. These reforms will instill both confidence and transparency in the program.

I look forward to continuing to work with all Senators and stakeholders to improve and reauthorize this important program. I am confident our work will result in a secure EB–5 program that will create American jobs and promote economic growth throughout our country, particularly in the rural and distressed communities that need it most.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 190—ENCOURAGING REUNIONS OF KOREAN AMERICANS WHO WERE DIVIDED BY THE KOREAN WAR FROM RELATIVES IN NORTH KOREA

Mr.KIRK (for himself and Mr.WARNER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 190

Whereas the division of the Korean Peninsula into the Republic of Korea (referred to in this preamble as ''South Korea'') and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (referred to in this preamble as ''North Korea'') separated more than 10,000,000 Koreans from family members;

Whereas since the signing of the Korean War armistice agreement on July 27, 1953, there has been little to no contact between Korean Americans and family members who remain in North Korea;

Whereas North and South Korea first agreed to divided family reunions in 1985 and have since held 19 face-to-face reunions and 7 video link reunions;

Whereas those reunions have subsequently given approximately 22,000 Koreans the opportunity to briefly reunite with loved ones;

Whereas the most recent family reunions between North Korea and South Korea took place in February 2014 after a suspension of more than 3 years;

Whereas the United States and North Korea do not maintain diplomatic relations and certain limitations exist for Korean Americans to participate in inter-Korean family reunions;

Whereas more than 1,700,000 people of the United States are of Korean descent;

Whereas the number of first generation Korean and Korean American divided family members is rapidly diminishing given advanced age;

Whereas many Korean Americans with family members in North Korea have not seen or communicated with their relatives in more than 60 years;

Whereas Korean Americans and North Koreans both continue to suffer from the tragedy of being divided from loved ones;

Whereas the inclusion of Korean American families in the reunion process would constitute a positive humanitarian gesture by North Korea and contribute to the long-term goal of peace on the Korean Peninsula shared by the governments of North Korea, South Korea, and the United States;

Whereas the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110–181; 122 Stat. 3) requires the President, every 180 days, to submit to Congress a report on ''efforts, if any, of the United States Government to facilitate family reunions between United States citizens and their relatives in North Korea''; and

Whereas in the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (Public Law 111–242; 124 Stat. 2607), Congress urged ''the Special Representative on North Korea Policy, as the senior official handling North Korea issues, to prioritize

the issues involving Korean divided families and, if necessary, to appoint a coordinator for such families'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the significance of the past willingness of North Korea to resume reunions of divided family members between North Korea and South Korea;

(2) encourages North Korea to permit reunions between Korean Americans and their relatives still living in North Korea;

(3) calls on the Secretary of State to further prioritize efforts to reunite Korean Americans with their divided family members;

(4) acknowledges the efforts of the American Red Cross to open channels of communication between Korean Americans and their family members who remain in North Korea;

(5) encourages the Government of South Korea to include United States citizens in future family reunions planned with North Korea; and

(6) praises humanitarian efforts to reunite all individuals of Korean descent with their relatives and engender a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

SENATE RESOLUTION 191—RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN, III

Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. REID, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 191

Whereas Joseph Robinette ''Beau'' Biden, III, born in Wilmington, Delaware and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Syracuse University law school, served our country as an attorney in the Department of Justice for seven years, including assisting the nation of Kosovo in rebuilding their criminal justice system;

Whereas Beau Biden served his beloved State of Delaware for eight years as Attorney General;

Whereas Beau Biden joined the Army in 2003 at the age of 34, rose to the rank of major in the Delaware Army National Guard's Judge Advocate General Corps, deployed to Iraq in 2008 and received the Bronze Star for his service;

Whereas Beau Biden leaves behind a beloved wife, Hallie, and two children, Natalie and Hunter; and

Whereas Beau Biden was the eldest son of the former Senator from Delaware and current Vice President of the United States and President of the United States Senate, Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr.: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the untimely death of Joseph Robinette Biden, III.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate this resolution to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the Vice President of the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1476. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1477. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1478. Mr. TILLIS (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1479. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1480. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1481. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1482. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1483. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1484. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1485. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1486. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra.

SA 1487. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1488. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1489. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1490. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1491. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1492. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1493. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1494. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COONS, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra.

SA 1495. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1496. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1497. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1498. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1499. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1500. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1501. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1502. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment

SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1503. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1504. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1505. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1506. Mr. TILLIS (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra.

SA 1507. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1508. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1509. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1510. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1511. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1512. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Ms. HIRONO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1513. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1514. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1515. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1516. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1517. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1518. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1519. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1520. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1521. Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. NELSON, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KING, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. REID, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra.

SA 1522. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra.

SA 1523. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1524. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1525. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1526. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1527. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1528. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1529. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1530. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1531. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1532. Mr. DONNELLY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1533. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1534. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1535. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. CORKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1536. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1537. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1538. Mr. WICKER (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1539. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1540. Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. GARDNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra.

SA 1541. Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. VITTER, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1542. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1543. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1544. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1545. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1546. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1547. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1548. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1549. Mrs. ERNST (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1550. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1551. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1552. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN

to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1553. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1554. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1555. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1556. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1557. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1558. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1559. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1560. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1561. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1562. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1563. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1564. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1565. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1566. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1567. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. INHOFE, and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1568. Mr. COTTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1569. Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1570. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1571. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1572. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1573. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1574. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1575. Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1576. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1577. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1578. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. PAUL, Mr. COONS, Mr. HELLER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1579. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1580. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1581. Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. TILLIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1582. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1583. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1584. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1585. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1586. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1587. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1588. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1589. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1590. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1591. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1592. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1593. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1594. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1595. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1596. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1597. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1598. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1599. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. MURPHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1600. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1601. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1602. Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1603. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1604. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1486 submitted by Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. WARNER) to the amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1605. Mr. COTTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1606. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1607. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1608. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1609. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1610. Mr. SCHATZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1611. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1612. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1613. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1476. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1049. USE OF THE NATIONAL GUARD FOR SUPPORT OF CIVILIAN FIREFIGHTING ACTIVITIES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Modular Airborne Firefighting System Flexibility Act''.

(b) OPERATIONAL USE AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 32, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 116. Operational use: support for civilian firefighting activities

''(a) BASIS OF AUTHORITY.—The authority in this section is based on a recognition of the basic premises of the National Incident Management System and the National Response Framework that—

''(1) incidents are typically managed at the local level first; and

''(2) local jurisdictions retain command, control, and authority over response activities for their jurisdictional areas.

''(b) ASSISTANCE TO CIVILIAN FIREFIGHTING ORGANIZATIONS AUTHORIZED.—Members and units of the National Guard are authorized to support firefighting operations, missions, or activities, including aerial firefighting employment of the Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS), undertaken in support of a Federal or State agency or other civilian authority.

''(c) ROLE OF GOVERNOR AND STATE ADJUTANT GENERAL.—For the purposes of subsection (a)—

''(1) the Governor of a State shall be the principal civilian authority; and

''(2) the adjutant general of the State—

''(A) shall be the principal military authority, when acting in the adjutant general's State capacity; and

''(B) has the primary authority to mobilize members and units of the National Guard of the State in any duty status under this title the adjutant general considers appropriate to employ necessary forces when funds to perform such operations, missions, or activities are reimbursed.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 1 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''116. Operational use: support for civilian firefighting activities.''.

(c) ACTIVE GUARD AND RESERVE (AGR) SUPPORT.—Section 328(b) of such title is amended by inserting ''duty as specified in section 116(b) of this title or may perform'' after ''subsection (a) may perform''.

(d) FEDERAL TECHNICIAN SUPPORT.—Section 709(a)(3) of such is amended by inserting ''duty as specified in section 116(b) of this title or'' after ''the performance of'' the first place it appears.

SA 1477. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title III, add the following:

SEC. 344. REIMBURSEMENT OF STATES FOR LOSS OR DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY AS A RESULT OF FIRE CAUSED BY MILITARY TRAINING OR OTHER ACTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES OF THE ARMED FORCES OR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

(a) REIMBURSEMENT REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall, upon application by a State, reimburse the State for the reasonable costs of the State for services provided in connection with loss or destruction of property, or mitigation of damage, loss, or destruction of property, whether or not property of the State, and all fire suppression costs, as a result of a fire caused by military training or other actions in the United States of units or members of the Armed Forces or employees of the Department of Defense.

(2) SERVICES COVERED.—Services reimbursable under this subsection shall be limited to services proximately related to the fire for which reimbursement is sought under this subsection.

(b) APPLICATION.—Each application of a State for reimbursement for costs under subsection (a) shall set forth an itemized request of the services covered by the application, including the costs of such services.

(c) FUNDS.—Reimbursements under subsection (a) shall be made from amounts authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance.

SA 1478. Mr. TILLIS (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. 141. STATIONING OF C–130 H AIRCRAFT AVIONICS PREVIOUSLY MODIFIED BY THE AVIONICS MODERNIZATION PROGRAM (AMP) IN SUPPORT OF DAILY TRAINING AND CONTINGENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR AIRBORNE AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES.

The Secretary of the Air Force shall station aircraft previously modified by the C–130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) to support United States Army Airborne and United States Army Special Operations Command daily training and contingency requirements by the end of fiscal year 2017, and such aircraft shall not be required to deploy in the normal rotation of C–130 H units. The Secretary shall provide such personnel as required to maintain and operate the aircraft.

SEC. ——. FIELDING OF AMP MODIFIED C–130 H AIRCRAFT

Section 134 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. 'Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291) prohibits the Air Force from canceling or modifying the C–130H AMP program of record. Elsewhere in this Act the committee states that it expect the Air Force to continue to execute AMP and field C–130H aircraft previously upgraded by the AMP program until the Air Force provides a concrete plan that describes the final modification configuration for a restructured AMP program, a service cost position, and a procurement and installation schedule that would realistically support a fleet viability requirement.

The Air Force has resisted fielding the five previously modified AMP aircraft or to install the previously purchased installation kits to modify an additional four aircraft because of the difficulties in training aircrews and establishing logistics support, thereby negating the ability to deploy these aircraft in the C–130 schedule rotation. However, in order to comply with 134 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. 'Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291) and stated committee desires, the Air Force must continue fielding these aircraft.

The five current AMP-modified C–130Hs, plus aircraft modified with the four previously purchased installation kits would be

ideal aircraft to support 18th Airborne Corps, 82nd Airborne Division, and U.S. Army Special Operations Command training and contingency requirements as they would primarily provide training support to these units and not be required to deploy in the normal rotation of C–130 units.

The committee believes the Air Force has expended significant funds on the AMP program of record and therefore should use due diligence to give the American taxpayer the best return on scarce funding to maximize military effectiveness.

SA 1479. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 884. REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT OF ULTRA LIGHT COMBAT VEHICLE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, in consultation with the Secretary of the Army, shall submit to Congress a report on the development of an Army Ultra Light Combat Vehicle (ULCV) for use with light infantry brigades and with Special Operations Forces.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) An assessment whether the ULCV is a suitable candidate for militarized commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) purchase rather than purpose-built, defense-only platforms, leveraging existing global automotive supply chains to satisfy requirements and performance specifications for the program.

(2) An assessment whether fielding such a program meets the requirements of the Department of Defense's Better Buying Directive.

SA 1480. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 588 the following:

SEC. 588A. SENSE OF SENATE ON THE BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) programs under the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program provide community-based outreach services that coordinate state and local resources into a single network to offer critical support to members of the Armed Forces before, during, and after military service deployments;

(2) services under the Beyond Yellow Ribbon program include substance abuse treatment, mental health, suicide prevention, employment services, educational assistance, military sexual assault referrals, health care, marriage and financial counseling and other related services;

(3) programs under the Beyond Yellow Ribbon program have helped thousands of members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their family members cope with the challenges associated with deployments and military service;

(4) programs under the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program have seen significant outcomes in areas including suicide prevention, access to mental health care, homelessness prevention, and access to employment for veterans; and

(5) the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program has enduring value; and

(6) the Department of Defense should identify permanent funding and continue its support for the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program as the needs of our men and women in the Armed Forces and their families for outreach and reintegration services continue to increase.

SA 1481. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the appropriate place please insert the following:

SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the accidental transfer of suspected *bacillus anthracis*, also known as anthrax, from an Army laboratory to 28 laboratories located in 12 states and three countries discovered in April 2015 represents a serious safety lapse and a potential threat to public health;

(2) the Department of Defense, in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, should continue to investigate the cause of this lapse and determine if protective protocols should be strengthened;

(3) the Department of Defense should reassess standards on a regular basis to ensure they are current and effective to prevent a reoccurrence; and

(4) the Department of Defense should keep the relevant defense committees apprised of the investigation, any potential public health or safety risk, remedial actions taken and plans to regularly reassess standards.

SA 1482. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 721. PROHIBITION ON CONDUCT OF CERTAIN MEDICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

The Secretary of Defense and each Secretary of a military department shall not fund or conduct a medical research and development project unless the Secretary funding or conducting the project determines that the project is directly designed to protect, enhance, or restore the health and safety of members of the Armed Forces through the phases of deployment, combat, recovery, and rehabilitation.

SA 1483. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 186, line 9, insert before the period at the end the following: '', including the use of contractor facilities and equipment and qualified contract pilot trainers to increase near-term throughput''.

SA 1484. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title XVI, after subtitle A, insert the following:

Subtitle B—Defense Intelligence and Intelligence-related Activities

SEC. 1621. REPORT ON AIR NATIONAL GUARD CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RQ–4 GLOBAL HAWK MISSION.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air Force, in coordination with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of using the Air National Guard in association with the active duty Air Force to operate and maintain the RQ–4 Global Hawk.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the costs, training requirements, and personnel required to create an association for the Global Hawk mission consisting of members of the Air Force serving on active duty and members of the Air National Guard.

(2) The capacity of the Air National Guard to support an association described in paragraph (1).

SA 1485. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 1637. SENSE OF SENATE ON THE NUCLEAR FORCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM OF THE AIR FORCE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senates makes the following findings:

(1) On February 6, 2014, Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) initiated a force improvement program for the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) force designed to improve mission effectiveness, strengthen culture and morale, and identify areas in need of investment by soliciting input from airmen performing ICBM operations.

(2) The ICBM force improvement program generated more than 300 recommendations to strengthen ICBM operations and served as a model for subsequent force improvement programs in other mission areas, such as bomber operations and sustainment.

(3) On May 28, 2014, as part of the nuclear force improvement program, the Air Force announced it would make immediate improvements in the nuclear mission of the Air Force, including enhancing career opportunities for airmen in the nuclear career field, ensuring training activities focused on performing the mission in the field, reforming the personnel reliability program, establishing special pay rates for positions in the nuclear career field, and creating a new service medal for nuclear deterrence operations.

(4) Chief of Staff of the Air Force Mark Welsh has said that, as part of the nuclear force improvement program, the Air Force will increase nuclear-manning levels and strengthen professional development for the members of the Air Force supporting the nuclear mission of the Air Force in order ''to address shortfalls and offer our airmen more stable work schedule and better quality of life''.

(5) Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, in recognition of the importance of the nuclear mission of the Air Force, proposed elevating the grade of the commander of the Air Force Global Strike Command from lieutenant general to general, and on March 30, 2015, the Senate confirmed a general as commander of that command.

(6) The Air Force redirected more than $160,000,000 in fiscal year 2014 to alleviate urgent, near-term shortfalls within the nuclear mission of the Air Force as part of the nuclear force improvement program.

(7) The Air Force plans to spend more than $200,000,000 on the nuclear force improvement program in fiscal year 2015, and requested more than $130,000,000 for the program for fiscal year 2016.

(8) Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel said on November 14, 2014, that ''[t]he nuclear mission plays a critical role in ensuring the Nation's safety. No other enterprise we have is more important''.

(9) Secretary Hagel also said that the budget for the nuclear mission of the Air Force should increase by 10 percent over a five-year period.

(10) Section 1652 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–201; 128 Stat. 3654; 10 U.S.C. 491 note) declares it the policy of the United States ''to ensure that the members of the Armed Forces who operate the nuclear deterrent of the United States have the training, resources, and national support required to execute the critical national security mission of the members''.

(b) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the nuclear mission of the Air Force should be a top priority for the Department of the Air Force and for Congress;

(2) the members of the Air Force who operate and maintain the Nation's nuclear deterrent perform work that is vital to the security of the United States;

(3) the nuclear force improvement program of the Air Force has made significant near-term improvements for the members of the Air Force in the nuclear career field of the Air Force;

(4) Congress should support long-term investments in the Air Force nuclear enterprise that sustain the progress made under the nuclear force improvement program;

(5) the Air Force should—

(A) regularly inform Congress on the progress being made under the nuclear force improvement program and its efforts to strengthen the nuclear enterprise; and

(B) make Congress aware of any additional actions that should be taken to optimize performance of the nuclear mission of the Air Force and maximize the strength of the United States strategic deterrent; and

(6) future budgets for the Air Force should reflect the importance of the nuclear mission of the Air Force and the need to provide members of the Air Force assigned to the nuclear mission the best possible support and quality of life.

SA 1486. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

Purpose: To require reporting on energy security issues involving Europe and the Russian Federation, and to express the sense of Congress regarding ways the United States could help vulnerable allies and partners with energy security.

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1257. REPORTING ON ENERGY SECURITY ISSUES INVOLVING EUROPE AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) ADDITIONAL MATTERS IN ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.—Section 1245(b) of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291; 128 Stat. 3566) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (15) as paragraph (16); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following new paragraph:

''(15) An assessment of Russia's ability to use energy supplies, particularly natural gas and oil, as tools of coercion or intimidation to undermine the security of NATO members or other neighboring countries.''.

(b) REPORT ON EUROPEAN ENERGY SECURITY AND RELATED VULNERABILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report assessing the energy security of NATO members, other European nations who share a border with the Russian Federation, and Moldova.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include assessments of the following issues:

(A) The extent of reliance by these nations on the Russian Federation for supplies of oil and natural gas.

(B) Whether such reliance creates vulnerabilities that negatively affect the security of those nations.

(C) The magnitude of those vulnerabilities.

(D) The impacts of those vulnerabilities on the national security and economic interests of the United States.

(E) Any other aspect that the Director determines to be relevant to these issues.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. ____. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON WAYS THE UNITED STATES COULD HELP VULNERABLE ALLIES AND PARTNERS WITH ENERGY SECURITY.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (Public Law 94–163) gives the President discretion to allow crude oil and natural gas exports that the President determines to be consistent with the national interest;

(2) United States allies and partners in Europe and Asia have requested access to United States oil and natural gas exports to limit their vulnerability and to diversify their supplies, including in the face of Russian aggression and Middle East volatility; and

(3) the President should exercise existing authorities related to natural gas and crude oil exports to help aid vulnerable United States allies and partners, consistent with the national interest.

SA 1487. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. EXPEDITED APPROVAL OF EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS TO UNITED STATES ALLIES AND PARTNERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3(c) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(c) For purposes'' and inserting the following:

''(c) EXPEDITED APPROVAL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes'';

(2) in paragraph (1) (as so designated), by striking ''nation with which there is in effect a free trade agreement requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas'' and inserting ''foreign country described in paragraph (2)''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) FOREIGN COUNTRY DESCRIBED.—A foreign country referred to in paragraph (1) is—

''(A) a nation with which there is in effect a free trade agreement requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas;

''(B) a member country of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; or

''(C) Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Finland, India, or Japan.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to applications for the authorization to export natural gas under section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b) that are pending on, or filed on or after, the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 1488. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 608. SENSE OF SENATE ON MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PAY RAISES.

(a) FINDING.—The Senate finds that section 1009 of title 37, United States Code, specifies that the annual increase in pay for members of the uniformed services shall equal the employment cost index while section 5303 of title 5, United States Code, provides that the amount of the annual increase in pay for civilian employees of the Federal Government should be equal to one half of one percent less than the employment cost index.

(b) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the members of our uniformed services have earned a higher annual increase in pay to reward them for the unique challenges and hardships of their service to our country; and

(2) the annual increase in pay for members of the uniformed services should exceed that of the annual increase in pay for civilian employees of the Federal Government.

SA 1489. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 832. MODIFICATIONS TO THE JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS FOR CERTAIN SOLE-SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

(a) REPEAL OF SIMPLIFIED JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS.—Section 811 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84; 123 Stat. 2405) is repealed.

(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS.—

(1) DEFENSE PROCUREMENTS.—Section 2304(f)(2)(D)(ii) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''if such procurement is for property or services in an amount less than $20,000,000'' before the semicolon at the end.

(2) CIVILIAN PROCUREMENTS.—Section 3304(e)(4) of title 41, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''or section 8(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(a)).'' and inserting ''; or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(E) the procurement is for property or services in an amount less than $20,000,000 and is conducted under section 8(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(a)).''.

SA 1490. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 403. MINIMUM NUMBER OF ARMY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3062 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e)(1) Effective October 1, 2015, the Secretary of the Army shall maintain a total number of brigade combat teams for the regular and reserve components of the Army of not fewer than 32 brigade combat teams.

''(2) In this subsection, the term ' brigade combat team' means any unit that consists of—

''(A) an arms branch maneuver brigade;

''(B) its assigned support units; and

''(C) its assigned fire teams''.

(b) LIMITATION ON ELIMINATION OF ARMY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAMS.—

(1) LIMITATION.—The Secretary of the Army may not proceed with any decision to reduce the number of brigade combat teams for the regular Army to fewer than 32 brigade combat teams.

(2) ADDITIONAL LIMITATION ON RETIREMENT.—The Secretary may not eliminate any brigade combat team from the brigade combat teams of the regular Army as of the date of the enactment of this Act until the later of the following:

(A) The date that is 30 days after the date on which the Secretary submits the report required under paragraph (3).

(B) The date that is 30 days after the date on which the Secretary certifies to the congressional defense committees that—

(i) the elimination of Army brigade combat teams will not increase the operational risk of meeting the National Defense Strategy; and

(ii) the reduction of such combat teams does not reduce the total number of brigade combat teams of the Army to fewer than 32 brigade combat teams.

(3) REPORT ON ELIMINATION OF BRIGADE COMBAT TEAMS.—The Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth the following:

(A) The rationale for any proposed reduction of the total strength of the Army, including the National Guard and Reserves, below the strength provided in subsection (e) of section 3062 of title 10, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a) of this section), and an operational analysis of the total strength of the Army that demonstrates performance of the designated mission at an equal or greater level of effectiveness as the personnel of the Army so reduced.

(B) An assessment of the implications for the Army, the Army National Guard of the United States, and the Army Reserve of the force mix ratio of Army troop strengths and combat units after such reduction.

(C) Such other matters relating to the reduction of the total strength of the Army as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) ADDITIONAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—At least 90 days before the date on which the total strength of the Army, including the National Guard and Reserves, is reduced below the strength provided in subsection (e) of section 3062 of title 10, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a) of this section), the Secretary of the Army, in consultation with (where applicable) the Director of the Army National Guard or Chief of the Army Reserve, shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the reduction.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A list of each major combat unit of the Army that will remain after the reduction, organized by division and enumerated down to the brigade combat team-level or its equivalent, including for each such brigade combat team—

(i) the mission it is assigned to; and

(ii) the assigned unit and military installation where it is based.

(B) A list of each brigade combat team proposed for disestablishment, including for each such unit—

(i) the mission it is assigned to; and

(ii) the assigned unit and military installation where it is based.

(C) A list of each unit affected by a proposed disestablishment listed under subparagraph (B) and a description of how such unit is affected.

(D) For each military installation and unit listed under subparagraph (B)(ii), a description of changes, if any, to the designed operational capability (DOC) statement of the unit as a result of a proposed disestablishment.

(E) A description of any anticipated changes in manpower authorizations as a result of a proposed disestablishment listed under subparagraph (B).

SA 1491. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1005. ECONOMICAL AND EFFICIENT OPERATION OF WORKING CAPITAL FUND ACTIVITIES.

Section 2208(e) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' after ''(e)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) The accomplishment of the most economical and efficient organization and operation of working capital fund activities for purposes of paragraph (1) shall include actions toward the implementation of a workload plan that optimizes the efficiency of the workforce operating within a working capital fund activity and reduces the rate structure.''.

SA 1492. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1283. AUTHORIZATION OF EXPORTATION OF CRUDE OIL TO CERTAIN ALLIES AND PARTNERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Section 103(b) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6212(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3)(A) The President shall exempt from the rule promulgated under paragraph (1) exports of crude oil from the United States to countries that are allies and partners of the United States and the energy security of which would be enhanced by such exports, including members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Georgia, Ukraine, Finland, Japan, and India.

''(B) If the President receives a request for exports of crude oil produced in the United

States from the government of a country described in subparagraph (A), the President shall approve the export of such crude oil to that country not later than 60 days after receiving the request if the President determines that the export of such crude oil to that country is in the national interest.''.

SA 1493. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 342 the following:

SEC. 342A. PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTS TO FACILITATE PAYMENTS FOR HONORING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AT SPORTING EVENTS.

(a) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Army National Guard has paid professional sports organizations to honor members of the Armed Forces;

(2) any organization wishing to honor members of the Armed Forces should do so on a voluntary basis, and the Department of Defense should take action to ensure that no payments be made for such activities in the future; and

(3) any organization, including the National Football League, that has accepted taxpayer funds to honor members of the Armed Forces should consider directing an equivalent amount of funding in the form of a donation to a charitable organization that supports members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families.

(b) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 134 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2241a the following new section:

''§ 2241b. Prohibition on contracts providing payments for activities to honor members of the armed forces

''(a) PROHIBITION.—The Department of Defense may not enter into any contract or other agreement under which payments are to be made in exchange for activities by the contractor intended to honor, or giving the appearance of honoring, members of the armed forces (whether members of the regular components or the reserve components) at any form of sporting event.

''(b) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed as prohibiting the Department from taking actions to facilitate activities intended to honor members of the armed forces at sporting events that are provided on a pro bono basis if such activities are provided and received in accordance with applicable rules and regulations regarding the acceptance of gifts by the military departments, the armed forces, and members of the armed forces.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of subchapter I of chapter 134 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2241a the following new item:

''2241b. Prohibition on contracts providing payments for activities to honor members of the armed forces at sporting events.''.

SA 1494. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COONS, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. DEFINITION OF SPOUSE FOR PURPOSES OF VETERANS BENEFITS TO REFLECT NEW STATE DEFINITIONS OF SPOUSE.

(a) SPOUSE DEFINED.—Section 101 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''of the opposite sex''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (31) and inserting the following new paragraph:

''(31)(A) An individual shall be considered a 'spouse' if—

''(i) the marriage of the individual is valid in the State in which the marriage was entered into; or

''(ii) in the case of a marriage entered into outside any State—

''(I) the marriage of the individual is valid in the place in which the marriage was entered into; and

''(II) the marriage could have been entered into in a State.

''(B) In this paragraph, the term 'State' has the meaning given that term in paragraph (20), except that the term also includes the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.''.

(b) MARRIAGE DETERMINATION.—Section 103(c) of such title is amended by striking ''according to'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''in accordance with section 101(31) of this title.''.

SA 1495. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 1495

In the appropriate place please insert the following:

SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the accidental transfer of suspected bacillus anthracis, also known as anthrax, from an Army laboratory to more than 28 laboratories located in at least 12 states and three countries discovered in April 2015 represents a serious safety lapse and a potential threat to public health;

(2) the Department of Defense, in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, should continue to investigate the cause of this lapse and determine if protective protocols should be strengthened;

(3) the Department of Defense should reassess standards on a regular basis to ensure they are current and effective to prevent a reoccurrence; and

(4) the Department of Defense should keep Congress apprised of the investigation, any potential public health or safety risk, remedial actions taken and plans to regularly reassess standards.

SA 1496. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1283. AUTHORIZATION OF EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS TO CERTAIN ALLIES AND PARTNERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Section 103(b) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6212(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3)(A) The President shall exempt from the rule promulgated under paragraph (1) exports of natural gas from the United States to countries that are allies and partners of the United States and the energy security of which would be enhanced by such exports, including members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Georgia, Ukraine, Finland, Japan, and India.

''(B) If the President receives a request for exports of natural gas produced in the United States from the government of a country described in subparagraph (A), the President shall approve the export of such natural gas to that country not later than 60 days after receiving the request if the President determines that the export of such natural gas to that country is in the national interest.''.

SA 1497. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1257. REPORT ON SECURITY CHALLENGES OF HYBRID WARFARE TACTICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth an assessment of the security challenges posed by hybrid warfare tactics that combine conventional and unconventional means, such as those used by the Russian Federation in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, and their implications for United States military doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, and personnel and facilities.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report under subsection (a) shall address the following:

(1) The implications for mechanized and armored warfare.

(2) The implications of the use of information operations to gain information dominance.

(3) The implications of the use of sophisticated electronic warfare capabilities.

(4) The applicability of lessons learned from the conflict in Ukraine to security challenges faced by other United States combatant commands, including the United

States Pacific Command and the United States Central Command.

(5) Such other matters with respect to the security challenges posed by the tactics described in subsection (a) as the Secretary consider appropriate.

SA 1498. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title II, add the following:

SEC. 236. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON COMMON AIRBORNE SENSE AND AVOID TECHNOLOGY ON UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) timely integration and first article delivery of Common Airborne Sense and Avoid technology on unmanned aircraft systems of the Department of Defense is a key requirement to ensuring greater access by the Department of Defense to the airspace of the United States and sustaining United States leadership in the unmanned aircraft systems industry;

(2) the technology described in paragraph (1) plays a crucial role in the development of civil standards by the Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the efforts of unmanned aircraft systems test centers and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and

(3) the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Air Force should fully support and fund continued research, development, testing, integration, and first article delivery of the technology described in paragraph (1) on unmanned aircraft systems of the Department.

SA 1499. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 316, between lines 24 and 25, insert the following:

(3) Recommendations on how best to implement mental health screenings for individuals enlisting or accessioning into the Armed Forces before enlistment or accession.

SA 1500. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. 141. BRIEFING ON RETIREMENT AND STORAGE OF AIR FORCE ONE (VC–25) AIRCRAFT.

Not later than April 1, 2016, the Secretary of the Air Force shall provide to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a briefing on the Air Force's plan to retire and subsequently place into storage the current fleet of Air Force One (VC–25) aircraft. The briefing shall include an overview on the plan to move one or both aircraft to a museum owned by the Department of the Air Force upon their retirement from active service.

SA 1501. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 808, line 4, insert after ''level'' the following: ''and an estimate of the costs of downblending that uranium''.

SA 1502. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1628. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON REVIEWING AND CONSIDERING FINDINGS OF COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS ON CYBER CAPABILITIES OF ARMED FORCES.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should, before reducing any cyber capabilities of an active or reserve component of the Armed Forces, review and consider findings from an assessment by the Council of Governors of the synchronization of cyber capabilities in the active and reserve components of the Armed Forces.

SA 1503. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle D of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 643. ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENT OF BOTH RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR CERTAIN MILITARY RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

(a) EXTENSION OF CONCURRENT RECEIPT AUTHORITY TO RETIREES WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES RATED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT.—Subsection (a) of section 1414 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (2).

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading of such section is amended to read as follows:

''§ 1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation''.

(2) The item relating to such section in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 71 of such title is amended to read as follows:

''1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on July 1, 2016, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SEC. 644. COORDINATION OF SERVICE ELIGIBILITY FOR COMBAT-RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION AND CONCURRENT RECEIPT.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO STANDARDIZE SIMILAR PROVISIONS.—

(1) QUALIFIED RETIREES.—Subsection (a) of section 1414 of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section 626(a) of this Act, is further amended—

(A) by striking ''a member or'' and all that follows through ''retiree')'' and inserting ''a qualified retiree''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) QUALIFIED RETIREES.—For purposes of this section, a qualified retiree, with respect to any month, is a member or former member of the uniformed services who—

''(A) is entitled to retired pay (other than by reason of section 12731b of this title); and

''(B) is also entitled for that month to veterans' disability compensation.''.

(2) DISABILITY RETIREES.—Paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of section 1414 of such title is amended to read as follows:

''(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR RETIREES WITH FEWER THAN 20 YEARS OF SERVICE.—The retired pay of a qualified retiree who is retired under chapter 61 of this title with fewer than 20 years of creditable service is subject to reduction by the lesser of—

''(A) the amount of the reduction under sections 5304 and 5305 of title 38; or

''(B) the amount (if any) by which the amount of the member's retired pay under such chapter exceeds the amount equal to 2½ percent of the member's years of creditable service multiplied by the member's retired pay base under section 1406(b)(1) or 1407 of this title, whichever is applicable to the member.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on July 1, 2016, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SA 1504. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle D of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 643. ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENT OF BOTH RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR MILITARY RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

(a) RESTATEMENT OF CURRENT CONCURRENT PAYMENT AUTHORITY WITH EXTENSION OF PAYMENT AUTHORITY TO RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

RATED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT DISABLING.—Subsection (a) of section 1414 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) and subsection (b), a member or former member of the uniformed services who is entitled for any month to retired pay and who is also entitled for that month to veterans' disability compensation for a service-connected disability or combination of service-connected disabilities that is compensable under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (hereinafter in this section referred to as 'qualified retiree') is entitled to be paid both for that month without regard to sections 5304 and 5305 of title 38.

''(2) ONE-YEAR PHASE-IN FOR QUALIFIED RETIREES WITH TOTAL DISABILITIES.—During the period beginning on January 1, 2004, and ending on December 31, 2004, payment of retired pay to a qualified retiree is subject to subsection (c) if the qualified retiree is any of the following:

''(A) A qualified retiree receiving veterans' disability compensation for a disability rated as 100 percent disabling by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

''(B) A qualified retiree receiving veterans' disability compensation at the rate payable for a disability rated as 100 percent disabling by reason of a determination of individual unemployability.

''(3) 10-YEAR PHASE-IN FOR QUALIFIED RETIREES WITH DISABILITIES RATED 50 PERCENT DISABLING OR HIGHER.—During the period beginning on January 1, 2004, and ending on December 31, 2013, payment of retired pay to a qualified retiree is subject to subsection (c) if the qualified retiree is entitled to veterans' disability compensation for a service-connected disability or combination of service-connected disabilities that is rated not less than 50 percent disabling by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

''(4) 10-YEAR PHASE-IN FOR QUALIFIED RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE DISABILITIES RATED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT DISABLING.—During the period beginning on January 1, 2016, and ending on December 31, 2025, payment of retired pay to a qualified retiree is subject to subsection (d) if the qualified retiree is entitled to veterans' disability compensation for a service-connected disability or combination of service-connected disabilities that is rated less than 50 percent disabling by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs but is compensable under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.''.

(b) PHASE-IN FOR QUALIFIED RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE DISABILITIES RATED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT DISABLING.—Such section is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection (d):

''(d) PHASE-IN OF FULL CONCURRENT RECEIPT FOR QUALIFIED RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE DISABILITIES RATED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT DISABLING.—During the period beginning on January 1, 2016, and ending on December 31, 2025, retired pay payable to a qualified retiree that pursuant to subsection (a)(4) is subject to this subsection shall be determined as follows:

''(1) CALENDAR YEAR 2016.—For a month during 2016, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the amount (if any) of retired pay in excess of the current baseline offset, plus $100.

''(2) CALENDAR YEAR 2017.—For a month during 2017, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount specified in paragraph (1) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 10 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount specified in paragraph (1) for that member's disability.

''(3) CALENDAR YEAR 2018.—For a month during 2018, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (2) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 20 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (2) for that qualified retiree.

''(4) CALENDARY YEAR 2018.—For a month during 2019, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (3) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 30 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (3) for that qualified retiree.

''(5) CALENDAR YEAR 2020.—For a month during 2020, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (4) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 40 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (4) for that qualified retiree.

''(6) CALENDAR YEAR 2021.—For a month during 2021, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (5) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 50 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (5) for that qualified retiree.

''(7) CALENDAR YEAR 2022.—For a month during 2022, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (6) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 60 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (6) for that qualified retiree.

''(8) CALENDAR YEAR 2023.—For a month during 2023, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (7) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 70 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (7) for that qualified retiree.

''(9) CALENDAR YEAR 2024.—For a month during 2024, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (8) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 80 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (8) for that qualified retiree.

''(10) CALENDAR YEAR 2025.—For a month during 2025, the amount of retired pay payable to a qualified retiree is the sum of—

''(A) the amount determined under paragraph (9) for that qualified retiree; and

''(B) 90 percent of the difference between (i) the current baseline offset, and (ii) the amount determined under paragraph (9) for that qualified retiree.

''(11) GENERAL LIMITATION.—Retired pay determined under this subsection for a qualified retiree, if greater than the amount of retired pay otherwise applicable to that qualified retiree, shall be reduced to the amount of retired pay otherwise applicable to that qualified retiree.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO PHASE-IN FOR QUALIFIED RETIREES WITH DISABILITIES RATED 50 PERCENT DISABLING OR HIGHER.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) in the subsection caption, by inserting ''FOR QUALIFIED RETIREES WITH DISABILITIES RATED 50 PERCENT DISABLING OR HIGHER'' after ''FULL CONCURRENT RECEIPT''; and

(2) by striking ''the second sentence of subsection (a)(1)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)(3)''.

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading of such section is amended to read as follows:

''§ 1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation''.

(2) The item relating to such section in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 71 of such title is amended to read as follows:

''1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation.''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on December 31, 2015, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SEC. 644. COORDINATION OF SERVICE ELIGIBILITY FOR COMBAT-RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION AND CONCURRENT RECEIPT.

(a) AMENDMENT TO STANDARDIZE SIMILAR PROVISIONS.—Paragraph (2) of section 1414(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR RETIREES WITH FEWER THAN 20 YEARS OF SERVICE.—The retired pay of a qualified retiree who is retired under chapter 61 of this title with fewer than 20 years of creditable service is subject to reduction by the lesser of—

''(A) the amount of the reduction under sections 5304 and 5305 of title 38; or

''(B) the amount (if any) by which the amount of the member's retired pay under such chapter exceeds the amount equal to 2½ percent of the member's years of creditable service multiplied by the member's retired pay base under section 1406(b)(1) or 1407 of this title, whichever is applicable to the member.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on July 1, 2015, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SA 1505. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle D of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 643. ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENT OF BOTH RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR MILITARY RETIREES WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES RATED 40 PERCENT DISABLING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a)(2) of section 1414 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking ''means'' and all that follows and inserting ''means the following:

''(A) During the period beginning on January 1, 2004, and ending on June 30, 2015, a service-connected disability or combination of service-connected disabilities that is rated as not less than 50 percent disabling by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

''(B) After June 30, 2015, a service-connected disability or combination of service-

connected disabilities that is rated as not less than 40 percent disabling by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading of such section is amended to read as follows:

''§ 1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation rated 40 percent or higher: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation''.

(2) The item relating to such section in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 71 of such title is amended to read as follows:

''1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation rated 40 percent or higher: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on July 1, 2015, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SEC. 644. COORDINATION OF SERVICE ELIGIBILITY FOR COMBAT-RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION AND CONCURRENT RECEIPT.

(a) AMENDMENT TO STANDARDIZE SIMILAR PROVISIONS.—Paragraph (2) of section 1414(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR RETIREES WITH FEWER THAN 20 YEARS OF SERVICE.—The retired pay of a qualified retiree who is retired under chapter 61 of this title with fewer than 20 years of creditable service is subject to reduction by the lesser of—

''(A) the amount of the reduction under sections 5304 and 5305 of title 38; or

''(B) the amount (if any) by which the amount of the member's retired pay under such chapter exceeds the amount equal to 2½ percent of the member's years of creditable service multiplied by the member's retired pay base under section 1406(b)(1) or 1407 of this title, whichever is applicable to the member.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on July 1, 2015, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SA 1506. Mr. TILLIS (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. 141. STATIONING OF C–130 H AIRCRAFT AVIONICS PREVIOUSLY MODIFIED BY THE AVIONICS MODERNIZATION PROGRAM (AMP) IN SUPPORT OF DAILY TRAINING AND CONTINGENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR AIRBORNE AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES.

The Secretary of the Air Force shall station aircraft previously modified by the C–130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) to support United States Army Airborne and United States Army Special Operations Command daily training and contingency requirements by the end of fiscal year 2017, and such aircraft shall not be required to deploy in the normal rotation of C–130 H units. The Secretary shall provide such personnel as required to maintain and operate the aircraft.

SA 1507. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1258. APPROVAL OF EXPORT LICENCES AND LETTERS OF REQUEST TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT OF UKRAINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) EXPORT LICENSE APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary of State shall provide the specified congressional committees a detailed list of all export license applications, including requests for marketing licenses, for the sale of defense articles and defense services to Ukraine. The list shall include the date when the application or request was first submitted, the current status of each application or request, and the estimated timeline for adjudication of such applications or requests. The Secretary shall give priority to processing these applications and requests.

(2) LETTERS OF REQUEST.—The Secretary of State shall also provide the specified congressional committees a detailed list of all pending Letters of Request for Foreign Military Sales to Ukraine, including the date when the letter was first submitted, the current status, and the estimated timeline for adjudication of such letters.

(b) REPORTS.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the specified congressional committees a report outlining the status of the applications, requests for marketing licenses and Letters of Request described under subsection (a). The report shall terminate upon certification by the President that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Government of Ukraine has been restored or 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, whichever occurs first.

(c) SPECIFIED CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''specified congressional committees'' means—

(1) the congressional defense committees; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SA 1508. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title V, add the following:

SEC. 515. PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE COMPONENTS WHO ARE SEPARATING FROM THE ARMED FORCES.

Section 1145 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection (d):

''(d) PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS FOR MEMBERS OF RESERVE COMPONENTS.—(1) The Secretary concerned shall provide a physical examination pursuant to subsection (a)(5) to each member of a reserve component who—

''(A) will not otherwise receive such an examination under such subsection; and

''(B) elects to receive such a physical examination.

''(2) The Secretary concerned shall—

''(A) provide the physical examination under paragraph (1) to a member during the 90-day period before the date on which the member is scheduled to be separated from the armed forces; and

''(B) issue orders to such a member to receive such physical examination.

''(3) A member may not be entitled to health care benefits pursuant to subsection (a), (b), or (c) solely by reason of being provided a physical examination under paragraph (1).

''(4) In providing to a member a physical examination under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall provide to the member a record of the physical examination.''.

SA 1509. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. INCREASED COOPERATION BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPROVE PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR VETERANS BENEFITS.

(a) PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly develop and implement procedures to improve the timely provision to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of such information as the Secretary requires to process claims submitted to the Secretary for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) TIMELY PROVISION.—The procedures developed and implemented under paragraph (1) shall ensure that the information provided to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is provided to the Secretary not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary requests the information.

(b) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the requests for information made by the Secretary during the most recent one-year period for information from the Secretary of Defense required by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to process claims submitted to the Secretary for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary; and

(2) the timeliness of responses to such requests.

SA 1510. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016

for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 738. REPORT ON INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS SYSTEMS OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly submit to Congress a report that sets forth a timeline with milestones for achieving interoperability between the electronic health records systems of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SA 1511. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 265, strike line 15 and insert the following:

result of the implementation of the plan;

(C) an assessment whether the privatized defense commissary system under the plan can sustain the current savings to patrons of the defense commissary system;

(D) an assessment of the impact that privatization of the defense commissary system under the plan would have on all eligible beneficiaries;

(E) an assessment whether the privatized defense commissary system under the plan can sustain the continued operation of existing commissaries; and

(F) an assessment whether privatization of the defense commissary system is feasible for overseas commissaries.

SA 1512. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Ms. HIRONO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense considers appropriate, shall establish a process to determine whether a covered individual served as described in subsection (a) or (b) of section 107 of title 38, United States Code, for purposes of determining whether such covered individual is eligible for benefits described in such subsections.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this section, a covered individual is any individual who—

(1) claims service described in subsection (a) or (b) of section 107 of title 38, United States Code; and

(2) is not included in the Approved Revised Reconstructed Guerilla Roster of 1948, known as the ''Missouri List''.

(c) PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS.—The process established under subsection (a) shall include a mechanism to ensure that a covered individual is not treated as an individual eligible for a benefit described in subsection (a) or (b) of section 107 of such title if such covered individual engaged in any disqualifying conduct during service described in such subsections, including collaboration with the enemy or criminal conduct.

SA 1513. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title V, add the following:

SEC. 524. ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCESS BY WHICH MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES MAY CARRY A CONCEALED PERSONAL FIREARM ON A MILITARY INSTALLATION.

(a) PROCESS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense, taking into consideration the views of senior leadership of military installations in the United States, shall establish a process by which the commander of a military installation in the United States may authorize a member of the Armed Forces who is assigned to duty at the installation to carry a concealed personal firearm on the installation if the commander determines it to be necessary as a personal-protection or force-protection measure.

(b) RELATION TO STATE AND LOCAL LAW.—In establishing the process under subsection (a) for a military installation, the commander of the installation shall consult with elected officials of the State and local jurisdictions in which the installation is located and take into consideration the law of the State and such jurisdictions regarding carrying a concealed personal firearm.

(c) MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS.—To be eligible to be authorized to carry a concealed personal firearm on a military installation pursuant to the process established under subsection (a), a member of the Armed Forces—

(1) must complete any training and certification required by any State in which the installation is located that would permit the member to carry concealed in that State;

(2) must not be subject to disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for any offense that could result in incarceration or separation from the Armed Forces;

(3) must not be prohibited from possessing a firearm because of conviction of a crime of domestic violence; and

(4) must meet such service-related qualification requirements for the use of firearms, as established by the Secretary of the military department concerned.

(d) STATE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''State'' includes the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

SA 1514. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title X, insert the following:

SEC. ____. REPORT ON FUTURE MIX OF AIRCRAFT PLATFORMS FOR THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) REPORT ON STUDY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report setting forth the results of a study, to be performed by an organization or entity independent of the Department of Defense selected by the Secretary for purposes of this section, that determines the following:

(1) An optimized future mix of shorter range fighter-class strike aircraft and long-range strike aircraft platforms for the Armed Forces.

(2) An appropriate future mix of manned aerial platforms and unmanned aerial platforms for the Armed Forces.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS IN DETERMINING MIX.—The mixes determined pursuant to the study shall be determined taking into account relevant portions of the defense strategy, critical assumptions, priorities, force-sizing construct, and cost.

(c) NONDUPLICATION OF EFFORT.—If any information required under subsection (a) has been included in another report or notification previously submitted to Congress by law, the Secretary may provide a list of such reports and notifications at the time of submitting the report required by subsection (a) in lieu of including such information in the report required by subsection (a).

SA 1515. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERMENT IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2402(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(10) Any individual—

''(A) who—

''(i) was naturalized pursuant to section 2(1) of the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–207; 8 U.S.C. 1423 note); and

''(ii) at the time of the individual's death resided in the United States; or

''(B) who—

''(i) the Secretary determines served with a special guerrilla unit or irregular forces operating from a base in Laos in support of the Armed Forces of the United States at any time during the period beginning February 28, 1961, and ending May 7, 1975; and

''(ii) at the time of the individual's death—

''(I) was a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States; and

''(II) resided in the United States.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to an individual dying on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1516. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1049. CODIFICATION IN LAW OF ESTABLISHMENT AND DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF COMPLEX ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS IN THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is in the Office of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau the Office of Complex Administrative Investigations (in this section referred to as the ''Office'').

(b) DIRECTION AND SUPERVISION.—The Office shall be under the direction and supervision of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

(c) DUTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The duties of the Office shall be to undertake complex administrative investigations of matters relating to members of the National Guard when in State status, including investigations of sexual assault involving a member of the National Guard in such status, upon the request of any of the following:

(A) The Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

(B) An adjutant general of a State or territory or the District of Columbia.

(C) The governor of a State or territory, or the Commanding General of the National Guard of the District of Columbia.

(2) COMPLEX ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS.—For purposes of this subsection, a complex administrative investigation is any investigation (as specified by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau for purposes of this section) involving factors giving rise to unusual complexity in investigation, including the following:

(A) Questions of jurisdiction between the United States and a State or territory.

(B) Matters requiring specialized training among investigating officers.

(C) Matters raising the need for an independent investigation in order to ensure fairness and impartiality in investigation.

(3) MATTERS RELATING TO MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD IN STATE STATUS.—The determination whether or not a matter relates to a member of the National Guard when in State status for purposes of this section shall be made by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau in accordance with criteria specified by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau for purposes of this section.

(d) CHIEF OF NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU TREATMENT OF FINAL REPORTS.—The Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall treat any final report of the Office on a matter under this section as if such report were the report of an Inspector General of the Department of Defense or a military department on such matter.

(e) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) SUBMITTAL OF FINAL REPORTS TO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATIONS.—Upon the adoption by the Office of a final report on an investigation undertaken by the Office pursuant to this section, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall submit such report (with any personally identifying information appropriately redacted) to the members of Congress from the State or territory concerned.

(2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall submit to Congress each year a report on the investigations undertaken by the Office pursuant to this section during the preceding year. Each report shall include, for the year covered by such report, the following:

(A) A summary description of the investigations undertaken during such year, including any trends in matters subject to investigation and in findings as a result of investigations.

(B) Information, set forth by State and territory, on the investigations undertaken during such year involving allegations of sexual assault involving a member of the National Guard.

(C) Such other information and matters on the investigations undertaken during such year as the Chief of the National Guard Bureau considers appropriate.

(f) PERSONNEL AND OTHER CAPABILITIES.—The Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall ensure that the Office maintains the personnel and other capabilities necessary for the discharge of the duties of the Office under this section.

(g) PROCEDURES AND INSTRUCTIONS.—The Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall issue, and may from time to time update, procedures and instructions necessary for the discharge of the duties of the Office under this section.

(h) REPEAL OF SUPERSEDED INSTRUCTION.—Chief of the National Guard Bureau Instruction CNGBI 0400.01, dated July 30, 2012, shall have no further force or effect.

SEC. 1050. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES REPORT ON SERIOUS MISCONDUCT WITHIN THE NATIONAL GUARD.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth the following:

(1) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the authorities of the Secretary of Defense and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to investigate and respond on their own initiative to allegations of serious misconduct, including but not limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, violations of Federal law, retaliation, and waste, fraud, and abuse arising in operations of the National Guard in Federal status and in State status.

(2) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the mechanisms available to the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the military departments, and the Chief of the National Guard to receive, process, and monitor the disposition of allegations described in paragraph (1), whether first brought to the attention of the Federal government or the Adjutants General.

(3) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the process used to determine whether allegations described in paragraph (1) are investigated by the Department of Defense, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Inspector General of the National Guard Bureau, the Inspectors General of the military departments, the Office of Complex Administrative Investigations of the National Guard Bureau, Federal military or civilian law enforcement agencies, or other agencies in the first instance, and the coordination of investigations among such agencies

(4) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the monitoring of investigations into allegations described in paragraph (1) by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the military departments, and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau which are undertaken by Federal agencies and those undertaken under the direction of the Adjutants General.

(5) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the process used for disposing of substantiated allegations described in paragraph (1), whether by prosecution or administrative action, and the consistency in the disposition of allegations of a similar nature across the National Guard.

(6) An evaluation of the effectiveness of State codes of military justice in prosecuting members of the National Guard for serious misconduct described in paragraph (1), and an assessment whether chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), should be extended to authorize prosecution of some or all offenses committed by members of the National Guard while in State status.

(7) An evaluation of the effectiveness of mechanisms to protect the confidentiality of members of the National Guard who report allegations described in paragraph (1) and to prevent retaliation against such members.

(8) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the National Guard Bureau in preventing and proactively identifying instances of serious misconduct described in paragraph (1), including the availability and effectiveness of hotlines through which members of the National Guard who are uncomfortable reporting their concerns through State channels may bring them to the attention of the National Guard Bureau and the use of command climate surveys in identifying serious misconduct.

SA 1517. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 1204 the following:

SEC. 1204A. REPORT ON EXPANSION OF NATIONAL GUARD STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM TO INCLUDE NATIONS IN THE ARCTIC REGION.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth an assessment of the feasibility and advisability of expanding the National Guard State Partnership Program to include partnerships with nations in the Arctic region in order to further the strategy of the Department of Defense for the Arctic region.

SA 1518. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1005. ANNUAL REPORT ON MANNER IN WHICH THE BUDGET OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SUPPORTS THE STRATEGY OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE ARCTIC REGION.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall provide for the inclusion in the budget for each fiscal year after fiscal year 2016 that is submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, a report on the manner in which amounts requested in the budget for the fiscal year concerned for the Department

of Defense support implementation of the strategy of the Department and the Armed Forces for the Arctic region, including the extent to which such amounts will address gaps in military infrastructure and capabilities in the Arctic region.

(b) FORM.—Each report under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SA 1519. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1024. TREATMENT OF EACH VESSEL IN THE CVN–78 CLASS AIRCRAFT CARRIER PROGRAM AS A MAJOR SUBPROGRAM OF A MAJOR DEFENSE ACQUISITION PROGRAM.

Each vessel in the CVN–78 class aircraft carrier program shall be treated as a separate major subprogram of a major defense acquisition program for purposes of chapter 144 of title 10, United States Code.

SA 1520. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in subtitle B of title XVI, insert the following:

SEC. ____. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO SUPPORT CIVIL AUTHORITIES IN RESPONSE TO CYBER ATTACKS BY FOREIGN POWERS.

(a) PLAN REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall develop a comprehensive plan for the United States Cyber Command to support civil authorities in responding to cyber attacks by foreign powers (as defined in section 101 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1801)) against the United States or a United States person.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The plan required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A plan for internal Department of Defense collective training activities that are integrated with exercises conducted with other agencies and State and local governments.

(B) Plans for coordination with the heads of other Federal agencies and State and local governments pursuant to the exercises required under subparagraph (A).

(C) Note of any historical frameworks that are used, if any, in the formulation of the plan required by paragraph (1), such as Operation Noble Eagle.

(D) Descriptions of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of Federal, State, and local authorities as the Secretary understands them.

(E) Descriptions of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the active components and reserve components of the Armed Forces.

(F) A description of such legislative and administrative action as may be necessary to carry out the plan required by paragraph (1).

(b) COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES REVIEW OF PLAN.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall review the plan developed under subsection (a)(1).

SA 1521. Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. NELSON, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KING, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. REID, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1523. LIMITATION ON THE AVAILABILITY OF OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATION FUNDING SUBJECT TO RELIEF FROM THE BUDGET CONTROL ACT.

(a) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, of the total amount authorized to be appropriated by this title for overseas contingency operations, not more than $50,950,000,000 may be available for obligation and expenditure unless—

(1) the discretionary spending limits imposed by section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended by section 302 of the Budget Control Act of 2011 (Public Law 112–25), on appropriations for the revised security category and the revised nonsecurity category are eliminated or increased in proportionally equal amounts for fiscal year 2016 by any other Act enacted after December 26, 2013; and

(2) if the revised security and the revised nonsecurity category are increased as described in paragraph (1), the amount of the increase is equal to or greater than the amount in excess of the $50,950,000,000 that is authorized to be appropriated by this title for security category activities.

(b) USE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE UNDER SATISFACTION OF LIMITATION.—

(1) TRANSFER.—Any amounts authorized to be appropriated by this title in excess of $50,950,000,000 that are available for obligation and expenditure pursuant to subsection (a) shall be transferred to applicable accounts of the Department of Defense providing funds for programs, projects, and activities other than for overseas contingency operations. Any amounts so transferred to an account shall be merged with amounts in the account to which transferred and available subject to the same terms and conditions as otherwise apply to amounts in such account.

(2) CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority to transfer amounts under this subsection is in addition to any other transfer authority in this Act.

SA 1522. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

Subtitle E—Army Programs

SEC. 161. STRYKER LETHALITY UPGRADES.

(a) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR PROCUREMENT, ARMY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by section 101 for procurement is hereby increased by $314,000,000, with the amount of the increase to be available for procurement for the Army for Wheeled and Tracked Combat Vehicles for Stryker (mod) Lethality Upgrades.

(2) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—The amount available under paragraph (1) for procurement for Stryker (mod) Lethality Upgrades is in addition to any other amounts available in this Act for procurement for the Army for Stryker (mod) Lethality Upgrades.

(b) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR RDT&E, ARMY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by section 201 for research, development, test, and evaluation is hereby increased by $57,000,000, with the amount of the increase to be available for research, development, test, and evaluation for the Army for the Combat Vehicle Improvement Program for Stryker Lethality Upgrades.

(2) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—The amount available under paragraph (1) for research, development, test, and evaluation for Stryker Lethality Upgrades is in addition to any other amounts available in this Act for research, development, test, and evaluation for the Army for Stryker Lethality Upgrades.

(c) OFFSET.—The aggregate amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by division A is hereby reduced by $371,000,000, with the amount of the reduction to be achieved through anticipated foreign currency gains in addition to any other anticipated foreign currency gains specified in the funding tables in division D.

SA 1523. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title I, add the following:

SEC. 120. UPDATE OF COST ESTIMATES FOR SSBN(X) SUBMARINE PROGRAM ALTERNATIVES.

(a) REPORT ON UPDATE REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—(A) Not later than March 31, 2016, the Secretary of the Navy shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth an update of the cost estimates prepared under subsection (a)(1) section 242 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81; 125 Stat. 1343) for each option considered under subsection (b) of that section for purposes of the report under that section on

the Ohio-class replacement ballistic missile submarine.

(B) The update shall specify how the cost updates account for differences in survivability, targeting responsiveness and flexibility, responsiveness to future threats, and other matters the Secretary considers important in comparing the options.

(2) FORM.—Each updated cost estimate in the report under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in an unclassified form that may be made available to the public. Other information from the update may be submitted in classified form.

(b) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the submittal under subsection (a) of the report required by that subsection, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth an assessment by the Comptroller General of the accuracy of the updated cost estimates in the report under subsection (a).

SA 1524. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1637. CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE REVIEW OF COST ESTIMATES FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

Section 1043(b)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81; 125 Stat. 1576), as most recently amended by section 1643 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291; 128 Stat. 3650), is further amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ''and the 25-year period'' after ''10-year period''; and

(2) in subparagraphs (B) and (C), by striking ''such period'' both places it appears and inserting ''such periods''.

SA 1525. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1637. PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR NEW AIR LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILE.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy may be obligated or expended for the research, development, test, and evaluation or procurement of a new air-launched cruise missile or for the W80 warhead life extension program.

SA 1526. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XVI, add the following:

Subtitle F—Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures

SEC. 1671. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures Act''.

SEC. 1672. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the Soviet Union no longer exists, and the Cold War is over. The nature of threats to the national security and military interests of the United States has changed. However, the United States continues to maintain an enormous arsenal of nuclear weapons and delivery systems that were devised with the Cold War in mind.

(2) The current nuclear arsenal of the United States includes approximately 5,000 total nuclear warheads, of which approximately 2,000 are deployed with three delivery components: long-range strategic bomber aircraft, land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. The bomber fleet of the United States comprises 93 B–52 and 20 B–2 aircraft. The United States maintains 450 intercontinental ballistic missiles. The United States also maintains 14 Ohio-class submarines, up to 12 of which are deployed at sea. Each of those submarines is armed with up to 96 independently targetable nuclear warheads.

(3) This Cold War-based approach to nuclear security comes at significant cost. Over the next 10 years, the United States will spend hundreds of billions of dollars maintaining its nuclear force. A substantial decrease in spending on the nuclear arsenal of the United States is prudent for both the budget and national security.

(4) The national security interests of the United States can be well served by reducing the total number of deployed nuclear warheads and their delivery systems, as stated by the Department of Defense's June 2013 nuclear policy guidance entitled, ''Report on Nuclear Employment Strategy of the United States''. This guidance found that force levels under the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed on April 8, 2010, and entered into force on February 5, 2011, between the United States and the Russian Federation (commonly known as the ''New START Treaty'') ''are more than adequate for what the United States needs to fulfill its national security objectives'' and that the force can be reduced by up to ⅓ below levels under the New START Treaty to 1,000 to 1,100 warheads.

(5) Even without additional reductions in deployed strategic warheads, the United States can save tens of billions of dollars by deploying those warheads more efficiently on delivery systems and by deferring production of new delivery systems until they are needed.

(6) Economic security and national security are linked and both will be well served by smart defense spending. Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated on June 24, 2010, ''Our national debt is our biggest national security threat'' and on August 2, 2011, stated, ''I haven't changed my view that the continually increasing debt is the biggest threat we have to our national security.''.

(7) The Government Accountability Office has found that there is significant waste in the construction of the nuclear facilities of the National Nuclear Security Administration of the Department of Energy.

SEC. 1673. REDUCTION IN NUCLEAR FORCES.

(a) PROHIBITION ON NEW LONG-RANGE PENETRATING BOMBER AIRCRAFT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for any of fiscal years 2015 through 2024 for the Department of Defense may be obligated or expended for the research, development, test, and evaluation or procurement of a long-range penetrating bomber aircraft.

(b) PROHIBITION ON F–35 NUCLEAR MISSION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy may be used to make the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

(c) REDUCTION IN THE B61 LIFE EXTENSION PROGRAM.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy may be obligated or expended for the B61 life extension program until the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Energy jointly certify to Congress that the total cost of the B61 life extension program has been reduced to not more than $4,000,000,000.

(d) TERMINATION OF W78 LIFE EXTENSION PROGRAM.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy may be obligated or expended for the W78 life extension program.

(e) REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR-ARMED SUBMARINES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning in fiscal year 2021, the forces of the Navy shall include not more than eight ballistic-missile submarines available for deployment.

(f) LIMITATION ON SSBN–X SUBMARINES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(1) none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for any of fiscal years 2015 through 2024 for the Department of Defense may be obligated or expended for the procurement of an SSBN–X submarine; and

(2) none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2025 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense may be obligated or expended for the procurement of more than eight such submarines.

(g) PROHIBITION ON NEW INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for any of fiscal years 2015 through 2024 for the Department of Defense may be obligated or expended for the research, development, test, and evaluation or procurement of a new intercontinental ballistic missile.

(h) TERMINATION OF MIXED OXIDE FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY PROJECT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy may be obligated or expended for the

Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility project.

(i) TERMINATION OF URANIUM PROCESSING FACILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy may be obligated or expended for the Uranium Processing Facility located at the Y–12 National Security Complex, Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

(j) PROHIBITION ON NEW AIR LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 or any fiscal year thereafter for the Department of Defense or the Department of Energy may be obligated or expended for the research, development, test, and evaluation or procurement of a new air-launched cruise missile or for the W80 warhead life extension program.

SEC. 1674. REPORTS REQUIRED.

(a) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Energy shall jointly submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report outlining the plan of each Secretary to carry out section 1673.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than March 1, 2016, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Energy shall jointly submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report outlining the plan of each Secretary to carry out section 1673, including any updates to previously submitted reports.

(c) ANNUAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS ACCOUNTING.—Not later than September 30, 2016, and annually thereafter, the President shall transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report containing a comprehensive accounting by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget of the amounts obligated and expended by the Federal Government for each nuclear weapon and related nuclear program during—

(1) the fiscal year covered by the report; and

(2) the life cycle of such weapon or program.

(d) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

SA 1527. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN TIME SPENT RECEIVING MEDICAL CARE FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AS ACTIVE DUTY FOR PURPOSES OF ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3301(1)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''12301(h),'' after ''12301(g),''.

(b) RETROACTIVE APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply as if such amendment were enacted immediately after the enactment of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–252).

SA 1528. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REPEAL OF SUNSET RELATED TO COAST GUARD AVIATION CAPACITY.

Section 225(b)(2) of the Howard Coble Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–281; 128 Stat. 3039) is repealed.

SA 1529. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 352 and insert the following:

SEC. 352. RETIREMENT OF MILITARY WORKING DOGS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2583(f) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(2) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''If the Secretary'';

(3) in paragraph (1), as designated by paragraph (2) of this subsection—

(A) by striking '', and no suitable adoption is available at the military facility where the dog is location, the Secretary may'' and inserting ''the Secretary shall''; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), as designated by paragraph (1) of this subsection, by inserting ''within the United States'' after ''to another location''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraph (2):

''(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply if a United States citizen living abroad adopts the dog at the time of retirement.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply to retirements of military working dogs pursuant to section 2583 of title 10, United States Code, that occur on or after that date.

SA 1530. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. PREFERENCE ELIGIBLE TREATMENT FOR FATHERS OF CERTAIN PERMANENTLY DISABLED OR DECEASED VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2108(3) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraphs (F) and (G) and inserting the following:

''(F) the parent of an individual who lost his or her life under honorable conditions while serving in the armed forces during a period named by paragraph (1)(A) of this section, if—

''(i) the spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or

''(ii) that parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from his or her spouse;

''(G) the parent of a service-connected permanently and totally disabled veteran, if—

''(i) the spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or

''(ii) that parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from his or her spouse; and''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall take effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1531. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle D of title V, add the following:

SEC. 540. REQUIREMENT TO USE HUMAN-BASED METHODS FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL TRAINING.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Department of Defense has made impressive strides in the development and use of methods of medical training and troop protection, such as the use of tourniquets and improvements in body armor, that have led to decreased battlefield fatalities.

(2) The Department of Defense uses more than 8,500 live animals each year to train physicians, medics, corpsmen, and other personnel methods of responding to severe battlefield injuries.

(3) The civilian sector has almost exclusively phased in the use of superior human-based training methods for numerous medical procedures currently taught in military courses using animals.

(4) Human-based medical training methods such as simulators replicate human anatomy and can allow for repetitive practice and data collection.

(5) According to scientific, peer-reviewed literature, medical simulation increases patient safety and decreases errors by healthcare providers.

(6) The Army Research, Development and Engineering Command and other entities of the Department of Defense have taken significant steps to develop methods to replace live animal-based training.

(7) According to the report by the Department of Defense titled ''Final Report on the use of Live Animals in Medical Education and Training Joint Analysis Team'', published on July 12, 2009—

(A) validated, high-fidelity simulators were to have been available for nearly every high-volume or high-value battlefield medical procedure by the end of 2011, and many were available as of 2009; and

(B) validated, high-fidelity simulators were to have been available to teach all other procedures to respond to common battlefield injuries by 2014.

(8) The Center for Sustainment of Trauma and Readiness Skills of the Air Force exclusively uses human-based training methods in its courses and does not use animals.

(9) In 2013, the Army instituted a policy forbidding non-medical personnel from participating in training courses involving the use of animals.

(10) In 2013, the medical school of the Department of Defense, part of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, replaced animal use within its medical student curriculum.

(11) The Coast Guard announced in 2014 that it would reduce by half the number of animals it uses for combat trauma training courses but stated that animals would continue to be used in courses designed for Department of Defense personnel.

(12) Effective January 1, 2015, the Department of Defense replaced animal use in six areas of medical training, including Advanced Trauma Life Support courses and the development and maintenance of surgical and critical care skills for field operational surgery and field assessment and skills tests for international students offered at the Defense Institute of Medical Operations.

(b) REQUIREMENT TO USE HUMAN-BASED METHODS FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL TRAINING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 101 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 2017. Use of human-based methods for certain medical training

''(a) COMBAT TRAUMA INJURIES.—(1) Not later than October 1, 2018, the Secretary of Defense shall develop, test, and validate human-based training methods for the purpose of training members of the armed forces in the treatment of combat trauma injuries with the goal of replacing live animal-based training methods.

''(2) Not later than October 1, 2020, the Secretary—

''(A) shall only use human-based training methods for the purpose of training members of the armed forces in the treatment of combat trauma injuries; and

''(B) may not use animals for such purpose.

''(b) EXCEPTION FOR PARTICULAR COMMANDS AND TRAINING METHODS.—(1) The Secretary may exempt a particular command, particular training method, or both, from the requirement for human-based training methods under subsection (a)(2) if the Secretary determines that human-based training methods will not provide an educationally equivalent or superior substitute for live animal-based training methods for such command or training method, as the case may be.

''(2) Any exemption under this subsection shall be for such period, not more than one year, as the Secretary shall specify in granting the exemption. Any exemption may be renewed (subject to the preceding sentence).

''(c) ANNUAL REPORTS.—(1) Not later than October 1, 2016, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the development and implementation of human-based training methods for the purpose of training members of the armed forces in the treatment of combat trauma injuries under this section.

''(2) Each report under this subsection on or after October 1, 2020, shall include a description of any exemption under subsection (b) that is in force as the time of such report, and a current justification for such exemption.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'combat trauma injuries' means severe injuries likely to occur during combat, including—

''(A) hemorrhage;

''(B) tension pneumothorax;

''(C) amputation resulting from blast injury;

''(D) compromises to the airway; and

''(E) other injuries.

''(2) The term 'human-based training methods' means, with respect to training individuals in medical treatment, the use of systems and devices that do not use animals, including—

''(A) simulators;

''(B) partial task trainers;

''(C) moulage;

''(D) simulated combat environments;

''(E) human cadavers; and

''(F) rotations in civilian and military trauma centers.

''(3) The term 'partial task trainers' means training aids that allow individuals to learn or practice specific medical procedures.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 101 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''2017. Use of human-based methods for certain medical training.''.

SA 1532. Mr. DONNELLY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 86, strike line 4 and all that follows through page 87, line 5, and insert the following:

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall direct the executive agent for printed circuit board technology appointed under section 256(a) of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110–417; 10 U.S.C. 2501 note) to coordinate execution of the study required by subsection (a) using capabilities of the Department in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act to conduct technical analysis on a sample of failed electronic parts in field systems.

(2) ELEMENTS.—(A) The technical analysis required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(i) Selection of a representative sample of electronic component types, including digital, mixed-signal, and analog integrated circuits.

(ii) An assessment of the presence of counterfeit parts, including causes and attributes of failures of any identified counterfeit part.

(iii) For components found to have counterfeit parts present, an assessment of the impact of the counterfeit part in the failure mechanism.

(iv) For cases with counterfeit parts contributing to the failure, a determination of the failure attributes, factors, and effects on subsystem and system level reliability, readiness, and performance.

(B) For any parts assessed under subparagraph (A) that demonstrate unusual or suspicious failure mechanisms, the federation established under section 937(a)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113–66; 10 U.S.C. 2224 note) shall—

(i) conduct a technical assessment for indications of malicious tampering; and

(ii) submit to the executive agent described in paragraph (1) a report on the findings of the federation with respect to the technical assessment conducted under clause (i).

SA 1533. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 478, strike line 18 and all that follows through page 492, line 20, and insert the following:

No amounts authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise available for the Department of Defense may be used to transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release to or within the United States, its territories, or possessions of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed or any other detainee who—

(1) is not a United States citizen or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(2) is or was held on or after January 20, 2009, at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by the Department of Defense.

SA 1534. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 1034.

SA 1535. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. CORKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. FEDERAL PURCHASE REQUIREMENT.

Section 203 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15852) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ''a number equivalent to'' before ''the total amount of electric energy'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) RENEWABLE ENERGY.—The term 'renewable energy' means electric or, if resulting from a thermal energy project placed in service after December 31, 2014, thermal energy generated from, or avoided by, solar,

wind, biomass, landfill gas, ocean (including tidal, wave, current, and thermal), geothermal, municipal solid waste, or new hydroelectric generation capacity achieved from increased efficiency or additions of new capacity at an existing hydroelectric project.''; and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as subparagraphs (A) through (C), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) (as so redesignated), by striking ''For purposes'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) SEPARATE CALCULATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this section, any energy consumption that is avoided through the use of renewable energy shall be considered to be renewable energy produced.

''(B) DENIAL OF DOUBLE BENEFIT.—Avoided energy consumption that is considered to be renewable energy produced under subparagraph (A) shall not also be counted for purposes of achieving compliance with a Federal energy efficiency goal required under any other provision of law.''.

SA 1536. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

(a) PLAN REQUIREMENTS AND REPORTING.—Section 116 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3723) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) PLAN REQUIREMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall develop a plan for the purpose of negotiating and entering into one or more free trade agreements with all eligible sub-Saharan African countries. The plan shall identify the 10 to 15 eligible sub-Saharan African countries or groups of such countries that are most ready for a free trade agreement with the United States.

''(2) ELEMENTS OF PLAN.—The plan required by paragraph (1) shall include, for each eligible sub-Saharan African country, the following:

''(A) The steps each such country needs to be equipped and ready to enter into a free trade agreement with the United States, including the effective implementation of the WTO Agreements and the development of a bilateral investment treaty.

''(B) Milestones for accomplishing each step identified in subparagraph (A) for each such country, with the goal of establishing a free trade agreement with each such country not later than 10 years after the date of the enactment of the Trade Act of 2015.

''(C) A description of the resources required to assist each such country in accomplishing each milestone described in subparagraph (B).

''(D) The extent to which steps described in subparagraph (A), the milestones described in subparagraph (B), and resources described in subparagraph (C) may be accomplished through regional or subregional organizations in sub-Saharan Africa, including the East African Community, the Economic Community of West African States, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, and the Economic Community of Central African States.

''(E) Procedures to ensure the following:

''(i) Adequate consultation with Congress and the private sector during the negotiations.

''(ii) Consultation with Congress regarding all matters relating to implementation of the agreement or agreements.

''(iii) Approval by Congress of the agreement or agreements.

''(iv) Adequate consultations with the relevant African governments and African regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations during the negotiation of the agreement or agreements.

''(3) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of the Trade Act of 2015, and every 5 years thereafter, the President shall prepare and submit to Congress a report containing the plan developed pursuant to paragraph (1).

''(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) ELIGIBLE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRY.—The term 'eligible sub-Saharan African country' means a country designated as an eligible sub-Saharan African country under section 104.

''(B) WTO.—The term 'WTO' means the World Trade Organization.

''(C) WTO AGREEMENT.—The term 'WTO Agreement' has the meaning given that term in section 2(9) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (19 U.S.C. 3501(9)).

''(D) WTO AGREEMENTS.—The term 'WTO Agreements' means the WTO Agreement and agreements annexed to that Agreement.''.

(b) COORDINATION OF USAID WITH FREE TRADE AGREEMENT POLICY.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDS.—Funds made available to the United States Agency for International Development under section 496 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2293) after the date of the enactment of this Act may be used, in consultation with the United States Trade Representative—

(A) to assist eligible countries, including by deploying resources to such countries, in addressing the steps and milestones identified in the plan developed under subsection (d) of section 116 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3723), as added by subsection (a); and

(B) to assist eligible countries in the implementation of the commitments of those countries under agreements with the United States and the WTO Agreements (as defined in subsection (d)(4) of such section 116).

(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) ELIGIBLE COUNTRY.—The term ''eligible country'' means a sub-Saharan African country that receives—

(i) benefits under for the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.); and

(ii) funding from the United States Agency for International Development.

(B) SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRY.—The term ''sub-Saharan African country'' has the meaning given that term in section 107 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3706).

(c) COORDINATION WITH MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION.—After the date of the enactment of this Act, the United States Trade Representative and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall consult and coordinate with the Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation regarding countries that have entered into a Millennium Challenge Compact pursuant to section 609 of the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 7708) that have been declared eligible to enter into such a Compact for the purpose of developing and carrying out the plan required by subsection (d) of section 116 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3723), as added by subsection (a).

(d) MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION CONCURRENT COMPACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 609 of the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 7708) is amended—

(A) in subsection (k), by striking the first sentence; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(l) CONCURRENT COMPACTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), an eligible country and the United States may enter into and have in effect not more than 2 Compacts at any given time under this section.

''(2) PURPOSES OF COMPACTS.—An eligible country and the United States that have entered into and have in effect a Compact under this section may enter into and have in effect at the same time one additional Compact in accordance with the requirements of this title if—

''(A) one or both of the Compacts are or will be for purposes of regional economic integration, increased regional trade, or cross-border collaborations; and

''(B) the Board determines that the country is making considerable and demonstrable progress in implementing the terms of the existing Compact and supplementary agreements to that Compact.

''(m) LIMITATION OF USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts made available to carry out this title, including amounts made available to enter into a Compact under this section or to provide assistance under section 616 or any other form of assistance under this title to a country, may not be obligated or expended for the purpose of entering into such a Compact with or providing such assistance to a country that has not been selected by the Board as eligible.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 613(b)(2)(A) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7712(b)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''the Compact'' and inserting ''any Compact''.

(3) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this subsection apply with respect to Compacts entered into between the United States and an eligible country under the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1537. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. RECOVERY OF EXCESS FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND PARTS GRANTED TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND TRANSFER TO CERTAIN PERSONS.

(a) RECOVERY.—Subchapter II of chapter 407 of title 36, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 40728A the following new section:

''§ 40728B. Recovery of excess firearms, ammunition, and parts granted to foreign countries and transfer to certain persons

''(a) AUTHORITY TO RECOVER.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) and subsection (b), the Secretary of the Army may acquire from any person any firearm, ammunition, repair parts, or other supplies described in section 40731(a) of this title which were—

''(A) provided to any country on a grant basis under the conditions imposed by section 505 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2314) that became excess to the needs of such country; and

''(B) lawfully acquired by such person.

''(2) The Secretary of the Army may not acquire anything under paragraph (1) except for transfer to a person in the United States under subsection (c).

''(3) The Secretary of the Army may accept firearms, ammunition, repair parts, or other supplies under paragraph (1) notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31.

''(b) COST OF RECOVERY.—The Secretary of the Army may not acquire anything under subsection (a) if the United States would incur any cost for such acquisition.

''(c) AVAILABILITY FOR TRANSFER.—Any firearms, ammunition, repair parts, or supplies acquired under subsection (a) shall be available for transfer in the United States to the person from whom acquired if such person—

''(1) is licensed as a manufacturer, importer, or dealer pursuant to section 923(a) of title 18; and

''(2) uses an ammunition depot of the Army that is an eligible facility for receipt of any firearms, ammunition, repair parts, or supplies under this paragraph.

''(d) CONTRACTS.—Notwithstanding subsection (k) of section 2304 of title 10, the Secretary may enter into such contracts or cooperative agreements on a sole source basis pursuant to paragraphs (4) and (5) of subsection (c) of such section to carry out this section.

''(e) FIREARM DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'firearm' has the meaning given such term in section 921 of title 18.''.

(b) SALE.—Section 40732 of such title is amended—

(1) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) SALES BY OTHER PERSONS.—A person who receives a firearm or any ammunition, repair parts, or supplies under section 40728B(c) of this title may sell, at fair market value, such firearm, ammunition, repair parts, or supplies.''; and

(2) in subsection (c), in the heading, by inserting ''BY THE CORPORATION'' after ''LIMITATION ON SALES''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 407 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 40728A the following new item:

''40728B. Recovery of excess firearms, ammunition, and parts granted to foreign countries and transfer to certain persons.''.

SA 1538. Mr. WICKER (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. MELVILLE HALL OF THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY.

(a) GIFT TO THE MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY.—The Maritime Administrator may accept a gift of money from the Foundation under section 51315 of title 46, United States Code, for the purpose of renovating Melville Hall on the campus of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

(b) COVERED GIFTS.—A gift described in this subsection is a gift under subsection (a) that the Maritime Administrator determines exceeds the sum of—

(1) the minimum amount that is sufficient to ensure the renovation of Melville Hall in accordance with the capital improvement plan of the United States Merchant Marine Academy that was in effect on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) 25 percent of the amount described in paragraph (1).

(c) OPERATION CONTRACTS.—Subject to subsection (d), in the case that the Maritime Administrator accepts a gift of money described in subsection (b), the Maritime Administrator may enter into a contract with the Foundation for the operation of Melville Hall to make available facilities for, among other possible uses, official academy functions, third-party catering functions, and industry events and conferences.

(d) CONTRACT TERMS.—The contract described in subsection (c) shall be for such period and on such terms as the Maritime Administrator considers appropriate, including a provision, mutually agreeable to the Maritime Administrator and the Foundation, that—

(1) requires the Foundation—

(A) at the expense solely of the Foundation through the term of the contract to maintain Melville Hall in a condition that is as good as or better than the condition Melville Hall was in on the later of—

(i) the date that the renovation of Melville Hall was completed; or

(ii) the date that the Foundation accepted Melville Hall after it was tendered to the Foundation by the Maritime Administrator; and

(B) to deposit all proceeds from the operation of Melville Hall, after expenses necessary for the operation and maintenance of Melville Hall, into the account of the Regimental Affairs Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentality or successor entity, to be used solely for the morale and welfare of the cadets of the United States Merchant Marine Academy; and

(2) prohibits the use of Melville Hall as lodging or an office by any person for more than 4 days in any calendar year other than—

(A) by the United States; or

(B) for the administration and operation of Melville Hall.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CONTRACT.—The term ''contract'' includes any modification, extension, or renewal of the contract.

(2) FOUNDATION.—In this section, the term ''Foundation'' means the United States Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Association and Foundation, Inc.

(f) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed under section 3105 of title 41, United States Code, as requiring the Maritime Administrator to award a contract for the operation of Melville Hall to the Foundation.

SA 1539. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 342 the following:

SEC. 342A. PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTS TO FACILITATE PAYMENTS FOR HONORING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AT SPORTING EVENTS.

(a) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Army National Guard has paid professional sports organizations to honor members of the Armed Forces;

(2) any organization wishing to honor members of the Armed Forces should do so on a voluntary basis, and the Department of Defense should take action to ensure that no payments be made for such activities in the future; and

(3) any organization, including the National Football League, that has accepted taxpayer funds to honor members of the Armed Forces should consider directing an equivalent amount of funding in the form of a donation to a charitable organization that supports members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families.

(b) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 134 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2241a the following new section:

''§ 2241b. Prohibition on contracts providing payments for activities to honor members of the armed forces

''(a) PROHIBITION.—The Department of Defense may not enter into any contract or other agreement under which payments are to be made in exchange for activities by the contractor intended to honor, or giving the appearance of honoring, members of the armed forces (whether members of the regular components or the reserve components) at any form of sporting event.

''(b) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed as prohibiting the Department from taking actions to facilitate activities intended to honor members of the armed forces at sporting events that are provided on a pro bono basis or otherwise funded with non-Federal funds if such activities are provided and received in accordance with applicable rules and regulations regarding the acceptance of gifts by the military departments, the armed forces, and members of the armed forces.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of subchapter I of chapter 134 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2241a the following new item:

''2241b. Prohibition on contracts providing payments for activities to honor members of the armed forces at sporting events.''.

SA 1540. Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. GARDNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. COMPTROLLER GENERAL BRIEFING AND REPORT ON MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) BRIEFING.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States

shall provide to the appropriate committees of Congress a briefing on the administration and oversight by the Department of Veterans Affairs of contracts for the design and construction of major medical facility projects, as defined in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the administration and oversight described in subsection (a).

(c) ELEMENTS.—The briefing required by subsection (a) and the report required by subsection (b) shall each include an examination of the following:

(1) The processes used by the Department for overseeing and assuring the performance of construction design and construction contracts for major medical facility projects, as so defined.

(2) Any actions taken by the Department to improve the administration of such contracts.

(3) Such opportunities for further improvement of the administration of such contracts as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(d) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

SA 1541. Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. VITTER, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—VESSEL INCIDENTAL DISCHARGE ACT

SEC. ___1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Vessel Incidental Discharge Act''.

SEC. ___2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Beginning with enactment of the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships in 1980 (22 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.), the United States Coast Guard has been the principal Federal authority charged with administering, enforcing, and prescribing regulations relating to the discharge of pollutants from vessels engaged in maritime commerce and transportation.

(2) The Coast Guard estimates there are approximately 21,560,000 State-registered recreational vessels, 75,000 commercial fishing vessels, and 33,000 freight and tank barges operating in United States waters.

(3) From 1973 to 2005, certain discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel were exempted by regulation from otherwise applicable permitting requirements.

(4) Over the 32 years during which this regulatory exemption was in effect, Congress enacted statutes on a number of occasions dealing with the regulation of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel, including—

(A) the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.) in 1980;

(B) the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (16 U.S.C. 4701 et seq.);

(C) the National Invasive Species Act of 1996 (110 Stat. 4073);

(D) section 415 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 3434) and section 623 of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004 (33 U.S.C. 1901 note), which established interim and permanent requirements, respectively, for the regulation of vessel discharges of certain bulk cargo residue;

(E) title XIV of division B of Appendix D of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2001 (114 Stat. 2763), which prohibited or limited certain vessel discharges in certain areas of Alaska;

(F) section 204 of the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 1902a), which established requirements for the regulation of vessel discharges of agricultural cargo residue material in the form of hold washings; and

(G) title X of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 (33 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.), which provided for the implementation of the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships, 2001.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this title is to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards and requirements for the management of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.

SEC. ___3. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term Administrator means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES.—The term aquatic nuisance species means a nonindigenous species (including a pathogen) that threatens the diversity or abundance of native species or the ecological stability of navigable waters or commercial, agricultural, aquacultural, or recreational activities dependent on such waters.

(3) BALLAST WATER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ballast water means any water, including any sediment suspended in such water, taken aboard a vessel—

(i) to control trim, list, draught, stability, or stresses of the vessel; or

(ii) during the cleaning, maintenance, or other operation of a ballast water treatment technology of the vessel.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ballast water does not include any pollutant that is added to water described in subparagraph (A) that is not directly related to the operation of a properly functioning ballast water treatment technology under this title.

(4) BALLAST WATER PERFORMANCE STANDARD.—The term ballast water performance standard means the numerical ballast water discharge standard set forth in section 151.2030 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations or section 151.1511 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, as applicable, or a revised numerical ballast water performance standard established under subsection (a)(1)(B), (b), or (c) of section ___5 of this title.

(5) BALLAST WATER TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY OR TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY.—The term ballast water treatment technology or treatment technology means any mechanical, physical, chemical, or biological process used, alone or in combination, to remove, render harmless, or avoid the uptake or discharge of aquatic nuisance species within ballast water.

(6) BIOCIDE.—The term biocide means a substance or organism, including a virus or fungus, that is introduced into or produced by a ballast water treatment technology to reduce or eliminate aquatic nuisance species as part of the process used to comply with a ballast water performance standard under this title.

(7) DISCHARGE INCIDENTAL TO THE NORMAL OPERATION OF A VESSEL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel means—

(i) a discharge into navigable waters from a vessel of—

(I)(aa) ballast water, graywater, bilge water, cooling water, oil water separator effluent, anti-fouling hull coating leachate, boiler or economizer blowdown, byproducts from cathodic protection, controllable pitch propeller and thruster hydraulic fluid, distillation and reverse osmosis brine, elevator pit effluent, firemain system effluent, freshwater layup effluent, gas turbine wash water, motor gasoline and compensating effluent, refrigeration and air condensate effluent, seawater pumping biofouling prevention substances, boat engine wet exhaust, sonar dome effluent, exhaust gas scrubber washwater, or stern tube packing gland effluent; or

(bb) any other pollutant associated with the operation of a marine propulsion system, shipboard maneuvering system, habitability system, or installed major equipment, or from a protective, preservative, or absorptive application to the hull of a vessel;

(II) weather deck runoff, deck wash, aqueous film forming foam effluent, chain locker effluent, non-oily machinery wastewater, underwater ship husbandry effluent, welldeck effluent, or fish hold and fish hold cleaning effluent; or

(III) any effluent from a properly functioning marine engine; or

(ii) a discharge of a pollutant into navigable waters in connection with the testing, maintenance, or repair of a system, equipment, or engine described in subclause (I)(bb) or (III) of clause (i) whenever the vessel is waterborne.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel does not include—

(i) a discharge into navigable waters from a vessel of—

(I) rubbish, trash, garbage, incinerator ash, or other such material discharged overboard;

(II) oil or a hazardous substance as those terms are defined in section 311 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1321);

(III) sewage as defined in section 312(a)(6) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1322(a)(6)); or

(IV) graywater referred to in section 312(a)(6) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1322(a)(6));

(ii) an emission of an air pollutant resulting from the operation onboard a vessel of a vessel propulsion system, motor driven equipment, or incinerator; or

(iii) a discharge into navigable waters from a vessel when the vessel is operating in a capacity other than as a means of transportation on water.

(8) GEOGRAPHICALLY LIMITED AREA.—The term geographically limited area means an area—

(A) with a physical limitation, including limitation by physical size and limitation by authorized route such as the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, that prevents a vessel from operating outside the area, as determined by the Secretary; or

(B) that is ecologically homogeneous, as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the heads of other Federal departments or agencies as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(9) MANUFACTURER.—The term manufacturer means a person engaged in the manufacture, assemblage, or importation of ballast water treatment technology.

(10) SECRETARY.—The term Secretary means the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

(11) VESSEL.—The term vessel means every description of watercraft or other artificial contrivance used, or practically or otherwise capable of being used, as a means of transportation on water.

SEC. ___4. REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall establish and implement enforceable uniform national standards and requirements for the regulation of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel. The standards and requirements shall—

(1) be based upon the best available technology economically achievable; and

(2) supersede any permitting requirement or prohibition on discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under any other provision of law.

(b) ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT.—The Secretary shall administer and enforce the uniform national standards and requirements under this title. Each State may enforce the uniform national standards and requirements under this title.

SEC. ___5. UNIFORM NATIONAL STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE REGULATION OF DISCHARGES INCIDENTAL TO THE NORMAL OPERATION OF A VESSEL.

(a) REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the requirements set forth in the final rule, Standards for Living Organisms in Ships' Ballast Water Discharged in U.S. Waters (77 Fed. Reg. 17254 (March 23, 2012), as corrected at 77 Fed. Reg. 33969 (June 8, 2012)), shall be the management requirements for a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel until the Secretary revises the ballast water performance standard under subsection (b) or adopts a more stringent State standard under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph.

(B) ADOPTION OF MORE STRINGENT STATE STANDARD.—If the Secretary makes a determination in favor of a State petition under section ___10, the Secretary shall adopt the more stringent ballast water performance standard specified in the statute or regulation that is the subject of that State petition in lieu of the ballast water performance standard in the final rule described under subparagraph (A).

(2) INITIAL MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR DISCHARGES OTHER THAN BALLAST WATER.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall issue a final rule establishing best management practices for discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel other than ballast water.

(b) REVISED BALLAST WATER PERFORMANCE STANDARD; 8-YEAR REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the feasibility review under paragraph (2), not later than January 1, 2022, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall issue a final rule revising the ballast water performance standard under subsection (a)(1) so that a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel will contain—

(A) less than 1 organism that is living or has not been rendered harmless per 10 cubic meters that is 50 or more micrometers in minimum dimension;

(B) less than 1 organism that is living or has not been rendered harmless per 10 milliliters that is less than 50 micrometers in minimum dimension and more than 10 micrometers in minimum dimension;

(C) concentrations of indicator microbes that are less than—

(i) 1 colony-forming unit of toxicogenic Vibrio cholera (serotypes O1 and O139) per 100 milliliters or less than 1 colony-forming unit of that microbe per gram of wet weight of zoological samples;

(ii) 126 colony-forming units of Escherichia coli per 100 milliliters; and

(iii) 33 colony-forming units of intestinal enterococci per 100 milliliters; and

(D) concentrations of such additional indicator microbes and of viruses as may be specified in regulations issued by the Secretary in consultation with the Administrator and such other Federal agencies as the Secretary and the Administrator consider appropriate.

(2) FEASIBILITY REVIEW.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not less than 2 years before January 1, 2022, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall complete a review to determine the feasibility of achieving the revised ballast water performance standard under paragraph (1).

(B) CRITERIA FOR REVIEW OF BALLAST WATER PERFORMANCE STANDARD.—In conducting a review under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consider whether revising the ballast water performance standard will result in a scientifically demonstrable and substantial reduction in the risk of introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species, taking into account—

(i) improvements in the scientific understanding of biological and ecological processes that lead to the introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species;

(ii) improvements in ballast water treatment technology, including—

(I) the capability of such treatment technology to achieve a revised ballast water performance standard;

(II) the effectiveness and reliability of such treatment technology in the shipboard environment;

(III) the compatibility of such treatment technology with the design and operation of a vessel by class, type, and size;

(IV) the commercial availability of such treatment technology; and

(V) the safety of such treatment technology;

(iii) improvements in the capabilities to detect, quantify, and assess the viability of aquatic nuisance species at the concentrations under consideration;

(iv) the impact of ballast water treatment technology on water quality; and

(v) the costs, cost-effectiveness, and impacts of—

(I) a revised ballast water performance standard, including the potential impacts on shipping, trade, and other uses of the aquatic environment; and

(II) maintaining the existing ballast water performance standard, including the potential impacts on water-related infrastructure, recreation, propagation of native fish, shellfish, and wildlife, and other uses of navigable waters.

(C) LOWER REVISED PERFORMANCE STANDARD.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines on the basis of the feasibility review and after an opportunity for a public hearing that no ballast water treatment technology can be certified under section ___6 to comply with the revised ballast water performance standard under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall require the use of the treatment technology that achieves the performance levels of the best treatment technology available.

(ii) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that the treatment technology under clause (i) cannot be implemented before the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) with respect to a class of vessels, the Secretary shall extend the implementation deadline for that class of vessels for not more than 36 months.

(iii) COMPLIANCE.—If the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) is extended, the Secretary shall recommend action to ensure compliance with the extended implementation deadline under clause (ii).

(D) HIGHER REVISED PERFORMANCE STANDARD.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that ballast water treatment technology exists that exceeds the revised ballast water performance standard under paragraph (1) with respect to a class of vessels, the Secretary shall revise the ballast water performance standard for that class of vessels to incorporate the higher performance standard.

(ii) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—If the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that the treatment technology under clause (i) can be implemented before the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) with respect to a class of vessels, the Secretary shall accelerate the implementation deadline for that class of vessels. If the implementation deadline under paragraph (3) is accelerated, the Secretary shall provide not less than 24 months notice before the accelerated deadline takes effect.

(3) IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE.—The revised ballast water performance standard under paragraph (1) shall apply to a vessel beginning on the date of the first drydocking of the vessel on or after January 1, 2022, but not later than December 31, 2024.

(4) REVISED PERFORMANCE STANDARD COMPLIANCE DEADLINES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may establish a compliance deadline for compliance by a vessel (or a class, type, or size of vessel) with a revised ballast water performance standard under this subsection.

(B) PROCESS FOR GRANTING EXTENSIONS.—In issuing regulations under this subsection, the Secretary shall establish a process for an owner or operator to submit a petition to the Secretary for an extension of a compliance deadline with respect to the vessel of the owner or operator.

(C) PERIOD OF EXTENSIONS.—An extension issued under subparagraph (B) may—

(i) apply for a period of not to exceed 18 months from the date of the applicable deadline under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) be renewable for an additional period of not to exceed 18 months.

(D) FACTORS.—In issuing a compliance deadline or reviewing a petition under this paragraph, the Secretary shall consider, with respect to the ability of an owner or operator to meet a compliance deadline, the following factors:

(i) Whether the treatment technology to be installed is available in sufficient quantities to meet the compliance deadline.

(ii) Whether there is sufficient shipyard or other installation facility capacity.

(iii) Whether there is sufficient availability of engineering and design resources.

(iv) Vessel characteristics, such as engine room size, layout, or a lack of installed piping.

(v) Electric power generating capacity aboard the vessel.

(vi) Safety of the vessel and crew.

(E) CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS.—

(i) DETERMINATIONS.—The Secretary shall approve or deny a petition for an extension of a compliance deadline submitted by an owner or operator under this paragraph.

(ii) DEADLINE.—If the Secretary does not approve or deny a petition referred to in clause (i) on or before the last day of the 90-day period beginning on the date of submission of the petition, the petition shall be deemed approved.

(c) FUTURE REVISIONS OF VESSEL INCIDENTAL DISCHARGE STANDARDS; DECENNIAL REVIEWS.—

(1) REVISED BALLAST WATER PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall complete a review, 10 years after the issuance of a final rule under subsection (b) and every 10 years thereafter, to determine whether further revision of the ballast water performance standard would result in a scientifically demonstrable and substantial reduction in the risk of the introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species.

(2) REVISED STANDARDS FOR DISCHARGES OTHER THAN BALLAST WATER.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, may include in a decennial review under this subsection best management practices for discharges covered by subsection (a)(2). The Secretary shall initiate a rulemaking to revise 1 or more best management practices for such discharges after a decennial review if the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that revising 1 or more of such practices would substantially reduce the impacts on navigable waters of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel other than ballast water.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting a review under paragraph (1), the Secretary, the Administrator, and the heads of other appropriate Federal agencies as determined by the Secretary, shall consider the criteria under section ___5(b)(2)(B).

(4) REVISION AFTER DECENNIAL REVIEW.—The Secretary shall initiate a rulemaking to revise the current ballast water performance standard after a decennial review if the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, determines that revising the current ballast water performance standard would result in a scientifically demonstrable and substantial reduction in the risk of the introduction or establishment of aquatic nuisance species.

(d) GREAT LAKES REQUIREMENTS.—In addition to the other standards and requirements imposed by this section, in the case of a vessel that enters the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River after operating outside the exclusive economic zone of the United States the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, shall establish a requirement that the vessel conduct saltwater flushing of all ballast water tanks onboard prior to entry.

SEC. ___6. TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY CERTIFICATION.

(a) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Beginning 1 year after the date that the requirements for testing protocols are issued under subsection (i), no manufacturer of a ballast water treatment technology shall sell, offer for sale, or introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce, or import into the United States for sale or resale, a ballast water treatment technology for a vessel unless the treatment technology has been certified under this section.

(b) CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—

(1) EVALUATION.—Upon application of a manufacturer, the Secretary shall evaluate a ballast water treatment technology with respect to—

(A) the effectiveness of the treatment technology in achieving the current ballast water performance standard when installed on a vessel (or a class, type, or size of vessel);

(B) the compatibility with vessel design and operations;

(C) the effect of the treatment technology on vessel safety;

(D) the impact on the environment;

(E) the cost effectiveness; and

(F) any other criteria the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) APPROVAL.—If after an evaluation under paragraph (1) the Secretary determines that the treatment technology meets the criteria, the Secretary may certify the treatment technology for use on a vessel (or a class, type, or size of vessel).

(3) SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION.—The Secretary shall establish, by regulation, a process to suspend or revoke a certification issued under this section.

(c) CERTIFICATION CONDITIONS.—

(1) IMPOSITION OF CONDITIONS.—In certifying a ballast water treatment technology under this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, may impose any condition on the subsequent installation, use, or maintenance of the treatment technology onboard a vessel as is necessary for—

(A) the safety of the vessel, the crew of the vessel, and any passengers aboard the vessel;

(B) the protection of the environment; or

(C) the effective operation of the treatment technology.

(2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—The failure of an owner or operator to comply with a condition imposed under paragraph (1) shall be considered a violation of this section.

(d) PERIOD FOR USE OF INSTALLED TREATMENT EQUIPMENT.—Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this title or any other provision of law, the Secretary shall allow a vessel on which a system is installed and operated to meet a ballast water performance standard under this title to continue to use that system, notwithstanding any revision of a ballast water performance standard occurring after the system is ordered or installed until the expiration of the service life of the system, as determined by the Secretary, so long as the system—

(1) is maintained in proper working condition; and

(2) is maintained and used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and any treatment technology certification conditions imposed by the Secretary under this section.

(e) CERTIFICATES OF TYPE APPROVAL FOR THE TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY.—

(1) ISSUANCE.—If the Secretary approves a ballast water treatment technology for certification under subsection (b), the Secretary shall issue a certificate of type approval for the treatment technology to the manufacturer in such form and manner as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(2) CERTIFICATION CONDITIONS.—A certificate of type approval issued under paragraph (1) shall specify each condition imposed by the Secretary under subsection (c).

(3) OWNERS AND OPERATORS.—A manufacturer that receives a certificate of type approval for the treatment technology under this subsection shall provide a copy of the certificate to each owner and operator of a vessel on which the treatment technology is installed.

(f) INSPECTIONS.—An owner or operator who receives a copy of a certificate under subsection (e)(3) shall retain a copy of the certificate onboard the vessel and make the copy of the certificate available for inspection at all times while the owner or operator is utilizing the treatment technology.

(g) BIOCIDES.—The Secretary may not approve a ballast water treatment technology under subsection (b) if—

(1) it uses a biocide or generates a biocide that is a pesticide, as defined in section 2 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136), unless the biocide is registered under that Act or the Secretary, in consultation with Administrator, has approved the use of the biocide in such treatment technology; or

(2) it uses or generates a biocide the discharge of which causes or contributes to a violation of a water quality standard under section 303 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1313).

(h) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the use of a ballast water treatment technology by an owner or operator of a vessel shall not satisfy the requirements of this title unless it has been approved by the Secretary under subsection (b).

(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

(A) COAST GUARD SHIPBOARD TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION PROGRAM.—An owner or operator may use a ballast water treatment technology that has not been certified by the Secretary to comply with the requirements of this section if the technology is being evaluated under the Coast Guard Shipboard Technology Evaluation Program.

(B) BALLAST WATER TREATMENT TECHNOLOGIES CERTIFIED BY FOREIGN ENTITIES.—An owner or operator may use a ballast water treatment technology that has not been certified by the Secretary to comply with the requirements of this section if the technology has been certified by a foreign entity and the certification demonstrates performance and safety of the treatment technology equivalent to the requirements of this section, as determined by the Secretary.

(i) TESTING PROTOCOLS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary, shall issue requirements for land-based and shipboard testing protocols or criteria for—

(1) certifying the performance of each ballast water treatment technology under this section; and

(2) certifying laboratories to evaluate such treatment technologies.

SEC. ___7. EXEMPTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No permit shall be required or prohibition enforced under any other provision of law for, nor shall any standards regarding a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under this title apply to—

(1) a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel if the vessel is less than 79 feet in length and engaged in commercial service (as defined in section 2101(5) of title 46, United States Code);

(2) a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel if the vessel is a fishing vessel, including a fish processing vessel and a fish tender vessel, (as defined in section 2101 of title 46, United States Code);

(3) a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel if the vessel is a recreational vessel (as defined in section 2101(25) of title 46, United States Code);

(4) the placement, release, or discharge of equipment, devices, or other material from a vessel for the sole purpose of conducting research on the aquatic environment or its natural resources in accordance with generally recognized scientific methods, principles, or techniques;

(5) any discharge into navigable waters from a vessel authorized by an on-scene coordinator in accordance with part 300 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, or part 153 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations;

(6) any discharge into navigable waters from a vessel that is necessary to secure the safety of the vessel or human life, or to suppress a fire onboard the vessel or at a shoreside facility; or

(7) a vessel of the armed forces of a foreign nation when engaged in noncommercial service.

(b) BALLAST WATER DISCHARGES.—No permit shall be required or prohibition enforced under any other provision of law for, nor shall any ballast water performance standards under this title apply to—

(1) a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel determined by the Secretary to—

(A) operate exclusively within a geographically limited area;

(B) take up and discharge ballast water exclusively within 1 Captain of the Port Zone established by the Coast Guard unless the Secretary determines such discharge poses a substantial risk of introduction or establishment of an aquatic nuisance species;

(C) operate pursuant to a geographic restriction issued as a condition under section 3309 of title 46, United States Code, or an equivalent restriction issued by the country of registration of the vessel; or

(D) continuously take on and discharge ballast water in a flow-through system that does not introduce aquatic nuisance species into navigable waters;

(2) a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel consisting entirely of water suitable for human consumption; or

(3) a ballast water discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel in an alternative compliance program established pursuant to section ___8.

(c) VESSELS WITH PERMANENT BALLAST WATER.—No permit shall be required or prohibition enforced under any other provision of law for, nor shall any ballast water performance standard under this title apply to, a vessel that carries all of its permanent ballast water in sealed tanks that are not subject to discharge.

(d) VESSELS OF THE ARMED FORCES.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to apply to a vessel as follows:

(1) A vessel owned or operated by the Department of Defense (other than a time-chartered or voyage-chartered vessel).

(2) A vessel of the Coast Guard, as designated by the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

SEC. ___8. ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator, may promulgate regulations establishing 1 or more compliance programs as an alternative to ballast water management regulations issued under section ___5 for a vessel that—

(1) has a maximum ballast water capacity of less than 8 cubic meters;

(2) is less than 3 years from the end of the useful life of the vessel, as determined by the Secretary; or

(3) discharges ballast water into a facility for the reception of ballast water that meets standards promulgated by the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary.

(b) PROMULGATION OF FACILITY STANDARDS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary, shall promulgate standards for—

(1) the reception of ballast water from a vessel into a reception facility; and

(2) the disposal or treatment of the ballast water under paragraph (1).

SEC. ___9. JUDICIAL REVIEW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An interested person may file a petition for review of a final regulation promulgated under this title in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

(b) DEADLINE.—A petition shall be filed not later than 120 days after the date that notice of the promulgation appears in the Federal Register.

(c) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), a petition that is based solely on grounds that arise after the deadline to file a petition under subsection (b) has passed may be filed not later than 120 days after the date that the grounds first arise.

SEC. ___10. EFFECT ON STATE AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No State or political subdivision thereof may adopt or enforce any statute or regulation of the State or political subdivision with respect to a discharge incidental to the normal operation of a vessel after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a State or political subdivision thereof may adopt or enforce a statute or regulation of the State or political subdivision with respect to ballast water discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel that specifies a ballast water performance standard that is more stringent than the ballast water performance standard under section ___5(a)(1)(A) if the Secretary, after consultation with the Administrator and any other Federal department or agency the Secretary considers appropriate, makes a determination that—

(1) compliance with any performance standard specified in the statute or regulation can in fact be achieved and detected;

(2) the technology and systems necessary to comply with the statute or regulation are commercially available; and

(3) the statute or regulation is consistent with obligations under relevant international treaties or agreements to which the United States is a party.

(c) PETITION PROCESS.—

(1) SUBMISSION.—The Governor of a State seeking to adopt or enforce a statute or regulation under subsection (b) shall submit a petition to the Secretary requesting the Secretary to review the statute or regulation.

(2) CONTENTS; TIMING.—A petition shall be accompanied by the scientific and technical information on which the petition is based, and may be submitted within 1 year of the date of enactment of this Act and every 10 years thereafter.

(3) DETERMINATIONS.—The Secretary shall make a determination on a petition under this subsection not later than 90 days after the date that the petition is received.

SEC. ___11. APPLICATION WITH OTHER STATUTES.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this title shall be the exclusive statutory authority for regulation by the Federal Government of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel to which this title applies. Except as provided under section ___5(a)(1)(A), any regulation in effect on the date immediately preceding the effective date of this title relating to any permitting requirement for or prohibition on discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel to which this title applies shall be deemed to be a regulation issued pursuant to the authority of this title and shall remain in full force and effect unless or until superseded by new regulations issued hereunder.

SA 1542. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1099. BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.

(a) AUDIT REFORM AND TRANSPARENCY FOR THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 714 of title 31, United States Code, or any other provision of law, an audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks under subsection (b) of such section 714 shall be completed not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A report on the audit required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted by the Comptroller General of the United States to Congress before the end of the 90-day period beginning on the date on which the audit is completed and made available to the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority and minority leaders of the House of Representatives, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the committee and each subcommittee of jurisdiction in the Senate and the House of Representatives, and any other Member of Congress who requests the report.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report under subparagraph (A) shall include a detailed description of the findings and conclusion of the Comptroller General of the United States with respect to the audit that is the subject of the report, together with such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Comptroller General of the United States may determine to be appropriate.

(3) REPEAL OF CERTAIN LIMITATIONS.—Section 714(b) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking all after ''in writing.''.

(4) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (f).

(b) AUDIT OF LOAN FILE REVIEWS REQUIRED BY ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct an audit of the review of loan files of homeowners in foreclosure in 2009 or 2010, required as part of the enforcement actions taken by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System against supervised financial institutions.

(2) CONTENT OF AUDIT.—The audit carried out pursuant to paragraph (1) shall consider, at a minimum—

(A) the guidance given by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System to independent consultants retained by the supervised financial institutions regarding the procedures to be followed in conducting the file reviews;

(B) the factors considered by independent consultants when evaluating loan files;

(C) the results obtained by the independent consultants pursuant to those reviews;

(D) the determinations made by the independent consultants regarding the nature and extent of financial injury sustained by each homeowner as well as the level and type of remediation offered to each homeowner; and

(E) the specific measures taken by the independent consultants to verify, confirm, or rebut the assertions and representations made by supervised financial institutions regarding the contents of loan files and the extent of financial injury to homeowners.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall issue a report to Congress containing

all findings and determinations made in carrying out the audit required under paragraph (1).

SA 1543. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XI, add the following:

SEC. 1116. COST SAVINGS ENHANCEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4512 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ''or identification of surplus funds or unnecessary budget authority'' after ''mismanagement'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''or identification'' after ''disclosure''; and

(C) in the matter following paragraph (2), by inserting ''or identification'' after ''disclosure''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c) The Inspector General of an agency or other agency employee designated under subsection (b) shall refer to the Chief Financial Officer of the agency any potential surplus funds or unnecessary budget authority identified by an employee, along with any recommendations of the Inspector General or other agency employee.

''(d)(1) If the Chief Financial Officer of an agency determines that rescission of potential surplus funds or unnecessary budget authority identified by an employee would not hinder the effectiveness of the agency, except as provided in subsection (e), the head of the agency shall transfer the amount of the surplus funds or unnecessary budget authority from the applicable appropriations account to the general fund of the Treasury.

''(2) Title X of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 681 et seq.) shall not apply to transfers under paragraph (1).

''(3) Any amounts transferred under paragraph (1) shall be deposited in the Treasury and used for deficit reduction, except that in the case of a fiscal year for which there is no Federal budget deficit, such amounts shall be used to reduce the Federal debt (in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury considers appropriate).

''(e)(1) The head of an agency may retain not more than 10 percent of amounts to be transferred to the general fund of the Treasury under subsection (d).

''(2) Amounts retained by the head of an agency under paragraph (1) may be—

''(A) used for the purpose of paying a cash award under subsection (a) to 1 or more employees who identified the surplus funds or unnecessary budget authority; and

''(B) to the extent amounts remain after paying cash awards under subsection (a), transferred or reprogrammed for use by the agency, in accordance with any limitation on such a transfer or reprogramming under any other provision of law.

''(f)(1) The head of each agency shall submit to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management an annual report regarding—

''(A) each disclosure of possible fraud, waste, or mismanagement or identification of potentially surplus funds or unnecessary budget authority by an employee of the agency determined by the agency to have merit;

''(B) the total savings achieved through disclosures and identifications described in subparagraph (A); and

''(C) the number and amount of cash awards by the agency under subsection (a).

''(2)(A) The head of each agency shall include the information described in paragraph (1) in each budget request of the agency submitted to the Office of Management and Budget as part of the preparation of the budget of the President submitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code.

''(B) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Government Accountability Office an annual report on Federal cost saving and awards based on the reports submitted under subparagraph (A).

''(g) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall—

''(1) ensure that the cash award program of each agency complies with this section; and

''(2) submit to Congress an annual certification indicating whether the cash award program of each agency complies with this section.

''(h) Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, and every 3 years thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the operation of the cost savings and awards program under this section, including any recommendations for legislative changes.''.

(b) OFFICERS ELIGIBLE FOR CASH AWARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4509 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''§ 4509. Prohibition of cash award to certain officers

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the term 'agency'—

''(1) has the meaning given that term under section 551(1); and

''(2) includes an entity described in section 4501(1).

''(b) PROHIBITION.—An officer may not receive a cash award under this subchapter if the officer—

''(1) serves in a position at level I of the Executive Schedule;

''(2) is the head of an agency; or

''(3) is a commissioner, board member, or other voting member of an independent establishment.''.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 45 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 4509 and inserting the following:

''4509. Prohibition of cash award to certain officers.''.

SA 1544. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXTENSION OF PERIOD FOR USE OF ENTITLEMENT TO POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER OR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.

(a) EXTENDED PERIOD.—Section 3312 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''in subsections (b) and (c)'' and inserting ''in subsections (b), (c), and (d)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) EXTENDED PERIOD FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER OR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.—Subject to section 3695 of this title and except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), an individual entitled to educational assistance under this chapter who has a service-connected disability consisting of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury is entitled to a number of months of educational assistance under section 3313 of this title equal to 54 months.''.

(b) REDUCED AMOUNT.—Section 3313 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j) REDUCED AMOUNT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH EXTENDED PERIOD OF ASSISTANCE.—The amount of educational assistance payable under this section to an individual described in section 3312(d) of this title shall be 67 percent of the amount otherwise payable to such individual under this section.''.

SA 1545. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST FUNDING PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BEEN EXPIRED FOR MORE THAN 5 YEARS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that appropriates amounts for a program for which the authorizing authority has been expired for more than 5 fiscal years.

(b) POINT OF ORDER; WAIVER AND APPEAL.—In the Senate, a point of order under subsection (a) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 644(e)). A point of order under subsection (a) may be waived in accordance with the procedures under section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 644(e)) upon an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members duly chosen and sworn.

SA 1546. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. TRANSFER AUTHORITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FUNDS TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS ON THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OF A SEQUESTRATION OF FUNDS.

(a) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER AUTHORIZATIONS.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Defense may transfer amounts of authorizations made available to the Department of Defense for a fiscal year between any such authorizations for that fiscal year (or any subdivisions

thereof) if the Secretary determines that the transfer—

(A) is necessary to mitigate the effects on the Department of Defense of a reduction in the discretionary spending limit or the sequestration of direct spending under section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) or a sequestration under section 251(a)(1) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 901(a)(1)); and

(B) is necessary in the national interest.

(2) LIMITATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), the total amount of authorizations that the Secretary may transfer under the authority of this section in a fiscal year may not exceed $50,000,000,000.

(3) EXCEPTION FOR TRANSFERS BETWEEN MILITARY PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATIONS.—A transfer of funds between military personnel authorizations shall not be counted toward the dollar limitation in paragraph (2).

(4) TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS TRANSFERRED.—Amounts of authorizations transferred pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be merged with and be available for the same purposes as the authorization to which transferred.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—The authority provided by subsection (a) to transfer authorizations—

(1) may only be used to provide authority for items that have a higher priority than the items from which authority is transferred;

(2) may not be used to provide authority for an item that has been denied authorization by Congress; and

(3) may not reduce the amount authorized for the fiscal year concerned for an item by an amount in excess of the amount equal to 50 percent of the amount otherwise authorized to be appropriated for that fiscal year for that item.

(c) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary of Defense shall notify Congress of each proposed use of the transfer authority in subsection (a).

(d) CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL.—A transfer may not occur under the authority in subsection (a) if Congress enacts a joint resolution disapproving the transfer within the 30-day period beginning on the notice to Congress of the transfer pursuant to subsection (c).

(e) EFFECT ON AUTHORIZATION AMOUNTS.—A transfer made from one account to another under the authority of this section shall be deemed to increase the amount authorized for the account to which the amount is transferred by an amount equal to the amount transferred.

(f) CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority to transfer funds under this section in addition to any other authority available to the Secretary of Defense to transfer funds for the Department of Defense under any other provision of law.

(g) SUNSET.—The authority to transfer funds under this section shall expire on September 30, 2023.

SA 1547. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

Subtitle ____—Bonuses for Cost-cutting Contracting

SEC. ___. PREFERENCE FOR COST-CUTTING DEFENSE CONTRACTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Defense Supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation shall be revised to establish a preference for the use by the Department of Defense of contractors with an established record of completing contracts under budget. The regulations as so revised shall provide that, in the evaluation of bids for a contract, the bid from a contractor that has achieved an average cost savings for its last three completed Department of Defense contracts within a contract cost category described under subsection (b) shall be discounted as provided under subsection (c) for purposes of price comparison.

(b) CONTRACT COST CATEGORIES.—For purposes of this section, contract cost categories for total contract awards are as follows:

(1) Under $1,000,000.

(2) Greater than or equal to $1,000,000 and less than $5,000,000.

(3) Greater than or equal to $5,000,000 and less than $10,000,000.

(4) Greater than or equal to $10,000,000 and less than $25,000,000.

(5) Greater than or equal to $25,000,000 and less than $50,000,000.

(6) Greater than or equal to $50,000,000 and less than $100,000,000

(7) Greater than or equal to $100,000,000.

(c) CALCULATION OF DISCOUNT.—

(1) CONTRACT SAVINGS WITHIN SAME OR HIGHER CONTRACT COST CATEGORY.—A bid for a contract shall be discounted pursuant to subsection (a) by an amount equal to the average percentage cost savings of the last three completed Department of Defense contracts within a contract cost category if such contract cost category is the same as or higher than the contract cost category of the contract that is being bid upon.

(2) CONTRACT SAVINGS WITHIN LOWER CONTRACT COST CATEGORY.—A bid for a contract shall be discounted pursuant to subsection (a) by an amount equal to the average cost savings of the last three completed Department of Defense contracts within a contract cost category if such contract cost category is lower than the contract cost category of the contract that is being bid upon.

(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR CONTRACTS EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN $100,000,000.—In the case of a bid for a contract in the contract cost category set forth in subsection (b)(7), the bid shall be discounted pursuant to subsection (a)—

(A) by an amount equal to the average cost savings of the last three completed Department of Defense contracts if—

(i) the contract cost category for such contracts is lower than such contract cost category; or

(ii) the contract cost category for such contracts is the same as the contract being bid upon, but the average value of such contracts is less than the lower of—

(I) 75 percent of the value of the contract being bid upon; or

(II) the amount equal to the value of such contract minus $50,000,000; or

(B) by an amount equal to the average percentage cost savings of the last three completed Department of Defense contracts within the same contract cost category if the average value of such contracts is equal to or greater than—

(i) 75 percent of the value of the contract being bid upon; or

(ii) the amount equal to the value of such contract minus $50,000,000.

SEC. ___. USE OF FUNDS SAVED THROUGH CONTRACT SAVINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that, of the total amount saved by the Department of Defense on a contract completed after the date of the enactment of this Act as a result of the contract costing less than the amount bid by the contractor—

(1) 50 percent shall be awarded to the contractor; and

(2) 50 percent shall be deposited in the Treasury and used for deficit reduction.

(b) CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of the agency awarding a contract described under subsection (a) shall certify that the savings achieved under the contract were not the result of any degradation in the quality of the goods or services provided under the contract before any funds are distributed under such subsection.

(2) HEAD OF AN AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''head of an agency'' has the meaning given the term in section 2302(1) of title 10, United States Code.

SA 1548. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. CONSOLIDATION OF DUPLICATIVE AND OVERLAPPING AGENCIES, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall, in coordination with the heads of other departments and agencies of the Federal Government—

(1) use available administrative authority to eliminate, consolidate, or streamline Government agencies, programs, and activities with duplicative and overlapping missions as identified in Government Accountability Office reports on duplication and overlap in Government programs;

(2) identify and submit to Congress a report setting the legislative action required to further eliminate, consolidate, or streamline Government agencies, programs, and activities with duplicative and overlapping missions as identified in the reports referred to in paragraph (1); and

(3) determine the total cost savings that—

(A) will accrue to each department, agency, and office effected by an action under paragraph (1) as a result of the actions taken under that paragraph; and

(B) could accrue to each department, agency, and office effected by an action under paragraph (2) as a result of the actions proposed to be taken under that paragraph using the legislative authority set forth under that paragraph.

SA 1549. Mrs. ERNST (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes;

which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 1229, add the following:

(c) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to promote a stable and unified Iraq, including by directly providing the Kurdistan Regional Government military and security forces associated with the Government of Iraq with defense articles, defense services, and related training, on an emergency and temporary basis, to more effectively partner with the United States and other international coalition members to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

(d) AUTHORIZATION.—

(1) MILITARY ASSISTANCE.—The President, in consultation with the Government of Iraq, is authorized to provide defense articles, defense services, and related training directly to Kurdistan Regional Government military and security forces associated with the Government of Iraq for the purpose of supporting international coalition efforts against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and any successor group or associated forces.

(2) DEFENSE EXPORTS.—The President is authorized to issue licenses authorizing United States exporters to export defense articles, defense services, and related training directly to the Kurdistan Regional Government military and security forces described in paragraph (1). For purposes of processing applications for such export licenses, the President is authorized to accept End Use Certificates approved by the Kurdistan Regional Government.

(3) TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance authorized under paragraph (1) and exports authorized under paragraph (2) may include anti-tank and anti-armor weapons, armored vehicles, long-range artillery, crew-served weapons and ammunition, secure command and communications equipment, body armor, helmets, logistics equipment, excess defense articles and other military assistance that the President determines to be appropriate.

(e) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—

(1) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—Assistance authorized under subsection (b)(1) and licenses for exports authorized under subsection (d)(2) shall be provided pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.) and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.), notwithstanding any requirement in such applicable provisions of law that a recipient of assistance of the type authorized under subsection (d)(1) shall be a country or international organization. In addition, any requirement in such provisions of law applicable to such countries or international organizations concerning the provision of end use retransfers and other assurance required for transfers of such assistance should be secured from the Kurdistan Regional Government.

(2) CONSTRUCTION AS PRECEDENT.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as establishing a precedent for the future provision of assistance described in subsection (d) to organizations other than a country or international organization.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that includes the following:

(A) A timeline for the provision of defense articles, defense services, and related training under the authority of subsections (d)(1) and (d)(2).

(B) A description of mechanisms and procedures for end-use monitoring of such defense articles, defense services, and related training.

(C) How such defense articles, defense services, and related training would contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States, as well as impact security in the region.

(2) UPDATES.—Not later than 180 days after the submittal of the report required by paragraph (1), and every 180 days thereafter through the termination pursuant to subsection (i) of the authority in subsection (d), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report updating the previous report submitted under this subsection. In addition to any matters so updated, each report shall include a description of any delays, and the circumstances surrounding such delays, in the delivery of defense articles, defense services, and related training to the Kurdistan Regional Government pursuant to the authority in subsections (d)(1) and (d)(2).

(3) FORM.—Any report under this subsection shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(4) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

(g) NOTIFICATION.—The President should provide notification to the Government of Iraq, when practicable, not later than 15 days before providing defense articles, defense services, or related training to the Kurdistan Regional Government under the authority of subsection (d)(1) or (d)(2).

(h) ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ''defense article'', ''defense service'', and ''training'' have the meanings given those terms in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794).

(i) TERMINATION.—The authority to provide defense articles, defense services, and related training under subsection (d)(1) and the authority to issue licenses for exports authorized under subsection (d)(2) shall terminate on the date that is three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1550. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 721. REMOVAL OF RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEDICAL FACILITIES TO PERFORM ABORTIONS.

Section 1093 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b); and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''(a) RESTRICTION ON USE OF FUNDS.—''.

SA 1551. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 622. STUDY AND REPORT ON POLICY CHANGES TO THE JOINT TRAVEL REGULATIONS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the impact of the policy changes to the Joint Travel Regulations for the Uniformed Service Members and Department of Defense Civilian Employees related to flat rate per diem for long term temporary duty travel that took effect on November 1, 2014. The study shall assess the following:

(1) The impact of such changes on shipyard workers who travel on long-term temporary duty assignments.

(2) Whether such changes have discouraged employees of the Department of Defense, including civilian employees at shipyards and depots, from volunteering for important temporary duty travel assignments.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than June 1, 2016, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on the study required by subsection (a).

SA 1552. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 603 the following:

SEC. 603A. ADJUSTMENTS OF BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING IN AREAS NOT ACCURATELY ASSESSED BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HOUSING MARKET SURVEYS.

Section 403(b)(7)(A) of title 37, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(iii) is located in an area in which the most recent determination of costs of adequate housing for purposes of this subsection does not accurately reflect the actual costs of adequate housing in such area.''.

SA 1553. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. _____. DESIGNATION OF MEDICAL FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS.

(a) PHSA.—Section 332(a)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254e(a)(1)) is amended in the second sentence by inserting ''and medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (including State homes, as defined in section 101(19) of title 38, United States Code)'' after ''(42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa)),''.

(b) CONCURRENT BENEFITS.—

(1) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.—Section 338A(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'';

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) not be participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program under chapter 76 of title 38, United States Code.''.

(2) DEBT REDUCTION PROGRAM.—Section 338B(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l-1(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'';

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) not be participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program under chapter 76 of title 38, United States Code.''.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the National Health Service Corps Program under subpart II of part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d et seq.), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall consult with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with respect to health professional shortage areas that are medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (including State homes, as defined in section 101(19) of title 38, United States Code).

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1554. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XXVIII, add the following:

Subtitle D—Other Matters

SEC. 2831. ELIMINATION OF STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES AND RENEWABLE ENERGY AT NATIONAL GUARD READINESS CENTERS.

Section 18236(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(2) by striking ''A contribution'' and inserting ''(1) Subject to paragraph (2), a contribution''; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (B), as redesignated by paragraph (1), the following new paragraph:

''(2) If a readiness center or armory project for which a contribution is made under paragraph (4) or (5) of section 18233(a) of this title consists of or includes an energy efficiency upgrade, the Secretary of Defense shall cover—

''(A) 100 percent of the cost of architectural, engineering, and design services related to the upgrade or renewable energy (including advance architectural, engineering, and design services under section 18233(e) of this title), as provided in paragraph (1)(A); and

''(B) 100 percent of the cost of construction related to the upgrade or renewable energy, notwithstanding subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1), and payment of such cost shall not be considered in applying the limitation in such subparagraph.''.

SA 1555. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of division A, add the following:

TITLE XVII—METAL THEFT

SEC. 1701. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Metal Theft Prevention Act of 2015''.

SEC. 1702. DEFINITIONS.

In this title—

(1) the term ''critical infrastructure'' has the meaning given the term in section 1016(e) of the USA PATRIOT Act (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e));

(2) the term ''recycling agent'' means any person engaged in the business of purchasing specified metal for reuse or recycling, without regard to whether that person is engaged in the business of recycling or otherwise processing the purchased specified metal for reuse; and

(3) the term ''specified metal'' means metal that—

(A)(i) is marked with the name, logo, or initials of a city, county, State, or Federal government entity, a railroad, an electric, gas, or water company, a telephone company, a cable company, a retail establishment, a beer supplier or distributor, or a public utility; or

(ii) has been altered for the purpose of removing, concealing, or obliterating a name, logo, or initials described in clause (i) through burning or cutting of wire sheathing or other means; or

(B) is part of—

(i) a street light pole or street light fixture;

(ii) a road or bridge guard rail;

(iii) a highway or street sign;

(iv) a water meter cover;

(v) a storm water grate;

(vi) unused or undamaged building construction or utility material;

(vii) a historical marker;

(viii) a grave marker or cemetery urn;

(ix) a utility access cover; or

(x) a container used to transport or store beer with a capacity of 5 gallons or more;

(C) is a wire or cable commonly used by communications and electrical utilities; or

(D) is copper, aluminum, and other metal (including any metal combined with other materials) that is valuable for recycling or reuse as raw metal, except for—

(i) aluminum cans; and

(ii) motor vehicles, the purchases of which are reported to the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (established under section 30502 of title 49, United States Code).

SEC. 1703. THEFT OF SPECIFIED METAL.

(a) OFFENSE.—It shall be unlawful to knowingly steal specified metal—

(1) being used in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce; and

(2) the theft of which is from and harms critical infrastructure.

(b) PENALTY.—Any person who commits an offense described in subsection (a) shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.

SEC. 1704. DOCUMENTATION OF OWNERSHIP OR AUTHORITY TO SELL.

(a) OFFENSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), it shall be unlawful for a recycling agent to purchase specified metal described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section 1702(3), unless—

(A) the seller, at the time of the transaction, provides documentation of ownership of, or other proof of the authority of the seller to sell, the specified metal; and

(B) there is a reasonable basis to believe that the documentation or other proof of authority provided under subparagraph (A) is valid.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a recycling agent that is subject to a State or local law that sets forth a requirement on recycling agents to obtain documentation of ownership or proof of authority to sell specified metal before purchasing specified metal.

(3) RESPONSIBILITY OF RECYCLING AGENT.—A recycling agent is not required to independently verify the validity of the documentation or other proof of authority described in paragraph (1).

(4) PURCHASE OF STOLEN METAL.—It shall be unlawful for a recycling agent to purchase any specified metal that the recycling agent—

(A) knows to be stolen; or

(B) should know or believe, based upon commercial experience and practice, to be stolen.

(b) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person who knowingly violates subsection (a) shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than $10,000 for each violation.

SEC. 1705. TRANSACTION REQUIREMENTS.

(a) RECORDING REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a recycling agent shall maintain a written or electronic record of each purchase of specified metal.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a recycling agent that is subject to a State or local law that sets forth recording requirements that are substantially similar to the requirements described in paragraph (3) for the purchase of specified metal.

(3) CONTENTS.—A record under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the name and address of the recycling agent; and

(B) for each purchase of specified metal—

(i) the date of the transaction;

(ii) a description of the specified metal purchased using widely used and accepted industry terminology;

(iii) the amount paid by the recycling agent;

(iv) the name and address of the person to which the payment was made;

(v) the name of the person delivering the specified metal to the recycling agent, including a distinctive number from a Federal or State government-issued photo identification card and a description of the type of the identification; and

(vi) the license plate number and State-of-issue, make, and model, if available, of the vehicle used to deliver the specified metal to the recycling agent.

(4) REPEAT SELLERS.—A recycling agent may comply with the requirements of this

subsection with respect to a purchase of specified metal from a person from which the recycling agent has previously purchased specified metal by—

(A) reference to the existing record relating to the seller; and

(B) recording any information for the transaction that is different from the record relating to the previous purchase from that person.

(5) RECORD RETENTION PERIOD.—A recycling agent shall maintain any record required under this subsection for not less than 2 years after the date of the transaction to which the record relates.

(6) CONFIDENTIALITY.—Any information collected or retained under this section may be disclosed to any Federal, State, or local law enforcement authority or as otherwise directed by a court of law.

(b) PURCHASES IN EXCESS OF $100.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a recycling agent may not pay cash for a single purchase of specified metal of more than $100. For purposes of this paragraph, more than 1 purchase in any 48-hour period from the same seller shall be considered to be a single purchase.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a recycling agent that is subject to a State or local law that sets forth a maximum amount for cash payments for the purchase of specified metal.

(3) PAYMENT METHOD.—

(A) OCCASIONAL SELLERS.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), for any purchase of specified metal of more than $100 a recycling agent shall make payment by check that—

(i) is payable to the seller; and

(ii) includes the name and address of the seller.

(B) ESTABLISHED COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS.—A recycling agent may make payments for a purchase of specified metal of more than $100 from a governmental or commercial supplier of specified metal with which the recycling agent has an established commercial relationship by electronic funds transfer or other established commercial transaction payment method through a commercial bank if the recycling agent maintains a written record of the payment that identifies the seller, the amount paid, and the date of the purchase.

(c) CIVIL PENALTY.—A person who knowingly violates subsection (a) or (b) shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than $5,000 for each violation, except that a person who commits a minor violation shall be subject to a penalty of not more than $1,000.

SEC. 1706. ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.

The Attorney General may bring an enforcement action in an appropriate United States district court against any person that engages in conduct that violates this title.

SEC. 1707. ENFORCEMENT BY STATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An attorney general or equivalent regulator of a State may bring a civil action in the name of the State, as parens patriae on behalf of natural persons residing in the State, in any district court of the United States or other competent court having jurisdiction over the defendant, to secure monetary or equitable relief for a violation of this title.

(b) NOTICE REQUIRED.—Not later than 30 days before the date on which an action under subsection (a) is filed, the attorney general or equivalent regulator of the State involved shall provide to the Attorney General—

(1) written notice of the action; and

(2) a copy of the complaint for the action.

(c) ATTORNEY GENERAL ACTION.—Upon receiving notice under subsection (b), the Attorney General shall have the right—

(1) to intervene in the action;

(2) upon so intervening, to be heard on all matters arising therein;

(3) to remove the action to an appropriate district court of the United States; and

(4) to file petitions for appeal.

(d) PENDING FEDERAL PROCEEDINGS.—If a civil action has been instituted by the Attorney General for a violation of this title, no State may, during the pendency of the action instituted by the Attorney General, institute a civil action under this title against any defendant named in the complaint in the civil action for any violation alleged in the complaint.

(e) CONSTRUCTION.—For purposes of bringing a civil action under subsection (a), nothing in this section regarding notification shall be construed to prevent the attorney general or equivalent regulator of the State from exercising any powers conferred under the laws of that State to—

(1) conduct investigations;

(2) administer oaths or affirmations; or

(3) compel the attendance of witnesses or the production of documentary and other evidence.

SEC. 1708. DIRECTIVE TO SENTENCING COMMISSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to its authority under section 994 of title 28, United States Code, and in accordance with this section, the United States Sentencing Commission, shall review and, if appropriate, amend the Federal Sentencing Guidelines and policy statements applicable to a person convicted of a criminal violation of section 1703 or any other Federal criminal law based on the theft of specified metal by such person.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out this section, the Sentencing Commission shall—

(1) ensure that the sentencing guidelines and policy statements reflect the—

(A) serious nature of the theft of specified metal; and

(B) need for an effective deterrent and appropriate punishment to prevent such theft;

(2) consider the extent to which the guidelines and policy statements appropriately account for—

(A) the potential and actual harm to the public from the offense, including any damage to critical infrastructure;

(B) the amount of loss, or the costs associated with replacement or repair, attributable to the offense;

(C) the level of sophistication and planning involved in the offense; and

(D) whether the offense was intended to or had the effect of creating a threat to public health or safety, injury to another person, or death;

(3) account for any additional aggravating or mitigating circumstances that may justify exceptions to the generally applicable sentencing ranges;

(4) assure reasonable consistency with other relevant directives and with other sentencing guidelines and policy statements; and

(5) assure that the sentencing guidelines and policy statements adequately meet the purposes of sentencing as set forth in section 3553(a)(2) of title 18, United States Code.

SEC. 1709. STATE AND LOCAL LAW NOT PREEMPTED.

Nothing in this title shall be construed to preempt any State or local law regulating the sale or purchase of specified metal, the reporting of such transactions, or any other aspect of the metal recycling industry.

SEC. 1710. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 1556. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. INTEREST RATE LIMITATION ON DEBT ENTERED INTO DURING MILITARY SERVICE TO CONSOLIDATE OR REFINANCE STUDENT LOANS INCURRED BEFORE MILITARY SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 207 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 527) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''ON DEBT INCURRED BEFORE SERVICE'' after ''LIMITATION TO 6 PERCENT'';

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

''(2) LIMITATION TO 6 PERCENT ON DEBT INCURRED DURING SERVICE TO CONSOLIDATE OR REFINANCE STUDENT LOANS INCURRED BEFORE SERVICE.—An obligation or liability bearing interest at a rate in excess of 6 percent per year that is incurred by a servicemember, or the servicemember and the servicemember's spouse jointly, during military service to consolidate or refinance one or more student loans incurred by the servicemember before such military service shall not bear an interest at a rate in excess of 6 percent during the period of military service.'';

(4) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by paragraph (2) of this subsection, by inserting ''or (2)'' after ''paragraph (1)''; and

(5) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated, by striking ''paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''paragraph (3)''.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF LIMITATION.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''the interest rate limitation in subsection (a)'' and inserting ''an interest rate limitation in paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a)''; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''AS OF DATE OF ORDER TO ACTIVE DUTY''; and

(B) by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''in the case of an obligation or liability covered by subsection (a)(1), or as of the date the servicemember (or servicemember and spouse jointly) incurs the obligation or liability concerned under subsection (a)(2)''.

(c) STUDENT LOAN DEFINED.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) STUDENT LOAN.—The term 'student loan' means the following:

''(A) A Federal student loan made, insured, or guaranteed under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.).

''(B) A private student loan as that term is defined in section 140(a) of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1650(a)).''.

SA 1557. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 884. ARSENAL AND ORGANIC INDUSTRIAL BASE SKILLS SUSTAINMENT AND DOMESTIC PRODUCTION INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the budget of the President for a fiscal year is submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, Unites States Code, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the equipment, weapons, weapons systems, components, subcomponents, and end-items purchased from foreign entities and identify those items which could be manufactured in the military arsenals of the United States or the military depots of the United States to meet the goals of section 2464 of title 10, United States Code, as well as a plan for moving that workload into the military arsenals or depots.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall address the following:

(1) Identification of items purchased by foreign manufacturers meeting the definition of—

(A) section 8302(a)(1) of title 41, United States Code, with an exception granted under subparagraph (A) or (B) of section 8302(a)(2) of such title;

(B) section 2533b(a)(1) of title 10, United States Code, with an exception granted under section 2533(b) of such title; and

(C) section 2534(a) of title 10, United States Code, with a waiver exercised under paragraph (1), (2), (4), or (5) of section 2534(d) of such title.

(2) Assessment of the skills required to manufacture the items identified in paragraph (1) and comparison of those skills with skills required to meet the critical capabilities identified by the Army Report to Congress on Critical Manufacturing Capabilities and Capacities, dated August 2013, and the core logistics capabilities identified by each military service pursuant to section 2464 of title 10, United States Code, as of the date of enactment of this bill.

(3) Identification of the tooling, equipment and facilities upgrades necessary for a military arsenal or depot to perform the manufacturing workload identified under paragraph (1).

(4) Identification of workload identified in paragraph (1) most appropriate for transfer to military arsenals or depots to meet the goals of subsection (a) or requirements of section 2464 of title 10, United States Code.

(5) A plan to transfer manufacturing workload identified in paragraph (4) to the military arsenals or depots within a stated timeframe.

(6) Such other information the Secretary considers necessary for adherence to paragraphs (4) and (5).

(7) An explanation of the rationale for continuing to sole-source manufacturing workload identified in paragraph (1) from a foreign source rather than a military arsenal, depot, or other organic facility.

SA 1558. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. ___. ARSENAL INSTALLATION REUTILIZATION AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2667 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (h), (i), and (j) as subsections (i), (j), and (k), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (g) the following new subsection:

''(h) ARSENAL INSTALLATION REUTILIZATION AUTHORITY.—(1) In the case of a military manufacturing arsenal, the Secretary concerned may authorize leases and contracts for a term of up to 25 years, notwithstanding subsection (b)(1), if the Secretary determines that a lease or contract of that duration will promote the national defense or be in the public interest for the purpose of—

''(A) helping to maintain the viability of the military manufacturing arsenal and any military installations on which it is located;

''(B) eliminating, or at least reducing, the cost of Government ownership of the military manufacturing arsenal, including the costs of operations and maintenance, the costs of environmental remediation, and other costs; and

''(C) leveraging private investment at the military manufacturing arsenal through long-term facility use contracts, property management contracts, leases, or other agreements that support and advance the preceding purposes.

''(2)(A) The Secretary concerned may delegate the authority provided by this subsection to the commander of the military manufacturing arsenal or, if part of a larger military installation, the installation commander.

''(B) The delegated authority does not include the authority to enter into a lease or contract under this section to carry out any activity covered by section 4544(b) of this title related to—

''(i) the sale of articles manufactured by a military manufacturing arsenal;

''(ii) the sale of services performed by a military manufacturing arsenal; or

''(iii) the performance of manufacturing work at the military manufacturing arsenal.

''(3) In this subsection, the term 'military manufacturing arsenal' means a Government-owned, Government-operated defense plant of the Department of the Defense that manufactures weapons, weapon components, or both.''.

SA 1559. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 832. PROHIBITION ON AWARDING OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONTRACTS TO INVERTED DOMESTIC CORPORATIONS.

(a) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 2338. Prohibition on awarding contracts to inverted domestic corporations

''(a) PROHIBITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency may not award a contract for the procurement of property or services to—

''(A) any foreign incorporated entity that such head has determined is an inverted domestic corporation or any subsidiary of such entity; or

''(B) any joint venture if more than 10 percent of the joint venture (by vote or value) is owned by a foreign incorporated entity that such head has determined is an inverted domestic corporation or any subsidiary of such entity.

''(2) SUBCONTRACTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of an executive agency shall include in each contract for the procurement of property or services awarded by the executive agency with a value in excess of $10,000,000, other than a contract for exclusively commercial items, a clause that prohibits the prime contractor on such contract from—

''(i) awarding a first-tier subcontract with a value greater than 10 percent of the total value of the prime contract to an entity or joint venture described in paragraph (1); or

''(ii) structuring subcontract tiers in a manner designed to avoid the limitation in paragraph (1) by enabling an entity or joint venture described in paragraph (1) to perform more than 10 percent of the total value of the prime contract as a lower-tier subcontractor.

''(B) PENALTIES.—The contract clause included in contracts pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall provide that, in the event that the prime contractor violates the contract clause—

''(i) the prime contract may be terminated for default; and

''(ii) the matter may be referred to the suspension or debarment official for the appropriate agency and may be a basis for suspension or debarment of the prime contractor.

''(b) INVERTED DOMESTIC CORPORATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, a foreign incorporated entity shall be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if, pursuant to a plan (or a series of related transactions)—

''(A) the entity completes before, on, or after May 8, 2014, the direct or indirect acquisition of—

''(i) substantially all of the properties held directly or indirectly by a domestic corporation; or

''(ii) substantially all of the assets of, or substantially all of the properties constituting a trade or business of, a domestic partnership; and

''(B) after the acquisition, either—

''(i) more than 50 percent of the stock (by vote or value) of the entity is held—

''(I) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic corporation, by former shareholders of the domestic corporation by reason of holding stock in the domestic corporation; or

''(II) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic partnership, by former partners of the domestic partnership by reason of holding a capital or profits interest in the domestic partnership; or

''(ii) the management and control of the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity occurs, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States, as determined pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, and such expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities.

''(2) EXCEPTION FOR CORPORATIONS WITH SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN FOREIGN COUNTRY OF ORGANIZATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A foreign incorporated entity described in paragraph (1) shall not be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if after the acquisition the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity has substantial business activities in the foreign country in which or under the law of which the entity is created or organized when compared to the total business activities of such expanded affiliated group.

''(B) SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall establish regulations

for determining whether an affiliated group has substantial business activities for purposes of subparagraph (A), except that such regulations may not treat any group as having substantial business activities if such group would not be considered to have substantial business activities under the regulations prescribed under section 7874 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as in effect on May 8, 2014.

''(3) SIGNIFICANT DOMESTIC BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B)(ii), an expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities if at least 25 percent of—

''(i) the employees of the group are based in the United States;

''(ii) the employee compensation incurred by the group is incurred with respect to employees based in the United States;

''(iii) the assets of the group are located in the United States; or

''(iv) the income of the group is derived in the United States.

''(B) DETERMINATION.—Determinations pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be made in the same manner as such determinations are made for purposes of determining substantial business activities under regulations referred to in paragraph (2) as in effect on May 8, 2014, but applied by treating all references in such regulations to 'foreign country' and 'relevant foreign country' as references to 'the United States'. The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) may issue regulations decreasing the threshold percent in any of the tests under such regulations for determining if business activities constitute significant domestic business activities for purposes of this paragraph.

''(c) WAIVER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency may waive subsection (a) with respect to any Federal Government contract under the authority of such head if the head determines that the waiver is required in the interest of national security or is necessary for the efficient or effective administration of Federal or Federally-funded programs that provide health benefits to individuals.

''(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The head of an agency issuing a waiver under paragraph (1) shall, not later than 14 days after issuing such waiver, submit a written notification of the waiver to the Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

''(d) APPLICABILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), this section shall not apply to any contract entered into before the date of the enactment of this section.

''(2) TASK AND DELIVERY ORDERS.—This section shall apply to any task or delivery order issued after the date of the enactment of this section pursuant to a contract entered into before, on, or after such date of enactment.

''(3) SCOPE.—This section applies only to contracts subject to regulation under the Federal Acquisition Regulation and the Defense Supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

''(e) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms 'expanded affiliated group', 'foreign incorporated entity', 'person', 'domestic', and 'foreign' have the meaning given those terms in section 835(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 395(c)).

''(2) SPECIAL RULES.—In applying subsection (b) of this section for purposes of subsection (a) of this section, the rules described under 835(c)(1) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 395(c)(1)) shall apply.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2337 the following new item:

''2338. Prohibition on awarding contracts to inverted domestic corporations.''

(b) REGULATIONS REGARDING MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury (or the Secretary's delegate) shall, for purposes of section 2338(b)(1)(B)(ii) of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), prescribe regulations for purposes of determining cases in which the management and control of an expanded affiliated group is to be treated as occurring, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States. The regulations prescribed under the preceding sentence shall apply to periods after May 8, 2014.

(2) EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—The regulations prescribed under paragraph (1) shall provide that the management and control of an expanded affiliated group shall be treated as occurring, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States if substantially all of the executive officers and senior management of the expanded affiliated group who exercise day-to-day responsibility for making decisions involving strategic, financial, and operational policies of the expanded affiliated group are based or primarily located within the United States. Individuals who in fact exercise such day-to-day responsibilities shall be treated as executive officers and senior management regardless of their title.

SA 1560. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 721. MONITORING OF ADVERSE EVENT DATA ON DIETARY SUPPLEMENT USE BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall modify the electronic health record system of the military health system to include data regarding the use by members of the Armed Forces of dietary supplements and adverse events with respect to dietary supplements.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The modifications required by subsection (a) shall ensure that the electronic health record system of the military health system—

(1) records adverse event report data regarding dietary supplement use by members of the Armed Forces;

(2) generates standard reports on adverse event data that can be aggregated for analysis;

(3) issues automated alerts to signal a significant change in adverse event reporting or to signal a risk of interaction with a medication or other treatment; and

(4) is interoperable with the MedWatch form of the Food and Drug Administration (as described in section 760(d) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 379aa(d))).

(c) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall conduct outreach to health care providers in the military health system to educate such providers on the importance of entering adverse event report data regarding dietary supplement use by members of the Armed Forces into the electronic health record system of the military health system and the MedWatch form described in subsection (b)(4).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADVERSE EVENT.—The term ''adverse event'' has the meaning given such term in section 761(a) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 379aa–1(a)).

(2) DIETARY SUPPLEMENT.—The term ''dietary supplement'' has the meaning given such term in section 201(ff) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321(ff)).

SA 1561. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 721. REPORTING OF DIETARY SUPPLEMENT USE BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a minimum requirement for the Department of Defense for the reporting by each member of the Armed Forces of the use by such member of dietary supplements.

(b) OTHER POLICIES OF MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.—Each Secretary of a military department may establish a different policy, or continue an existing policy, relating to the reporting of the use of dietary supplements by members of the Armed Forces under the jurisdiction of such Secretary only if such policy meets at least the minimum requirement established under subsection (a), as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

(c) INFORMATION IN HEALTH RECORD SYSTEM.—The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that the electronic health record system of the military health system—

(1) records dietary supplement use by members of the Armed Forces;

(2) generates standard reports on dietary supplement use that can be aggregated for analysis; and

(3) issues automated alerts to signal a significant change in dietary supplement use.

(d) DIETARY SUPPLEMENT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''dietary supplement'' has the meaning given such term in section 201(ff) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321(ff)).

SA 1562. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 654. LIMITATION ON SALE OF DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS IN COMMISSARY AND EXCHANGE STORES.

(a) LIMITATION.—Section 2484(c) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4)(A) A dietary supplement may be sold by a commissary store or exchange store, or a retail establishment operating on a military installation, only if—

''(i) the dietary supplement has been verified by an independent third party for recognized public standards of identity, purity, strength, and composition, and adherence to related process standards; or

''(ii) the dietary supplement complies with Defense Commissary Agency policy on inventory carried by commissaries.

''(B) The Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, identify the third parties that may provide verification under this paragraph.

''(C) In this paragraph, the term 'dietary supplement' has the meaning given that term in section 201(ff) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321(ff).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to sales that occur on or after such effective date.

SA 1563. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 738. REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DATA SECURITY AND TRANSMISSION STANDARDS FOR ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 1, 2016, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly submit to Congress a report on the standards for security and transmission of data to be implemented by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs in deploying the new or updated, as the case may be, electronic health record system of each such Department (required to be deployed by each such Department under section 713 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113–66; 10 U.S.C. 1071 note)) at military installations and in field environments.

(b) TRANSMISSION OF DATA.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include information on standards for transmission of data between the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs and standards for transmission of data between each such Department and private sector entities.

SA 1564. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. INCREASE IN CIVIL PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 801(b)(3) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 597(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''$55,000'' and inserting ''$110,000''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''$110,000'' and inserting ''$220,000''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to violations of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501 et seq.) that occur on or after such date.

SA 1565. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 31, strike line 1 and all that follows through ''assessment'' on line 5 and insert the following: ''A Capabilities Based Assessment or equivalent report to assess capability gaps and associated capability requirements and risks for the upgraded Littoral Combat Ship, which is proposed to commence with LCS 33. This assessment or equivalent report''.

SA 1566. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 645, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

(4) At the 2006 North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit in Riga, North Atlantic Treaty Organization member countries agreed to commit a minimum of two per cent of their national income or Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to spending on defense.

(5) At the 2014 North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit in Wales, North Atlantic Treaty Organization member countries agreed that ''allies currently meeting the NATO guideline to spend a minimum of 2% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense will aim to continue to do so'' and that ''allies whose current proportion of GDP spent on defense is below this level will: halt any decline in defense expenditure; aim to increase defense expenditure in real terms as GDP grows; aim to move towards the two percent guideline within a decade with a view to meeting their NATO Capability Targets and filling NATO's capability shortfalls''.

(6) In 2015, four out of the 28 North Atlantic Treaty Organization member countries, including the United States, meet the two percent target.

On page 646, strike line 16 and insert the following:

spending; and

(5) the North Atlantic Treaty Organization member countries are strongly urged to meet their commitment to spend two percent of their Gross Domestic Product on defense.

SA 1567. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. INHOFE, and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 728, strike line 12 and all that follows through page 729, line 8, and insert the following:

SEC. 1643. AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITY AT NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION MISSILE DEFENSE SITES.

(a) DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) determine whether the Aegis Ashore site in Romania and the site to be deployed in the Republic of Poland are capable of defending United States and allied personnel deployed at such sites from air warfare threats, including cruise missiles; and

(2) submit to the congressional defense committees notice of such determination.

(b) PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), if the Secretary determines pursuant to subsection (a)(1) that the Aegis Ashore sites described in such subsection are not capable of defending as described in such subsection, the Secretary shall—

(A) submit to the congressional defense committees, along with the annual budget request submitted to Congress under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, for fiscal year 2017, a plan to ensure that such sites have, by not later than December 31, 2018, anti-air warfare capability that is capable of defending as described in such subsection; and

(B) ensure that, not later than December 31, 2018, both sites described in such subsection have the capability described in such subsection.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The plan submitted under paragraph (1)(A) shall include a descriptions of the contributions that the Secretary anticipates from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and members of such organization to ensure the sites described in subsection (a)(1) have anti-air warfare capability that is capable of defending as described in such subsection.

(3) DELAY OF IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary may delay the requirement in paragraph (1)(B) if the Director of the Missile Defense Agency submits to the congressional defense committees a certification in writing that such delay is necessary to ensure initial operational capability of the ballistic missile defense system at such sites in accordance with the timeline in the 2010 Ballistic Missile Defense Review.

SA 1568. Mr. COTTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. UNAUTHORIZED DEALINGS IN SPECIAL NUCLEAR MATERIAL.

Section 57b.(2) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2077(b)(2)) is amended in the first sentence in the proviso by inserting ''the Director of National Intelligence,'' after ''Commerce,''.

SA 1569. Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title V, add the following:

SEC. 565. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS OF EMPLOYEES OF THE MILITARY CHILD CARE SYSTEM AND PROVIDERS OF CHILD CARE SERVICES AND YOUTH PROGRAM SERVICES FOR MILITARY DEPENDENTS.

(a) EMPLOYEES OF MILITARY CHILD CARE SYSTEM.—Section 1792 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection (d):

''(d) CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK.—The criminal background check of child care employees under this section that is required pursuant to section 231 of the Crime Control Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13041) shall be conducted pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense in accordance with the provisions of section 658H of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858f).''.

(b) PROVIDERS OF CHILD CARE SERVICES AND YOUTH PROGRAM SERVICES.—Section 1798 of such title is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

''(c) CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK.—A provider of child care services or youth program services may not provide such services under this section unless such provider complies with the requirements for criminal background checks under section 658H of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858f) for the State in which such services are provided.''.

SA 1570. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1283. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The United States has an upgraded, strategic-plus relationship with India based on regional cooperation, space science cooperation, and defense cooperation.

(2) The defense relationship between the United States and the Republic of India is strengthened by the common commitment of both countries to democracy.

(3) The United States and the Republic of India share a common and long-standing commitment to civilian control of the military.

(4) The United States and the Republic of India have increasingly worked together on defense cooperation across a range of activities, exercises, initiatives, and research.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States should—

(1) continue to expand defense cooperation with the Republic of India;

(2) welcome the role of the Republic of India in providing security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond;

(3) work cooperatively with the Republic of India on matters relating to our common defense;

(4) vigorously support the implementation of the United States-India Defense Framework Agreement; and

(5) support the India Defense Trade and Technology Initiative.

SA 1571. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title V, add the following:

SEC. 524. SENSE OF CONGRESS RECOGNIZING THE DIVERSITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The United States military includes individuals with a variety of national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds that have roots all over the world.

(2) In addition to diverse backgrounds, members of the Armed Forces come from numerous religious traditions, including Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, non-denominational, nonpracticing, and many more.

(3) Members of the Armed Forces from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions have lost their lives or been injured defending the national security of the United States.

(4) Diversity contributes to the strength of the Armed Forces, and service members from different backgrounds and religious traditions share the same goal of defending the United States.

(5) The unity of the Armed Forces reflects the strength in diversity that makes the United States a great Nation.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States should—

(1) continue to recognize and promote diversity in the Armed Forces; and

(2) honor those from all diverse backgrounds and religious traditions who have made sacrifices in serving the United States through the Armed Forces.

SA 1572. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1264. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE UNITED STATES ALLIANCE WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea has served as an anchor for stability, security, and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula, in the Asia-Pacific region, and around the world;

(2) the United States and the Republic of Korea continue to strengthen and adapt the bilateral, regional, and global scope of the comprehensive strategic alliance between the two nations, to serve as a linchpin of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, recognizing the shared values of democracy, human rights, free and open marketS, and the rule of law, as reaffirmed in the May 2013 ''Joint Declaration in Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America'';

(3) the United States and the Republic of Korea continue to broaden and deepen the alliance by strengthening the combined defense posture on the Korean Peninsula, enhancing mutual security based on the Republic of Korea-United States Mutual Defense Treaty, and promoting cooperation for regional and global security in the 21st century;

(4) the United States and the Republic of Korea share deep concerns that the nuclear, cyber, and ballistic missiles programs of North Korea and its repeated provocations pose grave threats to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia and recognize that both nations are determined to achieve the peaceful denuclearization of North Korea and remain fully committed to continuing close cooperation on the full range of issues related to North Korea;

(5) the United States and the Republic of Korea are particularly concerned that the nuclear and ballistic missile programs of North Korea, including North Korean efforts to miniaturize their nuclear technology and improve the mobility of their ballistic missiles, have gathered significant momentum and are poised to expand in the coming years;

(6) the Republic of Korea has made progress in enhancing future warfighting and interoperability capabilities by taking steps toward procuring Patriot Advanced Capability missiles, F–35 Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft, and RQ–4 Global Hawk Surveillance Aircraft;

(7) the United States supports the vision of a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons, free from the fear of war, and peacefully reunited on the basis of democratic and free market principles, as articulated in President Park's address in Dresden, Germany; and

(8) the United States and the Republic of Korea share the future interests of both nations in securing peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

SA 1573. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016

for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title X, add the following:

SEC. 10___. REPORT ON UNITED STATES CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit to Congress a report on all assessed and voluntary contributions, including in-kind, of the United States Government to the United Nations and its affiliated agencies and related bodies during the previous fiscal year.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) The total amount of all assessed and voluntary contributions, including in-kind, of the United States Government to the United Nations and United Nations affiliated agencies and related bodies.

(2) The approximate percentage of United States Government contributions to each United Nations affiliated agency or body in such fiscal year when compared with all contributions to such agency or body from any source in such fiscal year.

(3) For each such contribution—

(A) the amount of the contribution;

(B) a description of the contribution (including whether assessed or voluntary);

(C) the department or agency of the United States Government responsible for the contribution;

(D) the purpose of the contribution; and

(E) the United Nations or United Nations affiliated agency or related body receiving the contribution.

(c) SCOPE OF INITIAL REPORT.—The first report required under subsection (a) shall include the information required under this section for the previous five fiscal years.

(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—Not later than 14 days after submitting a report required under subsection (a), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall post a public version of the report on a text-based, searchable, and publicly available Internet website.

SA 1574. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title V, add the following:

SEC. 515. PILOT PROGRAM ON JOB PLACEMENT AND RELATED EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD AND THE RESERVES.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense may carry out a pilot program to enhance the efforts of the Department of Defense to provide job placement assistance and related employment services directly to members of the National Guard and the Reserves.

(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program in consultation with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

(b) ELIGIBLE MEMBERS.—The members of the National Guard and the Reserves eligible for job placement assistance and related employment services under the pilot program are such categories of members as the Secretary shall specify for purposes of the pilot program.

(c) ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES.—The mechanisms assessed under the pilot program shall include mechanisms as follows:

(1) To identify unemployed and underemployed members of the National Guard and the Reserves.

(2) To provide job placement assistance and related employment services to members of the National Guard and the Reserves on an individualized basis, including—

(A) resume writing and interview preparation assistance and services;

(B) cost-effective job placement services;

(C) post-employment follow up services; and

(D) such other assistance and services as the Secretary shall specify for purposes of the pilot program.

(d) DISCHARGE.—

(1) DISCHARGE THROUGH ADJUTANTS GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide for the carrying out of the pilot program through the Adjutants General of the States.

(2) OUTREACH.—The Adjutants General shall take appropriate actions to facilitate participation in the pilot program by eligible members of the National Guard and the Reserves, including through outreach to unit commanders.

(e) STATE MATCHING SHARE OF FUNDS.—In order for the pilot program to be carried out in a State, the State shall agree to contribute to the carrying out of the pilot program an amount, derived from non-Federal sources, equal to at least 30 percent of the funds provided by the Secretary for carrying out the pilot program in the State.

(f) EVALUATION METRICS.—The Secretary shall establish metrics for purposes of evaluating the success of the pilot program.

(g) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees on an annual basis a report on the activities, if any, under the pilot program during the preceding fiscal year.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report under this subsection shall include the following:

(A) A description of the activities under the pilot program during the fiscal year covered by such report, set forth by State in which the pilot program was carried out, including—

(i) the number of members of the National Guard and the Reserves who participated in the pilot program;

(ii) the job placement assistance and related employment services provided to such members under the pilot program; and

(iii) the number of members of the National Guard and Reserves who obtained employment through participation in the pilot program.

(B) A comparison of the pilot program with other programs conducted by the Department of Defense during such fiscal year to provide job placement assistance and related employment services to unemployed and underemployed members of the National Guard and the Reserves, including the costs of services per individual under such programs.

(C) An assessment of the impact of the pilot program, and increased employment among members of the National Guard and the Reserves as a result of the pilot program, on the readiness of the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

(D) Such recommendations for improvement or extension of the pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(E) Such other matters relating to the pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(h) LIMITATION ON FUNDING.—The amount obligated by the Secretary in any fiscal year to carry out the pilot program may not exceed $20,000,000.

(i) SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the authority to carry out the pilot program shall expire on September 30, 2019.

(2) TWO-YEAR EXTENSION.—The Secretary may continue to carry out the pilot program for a period, not in excess of two years, after September 30, 2019, if the Secretary considers continuation of the pilot program for such period to be advisable.

SA 1575. Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. PILOT PROGRAM ON PROVISION OF FURNITURE, HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO HOMELESS VETERANS MOVING INTO PERMANENT HOUSING.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of awarding grants to eligible entities to provide furniture, household items, and other assistance to covered veterans moving into permanent housing to facilitate the settlement of such covered veterans in such housing.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—For purposes of the pilot program, an eligible entity is any of the following:

(A) A veterans service agency.

(B) A veterans service organization.

(C) A nongovernmental organization that—

(i) is described in paragraph (3), (4), or (19) of section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such code; and

(ii) has an established history of providing assistance to veterans or the homeless.

(3) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of the pilot program, a covered veteran is any of the following:

(A) A formerly homeless veteran who is receiving housing, clinical services, and case management assistance under section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)).

(B) A veteran who is receiving—

(i) assistance from, or is the beneficiary of a service furnished by, a program that is in receipt of a grant under section 2011 of title 38, United States Code; or

(ii) services for which per diem payment is received under section 2012 of such title.

(C) A veteran who is—

(i) a beneficiary of the outreach program carried out under section 2022(e) of such title; or

(ii) in receipt of referral or counseling services from the program carried out under section 2023 of such title.

(D) A veteran who is receiving a service or assistance under section 2031 of such title.

(E) A veteran who is residing in therapeutic housing operated under section 2032 of such title.

(F) A veteran who is receiving domiciliary services under section 2043 of such title or domiciliary care under section 1710(b) of such title.

(G) A veteran who is receiving supportive services under section 2044 of such title.

(4) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(b) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program through the award of grants to eligible entities for the provision of furniture and other household items as described in subsection (a)(1).

(2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant awarded under the pilot program shall not exceed $500,000.

(c) SELECTION OF GRANT RECIPIENTS.—

(1) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under the pilot program shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor in such form and in such manner as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) SELECTION PRIORITY.—

(A) COMMUNITIES WITH GREATEST NEED.—Subject to subparagraph (B), in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, the Secretary shall give priority in the awarding of grants under the pilot program to eligible entities who serve communities which the Secretary determines have the greatest need of homeless services.

(B) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary may give priority in the awarding of grants under the pilot program to achieve a fair distribution, as determined by the Secretary, among eligible entities serving covered veterans in different geographic regions, including in rural communities and tribal lands.

(d) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each eligible entity receiving a grant under the pilot program shall use the grant—

(A) to coordinate with the Secretary to facilitate distribution of furniture and other household items to covered veterans moving into permanent housing;

(B) to purchase, or otherwise obtain via donation, furniture and household items for use by such covered veterans;

(C) to distribute such furniture and household items to such covered veterans; and

(D) to pay for background checks, provide security deposits, provide funds for utilities, and provide moving expenses for such covered veterans that are necessary for the settlement of such covered veterans in such housing.

(2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—A recipient of a grant awarded under the pilot program may not expend more than $2,500 of the amount of the grant awarded for the provision to a single covered veteran of assistance under the pilot program.

(3) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING.—In the case of an eligible entity receiving a grant under the pilot program that entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Secretary before the date of the enactment of this Act that provides for the provision of furniture and other household items to covered veterans as described in subsection (a) without Federal compensation, the eligible entity may use the grant in accordance with the provisions of such memorandum of understanding in lieu of paragraph (1).

(4) FULL USE OF FUNDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A recipient of a grant awarded under the pilot program shall use the full amount of the grant by not later than one year after the date on which the Secretary awards such grant.

(B) RECOVERY.—The Secretary may recover from a recipient of a grant awarded under this section all of the unused amounts of the grant if all of the amounts of the grant are not used—

(i) pursuant to paragraph (1) and subparagraph (A) of this paragraph; or

(ii) in a case described in paragraph (3), pursuant to an applicable memorandum of understanding.

(e) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall conduct outreach, including under chapter 63 of title 38, United States Code, to inform covered veterans about their eligibility to receive household items, furniture, and other assistance under the pilot program.

(f) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations for—

(1) evaluating an application by an eligible entity for a grant under the pilot program; and

(2) otherwise administering the pilot program.

(g) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 90 days after the last day of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the pilot program.

(B) The findings of the Secretary with respect to the feasibility and advisability of awarding grants to eligible entities as described in subsection (a)(1).

(C) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or administrative action to facilitate the settlement of covered veterans into permanent housing.

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section $5,000,000 for each year of the pilot program.

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) OUTREACH.—The term ''outreach'' has the meaning given such term in section 6301(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY.—The term ''veterans service agency'' means a unit of a State government, or a political subdivision thereof, that has primary responsibility for programs and activities of such government or subdivision related to veterans benefits.

(3) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.—The term ''veterans service organization'' means any organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

SA 1576. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title III, add the following:

SEC. 355. USE OF AIR NATIONAL GUARD AND AIR FORCE RESERVE FOR INITIAL AIRBORNE RESPONSE TO FIGHTING WILDFIRES.

(a) INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.—Subject to subsection (b), in order to prevent the loss of life and reduce property losses from wildfires, section 1535(a)(4) of title 31, United States Code, shall not apply to limit the use of interagency agreements with the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve to procure the services of a unit of the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve to conduct Defense Support to Civil Authority (DSCA) missions utilizing military fixed-wing aerial firefighting aircraft, including Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) units, in the airborne response to fighting wildfires.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—Section 1535(a)(4) of title 31, United States Code, shall not apply to interagency agreements described in subsection (a) only when a requesting agency determines that—

(1) privately contracted fixed-wing aerial firefighting aircraft are unavailable;

(2) there is an unfilled request for fixed-wing aerial firefighting aircraft, including MAFFS units, to perform an initial airborne response; or

(3) fixed-wing aerial firefighting aircraft, including MAFFS units, are needed to supplement privately contracted fixed-wing aerial firefighting aircraft.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as diminishing the role of contractor owned and operated fixed-wing aircraft as the primary source of aerial firefighting assets for the Federal wildland firefighting agencies.

SA 1577. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SECTION 1085. TRANSNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Transnational Drug Trafficking Act of 2015''.

(b) POSSESSION, MANUFACTURE OR DISTRIBUTION FOR PURPOSES OF UNLAWFUL IMPORTATIONS.—Section 1009 of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 959) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''It shall'' and all that follows and inserting the following: ''It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance in schedule I or II or flunitrazepam or a listed chemical intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that such substance or chemical will be unlawfully imported into the United States or into waters within a distance of 12 miles of the coast of the United States.

''(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a listed chemical—

''(1) intending or knowing that the listed chemical will be used to manufacture a controlled substance; and

''(2) intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that the controlled substance will be unlawfully imported into the United States.''.

(c) TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS OR SERVICES.—Chapter 113 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 2318(b)(2), by striking ''section 2320(e)'' and inserting ''section 2320(f)''; and

(2) in section 2320—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

''(4) traffics in a drug and knowingly uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with such drug,'';

(B) in subsection (b)(3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''counterfeit drug'' and inserting ''drug that uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with the drug''; and

(C) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

''(6) the term 'drug' means a drug, as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).''.

SA 1578. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. PAUL, Mr. COONS, Mr. HELLER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. UDALL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

Subtitle I—Uniform Code of Military Justice Reform

SEC. 596. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Military Justice Improvement Act of 2015''.

SEC. 597. MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE TO PROCEED TO TRIAL BY COURT-MARTIAL ON CHARGES ON CERTAIN OFFENSES WITH AUTHORIZED MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF CONFINEMENT OF MORE THAN ONE YEAR.

(a) MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.—With respect to charges under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that allege an offense specified in paragraph (2) and not excluded under paragraph (3), the Secretary of Defense shall require the Secretaries of the military departments to provide for the determination under section 830(b) of such chapter (article 30(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice) on whether to try such charges by court-martial as provided in paragraph (4).

(B) HOMELAND SECURITY.—With respect to charges under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that allege an offense specified in paragraph (2) and not excluded under paragraph (3) against a member of the Coast Guard (when it is not operating as a service in the Navy), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide for the determination under section 830(b) of such chapter (article 30(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice) on whether to try such charges by court-martial as provided in paragraph (4).

(2) COVERED OFFENSES.—An offense specified in this paragraph is an offense as follows:

(A) An offense under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that is triable by court-martial under that chapter for which the maximum punishment authorized under that chapter includes confinement for more than one year.

(B) An offense of retaliation for reporting a crime under section 893 of title 10, United States Code (article 93 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), as amended by section 599B of this Act, regardless of the maximum punishment authorized under that chapter for such offense.

(C) An offense under section 907a of title 10, United States Code (article 107a of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), as added by section 599C of this Act, regardless of the maximum punishment authorized under that chapter for such offense.

(D) A conspiracy to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) through (C) as punishable under section 881 of title 10, United States Code (article 81 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(E) A solicitation to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) through (C) as punishable under section 882 of title 10, United States Code (article 82 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(F) An attempt to commit an offense specified in subparagraphs (A) through (E) as punishable under section 880 of title 10, United States Code (article 80 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(3) EXCLUDED OFFENSES.—Paragraph (1) does not apply to an offense as follows:

(A) An offense under sections 883 through 917 of title 10, United States Code (articles 83 through 117 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(B) An offense under section 933 or 934 of title 10, United States Code (articles 133 and 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(C) A conspiracy to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) or (B) as punishable under section 881 of title 10, United States Code (article 81 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(D) A solicitation to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) or (B) as punishable under section 882 of title 10, United States Code (article 82 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(E) An attempt to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) through (D) as punishable under section 880 of title 10, United States Code (article 80 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(4) REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS.—The disposition of charges pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be subject to the following:

(A) The determination whether to try such charges by court-martial shall be made by a commissioned officer of the Armed Forces designated in accordance with regulations prescribed for purposes of this subsection from among commissioned officers of the Armed Forces in grade O–6 or higher who—

(i) are available for detail as trial counsel under section 827 of title 10, United States Code (article 27 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

(ii) have significant experience in trials by general or special court-martial; and

(iii) are outside the chain of command of the member subject to such charges.

(B) Upon a determination under subparagraph (A) to try such charges by court-martial, the officer making that determination shall determine whether to try such charges by a general court-martial convened under section 822 of title 10, United States Code (article 22 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), or a special court-martial convened under section 823 of title 10, United States Code (article 23 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(C) A determination under subparagraph (A) to try charges by court-martial shall include a determination to try all known offenses, including lesser included offenses.

(D) The determination to try such charges by court-martial under subparagraph (A), and by type of court-martial under subparagraph (B), shall be binding on any applicable convening authority for a trial by court-martial on such charges.

(E) The actions of an officer described in subparagraph (A) in determining under that subparagraph whether or not to try charges by court-martial shall be free of unlawful or unauthorized influence or coercion.

(F) The determination under subparagraph (A) not to proceed to trial of such charges by general or special court-martial shall not operate to terminate or otherwise alter the authority of commanding officers to refer such charges for trial by summary court-martial convened under section 824 of title 10, United States Code (article 24 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), or to impose non-judicial punishment in connection with the conduct covered by such charges as authorized by section 815 of title 10, United States Code (article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(5) CONSTRUCTION WITH CHARGES ON OTHER OFFENSES.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to alter or affect the disposition of charges under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that allege an offense triable by court-martial under that chapter for which the maximum punishment authorized under that chapter includes confinement for one year or less.

(6) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary of Homeland Security (with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy) shall revise policies and procedures as necessary to comply with this subsection.

(B) UNIFORMITY.—The General Counsel of the Department of Defense and the General Counsel of the Department of Homeland Security shall jointly review the policies and procedures revised under this paragraph in order to ensure that any lack of uniformity in policies and procedures, as so revised, among the military departments and the Department of Homeland Security does not render unconstitutional any policy or procedure, as so revised.

(7) MANUAL FOR COURTS-MARTIAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall recommend such changes to the Manual for Courts-Martial as are necessary to ensure compliance with this subsection.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE AND APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (a), and the revisions required by that subsection, shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to charges preferred under section 830 of title 10, United States Code (article 30 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), on or after such effective date.

SEC. 598. MODIFICATION OF OFFICERS AUTHORIZED TO CONVENE GENERAL AND SPECIAL COURTS-MARTIAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 822 of title 10, United States Code (article 22 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (8) and (9) as paragraphs (9) and (10), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph (8):

''(8) the officers in the offices established pursuant to section 598(c) of the Military Justice Improvement Act of 2015 or officers in the grade of O–6 or higher who are assigned such responsibility by the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, or the Commandant of the Coast Guard, but only with respect to offenses to which section 597(a)(1) of the Military Justice Improvement Act of 2015 applies;''.

(b) NO EXERCISE BY OFFICERS IN CHAIN OF COMMAND OF ACCUSED OR VICTIM.—Such section (article) is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c) An officer specified in subsection (a)(8) may not convene a court-martial under this section if the officer is in the chain of command of the accused or the victim.''.

(c) OFFICES OF CHIEFS OF STAFF ON COURTS-MARTIAL.—

(1) OFFICES REQUIRED.—Each Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces or Commandant specified in paragraph (8) of section 822(a) of title 10, United States Code (article 22(a) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), as amended by subsection (a), shall establish an office to do the following:

(A) To convene general and special courts-martial under sections 822 and 823 of title 10, United States Code (articles 22 and 23 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), pursuant to paragraph (8) of section 822(a) of title 10, United States Code (article 22(a) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), as so amended, with respect to offenses to which section 597(a)(1) applies.

(B) To detail under section 825 of title 10, United States Code (article 25 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), members of courts-martial convened as described in subparagraph (A).

(2) PERSONNEL.—The personnel of each office established under paragraph (1) shall consist of such members of the Armed Forces and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense, or such members of the Coast Guard or civilian personnel of the Department of Homeland Security, as may be detailed or assigned to the office by the Chief of Staff or Commandant concerned. The members and personnel so detailed or assigned, as the case may be, shall be detailed or assigned from personnel billets in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 599. DISCHARGE USING OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary of Homeland Security (with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy) shall carry out sections 597 and 598 (and the amendments made by section 598) using personnel, funds, and resources otherwise authorized by law.

(b) NO AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL OR RESOURCES.—Sections 597 and 598 (and the amendments made by section 598) shall not be construed as authorizations for personnel, personnel billets, or funds for the discharge of the requirements in such sections.

SEC. 599A. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES ON COURTS-MARTIAL BY INDEPENDENT PANEL ON REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.

Section 576(d)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112–239; 126 Stat. 1762) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as subparagraph (K); and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (I) the following new subparagraph (J):

''(J) Monitor and assess the implementation and efficacy of sections 597 through 599 of the Military Justice Improvement Act of 2015, and the amendments made by such sections.''.

SEC. 599B. EXPLICIT CODIFICATION OF RETALIATION FOR REPORTING A CRIME AS AN OFFENSE UNDER THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 893 of title 10, United States Code (article 93 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(a)'' before ''Any person'';

(2) in subsection (a), as so designated, by inserting '', or retaliating against any person subject to his orders for reporting a criminal offense,'' after ''any person subject to his orders''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(b) This section (article) is the sole section of this chapter under which the offense of retaliating against any person subject to a person's orders for reporting a criminal offense as described in subsection (a) is punishable.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECTION (ARTICLE) HEADING.—The heading of such section (article) is amended to read as follows:

''§ 893. Art. 93. Cruelty and maltreatment; retaliation for reporting a crime''.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS (ARTICLES).—The table of sections at the beginning of subchapter X of chapter 47 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 893 (article 93) and inserting the following new item:

''893. Art. 93. Cruelty and maltreatment; retaliation for reporting a crime.''.

(c) REPEAL OF SUPERSEDED PROHIBITION.—Section 1709 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113–66; 127 Stat. 962; 10 U.S.C. 113 note) is repealed.

SEC. 599C. ESTABLISHMENT OF OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE AS A SEPARATE OFFENCE UNDER THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.

(a) PUNITIVE ARTICLE.—Subchapter X of chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), is amended by inserting after section 907 (article 107) the following new section (article):

''§ 907a. Art. 107a. Obstruction of justice

''(a) Any person subject to this chapter who wrongfully does a certain act with the intent to influence, impede, or otherwise obstruct the due administration of justice shall be punished as a court-martial may direct, except that the maximum punishment authorized for such offense may not exceed dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for not more than five years.

''(b) This section (article) is the sole section of this chapter under which an offense described in subsection (a) is punishable.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of subchapter X of chapter 47 of such title, as amended by section 599B(b)(2) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 907 (article 107) the following new item:

''907a. Art. 107a. Obstruction of justice.''.

SA 1579. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1664. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT TO FORCE PROTECTION FOR INSTALLATIONS, FACILITIES, AND PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Maintaining appropriate force protection for deployed personnel of the Department of Defense and their families is a priority for Congress.

(2) Installations, facilities, and personnel of the Department in Europe face a rising threat from international terrorist groups operating in Europe, from individuals inspired by such groups, and from those traversing through Europe to join or return from fighting the terrorist organization known as the ''Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant'' (ISIL) in Iraq and Syria.

(3) Robust military intelligence support to force protection is necessary to detect and thwart potential terrorist plots that, if successful, would have strategic consequences for the United States and the allies of the United States in Europe.

(4) Military intelligence support is also important for detecting and addressing early indicators and warnings of aggression and assertive military action by Russia, particularly action by Russia to destabilize Europe with hybrid or asymmetric warfare.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should maintain and enhance robust military intelligence support to force protection for installations, facilities, and personnel of the Department of Defense and the family members of such personnel, in Europe and worldwide.

SA 1580. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 684, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking ''unless the Secretary'' and inserting the following: ''unless—

''(A) the Secretary'';

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(B) the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of the Russian Federation is no longer—

''(i) violating the territorial integrity of Ukraine; or

''(ii) supporting entities that have illegally seized property of the Government of Ukraine or territory of Ukraine.''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

''(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.''; and

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SA 1581. Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. TILLIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for

such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall designate at least one city in the United States each year as an ''American World War II City''.

(b) CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.—After the designation made under subsection (c), the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall make each designation under subsection (a) based on the following criteria:

(1) Contributions by a city to the war effort during World War II, including those related to defense manufacturing, bond drives, service in the Armed Forces, and the presence of military facilities within the city.

(2) Efforts by a city to preserve the history of the city's contributions during World War II, including through the establishment of preservation organizations or museums, restoration of World War II facilities, and recognition of World War II veterans.

(c) FIRST AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITY.—The city of Wilmington, North Carolina, is designated as an ''American World War II City''.

SA 1582. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1____. ACTION ON APPLICATIONS; PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF LNG EXPORT DESTINATIONS.

(a) DECISION DEADLINE.—For proposals that must also obtain authorization from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission or the United States Maritime Administration to site, construct, expand, or operate liquefied natural gas export facilities, the Secretary of Energy (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary'') shall issue a final decision on any application for the authorization to export natural gas under section 3(a) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b(a)) not later than 45 days after the later of—

(1) the conclusion of the review to site, construct, expand, or operate the liquefied natural gas export facilities required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); or

(2) the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) CONCLUSION OF REVIEW.—For purposes of subsection (a), review required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall be considered concluded when the lead agency—

(1) for a project requiring an Environmental Impact Statement, publishes a Final Environmental Impact Statement;

(2) for a project for which an Environmental Assessment has been prepared, publishes a Finding of No Significant Impact; or

(3) determines that an application is eligible for a categorical exclusion pursuant to National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) implementing regulations.

(c) JUDICIAL ACTION.—

(1) JURISDICTION.—The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit or the circuit in which the liquefied natural gas export facility will be located pursuant to an application described in subsection (a) shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction over any civil action for the review of—

(A) an order issued by the Secretary with respect to such application; or

(B) the failure of the Secretary to issue a final decision on such application.

(2) ORDER TO ISSUE DECISION.—If the Court in a civil action described in paragraph (1) finds that the Secretary has failed to issue a decision on the application as required under subsection (a), the Court shall order the Secretary to issue the decision not later than 30 days after the Court's order.

(3) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION.—The Court shall set any civil action brought under this subsection for expedited consideration and shall set the matter on the docket as soon as practical after the filing date of the initial pleading.

(4) APPEALS.—In the case of an application described in subsection (a) for which a petition for review has been filed—

(A) upon motion by an applicant, the matter shall be transferred to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit or the circuit in which a liquefied natural gas export facility will be located pursuant to an application described in section 3(a) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b(a)); and

(B) the provisions of this Act shall apply.

(d) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF EXPORT DESTINATIONS.—Section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF LNG EXPORT DESTINATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any authorization to export liquefied natural gas, the Secretary of Energy shall require the applicant to report to the Secretary of Energy the names of the 1 or more countries of destination to which the exported liquefied natural gas is delivered.

''(2) TIMING.—The applicant shall file the report required under paragraph (1) not later than—

''(A) in the case of the first export, the last day of the month following the month of the first export; and

''(B) in the case of subsequent exports, the date that is 30 days after the last day of the applicable month concerning the activity of the previous month.

''(3) DISCLOSURE.—The Secretary of Energy shall publish the information reported under this subsection on the website of the Department of Energy and otherwise make the information available to the public.''.

SA 1583. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. FINANCING OF EXPORTATION OF DEFENSE ARTICLES AND DEFENSE SERVICES BY EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES.

Section 2(b)(6)(I)(i)(I) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635(b)(6)(I)(i)(I)) is amended to read as follows:

''(I)(aa) the Bank determines that the end use of the defense articles or services includes civilian purposes; or

''(bb) the President determines that the transaction is in the national security interests of the United States; and''.

SA 1584. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1049. MODIFICATION OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DIRECTIVE 1350.2 TO ESTABLISH SEXUAL ORIENTATION AS A PROTECTED CATEGORY UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall modify Department of Defense Directive 1350.2, relating to the Department of Defense Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Program, in order to establish sexual orientation as a protected category under that Program.

SA 1585. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. METHODS FOR VALIDATING CERTAIN SERVICE CONSIDERED TO BE ACTIVE SERVICE BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Merchant Marine Act, 1936 established the United States Maritime Commission, and stated as a matter of policy that the United States should have a merchant marine that is ''capable of serving as a naval and military auxiliary in time of war or national emergency''.

(2) The Social Security Act Amendments of 1939 (Public Law 76–379) expanded the definition of employment to include service ''on or in connection with an American vessel under contract of service which is entered into within the United States or during the performance of which the vessel touches at a port in the United States, if the employee is employed on and in connection with such vessel''.

(3) The Joint Resolution to repeal sections 2, 3, and 6 of the Neutrality Act of 1939, and for other purposes (Public Law 77–294; 55 Stat. 764) repealed section 6 of the Neutrality Act of 1939 (related to the arming of United States vessels) and authorized the President during the national emergency to arm or permit to arm any United States vessel.

(4) On February 7, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, through Executive Order Number 9054, established the War Shipping Administration that was charged with building or purchasing, and operating the civilian shipping vessels needed for the war effort.

(5) During World War II, United States merchant mariners transported goods and materials through ''contested waters'' to the various combat theaters.

(6) At the conclusion of World War II, United States merchant mariners were responsible for transporting several million members of the United States Armed Forces back to the United States.

(7) The GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–202) provided that the Secretary of Defense could determine that service for the Armed Forces by organized groups of civilians, or contractors, be considered ''active service'' for benefits administered by the Veterans Administration.

(8) Department of Defense Directive 1000.20 directed that the determination be made by the Secretary of the Air Force, and established the Civilian/Military Service Review Board and Advisory Panel.

(9) In 1987, three merchant mariners along with the AFL–CIO sued Edward C. Aldridge, Secretary of the Air Force, challenging the denial of their application for veterans status. In Schumacher v. Aldridge (665 F. Supp. 41 (D.D.C. 1987)), the Court determined that Secretary Aldridge had failed to ''articulate clear and intelligible criteria for the administration'' of the application approval process.

(10) During World War II, women were repeatedly denied issuance of official documentation affirming their merchant marine seamen status by the War Shipping Administration.

(11) Coast Guard Information Sheet #77 (April 1992) identifies the following acceptable forms of documentation for eligibility meeting the requirements set forth in GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–202) and Veterans Programs Enhancement Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–368):

(A) Certificate of shipping and discharge forms.

(B) Continuous discharge books (ship's deck or engine logbooks).

(C) Company letters showing vessel names and dates of voyages.

(12) Coast Guard Commandant Order of 20 March, 1944, relieved masters of tugs, towboats, and seagoing barges of the responsibility of submitting reports of seamen shipped or discharged on forms, meaning certificates of shipping and discharge forms are not available to all eligible individuals seeking to document their eligibility.

(13) Coast Guard Information Sheet #77 (April, 1992) states that ''deck logs were traditionally considered to be the property of the owners of the ships. After World War II, however, the deck and engine logbooks of vessels operated by the War Shipping Administration were turned over to that agency by the ship owners, and were destroyed during the 1970s'', meaning that continuous discharge books are not available to all eligible individuals seeking to document their eligibility.

(14) Coast Guard Information Sheet #77 (April, 1992) states ''some World War II period log books do not name ports visited during the voyage due to wartime security restrictions'', meaning that company letters showing vessel names and dates of voyages are not available to all eligible individuals seeking to document their eligibility.

(b) METHODS.—For the purposes of verifying that an individual performed service under honorable conditions that satisfies the requirements of a coastwise merchant seaman who is recognized pursuant to section 401 of the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–202; 38 U.S.C. 106 note) as having performed active duty service for the purposes described in subsection (d)(1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall accept the following:

(1) In the case of an individual who served on a coastwise merchant vessel seeking such recognition for whom no applicable Coast Guard shipping or discharge form, ship logbook, merchant mariner's document or Z-card, or other official employment record is available, the Secretary shall provide such recognition on the basis of applicable Social Security Administration records submitted for or by the individual, together with validated testimony given by the individual or the primary next of kin of the individual that the individual performed such service during the period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946.

(2) In the case of an individual who served on a coastwise merchant vessel seeking such recognition for whom the applicable Coast Guard shipping or discharge form, ship logbook, merchant mariner's document or Z-card, or other official employment record has been destroyed or otherwise become unavailable by reason of any action committed by a person responsible for the control and maintenance of such form, logbook, or record, the Secretary shall accept other official documentation demonstrating that the individual performed such service during period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946.

(3) For the purpose of determining whether to recognize service allegedly performed during the period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946, the Secretary shall recognize masters of seagoing vessels or other officers in command of similarly organized groups as agents of the United States who were authorized to document any individual for purposes of hiring the individual to perform service in the merchant marine or discharging an individual from such service.

(c) TREATMENT OF OTHER DOCUMENTATION.—Other documentation accepted by the Secretary of Homeland Security pursuant to subsection (b)(2) shall satisfy all requirements for eligibility of service during the period beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December 31, 1946.

(d) BENEFITS ALLOWED.—

(1) BURIAL BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY.—Service of an individual that is considered active duty pursuant to subsection (b) shall be considered as active duty service with respect to providing burial benefits under chapters 23 and 24 of title 38, United States Code, to the individual.

(2) MEDALS, RIBBONS, AND DECORATIONS.—An individual whose service is recognized as active duty pursuant to subsection (b) may be awarded an appropriate medal, ribbon, or other military decoration based on such service.

(3) STATUS OF VETERAN.—An individual whose service is recognized as active duty pursuant to subsection (b) shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled by reason of such recognized service to any benefit that is not described in this subsection.

(e) DETERMINATION OF COASTWISE MERCHANT SEAMAN.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall verify that an individual performed service under honorable conditions that satisfies the requirements of a coastwise merchant seaman pursuant to this section without regard to the sex, age, or disability of the individual during the period in which the individual served as such a coastwise merchant seaman.

(f) PRIMARY NEXT OF KIN DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''primary next of kin'' with respect to an individual seeking recognition for service under this section means the closest living relative of the individual who was alive during the period of such service.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1586. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 832. MODIFICATION OF BUY AMERICAN REQUIREMENTS FOR ITEMS FOR USE OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES.

Section 8302(a)(2)(A) of title 41, United States Code, is amended, by inserting ''that are needed for national security reasons on an urgent basis'' after ''use outside the United States''.

SA 1587. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1084. TRANSFER OF CERTAIN ITEMS OF THE OMAR BRADLEY FOUNDATION, PENNSYLVANIA, TO A DESCENDANT OF GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY.

(a) TRANSFER AUTHORIZED.—The Omar Bradley Foundation, Pennsylvania, may transfer, without consideration, to the child of General of the Army Omar Nelson Bradley and his first wife Mary Elizabeth Quayle Bradley, namely Elizabeth Bradley, such items of the Omar Bradley estate under the control of the Foundation as the Secretary of the Army determines to be without historic value to the Army.

(b) TIME OF SUBMITTAL OF CLAIM FOR TRANSFER.—No item may be transferred under subsection (a) unless a claim for the transfer of such item is submitted to the Omar Bradley Foundation during the 180-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1588. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1049. INAPPLICABILITY OF REGULATIONS LIMITING THE SALE OR DONATION OF EXCESS PROPERTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES UNLESS ENACTED BY CONGRESS.

No regulation, rule, guidance, or policy issued on or after May 15, 2015, that limits the sale or donation of excess property of the Federal Government, including excess property of the Department of Defense, to State and local agencies for law enforcement activities (whether pursuant to section 2576a of

title 10, United States Code, or any other provision of law, or as a condition on the use of Federal funds) shall have any force or effect unless enacted into law by Congress.

SA 1589. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE THREAT POSED BY VIOLENT ISLAMIC EXTREMISM.

It is the sense of Congress that one of the greatest threats to the safety of the American people is the threat of violent Islamist extremism.

SA 1590. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1065. STUDY ON RADIATION EXPOSURE FROM ATOMIC TESTING CLEANUP ON THE ENEWETAK ATOLL.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall conduct a study on radiation exposure from the atomic testing cleanup that occurred on the Enewetak Atoll during the period of years beginning with 1977 and ending with 1980.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study conducted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A determination of the amount of radiation that members of the Armed Forces and civilians were exposed to as a result of the atomic testing cleanup that described in subsection (a), especially with respect to those who were located on Runit Island during such cleanup.

(2) Identification of the effects of the exposure described in paragraph (1).

(3) An estimate of the number of surviving veterans and other civilians who were exposed as described in paragraph (1).

SA 1591. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. IMPROVEMENTS TO ADMINISTRATION OF POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

In any case in which an individual encounters a difficulty in obtaining Department of Defense form DD–214 from the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall accept from such individual, for purposes of confirming such individual's entitlement to educational assistance under section 3311 of title 38, United States Code, pay stubs and copies of military orders as indication of such individual's service on active duty in the Armed Forces.

SEC. 1086. CONSIDERATION OF MEMBERS OF RESERVE COMPONENTS OF ARMED FORCES AS VETERANS FOR PURPOSES OF EMPLOYMENT EMPHASIS UNDER FEDERAL CONTRACTS.

Section 4212(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(v) Members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces.''.

SEC. 1087. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF VETERAN FOR PURPOSES OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2108(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''a period of more than 180 consecutive days'' and inserting ''more than a total of 180 days''; and

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''a period of more than 180 consecutive days'' and inserting ''more than a total of 180 days''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to—

(1) examinations for entrance into the competitive service held after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) certificates furnished under section 3317 of title 5, United States Code, after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1592. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 417. CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU AUTHORITY RELATING TO ALLOCATIONS TO STATES OF AUTHORIZED NUMBERS OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD.

(a) MANDATORY REVIEW AND AUTHORIZED REDUCTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief of the National Guard Bureau—

(A) shall review each fiscal year the number of members of the Army National Guard of the United States and the Air National Guard of the United States serving in each State; and

(B) if the Chief of the National Guard Bureau makes the determination described in paragraph (2) with respect to a State in a fiscal year, may reduce the number of members of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States, as applicable, to be allocated to serve in such State during the succeeding fiscal year.

(2) DETERMINATION.—A determination described in this paragraph is a determination with respect to a State that, during any three of the five fiscal years ending in the fiscal year in which such determination is made, the number of members of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States serving in such State is or was fewer than the number authorized for the applicable fiscal year

(b) ADMINISTRATION OF REDUCTIONS.—In administering reductions under subsection (a)(1)(B), the Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall seek to ensure that—

(1) the number of members of the Army National Guard of the United States and the Air National Guard of the United States serving in each State each fiscal year is commensurate with the National Guard force structure in such State during such fiscal year; and

(2) the number of members of the National Guard serving on full-time duty for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the National Guard serving in each State during each fiscal year is commensurate with the National Guard force structure in such State during such fiscal year.

(c) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that whenever the Chief of the National Guard Bureau considers changes to force structure or unit location for the National Guard, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau should focus solely on readiness, capability, efficiencies, and costs, rather than attempting to ensure equality among the States.

SA 1593. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title V, add the following:

SEC. 524. IMPROVEMENTS TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FORM DD 214, THE CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE OR DISCHARGE FROM ACTIVE DUTY.

(a) IMPROVEMENTS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and in consultation with the Governors of the States, make improvements to Department of Defense Form DD 214, the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, in order to ensure that the Form better provides correct and useful contact information for individuals undergoing release or discharge from the Armed Forces.

(b) SCOPE OF IMPROVEMENTS.—The improvements made pursuant to subsection (a) may include the inclusion in Department of Defense Form DD 214 of the following:

(1) A non-military electronic mail address.

(2) A personal cellular phone number.

(3) Applicable diagnostic codes in connection with receipt of disability severance pay.

(4) Such other information as the Secretary considers appropriate to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs and State and local veterans agencies can contact and assist individuals undergoing release or discharge from the Armed Forces, while also protecting the privacy of such individuals.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report setting forth a description of the improvements made to Department of Defense Form DD 214 pursuant to this section.

SA 1594. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr.

MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. CRUDE OIL AND CONDENSATE REPORT REQUIRED.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the appropriate committees and leadership of Congress an unclassified report assessing—

(1) the ability of crude oil and condensate produced in Iran and the United States to access and supply the global crude oil and condensate market; and

(2) the extent to which future action involving any measure of statutory sanctions relief by the United States will result in greater exports of Iranian petroleum to the global market than permitted as of the date of the report.

(b) REMOVAL OF EXPORT RESTRICTIONS.—Beginning on the date that is 30 calendar days after the date of submission of the report required under subsection (a), notwithstanding any provision of law, any domestic United States crude oil and condensate may be exported on the same basis that petroleum products may be exported on the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall limit the authority of the President under the Constitution, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), or part B of title II of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6271 et seq.) to prohibit exports.

SA 1595. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY TO ALLOW SALE OF DOMESTIC CRUDE OIL TO UNITED STATES ALLIES AND TRADING PARTNERS.

It is the sense of Congress that the President may lawfully exercise statutory authorities to allow the sale of domestically produced crude oil to allies and trading partners of the United States, consistent with the call of the National Security Strategy of the President to ''promote diversification of energy fuels, sources, and routes''.

SA 1596. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. CREDITABLE SERVICE FOR FEDERAL RETIREMENT FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''annuity'' includes a survivor annuity; and

(2) the terms ''survivor'', ''survivor annuitant'', and ''unfunded liability'' have the meanings given those terms under section 8331 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 8332(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (16), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (17), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and'';

(C) by inserting after paragraph (17) the following:

''(18) any period of service performed—

''(A) not later than December 31, 1977;

''(B) while a citizen of the United States;

''(C) in the employ of—

''(i) Air America, Inc.; or

''(ii) any entity associated with, predecessor to, or subsidiary to Air America, Inc., including Air Asia Company Limited, CAT Incorporated, Civil Air Transport Company Limited, and the Pacific Division of Southern Air Transport; and

''(D) during the period that Air America, Inc. or such other entity described in subparagraph (C) was owned and controlled by the United States Government.''; and

(D) in the second undesignated paragraph following paragraph (18) (as added by subparagraph (C)), by adding at the end the following: ''For purposes of this subchapter, service of the type described in paragraph (18) of this subsection shall be considered to have been service as an employee.''.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT.—Section 8334(g) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting '' ; or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) any period of service for which credit is allowed under section 8332(b)(18) of this title.''.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to annuities commencing on or after the effective date of this section.

(2) PROVISIONS RELATING TO CURRENT ANNUITANTS.—

(A) ELECTION.—Any individual who is entitled to an annuity for the month in which this section becomes effective may elect to have the amount of such annuity recomputed as if the amendments made by this section had been in effect throughout all periods of service on the basis of which the annuity is or may be based.

(B) SUBMISSION OF ELECTION.—An individual shall make an election under subparagraph (A) by submitting an appropriate application to the Office of Personnel Management not later than 2 years after the effective date of this section.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE OF RECOMPUTATION; RETROACTIVE PAY AS LUMP-SUM PAYMENT.—

(i) EFFECTIVE DATE.—A recomputation under subparagraph (A) shall be effective as of the commencement date of the annuity.

(ii) RETROACTIVE PAY AS LUMP-SUM PAYMENT.—Any additional amounts becoming payable, due to a recomputation under subparagraph (A), for periods before the first month for which the recomputation is reflected in the regular monthly annuity payments of an individual shall be payable to the individual in the form of a lump-sum payment.

(3) PROVISIONS RELATING TO INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR (BUT NOT CURRENTLY RECEIVING) AN ANNUITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—

(i) ELECTION.—An individual not described in paragraph (2) who becomes eligible for an annuity or an increased annuity as a result of the enactment of this section may elect to have the rights of the individual under subchapter III of chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, determined as if the amendments made by this section had been in effect throughout all periods of service on the basis of which the annuity is or would be based.

(ii) SUBMISSION OF ELECTION.—An individual shall make an election under clause (i) by submitting an appropriate application to the Office of Personnel Management not later than 2 years after the later of—

(I) the effective date of this section; or

(II) the date on which the individual separates from service.

(B) EFFECTIVE DATE OF ENTITLEMENT; RETROACTIVITY.—

(i) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), any entitlement to an annuity or an increased annuity resulting from an election under subparagraph (A) shall be effective as of the commencement date of the annuity.

(II) RETROACTIVE PAY AS LUMP-SUM PAYMENT.—Any amounts becoming payable for periods before the first month for which regular monthly annuity payments begin to be made in accordance with the amendments made by this section shall be payable to the individual in the form of a lump-sum payment.

(ii) RETROACTIVITY.—Any determination of the amount, or of the commencement date, of any annuity, all the requirements for entitlement to which (including separation, but not including any application requirement) would have been satisfied before the effective date of this section if this section had been in effect (but would not then otherwise have been satisfied absent this section) shall be made as if application for the annuity had been submitted as of the earliest date that would have been allowable, after the date on which the individual separated from service, if the amendments made by this section had been in effect throughout the periods of service referred to in subparagraph (A)(i).

(4) RIGHT TO FILE ON BEHALF OF A DECEDENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The regulations promulgated under subsection (e)(1) shall include provisions, in accordance with the order of precedence under section 8342(c) of title 5, United States Code, under which a survivor of an individual who performed service described in section 8332(b)(18) of such title (as added by subsection (b)(1)(C)) shall be allowed to submit an application on behalf of and to receive any lump-sum payment that would otherwise have been payable to the decedent under paragraph (2)(C)(ii) or (3)(B)(i)(II) of this subsection.

(B) SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION.—An application under this paragraph shall not be valid unless it is filed not later than the later of—

(i) 2 years after the effective date of this section; or

(ii) 1 year after the date of the decedent's death.

(d) FUNDING.—

(1) LUMP-SUM PAYMENTS.—Any lump-sum payment under paragraph (2)(C)(ii) or (3)(B)(i)(II) of subsection (c) shall be payable

out of the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund.

(2) UNFUNDED LIABILITY.—Any increase in the unfunded liability of the Civil Service Retirement System attributable to the enactment of this section shall be financed in accordance with section 8348(f) of title 5, United States Code.

(e) REGULATIONS AND SPECIAL RULE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall promulgate any regulations necessary to carry out this section, which shall include provisions under which rules similar to those established under the amendments made by section 201 of the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986 (Public Law 99–335; 100 Stat. 588) shall be applied with respect to any service described in section 8332(b)(18) of title 5, United States Code (as added by subsection (b)(1)(C)) that was subject to title II of the Social Security Act.

(2) SPECIAL RULE.—For purposes of any application for any benefit which is computed or recomputed taking into account any service described in section 8332(b)(18) of title 5, United States Code (as added by subsection (b)(1)(C)), section 8345(i)(2) of such title shall be applied by deeming the reference to the date of the ''other event which gives rise to title to the benefit'' to refer to the effective date of this section, if later than the date of the event that would otherwise apply.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on the first day of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 1597. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. 141. LIMITATION ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR THE DIVESTMENT OR TRANSFER OF KC–10 AIRCRAFT.

None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2016 for the Air Force may be obligated or expended during such fiscal year to divest or transfer, or prepare to divest or transfer, KC–10 aircraft.

SA 1598. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE CHILDREN TO WHOM ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE MAY BE TRANSFERRED UNDER POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 3319 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(c) ELIGIBLE DEPENDENTS.—

''(1) TRANSFER.—An individual approved to transfer an entitlement to educational assistance under this section may transfer the individual's entitlement as follows:

''(A) To the individual's spouse.

''(B) To one or more of the individual's children.

''(C) To a combination of the individuals referred to in subparagraphs (A) and (B).

''(2) DEFINITION OF CHILDREN.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'children' includes dependents described in section 1072(2)(I) of title 10.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to educational assistance payable under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1599. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. MURPHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. ORTHOTICS AND PROSTHETICS EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT.

(a) GRANTS REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall award grants to eligible institutions to enable the eligible institutions—

(A) to establish a master's degree program in orthotics and prosthetics; or

(B) to expand upon an existing master's degree program in orthotics and prosthetics, including by admitting more students, further training faculty, expanding facilities, or increasing cooperation with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

(2) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give priority in the award of grants under this section to eligible institutions that have entered into a partnership with a medical center or clinic administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs or a facility administered by the Department of Defense, including by providing clinical rotations at such medical center, clinic, or facility.

(3) GRANT AMOUNTS.—Grants awarded under this section shall be in amounts of not less than $1,000,000 and not more than $1,500,000.

(b) REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than annually thereafter for two years, the Secretary shall issue a request for proposals from eligible institutions for grants under this section.

(2) PROPOSALS.—An eligible institution that seeks the award of a grant under this section shall submit an application therefor to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require, including—

(A) demonstration of a willingness and ability to participate in a partnership described in subsection (a)(2); and

(B) a commitment, and demonstration of an ability, to maintain an accredited orthotics and prosthetics education program after the end of the grant period.

(c) GRANT USES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible institution awarded a grant under this section shall use grant amounts to carry out any of the following:

(A) Building new or expanding existing orthotics and prosthetics master's degree programs.

(B) Training doctoral candidates in fields related to orthotics and prosthetics to prepare them to instruct in orthotics and prosthetics programs.

(C) Training faculty in orthotics and prosthetics education or related fields for the purpose of instruction in orthotics and prosthetics programs.

(D) Salary supplementation for faculty in orthotics and prosthetics education.

(E) Financial aid that allows eligible institutions to admit additional students to study orthotics and prosthetics.

(F) Funding faculty research projects or faculty time to undertake research in the areas of orthotics and prosthetics for the purpose of furthering their teaching abilities.

(G) Renovation of buildings or minor construction to house orthotics and prosthetics education programs.

(H) Purchasing equipment for orthotics and prosthetics education.

(2) LIMITATION ON CONSTRUCTION.—An eligible institution awarded a grant under this section may use not more than 50 percent of the grant amount to carry out paragraph (1)(G).

(3) ADMISSIONS PREFERENCE.—An eligible institution awarded a grant under this section shall give preference in admission to the orthotics and prosthetics master's degree programs to veterans, to the extent practicable.

(4) PERIOD OF USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution awarded a grant under this section may use the grant funds for a period of three years after the award of the grant.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term ''eligible institution'' means an educational institution that offers an orthotics and prosthetics education program that—

(A) is accredited by the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education in cooperation with the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs; or

(B) demonstrates an ability to meet the accreditation requirements for orthotic and prosthetic education from the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education in cooperation with the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs if the institution receives a grant under this section.

(2) The term ''veteran'' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, $15,000,000 to carry out this section. The amount so authorized to be appropriated shall remain available for obligation until September 30, 2018.

(2) UNOBLIGATED AMOUNTS TO BE RETURNED TO THE TREASURY.—Any amounts authorized to be appropriated by paragraph (1) that are not obligated by the Secretary as of September 30, 2018, shall be returned to the Treasury of the United States.

SEC. 1086. CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ORTHOTIC AND PROSTHETIC EDUCATION.

(a) GRANT FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall award a grant to an eligible institution to enable the eligible institution—

(A) to establish the Center of Excellence in Orthotic and Prosthetic Education (in this section referred to as the ''Center''); and

(B) to enable the eligible institution to improve orthotic and prosthetic outcomes for veterans, members of the Armed Forces, and civilians by conducting evidence-based research on—

(i) the knowledge, skills, and training most needed by clinical professionals in the field of orthotics and prosthetics; and

(ii) how to most effectively prepare clinical professionals to provide effective, high-quality orthotic and prosthetic care.

(2) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give priority in the award of a grant under this section to an eligible institution that has in force, or demonstrates the willingness and ability to enter into, a memoranda of understanding with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, or other appropriate Government agency, or a cooperative agreement with an appropriate private sector entity, which memorandum of understanding or cooperative agreement provides for either, or both, of the following:

(A) The provision of resources, whether in cash or in kind, to the Center.

(B) Assistance to the Center in conducting research and disseminating the results of such research.

(3) GRANT AMOUNT.—The grant awarded under this section shall be in the amount of $5,000,000.

(b) REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue a request for proposals from eligible institutions for the grant under this section.

(2) PROPOSALS.—An eligible institution that seeks the award of the grant under this section shall submit an application therefor to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(c) GRANT USES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The eligible institution awarded the grant under this section shall use the grant amount as follows:

(A) To develop an agenda for orthotics and prosthetics education research.

(B) To fund research in the area of orthotics and prosthetics education.

(C) To publish or otherwise disseminate research findings relating to orthotics and prosthetics education.

(2) PERIOD OF USE OF FUNDS.—The eligible institution awarded the grant under this section may use the grant amount for a period of five years after the award of the grant.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term ''eligible institution'' means an educational institution that—

(A) has a robust research program;

(B) offers an orthotics and prosthetics education program that is accredited by the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education in cooperation with the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs;

(C) is well recognized in the field of orthotics and prosthetics education; and

(D) has an established association with—

(i) a medical center or clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(ii) a local rehabilitation hospital.

(2) The term ''veteran'' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, $5,000,000 to carry out this section.

SA 1600. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. MAKING PERMANENT EXTENDED PERIOD OF PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES RELATING TO MORTGAGES, MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE, AND EVICTION.

Section 710(d) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (3).

SA 1601. Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 706. PROVISION OF CARE PLANNING SESSIONS FOR ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS UNDER THE TRICARE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall provide to eligible individuals described in subsection (b) a care planning session with respect to a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia that includes the following:

(1) A comprehensive care plan.

(2) Information on the particular diagnosis of the eligible individual diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia.

(3) Information on possible treatment options and how to access those options.

(4) Information on relevant medical and community services that are available.

(5) Such other information as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—An eligible individual described in this subsection is one of the following:

(1) A covered beneficiary (as defined in section 1072 of title 10, United States Code) who was first diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) A family member of a covered beneficiary described in paragraph (1).

(3) A caregiver of a covered beneficiary described in paragraph (1).

(c) LIMITATION.—The care planning session provided under subsection (a) may by provided only once with respect to each eligible individual.

(d) FOLLOW-UP.—The Secretary may provide a follow-up appointment or appointments to an eligible individual described in subsection (b) relating to the care planning session provided under subsection (a) if the Secretary determines that the provision of such appointment or appointments is appropriate to maintain a proper level of care for the eligible individual diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia and the family members and caregivers of that individual in order to improve the provision of health care by the Department of Defense and reduce health care costs.

SA 1602. Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1065. REPORT ON PLANS FOR THE USE OF DOMESTIC AIRFIELDS FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND DISASTER RESPONSE.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Transportation, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report setting forth an assessment of the plans for airfields in the United States that are required to support homeland defense and local disaster response missions.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—The report shall include the following items:

(1) The criteria used to determine the capabilities and locations of airfields in the United States needed to support safe operations of military aircraft in the execution of homeland defense and local disaster response missions.

(2) A description of the processes and procedures in place to ensure that contingency plans for the use of airfields in the United States that support both military and civilian air operations are coordinated among the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies with jurisdiction over those airfields.

(3) An assessment of the impact to logistics and resource planning as a result of the reduction of certain capabilities of airfields in the United States that support both military and civilian air operations.

(4) A review of the existing agreements and authorities between the Commander of the United States Northern Command and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration that allow for consultation on decisions that impact the capabilities of airfields in the United States that support both military and civilian air operations.

(c) FORM.—The report under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(2) CAPABILITIES OF AIRFIELDS.—The term ''capabilities of airfields'' means the length and width of runways, taxiways, and aprons, the operation of navigation aids and lighting, the operation of fuel storage, distribution, and refueling system, and the availability of air operations facilities.

(3) AIRFIELDS IN THE UNITED STATES THAT SUPPORT BOTH MILITARY AND CIVILIAN AIR OPERATIONS.—The term ''airfields in the United States that support both military and civilian air operations'' means the following:

(A) Airports that are designated as joint use facilities pursuant to section 47175 of

title 49, United States Code, in which both the military and civil aviation have shared use of the airfield.

(B) Airports used by the military that have a permanent military aviation presence at the airport pursuant to a memorandum of agreement or tenant lease with the airport owner that is in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 1603. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1085. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING EXPORTS OF CRUDE OIL.

It is the sense of Congress that exports of crude oil to allies and partners of the United States shall not be determined to be consistent with the national interest and the purposes of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.) if those exports would increase energy prices in the United States for American consumers or businesses or increase the reliance of the United States on imported oil.

SA 1604. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1486 submitted by Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. WARNER) to the amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 4, strike lines 15 and 16 and insert the following:

(3) exports of crude oil to allies and partners of the United States shall not be determined to be consistent with the national interest and the purposes of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.) if those exports would increase energy prices in the United States for American consumers or businesses or increase the reliance of the United States on imported oil; and

(4) the President should exercise existing au-

SA 1605. Mr. COTTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XXXI, add the following:

SEC. 3124. LIMITATION ON ACCELERATION OF DISMANTLEMENT OF RETIRED NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

(a) LIMITATION.—Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), none of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for any of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 for the National Nuclear Security Administration may be obligated or expended to accelerate the dismantlement of the nuclear weapons of the United States to a rate faster than the rate mandated by the total projected dismantlement schedule included in table 2-7 of the annex to the stockpile stewardship and management plan for fiscal year 2016 submitted to Congress in March 2015 under section 4203 of the Atomic Energy Defense Act (50 U.S.C. 2523).

(b) EXCEPTION FOR COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN COMMITMENTS.—

(1) CERTIFICATION.—The limitation under subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to a fiscal year if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a certification that the President has—

(A) requested, in the budget of the President for that fiscal year submitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, sufficient amounts to fulfill for that fiscal year all commitments related to nuclear modernization funding, capabilities, and schedules that the President made to the Senate during the consideration by the Senate of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the New START Treaty, as described in—

(i) the document entitled, ''Message from the President on the New START Treaty'', dated February 2, 2011; and

(ii) the fiscal year 2012 update to the report required by section 1251 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84; 123 Stat. 2549), submitted to Congress in February 2011; and

(B) except as provided in paragraph (2), fulfilled all such commitments.

(2) EXCEPTION.—If, for any fiscal year covered by the limitation under subsection (a), an appropriations Act is enacted that appropriates amounts that are insufficient for the President to fulfill the commitments described in paragraph (1)(A), the President may certify under paragraph (1)(B) that the President has fulfilled such commitments to the extent possible with available funds.

(c) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.—The limitation under subsection (a) shall not apply to activities necessary to conduct maintenance or surveillance of the nuclear weapons stockpile or activities to ensure the safety or reliability of the stockpile.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the congressional defense committees;

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

(2) NEW START TREATY.—The term ''New START Treaty'' means the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed on April 8, 2010, and entered into force on February 5, 2011.

SA 1606. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle D of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 643. BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO LOSE THEIR RIGHT TO RETIRED PAY FOR REASONS OTHER THAN DEPENDENT ABUSE.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Families Serve, Too, Military Justice Reform Act of 2015''.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Section 1408 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (i), (j), and (k) as subsections (j), (k), and (l), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

''(i) BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS OF MEMBERS LOSING RIGHT TO RETIRED PAY FOR MISCONDUCT OTHER THAN DEPENDENT ABUSE.—(1)(A) If, in the case of a member or former member of the armed forces referred to in paragraph (2)(A), a court order provides (in the manner applicable to a division of property) for the payment of an amount from the disposable retired pay of that member or former member (as certified under paragraph (4)) to an eligible spouse or former spouse of that member or former member, the Secretary concerned, beginning upon effective service of such court order, shall pay that amount in accordance with this subsection to such spouse or former spouse.

''(B) If, in the case of a member or former member of the armed forces referred to in paragraph (2)(A), a court order provides for the payment as child support of an amount from the disposable retired pay of that member or former member (as certified under paragraph (4)) to an eligible dependent child of the member or former member, the Secretary concerned, beginning upon effective service of such court order, shall pay that amount in accordance with this subsection to such dependent child.

''(2) A spouse or former spouse, or a dependent child, of a member or former member of the armed forces is eligible to receive payment under this subsection if—

''(A) the member or former member, while a member of the armed forces and after becoming eligible to be retired from the armed forces on the basis of years of service, has eligibility to receive retired pay terminated as a result of misconduct while a member (other than misconduct described in subsection (h)(2)(A));

''(B) in the case of eligibility of a spouse or former spouse under paragraph (1)(A), the spouse or former spouse—

''(i) either—

''(I) was married to the member or former member at the time of the misconduct that resulted in the termination of retired pay; or

''(II) was is receipt of marital support, alimony, or child support from the member or former member as of the time of the misconduct pursuant to a court order; and

''(ii) was not, based on the evidence adduced at trial, an aider, abettor, accomplice, or co-conspirator in the misconduct that resulted in the termination of retired pay, as certified in writing to the convening authority by—

''(I) the military judge of the court-martial that resulted in the termination of retired pay; or

''(II) the staff judge advocate of the convening authority; and

''(C) in the case of eligibility of a dependent child under paragraph (1)(B), the dependent child—

''(i) had not reached the age of 16 years at the time of the misconduct that resulted in the termination of retired pay; or

''(ii) had reached the age of 16 years at the time of the misconduct and was not, based on the evidence adduced at trial, an aider,

abettor, accomplice, or co-conspirator in the misconduct that resulted in the termination of retired pay, as certified in writing to the convening authority by—

''(I) the military judge of the court-martial that resulted in the termination of retired pay; or

''(II) the staff judge advocate of the convening authority.

''(3) The amount certified by the Secretary concerned under paragraph (4) with respect to a member or former member of the armed forces referred to in paragraph (2)(A) shall be deemed to be the disposable retired pay of that member or former member for the purposes of this subsection.

''(4) Upon the request of a court or an eligible spouse or former spouse, or an eligible dependent child, of a member or former member of the armed forces referred to in paragraph (2)(A) in connection with a civil action for the issuance of a court order in the case of that member or former member, the Secretary concerned shall determine and certify the amount of the monthly retired pay that the member or former member would have been entitled to receive as of the date of the certification—

''(A) if the member or former member's eligibility for retired pay had not been terminated as described in paragraph (2)(A); and

''(B) if, in the case of a member or former member not in receipt of retired pay immediately before that termination of eligibility for retired pay, the member or former member had retired on the effective date of that termination of eligibility.

''(5)(A) Paragraphs (5) through (8) and (10) of subsection (h) shall apply to eligibility of former spouses to payments under this subsection, court orders for the payment of disposable retired pay under this subsection, amounts payable under this subsection, and payments under this subsection in the same manner as such paragraphs apply to such matters under subsection (h).

''(B) If a spouse or former spouse or a dependent child eligible or entitled to receive payments under this subsection is eligible or entitled to receive benefits under subsection (h), the eligibility or entitlement of that spouse or former spouse or dependent child to such benefits shall be determined under subsection (h) instead of this subsection.

''(6)(A) A spouse or former spouse of a member or former member of the armed forces referred to in paragraph (2)(A), while receiving payments in accordance with this subsection, shall be entitled to receive medical and dental care, to use commissary and exchange stores, and to receive any other benefit that a spouse or a former spouse of a retired member of the armed forces is entitled to receive on the basis of being a spouse or former spouse, as the case may be, of a retired member of the armed forces in the same manner as if the member or former member referred to in paragraph (2)(A) was entitled to retired pay.

''(B) A dependent child of a member or former member referred to in paragraph (2)(A) who was a member of the household of the member or former member at the time of the misconduct described in paragraph (2)(A) shall be entitled to receive medical and dental care, to use commissary and exchange stores, and to have other benefits provided to dependents of retired members of the armed forces in the same manner as if the member or former member referred to in paragraph (2)(A) was entitled to retired pay.

''(C) If a spouse or former spouse or a dependent child eligible or entitled to receive a particular benefit under this paragraph is eligible or entitled to receive that benefit under another provision of law, the eligibility or entitlement of that spouse or former spouse or dependent child to such benefit shall be determined under such other provision of law instead of this paragraph.

''(7) In this subsection, the term 'dependent child', with respect to a member or former member of the armed forces referred to in paragraph (2)(A), has the meaning given that term in subsection (h)(11).''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (f) of such section is amended by striking ''subsection (i)'' each place it appears and inserting ''subsection (j)''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply to a spouse or former spouse, or a dependent child of a member or former member of the Armed Forces whose eligibility to receive retired pay is terminated on or after that date as a result of misconduct while a member.

(e) OFFSET.—$57,000,000 of the National Defense Function (050) of unobligated balances from fees collected to defray expenses for the automation of fingerprint identification and criminal justice information services and associated costs of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is hereby cancelled.

SA 1607. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO REMOVE SENIOR EXECUTIVES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR PERFORMANCE OR MISCONDUCT TO INCLUDE CERTAIN OTHER EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 713 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter before subparagraph (A), in the first sentence, by striking ''senior executive position'' both places it appears and inserting ''covered position''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''in paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''in paragraph (3) employed in a senior executive position at the Department'';

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

''(2) For purposes of this section, a covered position is—

''(A) a senior executive position; or

''(B) a position listed in section 7401 of this title that is not a senior executive position.'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''under subsection (a)(2)'' and inserting ''under subsection (a)(1)(B)'';

(3) in subsection (c), by striking ''senior executive position'' and inserting ''covered position'';

(4) in subsection (d)(1), by striking ''The procedures under section 7543(b) of title 5'' and inserting ''Sections 7461(b) and 7462 of this title and sections 7503, 7513, and 7543(b) of title 5''; and

(5) in subsection (g)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) an employee of the Department employed on a full-time basis under a permanent appointment in a position listed in section 7401 of this title (other than interns and residents appointed pursuant to section 7406 of this title) who is not in a senior executive position.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subchapter V of chapter 74 of such title is amended—

(1) in section 7461(b)(1), by striking ''If the'' and inserting ''Except as provided in sections 713 of this title, if the''; and

(2) in section 7462—

(A) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''Disciplinary'' and inserting ''Except as provided in section 713 of this title, the Disciplinary''; and

(B) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''In any case'' and inserting ''Except as provided in section 713 of this title, in any case''.

(c) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—Section 713 of such title is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), in the first sentence, by striking ''of Veterans Affairs''; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking ''Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives'' and inserting ''Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives''.

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—

(1) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for section 713 of such title is amended by striking ''**Senior executives: removal based on performance or misconduct**'' and inserting ''**Removal of senior executives and certain other employees based on performance or misconduct**''.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 7 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 713 and inserting the following new item:

''713. Removal of senior executives and certain other employees based on performance or misconduct.''.

SA 1608. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 686, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

''(e) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED FOR WAIVER OR EXCEPTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not exercise the waiver authority under subsection (b), and the exception under subsection (c)(1) shall not apply, unless the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of the Russian Federation is no longer—

''(A) violating the territorial integrity of Ukraine; or

''(B) supporting entities that have illegally seized property of the Government of Ukraine or territory of Ukraine.

''(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

''(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.''.

SA 1609. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle D of title V, add the following:

SEC. 540. ELIGIBILITY OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMY FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EFFECTIVE UPON COMPLETION OF INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING IN THE ARMY.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any individual who is enlisted, inducted, or appointed as a member of the Army, including the Army National Guard of the United States and the Army Reserve, after the date of the enactment of this Act, shall be eligible for tuition assistance through the Department of Defense for members of the Armed Forces upon completion of initial entry training.

SA 1610. Mr. SCHATZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle D of title V, add the following:

SEC. 540. RECEIPT BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WITH PRIMARY MARINER DUTIES OF TRAINING THAT COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2105 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection (b):

''(b) MEMBERS WITH PRIMARY MARINER DUTIES.—(1) For purposes of the program under this section, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall each ensure that members of the armed forces with primary mariner duties receive training that complies with national standards and requirements under the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW).

''(2) The following shall comply with basic training standards under national requirements and the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping:

''(A) The recruit training provided to each member of the armed forces.

''(B) The training provided to each member of the armed forces who is assigned to a vessel.

''(3) Under the program, each member of the armed forces who is assigned to a vessel of at least 100 gross tons (GRT) in a deck or engineering career field shall be provided the following:

''(A) A designated path to applicable credentials under the national requirements and the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping consistent with the responsibilities of the position to which assigned.

''(B) The opportunity, at Government expense, to attend credentialing programs that provide merchant mariner training not offered by the armed forces.

''(4)(A) For purposes of the program, the material specified in subparagraph (B) shall be submitted to the National Maritime Center of the Coast Guard for assessment of the compliance of such material with national requirements and the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping.

''(B) The material specified in this subparagraph is as follows:

''(i) The course material of each unclassified course for members of the armed forces in marine navigation, leadership, and operation and maintenance.

''(ii) The unclassified qualifications for assignment for deck or engineering positions on waterborne vessels.

''(C) The National Maritime Center shall conduct assessments of material for purposes of this paragraph. Such assessments shall evaluate the suitability of material for the service at sea addressed by such material and without regard to the military pay grade of the intended beneficiaries of such material.

''(D) If material submitted to the National Maritime Center pursuant to this paragraphs is determined not to comply as described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary offering such material to members of the armed forces shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report setting forth the actions to be taken by such Secretary to bring such material into compliance.''.

(b) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Secretary concerned shall establish, for members of the Armed Forces under the jurisdiction of such Secretary, procedures as follows:

(A) Procedures by which members identify qualification gaps in training and proficiency assessments and complete training or assessments approved by the Coast Guard in addressing such gaps.

(B) Procedures by which members obtain service records of any service at sea.

(C) Procedures by which members may submit service records of service at sea and other military qualifications to the National Maritime Center for evaluation and issuance of a Merchant Marine Credential.

(D) Procedures by which members may obtain a medical certificate for use in applications for Merchant Marine Credentials.

(2) USE OF MILITARY DRUG TEST RESULTS IN MERCHANT MARINE CREDENTIAL APPLICATIONS.—The Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall jointly establish procedures by which the results of appropriate drug tests administered to members of the Armed Forces by the military departments may be used for purposes of applications for Merchant Marine Credentials.

(3) SECRETARY CONCERNED DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''Secretary concerned'' has the meaning given that term in section 101(a) of title 10, United States Code.

SA 1611. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title II, add the following:

SEC. 221. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF FUNDS FOR THE MEADS PROGRAM.

None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Defense may be obligated or expended for the medium extended air defense system.

SA 1612. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. 141. HEI PGU–13/B ROUND 30MILIMETER AMMUNITION.

(a) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, AIR FORCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by section 101 is hereby increased by $1,096,000, with the amount of the increase to be available for procurement of ammunition, Air Force, for the purpose of the procurement of HEI PGU–13/B Round 30milimeter ammunition.

(2) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—The amount available under paragraph (1) for the procurement of ammunition specified in that paragraph is in addition to any other amounts available in this Act for procurement of such ammunition.

(b) OFFSET.—The amount authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2016 by section 301 is hereby decreased by $1,096,000, with the amount of the decrease to be applied against amounts available for operation and maintenance, Air Force, for Base Support for golf.

SA 1613. Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1463 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN to the bill H.R. 1735, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of part II of subtitle H of title V, add the following:

SEC. 593. AUTHORIZATION FOR AWARD OF MEDAL OF HONOR TO JAMES MEGELLAS FOR ACTS OF VALOR DURING BATTLE OF THE BULGE.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The President may award the Medal of Honor under section 3741 of title 10, United States Code, to James Megellas, formerly of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and currently of Colleyville, Texas, for the acts of valor described in subsection (b).

(b) ACTION DESCRIBED.—The acts of valor referred to in subsection (a) are the actions of James Megellas on January 28, 1945, in Herresbach, Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge, during World War II, when, as a first lieutenant in the 82d Airborne Division, he led a surprise and devastating attack on a much larger advancing enemy force, killing and capturing a large number and causing others to flee, single-handedly destroying

an attacking German Mark V tank with two hand-held grenades, and then leading his men in clearing and seizing Herresbach.

(c) WAIVER OF TIME LIMITATIONS.—The award under subsection (a) may be made without regard to the time limitations specified in section 3744(b) of title 10, United States Code, or any other time limitation established by law or regulation with respect to the awarding of certain medals to persons who served in the Army.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 3, 2015.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 3, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Challenges and Implications of EPA's Proposed National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Ground-Level Ozone and Legislative Hearing on S. 638, S. 751, and S. 640.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 3, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Audit & Appeal Fairness, Integrity, and Reforms in Medicare Act of 2015.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 3, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Implications of the Iran Nuclear Agreement for U.S. Policy in the Middle East.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on June 3, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act: Ensuring College Affordability.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 3, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Watchdogs Needed: Top Government Investigator Positions Left Unfilled for Years.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 3, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 3, 2015, at 2:30 p.m. in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Aja Kennedy, a fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the duration of this session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Commander Eric Taylor, a Navy fellow in my office, be allowed floor privileges for the duration of Senate debate on H.R. 1735, the National Defense Authorization Act through the fiscal year 2016.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jody Bennett, on the staff of the Committee on Armed Services, be granted privileges of the floor at all times during the Senate's consideration of and votes relating to H.R. 1735, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 48, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 48) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 48) was agreed to.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE RISE OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN EUROPE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 92, S. Res. 87.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 87) to express the sense of the Senate regarding the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and to encourage greater cooperation with the European governments, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in preventing and responding to anti-Semitism.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further 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. 87) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 25, 2015, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN, III

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 191.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 191) relative to the death of Joseph Robinette Biden, III.

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. 191) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, June 4; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate then resume consideration of H.R. 1735 under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Senators should expect at least one rollcall vote at approximately 10:15 tomorrow morning.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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 6:31 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, June 4, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.