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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come, as Baltimore, MD, descends into chaos and the death toll in Nepal rises, we come to You today in the assurance not of our feeble hold on You but of Your mighty grasp on us. Thank You for the beckoning glory and the fresh vigor of a new day.

Sustain our Senators in their work. May they trust in Your power as they strive to solve the vexing problems of our time. Lord, use them to ensure that justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream. Strengthen them with Your might and fill them with the Spirit of Your love.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The majority leader is recognized.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, every Republican and every Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee voted to approve the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. That 19-to-0 vote cleared the way for its consideration on the floor today.

This is an important debate in our country. At its heart, it turns on a central proposition: Do the American people, through the Members of Congress they elect, deserve a say in one of the most important issues of our time? For a long time, the answer from the White House seemed to be no. We have since seen a softening of that hard line, but that doesn't mean the fight for this bipartisan legislation has been won. I still expect to see a vigorous debate this week. I still expect to see a robust amendment process. And then, at the end of the day, the American people are right to expect their Senators—regardless of party—to stand for them by supporting a bill that is as sensible as it is bipartisan.

Preventing the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism from getting access to nuclear weapons should be the goal of our Senators no matter what party they belong to. The price of a bad agreement with Iran could be catastrophic.

Iran's nuclear program is only one aspect of its efforts to confront the West across the full spectrum of warfare: through public diplomacy, through its support for terrorism and proxies, through its missile capabilities, and through a modernization of its conventional forces. Iran is on the move in all of those areas. Any sanctions relief from a nuclear agreement would give Iran, actually, more funds to conduct these and other activities, so Congress needs to have a say.

Let's not forget that the American people were led to believe that the point of the White House negotiations with Iran were to end Iran's nuclear program and to prevent it from obtaining nuclear weapons. Congress and the American people were not told that this would be an exercise in granting Iran international permission to become a nuclear threshold state—just steps away from a nuclear weapon.

If that truly is how things have developed since, then the Members of this body and the people we represent need to be heard. The American people, through the representatives they elected, have a right to review, analyze, and pass their judgment on any agreement reached to ensure Americans are getting the kind of agreement they actually deserve.

Giving the American people a real voice on a topic of such vital importance should not be a partisan issue, and by passing the bipartisan Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, we can help ensure that it isn't.

Among other things, this bipartisan bill would require that any agreement reached with Iran be submitted for congressional review and for public examination. It would also provide the Congress elected by the people with the ability to approve or disapprove of any Iran deal before congressional sanctions are removed.

In short, the point of this bill is to give the elected representatives of the American people the tools to assess any agreement reached by the administration before congressional sanctions are lifted. Those crippling sanctions—which include bipartisan sanctions authored by Senator KIRK that passed 100 to 0, over the White House's objections—are one of the most important reasons we even got Iran to the table in the first place. So the United States should not give up that leverage now if it means bringing home an agreement that does not meet American national security interests or one that simply passes on dealing with the Iranian nuclear program to the next administration.

The point of these negotiations should be to secure an agreement strong enough on its own merits to pass muster with Congress and with the American people.

Congress had the correct judgment to impose bipartisan sanctions over White House objections a few years back.

Congress would now have the correct judgment to insist that its Members and the Americans each of us represent be considered in this critically important conversation. Passing the bipartisan Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act is key to ensuring that happens, and in the process of doing so, we will ensure that the voices of all Americans are heard with the kind of robust amendment process I mentioned on the floor last week.

In that vein, we appreciate the Democratic leader's comments about an open amendment process where, no matter how a person feels about this bill, they will have an opportunity to offer amendments. I appreciate his supportive comments, and we encourage Senators to come to the floor today and to offer their amendments.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I express my appreciation publicly—I have done so privately—for the good work done by Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN, the chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. They have done remarkably good work and exemplary work for us. Getting consensus on anything in the Senate is very hard. In spite of the monumental task they faced, the chair and ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN, were able to do just that with their Iran legislation. These two good Senators have worked very hard to find a middle ground that satisfies both Congress and the administration. I think they have done that.

The Corker-Cardin bill allows Congress to vote on a final agreement. It also provides for immediate reinstitution of the sanctions should Iran breach the terms of the agreement. After weeks of bipartisan negotiations, the Foreign Relations Committee reported the Corker-Cardin legislation with a unanimous 19-to-0 vote.

I, along with many of my Senate Democratic colleagues, support this legislation. In fact, I think all Democrats would support this legislation. Senators CORKER and CARDIN worked very hard to strike a very delicate balance. Now we must protect that delicate balance by working together to avoid major changes that could imperil the success of the bill.

I hope we can move forward with the same spirit of bipartisanship that got us here and bring the bill to a vote as quickly as possible. However, a number of my Republican colleagues stated publicly, in their efforts to be the Republican nominee for President, what they want to do with this bill. I am concerned that they and others want to use this good, bipartisan piece of legislation as a platform for their political ambitions. This bill is too important to be a pawn in anyone's political game. I have told Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN that I will support their efforts to preserve their work.

As we move forward, I am hoping we can all work together in the bipartisan spirit in which this bill was crafted and keep our eyes on the ultimate goal of preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

Having said that, I am very concerned about some statements made by my friend, the vote counter for the Senate Republicans, the senior Senator from Texas. He said in Politico—I am not going to state his full quote but basically enough to get the idea:

> Some of 'em might pass. I think it's going to be an interesting dance. . . . There are some that are interesting, that will be hard to vote against.

This is a bill which was brought to the Senate floor on a bipartisan basis. We should continue on that basis. It shouldn't be up to Democrats to kill these vexatious amendments; we should get some help from our Republican colleagues.

I look forward to this debate. It is important for the country. It is important for the world. I am grateful for the work done by those two good Senators. I just hope it is not maligned, messed up, and denigrated as a result of political posturing.

THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when I first came to the Senate and when I served in the House, conference committees were an important part of the business we did here in Congress. But in recent years—very recent years—going to conference hasn't been what it used to be.

Going to conference on a piece of legislation used to mean there would be serious discussions and compromises that generally produced a product that could be supported by Members of both parties. It was a real conference. Democrats sat down with Republicans and in a public forum determined what should happen on that bill.

I can remember going to those conferences. They were tough, they were long, and there were a lot of compromises made. But that is what legislation is—the art of compromise. When we finished, we had a product that was supported by both parties.

That is why we used to do appropriations bills like that. Why? As an example, Senator Domenici and I for many years were the chairman and ranking member of a very important subcommittee, energy and water. It was very important, billions and billions of dollars. We did our work as a subcommittee, but then we were able to meet and work these out in conference. That is why we came to the floor. We did the bill in a few hours because everyone had had their input.

Sadly, under a Republican House and a Republican Senate, that is no longer the case. Here is an example: the budget conference resolution. There is all the chest-beating and flexing of muscles in the press. The Republicans have a budget. They worked and worked and got it done. They finished the conference.

The Republican majorities in the House and the Senate don't even bother to show that there is a bipartisan consensus building; they just do it. Any meetings that have been had on this bill with Democrats have been strictly for show.

There is no discussion. There is no public debate. There is nothing done. It is Republicans in the House and Republicans in the Senate meeting together. I would bet that the conferences even between the House and the Senate were done mainly by the two chairs of the committees. Not a word of input on this bill—not a word of input on this bill from Democrats. It is no conference. The party already knows what they want; they are not interested in our ideas.

Forbes magazine—I don't quote Forbes magazine very often for obvious reasons. It is a very conservative news outlet, but listen to what they said, and I quote verbatim:

> This will not be the start of a period of bipartisanship when it comes to budget issues. To the contrary, the budget resolution conference report that will likely be voted on this week will solely become a product of what the Republican majorities in the House and Senate wanted to do. There was little-to-no effort to involve Democrats in the negotiations because the leadership would risk losing GOP votes in both houses by doing so. They also would have risked alienating the GOP base, much of which continues to believe a compromise with congressional Democrats and the Obama administration is the political equivalent of collaborating with the enemy.

How about that; every word of this is true. It is so sad for our country when working across party lines is considered collaborating with the enemy.

I have said here on the floor many times, and I will say it again: When Obama was elected the first time, Republicans gathered here in Washington—a couple of days the meeting took, and it has been written up a lot of times—and they made two conclusions. They came to two conclusions: No. 1, we are not going to have Obama reelected. They failed miserably with that. But on the second thing they have been successful; that is, they would oppose anything and everything President Obama wanted. They have done that now for 6½ years.

What a sad day for our country.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my friend, the senior Senator from South Dakota, be recognized as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. REID. Prior to recognizing my colleague, would the Chair note the business for the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

The Senator from South Dakota.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, on April 2, President Obama announced that a framework had been reached for a nuclear agreement with Iran. If all goes according to plan—which hasn't happened often during these repeatedly prolonged negotiations—it means the White House would finish negotiating an agreement sometime in June. But the question remains as to what type of agreement the negotiations will finally produce.

Any deal with Iran needs to achieve one thing—one thing—and that is to prevent permanently Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. But the framework the President has unveiled seems unlikely to achieve that goal.

Far from eliminating Iran's nuclear capabilities, the framework does not shut down a single nuclear facility in the country. It doesn't destroy a single centrifuge. It doesn't stop research and development on existing centrifuges. It doesn't eliminate Iran's missile development programs. And it allows Iran to keep a substantial part of its existing stockpile of enriched uranium. It is no surprise that Members of both parties are deeply concerned the final agreement will not be effective in preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

I don't need to tell anyone why Iran's possessing a nuclear weapon is such a dangerous prospect. First of all, Iran, as we all know, is a state sponsor of terrorism. Practically speaking, that means Iran provides support and funding to organizations that consider the slaughter of innocent civilians to be an acceptable negotiating tactic, which has kept millions of ordinary men, women, and children in the Middle East from living in stability and peace.

Iran's plan for the Middle East includes its stated goal of wiping our ally Israel off the map, which should tell us all we need to know about that country's commitment to peace in the region. Meanwhile, at home, Iran embraces the same violence and oppression it spreads abroad. Iran's Government is hostile to freedom of any kind. Thousands of Iran's citizens have been tortured, imprisoned, and executed for daring to stand up for their human rights. This is not a regime that can be trusted with a nuclear weapon.

In addition to the danger inherent in a regime such as Iran having nuclear weapons at its disposal, Iran's acquiring such a weapon could likely start a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Right now, we are witnessing a quasi-proxy war in Yemen, with Iran supporting the Houthis and a Saudi Arabia-led coalition bombing the Houthis and supporting the ousted government. Imagine this scenario if both major powers had nuclear weapons at their disposal?

There is also the other great danger in Iran's acquiring nuclear weapons—a chance it could give a nuclear weapon to a terrorist organization. Imagine a situation in which a nuclear weapon fell into the hands of such organizations. The consequences of that would be unthinkable.

This week the Senate is considering the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act negotiated by Senators CORKER and CARDIN. The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act would ensure that the American people's concerns about a nuclear deal are heard by providing for congressional review of any agreement the President reaches with Iran.

Specifically, the bill would require the President to submit the agreement to Congress and prevent him from waiving any congressional sanctions on Iran until Congress reviews the deal.

Congress passed sanctions that eventually brought the Iranian economy to its knees and drove the Iranian Government to the negotiating table. The only reason—the only reason—Iran is cooperating at all on a nuclear agreement is because it wants to see those sanctions lifted. This bill would ensure the sanctions could only be lifted after congressional review.

The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act would also make sure any agreement with Iran is verified and enforced. Under the terms of this legislation, every 90 days the President would be required to provide Congress with confirmation that Iran is complying with the agreement.

The bill also includes reporting requirements on Iran's record on human rights and support for terrorism and any ballistic missile testing it is conducting.

I plan to offer an amendment to this legislation to require the Secretary of State to investigate whether the International Atomic Energy Agency, which would be in charge of inspections under any agreement, would have access to military bases if they were deemed to be suspicious sites.

Recent reports have indicated that the Iranian military is hostile to any inspection of military bases. General Hussein Salami, deputy head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, told Iranian media, ''They [the inspectors] will not even be permitted to inspect the most normal military site in their dreams.'' Well, given that attitude, are we really supposed to trust Iran to fully comply with a nuclear agreement?

While I remain concerned about the framework the President has unveiled, one bright spot in this debate has been seeing Democrats and Republicans working together to ensure that any deal with Iran is verifiable, enforceable, and accountable and promotes security and stability in the region and around the globe.

This kind of bipartisanship has been more the norm in the Senate lately. When Republicans were elected last November, we promised we would get Washington working again for American families. That was not a campaign slogan. That was a commitment, and we have been delivering on our promise.

Since Republicans took control of the Senate in January, we have passed 13 bipartisan bills: legislation to approve the Keystone Pipeline, a bill to prevent suicides among veterans, reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program, legislation to give law enforcement new tools to fight human trafficking and provide support for trafficking victims, and the first significant bipartisan reform of Medicare in years.

Even the media is paying attention. On April 26, CBS published an article entitled ''Some Good News Out of Washington, For a Change.'' On April 24, an NPR headline asked: ''Has the Senate Found It's More Fun to be Functional?'' And a USA TODAY headline from April 20 noted: ''New Study Suggests a 'Healthier' Congress.'' It argues that we are getting things done again and working again and functioning here in the Senate.

The best way to solve the challenges facing our Nation is for Democrats and Republicans to come together and to develop solutions. We have been doing that for the past 4 months here in the Senate, and that is what we are doing on this crucial Iran legislation.

A nuclear-armed Iran is a threat to the safety, security, and stability of the globe, and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to ensure that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

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

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1191, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1191) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Corker/Cardin amendment No. 1140, in the nature of a substitute.

AMENDMENT NO. 1179 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1140

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I call up the Corker-Cardin amendment, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Tennessee [Mr. CORKER], for himself and Mr. CARDIN, proposes an amendment numbered 1179 to amendment No. 1140.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require submission of all Persian text included in the agreement)

On page 2, line 13, insert '', and specifically including any agreed Persian text of such agreement, related materials, and annexes'' after ''and annexes''.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, this amendment simply requires that, alongside the English text of any final agreement, the President submit to Congress the official Persian text of any final agreement, including the related materials and annexes.

We all have seen the controversy surrounding the discrepancies between the American factsheet and the Iranian factsheet. This agreement is too important to rely on secondhand interpretations of the Senate. In order for Congress to adequately evaluate any agreement, we have to see what both sides believe this agreement is, and that requires the Persian text of the agreement.

This is a commonsense amendment. I thank Senator CARDIN for joining me in this amendment, and not unprecedented in any way. In fact, we just recently received a transmission of the China 123 agreement, which included the Chinese text.

I yield to my friend, Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator CORKER on this first amendment being offered. We have used the same process we used in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. There are several Members who have brought this to our attention; that it is important, in reviewing the agreement—assuming agreement is reached by Congress—that we have at our disposal the documents being used. We expect we will have certainly an English version, but there could be information in other languages, including Farsi. So it is important we have the original documents being used so we can review and determine ourselves all the details of the agreement.

So that is the purpose of this. This is a bipartisan amendment. We believe it strengthens the underlying purpose of this bill, which is to set up an orderly way for Congress to review a potential agreement reached between the United States and our negotiating partners and Iran—have an opportunity to review and have the options of either taking no action or dealing with an approval or disapproval or dealing with the sanctions, since we imposed the sanctions. So I think it strengthens the underlying bill, but more importantly it is a process we should use.

If I might, the bill now is open for amendment, but I would urge my colleagues to understand how the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has brought forward a bill that got a 19-to-0 vote in the committee—because we recognize stopping Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state is so important, we cannot be distracted by other issues. So we focused on that issue.

As I said earlier, we have a lot of other problems with Iran. Iran sponsors terrorism. Iran has interfered with its neighbors and is continuing to do that. Iran has a horrible record on human rights.

So as I started to look through the amendments that were filed—they haven't been made pending but have been filed—I see a whole host of amendments that deal with issues that aren't really involved in this bill in stopping Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state. They would add certification requirements on Iran not participating in terrorism or its ballistic missile program or its human rights record or its interference with the sovereignty of other countries or the return of U.S. citizens who are improperly being held.

Every Member of this body agrees that Iran needs to respond to those issues, and we have tools available to deal with that. We have sanctions, regimes that deal with human rights violations, sponsoring terrorism, ballistic missile programs. This bill deals with stopping Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state.

Now what would happen if any of those amendments were approved, if we had to have a certification. The President could not make that certification. So one of two things happens: It is a poison pill that kills this bill, so we lose our opportunity to review or it blows up negotiations, and then the United States is alone, without any international support, because we blew it up in stopping Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state, making it much less likely that we will stop Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state. That is why Senator GRAHAM said the only people who will celebrate a poison pill getting on this bill will be Iran.

So I urge my colleagues to understand what is at stake. This is a very important bill.

What Senator CORKER and I urge Senators to do is, if they have amendments to file, talk to us. That is how we did it in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Talk to us. Let's see whether we can work out an amendment, in an orderly way, to consider those amendments.

That is what we want to do, so we can use our time on the floor in consideration of amendments in the most constructive way, that will lead to a bill being approved by the same large vote we had in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, so we use the process for amendments similar to what this bill, S. 615, does for a congressional review of an agreement and the way the Senate Foreign Relations Committee did its work to get a 19-to-0 vote.

I thank my chairman for his extraordinary leadership. I thank the Presiding Officer who was very helpful in this process. I hope we will be able to proceed in that direction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Maryland.

I agree. We have reached out to numbers of people who have amendments and have asked them to come down to the floor and talk with us. I know a number of our folks are traveling around the country focused on other things at present. We have reached out to them to get back with us and talk about some of the language.

I say to my friend from Maryland that I appreciate his openness to the numbers of amendments we are now looking at. I know at lunch today he will talk to his caucus a little bit about them and we will talk to ours.

I look forward to a robust process. But, again, we have to have people who, if they want to call up an amendment—they need to come down, if they will, and talk with us and let us work through the process.

I thank the Senator for his comments.

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

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

WELCOMING PRIME MINISTER ABE

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise to welcome the Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe to Congress and to speak to the importance of United States-Japan relations and the future of the Asia-Pacific region.

Tomorrow is a momentous occasion. For the first time ever, our country will welcome the leader of Japan to speak before a joint meeting of Congress.

For over 2½ centuries, our Nations have been intimately linked by trade and commerce. In 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry waited with his ships on Japanese shores to deliver a letter from President Millard Fillmore to Japan's Emperor on November 13, 1852, which said in part:

I send you this public letter by Commodore Matthew C. Perry, an officer of the highest rank in the navy of the United States, and commander of the squadron now visiting Your imperial majesty's dominions.

I have directed Commodore Perry to assure your imperial majesty that I entertain the kindest feelings toward your majesty's person and government, and that I have no other object in sending him to Japan but to propose to your imperial majesty that the United States and Japan should live in friendship.

Thus, our Nations embarked on a path and relationship that would change the course of world history. On July 29, 1858, the United States and

Japan concluded the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, and in 1860 Japan dispatched its first diplomats to Washington, DC. They were the very first Japanese diplomats to visit a foreign power in 200 years.

Historians have often referred to our opening with Japan as an extension of our own Nation's Manifest Destiny which spread the American people and values across the West, including my home State of Colorado.

In 1911, President William Howard Taft further advanced our ties by concluding the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation with Japan. In World War I, Japan sided with the allies.

On March 26, 1912, a gift of 3,020 cherry blossom trees arrived in our Nation's Capital—a symbol of United States-Japanese friendship that we witness every spring as we walk by or drive by the Tidal Basin and other landmarks in Washington. But we must never forget the dark pages in our history. We must never forget Pearl Harbor, the day that will live in infamy. We must never forget Iwo Jima, Saipan, Guadalcanal, and the bloody battles in Okinawa.

This war changed our Nation forever. Every day we must remember the sacrifice of the greatest generation that prevailed in that epic, great civilizational conflict. Without them, this Nation would not be what it is today. Without them, this Nation may not have endured. We never lost sight of perspective of why we fought. As Imperial Japan surrendered aboard the USS *Missouri*, GEN Douglas MacArthur offered the following:

> It is my earnest hope and indeed the hope of all mankind that from this solemn occasion a better world shall emerge out of the blood and carnage of the past—a world founded upon faith and understanding—a world dedicated to the dignity of man and the fulfillment of his most cherished wish—for freedom, tolerance, and justice.

Japan's destruction following World War II was nearly complete. Out of that rubble of tragedy emerged the great partnership between our two nations. On April 19, 1951, General MacArthur went before Congress and declared in his farewell address:

> The Japanese people, since the war, have undergone the greatest reformation recorded in modern history. With a commendable will, eagerness to learn, and marked capacity to understand, they have, from the ashes left in the war's wake, erected in Japan an edifice dedicated to the supremacy of individual liberty and personal dignity; and in the ensuing process there has been created a truly representative government committed to the advance of political morality, freedom of economic enterprise, and social justice.

As Japan took on the task of arduously rebuilding its society and economy, our friendship and our relationship blossomed. Perhaps helping in that relationship, of course, is a shared national pastime, baseball. It arrived in Japan in the 19th century and was already a thriving sport by the time the postwar recovery had begun.

Yogi Berra, the New York Yankees' great, visited Japan in 1953 in the midst of this rebuilding process. His love of the game won the affection of millions, and he traveled the country demonstrating his skills behind the plate. Still, many of us may pause to wonder if this is the place—a nation haunted by such recent trials of war and a land struggling to regain its footing in the world, a once powerful country desperate to turn the page in history—where Yogi Berra first uttered his memorable phrase: The future ain't what it used to be.

With the United States firmly at her side, Japan rose again. Japan today is the world's third largest economy and the fourth largest trading partner for the United States. Millions of Americans for generations have bought iconic Japanese products, from Sony televisions to Toyota automobiles, to Toshiba laptops.

In the 1980s, former Senate majority leader and later Ambassador to Japan Mike Mansfield would describe the United States-Japan relationship as the most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none. The United States-Japan alliance remains the backbone of security and stability in Asia. Approximately 53,000 U.S. military personnel are now stationed in the Japanese islands, both onshore and offshore. Together, with our Japanese partners, we work daily to confront the security challenges in the region and to ensure peace and stability.

As the challenges in the region are evolving, so, too, must the security relationship between the United States and Japan. The Japanese leadership is currently taking necessary steps to change its post-World War II defense posture in order to meet the traditional and emerging challenges in the region. The revised United States-Japan defense cooperation guidelines, announced yesterday, signify a new phase in our relationship and Japan's emergence as security leader in the region.

I want the American people to understand the importance of these developments. It is due to U.S. military presence and the steadfast commitment to our allies that we have avoided a land war in East Asia for generations.

Distinguished political scientist Joseph Nye may have put it best when he said: Security is like oxygen—you tend not to notice it until you begin to lose it, but once that occurs there is nothing else that you will think about.

Our presence in the region has given our allies the breathing space to rebuild and stave off aggression, and now they are stepping up to the plate by increasingly sharing that responsibility with the United States.

This is also a historic economic moment for the Asia-Pacific region. The United States and Japan are leading the way on concluding one of the most ambitious trade deals ever undertaken, the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Eleven Pacific nations from Malaysia to New Zealand and Brunei to Vietnam are actively working to tear down barriers to trade that have stifled access to markets far too long. TPP's reach encompasses nearly 40 percent—nearly 40—percent of all global trade and trillions of dollars in economic activity.

TPP will set the standard for a new era of economic relationships with Asia, and the United States and Japan are leading the way. We must conclude this landmark agreement as soon as possible, and I am encouraged by the progress we have made in Congress to advance this historic pact, but we must look at the TPP as just one step forward in our commitment to the region, not the final solution.

Despite the crises of the day in the Middle East or Europe, where the United States does and should play an important role, our Nation's strategic future lies in Asia.

Consider the following estimates from the Asian Development Bank:

By 2050, Asia will account for over half of the population and over half of the world's gross domestic product.

Asia's middle class will rise and increase to a staggering 3 billion people.

Per capita GDP income in the region will rise to around $40,000, making it similar to the Europe of today.

We cannot miss the opportunity to be a part of this important opportunity and transformation. Working with Japan and other regional partners, we must ensure that our policies strengthen existing friendships and build new partnerships that will be critical to U.S. national security and economic well-being for generations to come.

This administration's pivot to Asia or rebalance policy, which builds on the work that began under previous administrations, is a sensible approach to realizing these goals. But I am concerned, however, with the pace and focus and the consistency of the implementation of the rebalance. The administration, this administration and the next one, must ensure that this important policy of engagement is pursued vigorously at all levels—whether that is the military, diplomacy or civilian fronts—in order for the rebalance to actually achieve its stated and strategic objectives. Moving in fits and starts is not good policy, whether that is for the economy or foreign relations. Every moment of hesitation and idleness invites evermore challenges and missed opportunities. Doubt is never the basis of a long-term, strong relationship.

Our partners in the region must know each and every day that the United States is here to stay. We still face grave threats in the Asia-Pacific region as North Korea marches on with their nuclear program and belligerence toward the free world. The growing challenges of nuclear proliferation, cyber security threats, and the destabilizing territorial disputes in the South and East Asian seas requires that now more than ever the United States and Japan are vigilant and united with our allies in our efforts to maintain regional prosperity and security.

As the Prime Minister delivers his historic address tomorrow, it is my hope that he delivers the message that the promise of the future in the region, bolstered by an alliance with the United States, is a more powerful force than the painful history of the past.

We must never forget that colonialism and militarism caused untold anguish and destruction in the region in the 20th century. But as demonstrated by the strength of the United States-Japan relations following those dark pages of history, it is my sincerest wish that our friends in the region can establish a viable path forward and overcome this difficult past to focus on building a better future.

America's new century in the Asia-Pacific region has arrived. But as we welcome Prime Minister Abe and celebrate our friendship, we must remember this is only the first inning of this ball game. We must continue to work toward the goal that General MacArthur had stated aboard the USS *Missouri* on September 2, 1945:

. . . a better world shall emerge out of the blood and carnage of the past—a world founded upon faith and understanding—a world dedicated to the dignity of man and the fulfillment of his most cherished wish—for freedom, tolerance and justice.

I yield the floor.

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. CARDIN. 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. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator GARDNER for his leadership as chair of the East Asia and Pacific subcommittee. I am still technically the ranking member of that subcommittee, but under my new responsibilities I have not had the same amount of time. I want to thank the Senator for the work he is doing, for doing the rebalanced Asia. We know how important Asia is to the United States. With the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Abe, being here this week, it is an opportunity to underscore the important relationship between Japan and the United States. I really wish to thank the Senator for the way he has led the subcommittee and how he has worked to point out the important issues we have on maritime security and how we have to work together to make sure responsible action takes place and that we don't have a circumstance that could get out of control and could affect not only the security of some of our allies but also the maritime shipping areas.

There are so many issues we are working on with our ally Japan, and this week we have a chance really to strengthen those relationships. We will have an opportunity to talk to the Prime Minister, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Senator from Colorado in this very important part of the world, Japan.

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. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

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

CORINTHIAN COLLEGES

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, it has been nearly 1 year since Corinthian Colleges, Inc., began its death spiral—falling under the weight of its own wrongdoing. Corinthian Colleges defrauded students, defrauded taxpayers, lied to accreditors, lied to the Federal Government, and on Sunday, this for-profit college, Corinthian Colleges, announced it would close its remaining 28 campuses—campuses in California, Oregon, Hawaii, Arizona, and New York. So, finally, Corinthian has collapsed.

We reflect on this disaster and ask a basic critical question: Why did it take this long given the long litany of violations to finally stop the flow of hundreds of millions of dollars—Federal tax dollars—to Corinthian Colleges, and equally important, how many Corinthian disasters lie ahead in the for-profit college and university industry?

There are certainly more questions we need to ask of the Department of Education about how it handled this case and how it must be more aggressive in the future to stop violations earlier, especially to prevent the students at these for-profit education companies from suffering an experience similar to Corinthian.

There will be more to come on that in the weeks and months ahead, but today I wish to focus on what is next for the students who attended these Corinthian campuses. We know this for-profit college and university industry pretty well. Ask any high school student in America to go online and to search a word, such as college or university, and watch what happens. As soon as they get to any kind of directory of Web sites, they will start seeing the ads for the for-profit colleges and universities. Some of the names are pretty obvious and well known. The largest of all is University of Phoenix. The next largest is DeVry University, out of the city of Chicago, and the next largest is Kaplan, an entity that was once owned by the Washington Post and now is on its own.

These for-profit colleges and universities descend on students, as well as on those who graduated from high school, imploring them to sign up for an education online—to sign up for a for-profit college. It will be so easy. They can do this online and get their degree. It will be a snap. That is what Corinthian did for years.

I know that with the news of the closure, students who signed up for Corinthian and went to school there woke up wondering what is next. Their college just disappeared, but their student debt didn't disappear. They signed up for these loans to go to this worthless school, and now the school has disappeared and the debt is still there.

There is a Federal law that can help these students. The Higher Education Act gives students who attended a school such as Corinthian—within 120 days of its closure—the ability to discharge their Federal student loans. I am renewing my call to the Department of Education to reach out directly to the thousands of students who have been exploited by Corinthian Colleges and to provide discharge applications to these students and give them clear, upfront information about how transferring their credits to another school may impact their ability to discharge their loans.

If a student transfers these Corinthian credits, which have limited value, to another school, they likely cannot discharge the loan they took out at Corinthian. So a student has to make a choice. The notice that the Department of Education sent to students yesterday is unacceptable. It leaves students to navigate through a series of links to get more information and it glosses over the most basic right of a student to discharge the student loans from bankrupt Corinthian Colleges.

Federal regulations clearly state the Secretary of Education's responsibility when a school such as Corinthian closes. According to the law, it says: ''After confirming the date of a school's closure, the Secretary identifies any Direct Loan borrower (or student on whose behalf a parent borrowed) who appears to have enrolled at the school on the school closure date or to have withdrawn not more than 120 days prior to the closure date.''

It goes on to say: ''If the borrower's current address is known, the Secretary mails the borrower a discharge application and an explanation of the qualifications and procedures for obtaining a discharge.''

The law is pretty clear. It is up to the Secretary of Education—the same agency that published an accreditation for this failed school, the same agency which sent the loan forms for students to sign up for loans. That same agency now has an obligation under the law to tell these students there is a way out.

Do you know what the average tuition is for a 2-year degree at the failed Corinthian Colleges? About $40,000. Imagine if this were your son or daughter. They just went through 2 years of school and have $40,000 in debt, and the college they are attending, Corinthian Colleges, just essentially went bankrupt, and now they find out people are laughing at them when they show their diploma from Corinthian Colleges.

What is wrong with this picture? A young person, 2 or 3 years out of high school, now has $40,000 worth of debt or more and nothing to show for it.

Now is not the time for the Department to be concerned with the cost to taxpayers of discharging this debt. That is an important issue, and we will take it on later. The time for that was really over the last 12 months when the Department of Education kept Corinthian alive by pumping in hundreds of millions of dollars to keep their doors open when they were headed for bankruptcy. Now is the time to focus on the students, particularly the students in the States I mentioned earlier. They need the relief from this student debt.

The Department has also been doing something which I really want to call them out on. You know what they are suggesting to the students who have just gone through this miserable experience at the for-profit, failed, bankrupt Corinthian Colleges? They are suggesting that they can transfer to another for-profit college. What are they thinking?

Students should be warned if they use their Corinthian credits to transfer to another institution, they will likely not be eligible for discharge.

I have a few examples of the schools the U.S. Department of Education suggested that the Corinthian Colleges students transfer their credits to and still keep their debt from Corinthian. ITT Tech is one example. We see their ads everywhere, don't we? What we don't see in their ads is the fact that they are being sued by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Sixteen different State attorneys general are investigating ITT Tech, and they are on the Department of Education's heightened cash monitoring list. Our Department is recommending that these students transfer to this school? What are they thinking?

Here is another example: Le Cordon Bleu and International Academy of Design and Technology—powerful names. What we don't see in all of their ads is that their parent company, Career Education Corporation, is under investigation by 17 different State attorneys general and on the Department of Education's heightened cash monitoring list. And our Department of Education is suggesting that the students at the failed Corinthian Colleges—why don't you pick up a culinary degree from Le Cordon Bleu. Maybe it will stay in business.

Here is another example: the Art Institutes and Argosy University. Argosy University—I ran into their signs in Chicago last week, and I could not help but think how many students are lured into believing Argosy University is something more than it really is. It is a for-profit college and university.

Incidentally, for the record, the parent company, Education Management Corporation is being sued by the U.S. Department of Justice and investigated by 17 State attorneys general. They are also on the Department of Education's heightened cash monitoring list. This is another school that the Department of Education suggested that Corinthian Colleges students transfer to.

Westwood College, one of the most infamous in the Chicagoland area, is being sued by the Illinois attorney general for deceptive recruiting practices. They were suggested to Corinthian Colleges students to transfer to by the Department of Education.

DeVry is under investigation by the Federal Trade Commission and by two State attorneys general. The University of Phoenix's parent company is being investigated by two State attorneys general. Kaplan is under investigation by three State attorneys general.

Has the Department of Education learned nothing? How in good faith can they tell these Corinthian students—who just had their college disappear and are sitting on a pile of debt—that these are viable transfer options for their students?

Last summer the Department assured me they would not sell Corinthian campuses to companies being investigated. They didn't want the students to be placed in double jeopardy. Why now will the Department accept that outcome for these students?

A move such as this leads me to the sad conclusion that the Department of Education is out of touch with the reality of the danger of students signing up at for-profit colleges and universities.

I want to say a word about the students who don't qualify for the clear relief I mentioned under the Federal law—the closed-school discharge. I joined with Senator ELIZABETH WARREN and others to call on the Department of Education to provide meaningful debt relief for all students wronged by Corinthian. We believe the fraud perpetrated by Corinthian should constitute a defense for repayment to students. The Department should provide clear guidelines on how students can assert their claims. These students need it and deserve it.

Senator WARREN and I will meet with Secretary Duncan and Undersecretary Mitchell later this week.

While Corinthian's fraudulent behavior has left tens of thousands of students in financial desperate straits, the company's leaders have been cashing in for years.

The CEO of the failed Corinthian corporation, which received 80 to 90 percent of its revenue directly from the Federal Treasury through student loans, made over $3 million in 2013. The vice presidents didn't do quite as well. They were only paid $1 million. The list goes on.

In September of last year, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau sued Corinthian. This goes back a few months. They sued them for illegal predatory lending schemes by luring students with false job promises, saddling them with high-cost debt, and harassing them when they were unable to repay their loans. It turned out that only 25 percent of the students coming out of Corinthian Colleges were able to repay their loans—25 percent. Why? Because the tuition is so high, the diploma is so worthless.

Why are we complicit? Why is the U.S. Department of Education not blowing the whistle on this school and every other school that is exploiting students all across America?

At the end of the day, the losers are not only the students who have wasted their time and ended up with debt, the losers are the taxpayers of America—the taxpayers of America, who provide funds for the student loans and unfortunately do not have the protection they deserve in this situation.

I call on the Department of Education to make their highest priority the casualties and victims of this Corinthian College.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, the Senator from Indiana now has the floor. I thank the Senator from Illinois and the Senator from Indiana for working with each other to go about this in a timely way.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I rise to express my support for the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act—the only measure now before us that will prevent President Obama from having a free and independent hand to conclude a flawed agreement with the Government of Iran.

The White House and the Ayatollahs in Iran must know that the Congress will not tolerate a bad deal secretly struck behind our backs and without our approval. The Corker-Menendez bill now before us and being managed by Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN on the floor needs our engagement and is the only vehicle we have to send that message. Thus, the passage of this review act is absolutely essential. Its passage will send a message more important than any amendments, no matter how correct or well-conceived, if those amendments would doom the bill, mute the message, and deprive us of this vital role.

We have come to a moment of decision in this Chamber. It is clear at last that we are finally close to imposing a vital congressional role in evaluating any deal—something President Obama previously had been determined to avoid.

I have long been concerned that the President is determined to implement his version of a deal with Iran on his own, circumventing Congress. This is not acceptable. Resolving this issue with Iran is the most significant foreign policy and security challenge of our age. It cannot be pursued simply by the President potentially overreaching his constitutional authority, longing for a legacy and desperate for a deal. If

he fears that a supermajority in Congress would reject this deal if it is presented to us, then he has struck the wrong deal.

Fortunately, the right, statesmanlike Presidential support was finally provided after the Foreign Relations Committee voted on an entirely bipartisan basis to give Congress a role in this matter. The question is whether the President will accept the decision made by the Congress as to whether the agreement with Iran achieves the goal of denying Iran nuclear weapons capability.

The successful congressional strategy that brought us to that result in committee required the sponsors of this bill—the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act—to keep the focus on its core purpose. While there were many amendments considered or offered in the committee that could have improved the bill, the Corker-Menendez bill passed by the Foreign Relations Committee is a necessary first step in achieving the goal of congressional engagement in one of the issues, if not the most important issue of our time.

It is now clear that the most important goal at this stage of the misguided and badly managed negotiations with the Iranian regime is that Congress must have a determining voice in accepting or rejecting any deal that is presented to us. With passage of the Corker-Menendez legislation, we will be able to spell out with precision what sort of an Iran deal might be acceptable, what concessions may be going too far, and what the consequences would be if Iran backs away from acceptable conditions.

I wish to emphasize and define the worst possible outcome that could happen. If our effort to impose a congressional role fails—if this bill is defeated or the promised veto is upheld—Congress will have become a spent force. Iran will see that Congress is no longer a matter of concern for them. The Iranians will have a green light to continue negotiations with a weak administration desperate for a deal—any deal. The Iranians can play their hand to maximum advantage without concern for the views of Congress or even the views of the American people we represent. At the same time, the Administration would be free to give as much ground as necessary to secure a deal that apparently they so desperately desire. They will be constrained by nothing coming from this Chamber or an impotent Congress.

To avoid that outcome, we must focus on keeping the bipartisan majority on this bill solid and robust. So I am cosponsoring, supporting, and will be voting for the Corker-Menendez bill. This is a necessary intermediate step, as I have said, toward a much more crucial vote on the Iran deal itself, where our focus needs to be.

Once we have secured a congressional role by passing this bill, we then must use the next 2 months to analyze the outlined agreement that came out of the negotiations in Switzerland a couple of weeks ago, identify its weaknesses, and determine how we should best proceed.

As it now stands, as outlined by the so-called political framework, I am profoundly unhappy with what has been agreed to by the Obama Administration. If this is what we see when the result of the final negotiations is presented to us, I will vote against it and do my best to make sure others do as well. We in Congress must make sure the White House knows what we require if a deal is to be accepted.

This is not a recent or uninformed position on my part. I have been deeply involved in this issue for the past several years, and I have been concerned about the growing threat of Iran since at least 2001. Back then, when I was our Ambassador in Berlin, the Embassy's biggest challenge was to persuade Germany to support the invasion of Iraq. But the Israeli Ambassador to Germany at the time, Shimon Stein, kept talking to me about what they conceived to be the real, ultimate threat. He convinced me that an even greater threat would be coming from Iran and that this threat would continue to grow until we took it seriously and dealt with it effectively.

After returning to the United States, I cochaired with Senator Chuck Robb the original Iran project at the Bipartisan Policy Center. We focused deeply on the Iran nuclear issue and offered detailed analysis and recommendations on how we believed it should be dealt with. Our task force members included such experts as Ash Carter, now Secretary of Defense; Ambassador DENNIS ROSS, one of the key and most experienced ambassadors and foreign policy analysts—particularly in the Middle East; a number of key generals who had served in the military on Middle Eastern affairs; and a number of other names, including Jack Keane and others.

Our reports covered all of the elements of a deal that is acceptable and could best meet, we thought, our national security needs. These included all aspects of fissile material production and how that activity must be limited and controlled; activities at the various nuclear facilities and the type of research and development that must be curtailed; the issue of Iranian stockpiles and their disposition; nuclear weapons design activities in the past that need to be revealed and stopped; missile development work; the critical need of adequate inspection regimes and compliance verification measures; and, importantly, the duration of any future deal.

We also examined the requirements of a necessary and credible military option that must back up any diplomatic efforts and sanctions pressure to achieve the right result. It was a last resort, and it was there to apply the pressure needed, along with ever-ratcheting sanctions, if Iran continued to defy the wishes of the United Nations, the wishes of the United States, and the wishes of the free world and all of those who had spoken up about the deadly consequences of the Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Since that early involvement and throughout that period, I supported negotiations as one of the essential tools to solve this problem. I want to state that again. This is not a rush to war. This is doing everything we can to prevent a war, to prevent conflict. I have ardently supported negotiations to try to achieve the necessary result combined with sanctions, putting ever-increasing pressure on the Iranian regime to achieve the desired result, with a backup—not taking off the table the use of force if necessary but only if necessary, only if everything else failed, because four Presidents, including our current President, have stated that Iranian possession of nuclear weapons is simply unacceptable. The United Nations has passed numerous resolutions to that effect. Other nations have said the same. Yet, now, we are looking at a framework that might allow Iran to break all of the commitments it made and all of the assertions we made.

We need a solution that guarantees our security and assures that Iran will never have nuclear weapons. If the White House cannot be persuaded to bring us a deal that does that, they should not bring us a deal at all.

Unfortunately, it is clear to me from the framework agreement and subsequent developments that these negotiations are off track and have been for some time. They do not begin to meet the minimum criteria outlined in our several Bipartisan Policy Center reports. Let me name five major problems that I see currently with the framework proposal that has been agreed to.

First, the Obama Administration's negotiating tactics have been seriously flawed from the beginning, abandoning central principles at the very outset of the negotiations. An agreement that builds on the outline emerging from the negotiations and trumpeted by the Administration as a breakthrough will allow Iran to retain a robust, industrial-capacity ability to enrich uranium—the core of nuclear weapons. This was never the intention of the international community until the Obama Administration negotiators took the helm and changed direction. The original intent—to deprive Iran of this nuclear weapons infrastructure—was deemed to be ''just too hard to achieve.''

The result is that Iran can now assume a guarantee that it will have the right to enrich uranium—the regime's fundamental demand from the beginning and one which the United Nations Security Council firmly and consistently refused until the Obama Administration began these negotiations. In the wake of that fundamental concession, we will have to rely on elaborate monitoring and compliance verification mechanisms to keep the uranium

enrichment enterprise within agreed bounds.

That directly leads to my second major problem with the outlined agreement. On the surface, there is a lot of reassurance that we would be able to detect cheating, and the President has emphasized this point repeatedly. Well, I have seen all of this before. I served here in this Senate when we were told our agreements with North Korea could be verified and would lead to a safer world. We were misled by that illusion. Today, 20 years after the nuclear agreement with North Korea, negotiated by the Clinton Administration, that country now has an estimated 20 nuclear warheads and the Chinese experts tell us the North Koreans will have more than 40 by the end of next year and an effective ICBM—intercontinental ballistic missile—to put those weapons on.

All that work developing such a huge, dangerous nuclear arsenal was done after we concluded a negotiated agreement to end North Korea's nuclear program, confident that we would be able to detect cheating. Let me repeat that. All that North Korea has achieved in violation of the agreement we made with them has occurred after that agreement, not before. And today they sit as a dangerous nuclear-armed nation, with over 20 nuclear warheads that can be easily—and have been—attached to ICBMs.

Now I fear we are making the same mistake in negotiating with another rogue regime. In recent days, it has become difficult for anyone to maintain that the agreement under consideration by this Administration with Iran will provide the transparency we need. Senior Iranian officials and authorities, including the Ayatollah himself and the chief of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, have said repeatedly that there will be no international inspections of Iranian military facilities.

We know that much of the nefarious nuclear weapons development work has gone on in such facilities. Barring access to them must simply be the end of any deal if that holds. The White House has indicated that such hard-line statements by the regime are part of their negotiating tactics. I do not take comfort from that. If that is so, then it must be proven at the negotiating table, not simply by declaration from our White House.

If the Administration brings us a deal that does not include complete transparency and the total ability to monitor Iranian compliance anywhere in that country, then all Members of Congress must stand and reject it. Third, I find there are many other nearly sinister details buried within this outline that are hidden from those not steeped in the technical details of this entire matter.

Many show that our negotiators caved on key issues, some at the last minute, to prevent Iran from walking out. In fact, the entire negotiations process since it began 6 years ago has been a steady uninterrupted litany of concessions as we give ground on one issue after another. The outline agreement confirms that pattern and hints at more to come.

One of the many examples of this is the agreement to allow continuing research and development of the most advanced centrifuges within the Fordow site that is safely buried deep beneath a mountain. Because there will not be uranium enriched there for the first 10 years of the agreement, we are told to take comfort. In fact, the developments that will occur in that sheltered bunker will make a nuclear ''break out'' capability certain and rapid once the agreement expires in a decade.

Even President Obama recently admitted that in the final years of the period covered by the outline, ''the breakout time would have shrunk almost to zero.'' That startling admission is a mortal blow to this agreement, in my view, and it comes from the chief advocate of the deal.

A fourth problem with the outline is the essential issue of sanctions relief. Initially, after the outline was released, the White House fact sheet emphasized that sanctions would be lifted gradually in stages as the Iranians showed a pattern of compliance with the terms of an agreement. The Iranian negotiators and the Supreme Leader immediately refuted that claim. They continue to say there is no such agreement and that all sanctions must be lifted immediately upon signing. It remains for them a nonnegotiable demand.

President Obama responded in a press conference last week that all of a sudden he was not very concerned about the phasing or timing issue or the way sanctions would be lifted. Instead, he said, and again I quote, the so-called ''snap-back'' provisions that would reimpose sanctions in the event of noncompliance were more important.

These Presidential comments signaled publicly that once again the Ayatollah could have his way. Sadly, no one seriously gives any credibility to these alleged ''snap-back'' provisions and their efficacy once the sanctions dam has burst.

Fifth, another mortal flaw in the outline is the issue of expiration date—the ''sunset clauses''. The outline and the White House talking points are designed to sell or confuse this issue. Various timeframes have been mentioned—10 years, 15 years, 25 years, permanent. The fact is the core limitations on Iran's nuclear infrastructure, if they are actually implemented over time, expire in 10 years, others in 15. The sanctions against Iran will have long since disappeared and Iran will then have the technical ability, the will, and the wealth to sprint toward a nuclear arsenal, as the President has acknowledged.

Ten years or even fifteen years is tomorrow afternoon in this dangerous game for the world's future. Again, the President's own words tell us everything we need to know about the effectiveness of the deal he is pressing on us. I quote again. ''What is a more relevant fear would be that in year 13, 14, 15, they have advanced centrifuges that enrich uranium fairly rapidly, and at that point the breakout times would have shrunk almost down to zero.''

This is, indeed, the most relevant fear presented by the negotiations with the Iranian regime; namely, the fear that Iran will be given the path to nuclear weapons possession, resulting in consequences that are not acceptable. We should all agree with President Obama that that is, indeed, the most relevant fear presented by his negotiations with the Iranian regime.

But at this moment, it seems most probable that we will be called upon to consider a deeply flawed agreement, one that is worse than no agreement at all, but this is not entirely unavoidable. We still have time to press the negotiators on both sides to change the outcome of their talks. The Iranians must know that with passage of the Iran Nuclear Review Agreement Act, Congress has become an important player at the table. There will be no new constraints on their maximalist positions.

If they want a deal now, they must give ground; if not, they will face new, more painful, and more relentless sanctions pressure. This is a profound moment in our history. A nuclear-armed Iran would present a danger to the Middle East, to the United States, and to the world that is impossible to overstate. Preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons always has been at the heart of our nuclear strategy. More than that, it is at the heart of the future of the world.

Allowing Iran to develop the capacity to develop those weapons, igniting thereby a nuclear arms race among its neighbors and beyond must be prevented at any cost. There is nothing whatsoever partisan about this request. Neither I nor most of my Republican colleagues are attacking the President or trying to deny him a foreign policy triumph or wishing him ill in this important task.

Similarly, I trust our Democratic colleagues will not be blindly supporting the President on this issue no matter what agreement might emerge from the Iran negotiations. In many ways, the future of these negotiations is now in our hands. We must pass the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act with as much bipartisan support as we can achieve in order to play a significant or any role in this process.

We must not provoke a veto that can be sustained, thereby depriving Congress of our role and voice. We must all use the next 2 months to press the White House to demand an agreement that permanently halts Iran's nuclear ambitions. We must then evaluate objectively and honestly the agreement that emerges; accept it if we can, reject it if we must. This is a solemn duty that the Constitution requires of the

Senate. I trust that each of us will be up to the task and the challenge we are facing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I first want to thank Senator COATS for the manner in which he has presented his views. We may not agree on every issue he raised in his remarks, but I fully agree that we have a responsibility to continue to work in a bipartisan manner in order to achieve this review statute so Congress can have an orderly way to express its review. I thank him for the thoughtful presentation he has made in regard to the legislation that is before us.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

EVENTS IN BALTIMORE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I know everyone in this body, this country, has been focused on the events in Baltimore. I live in Baltimore. It has affected all of us in our city. We love Baltimore. It is heartbreaking to see the violence that has taken place over the last several days, particularly yesterday. Baltimore is known for its neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are our strength. People take great pride in their neighborhood. There is a lot of ethnic pride in Baltimore. We have a proud tradition. We have a proud tradition of blue-collar workers who helped build this great country in steelmaking and shipbuilding and automaking.

We have government workers who have helped provide the services to the people of this country. We have a high-tech workforce that is the future of Baltimore. Baltimore is a great destination for tourists—our Inner Harbor. I could go on and on. But Baltimore is known for its people, its friendliness, and its real pride in strong neighborhoods.

That was shaken very badly during the events of yesterday as we saw violence. What happened to Freddie Gray is something that needs to be fully investigated. We want justice. All of us want justice. I was pleased we will have that independent investigation done by the Department of Justice.

Thousands of protesters were out in the streets in Baltimore exercising their First Amendment rights, expressing their frustration. They did it in an orderly way, in the way I would think we would want to see people express their views about matters of importance, including justice for Freddie Gray. There were a small number who decided to take to the streets in violence. It was counterproductive to the message. The family of Freddie Gray urged yesterday, particularly the day of his funeral, to be a day without protests.

But these individuals decided they would take matters into their own hands. What they did was hurt their community, hurt the neighborhoods, and hurt the city I love. Senator MIKULSKI and Congressman CUMMINGS, Congressman SARBANES, and others have been in touch with the mayor of Baltimore, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, with Governor Hogan, with the White House. We are taking all steps in order to preserve public safety in Baltimore and to make sure justice is provided in regard to the tragic death of Freddie Gray.

I would just urge all people to exercise restraint so we can provide safe communities for the people of Baltimore, that we will rebuild from this episode, and we will move forward. I thank many of my colleagues who have contacted Senator MIKULSKI and myself to express their concerns. We know these are very challenging times.

We urge all citizens of Baltimore to exercise restraint but to continue their passion for justice, as certainly Senator MIKULSKI and I and our congressional delegation will insist upon.

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. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I see Senator COONS on the floor, and he is prepared to speak with regard to S. 615.

First, I thank Senator COONS for his extraordinary leadership with regard to S. 615. He is one of those individuals who worked very closely with Senator CORKER and me to find a common way to resolve some extremely challenging issues we had. Let me take you back just a few weeks, where most people thought it was totally impossible for the Senate to get together on a bill that would provide an orderly way for us to review a potential agreement with Iran on nuclear weapons.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had scheduled a vote, there was a recess, and I think most of us felt that the bill would come out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee but that it would be a bill on which the President would continue his veto threat, and its future was anything but certain. Then the Senate Foreign Relations Committee went to work under Senator CORKER's leadership, and we were able to resolve these issues.

But one of the key players was Senator COONS. Senator COONS was traveling during the recess. He was in Africa doing important work on behalf of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I doubt that he got any sleep because I was getting calls from him at times when it was the middle of the night in Africa giving us very constructive ways to deal with some of the very difficult issues of congressional review, the length of time necessary for congressional review, how we can make sure that we had the information we needed, and that it gave the President the strongest possible hand. I thank Senator COONS for his extraordinary leadership and work on behalf of the legislation we have before us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, first, I thank Senator CARDIN for his gracious remarks and for his strong and capable leadership.

I come to the floor today to speak about the Iranian nuclear negotiations and the need for Congress to play a constructive, meaningful role in reviewing any potential deal.

This week, the full Senate will consider the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 which would ensure that Congress has the ability to consider any nuclear deal with Iran before any congressionally enacted sanctions on Iran's nuclear program are rolled back. This bill will also ensure that Congress exercises its oversight over the implementation of any agreement through imposing rigorous reporting requirements and certifications on the administration.

This bill passed the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate unanimously after Senators CORKER and CARDIN—the chair and ranking member—worked tirelessly together to ensure that it would receive bipartisan support. They carefully negotiated a deal that defeated amendments that would have prevented the Obama administration from continuing to negotiate in good faith. In my view, it is a great testament to their leadership that we were able to come together on a bipartisan bill that passed the committee unanimously and that the President has now said he would sign.

For the last 4 years, I have been hugely frustrated by the failure of Republicans and Democrats to come together in this Senate to pass legislation for the American people. The Republicans are now in the majority and have a chance to move past obstructionism and into leadership and to show that in this Senate, we have an opportunity to pass a bill, that this Senate plays a constructive role in protecting the national interests of the United States.

Leader MCCONNELL said that he wants a functioning Senate, that he wants regular order, that he wants the Senate to play its rightful role in foreign affairs. Well, here is the chance.

Let's review what has happened with this piece of legislation. The Republican chair of the Foreign Relations Committee—working well with his Democratic counterpart—crafted this bipartisan bill. Today, it has 44 Republican cosponsors. It passed the committee, which fully and thoroughly debated the bill and many potential amendments. A committee with views as broad as Republican Senators JOHNSON and RUBIO and PAUL to Democratic Senators BOXER and MURPHY—a very broad range of views on our foreign policy—came together to pass this bill

unanimously. If that is not regular order, I don't know what is.

If Senator MCCONNELL wants a functioning Senate, I believe we should respect the committee process that Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN led to achieve this compromise. This bill gives Leader MCCONNELL exactly the opportunity he wants to ensure that this Senate exercises its role in protecting America's national interest.

I particularly like what my Republican colleague from South Carolina, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, said recently:

> Anybody who monkeys with this bill is going to run into a buzz saw. Anybody who offers an amendment that will break this agreement apart . . . the beneficiary will be the Iranians.

That is why I stand here today to urge my colleagues to avoid attaching poison-pill amendments that are outside the scope of the current ongoing negotiations and pass this bill as currently passed out of the Foreign Relations Committee and as currently supported by a majority of Senate Republicans.

Over the last few years, Iran has responded to congressionally enacted sanctions by finally coming to the negotiating table to discuss and deal with its illicit nuclear weapons program. The Obama administration and the other P5 + 1 countries have been engaged in difficult, demanding negotiations with the Iranian theocratic regime. After a few extensions that have effectively frozen and in some ways rolled back certain parts of Iran's illicit nuclear program, the administration is in the final phases of their negotiations. Earlier their month, the President released the parameters of a potential deal, with the technical details and a few remaining critical gaps to be finalized possibly by the end of June.

This bill is not a referendum on the President's decision to pursue a path of diplomacy with Iran. This bill is not a referendum on the parameters announced on April 2. The bill before us this week has a simple, clear goal: It is about creating an orderly process that allows Congress to review any deal. As negotiations come to an end, it would ensure that Congress can play a constructive role after an agreement is reached by considering whether the deal is strong enough to warrant rolling back congressionally enacted sanctions. Yet, some—a few of my colleagues have insisted on making this bill a partisan exercise rather than keeping it the responsible, bipartisan measure that is before us now.

This bill is not about debating the merits of an ultimate deal now. We will have that chance when or if a deal is reached over the summer. It is not about, I hope, killing the negotiations before they have a chance to conclude. This bill is not about creating a list of complaints about Iran's destructive behavior in areas outside of its nuclear program. It could and should pass now, in its current form, without amendment.

I believe I have been as outspoken as anybody about Iran's destructive behavior, but I am troubled by some of the amendments being offered to make Iran's human rights record, its support for terrorism, and its relationship with Israel a part of these negotiations. Yes, Iran's human rights record is atrocious. Its support for terrorism threatens the stability of its neighbors and has taken countless innocent lives. Its continued threatening of Israel and its unwillingness to recognize the right of the Jewish State of Israel to exist is cowardly, dangerous, and just plain wrong. Iran must release the four Americans it currently holds hostage. I think everyone in this body would agree these are legitimate concerns for our consideration. Yet, the truth remains that they are outside the scope of the current negotiations around Iran's nuclear program. Congress must resist the temptation to make them a sticking point in those negotiations by including them as amendments to this bill.

Let's be clear. There are already congressionally enacted sanctions on Iran for its behavior in these areas. The deal's parameters, as published April 2, said that ''U.S. sanctions on Iran for terrorism, human rights abuses, and ballistic missiles will remain in place under the deal.'' No one is talking about removing those sanctions. The negotiations are about Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program and the critical importance of preventing Iran from ever building a nuclear weapon.

I have long believed a nuclear-armed Iran would pose a grave threat to the region, to Israel, and to the world. The nuclear arms race it would set off throughout the Middle East would have horrible consequences for global security. That is why throughout the negotiating process I have remained adamant that no deal is better than a bad deal, and I have closely consulted with the administration on that point as well as many others. I have met with senior administration officials to discuss these recently announced parameters and have been clear that I remain concerned about closing the remaining gaps and the need to maintain pressure on the Iranian regime to close any pathway to their development of a nuclear weapon capability.

I support this bill as it is. It is responsible and focused on the issue at hand. It ensures that Congress gets to weigh in if a deal is reached, and it strengthens this administration's ability to negotiate the best deal it possibly can.

Every Republican in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted for this bill, all 10 of them—from Senator RAND PAUL and Senator RUBIO to Senator JOHNSON and Senator BARRASSO. All nine Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee supported this bill. All 19 Senators on this Foreign Relations Committee represent as wide a range of foreign policy views as could exist. So I urge my colleagues on both sides to pause and reflect before supporting amendments that would make this a partisan exercise rather than a prudent use of congressional authority. If we want Congress to play a responsible role overseeing any potential deal, this bill gives us that chance. The alternative to this bill is not a better bill; it is a deal without any meaningful congressional input.

I have been as critical of Iran and distrusting of its intentions as anyone in this body, but if unrelated amendments become attached to this bill, I will not support its final passage.

Because of the great leadership of these two Senators, we have here a rare moment for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate as a whole to demonstrate our ability to move past what have been divisive and partisan fights over the last 4 years and come together and enact into law a measure that demonstrates our ability to give constructive, timely input on one of the most important national security challenges of our day and to restrain our sometimes extreme and divisive instincts in this body and instead demonstrate our ability to overcome those instincts and show our relevance. Let's not miss this opportunity to work together in the best interests of our Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. I thank the Senator for his constructive comments and his work on the committee.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act.

Early this month, Iran and the P5+1 countries agreed to a framework deal to restrict Iran's nuclear program and to submit it to international inspections. Negotiators now have until June 30 to try to reach a final agreement.

At the same time, the Senate has been advancing legislation requiring the President to submit any final agreement to Congress for review. That is the legislation on the floor before us today.

Congress is divided along partisan lines on many issues, but we are united in our conviction that Iran must not be allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon and that the people's elected representatives should have the opportunity to review any final agreement with Iran.

This bipartisan consensus was reflected in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's unanimous vote in favor

of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. I thank Chairman CORKER, who is on the floor here with me today, and Ranking Member CARDIN, also on the floor, for their statesmanship and the spirit of bipartisan compromise that they exhibited in negotiating the act. They did a great job.

According to the legislation, the President must submit any final agreement to Congress. Congress would then have 30 days to hear from negotiators and outside experts and to determine if additional action is warranted, including a resolution of approval or disapproval.

I believe congressional oversight is appropriate because the President, in order to implement any agreement with Iran, will need to set aside sanctions put in place by Congress. I also voted for this bill because it reasserts the proper role of Congress in providing oversight of the President's execution of foreign policy.

As a member of the Senator Foreign Relations Committee, I believe the best way to resolve the standoff over Iran's nuclear program is a hardnosed agreement that cuts off all paths Iran could take to pursue a nuclear weapon.

It was therefore crucial for me that the legislation considered by the committee not hinder our negotiators' efforts to reach a strong agreement. I believe that standard should be maintained as the full Senate considers this legislation.

I believe it is also essential that the spirit of cooperation and bipartisanship that was demonstrated by Senators CORKER and CARDIN in forging a bipartisan bill continue this week as the full Senate takes up the Iran legislation. Amendments that undermine the administration's negotiations or structurally alter this careful bipartisan compromise should be rejected by the Senate.

While I supported this bill in the Foreign Relations Committee, if the bipartisan nature of the legislation is eroded on the floor, the bill will no longer merit my support. This is a serious matter that will require the Senate to rise above the desire of some to force votes on poison-pill amendments that would destroy the bipartisan balance. We have to rise above politics here because we are confronted by a dangerous and unacceptable status quo in Iran.

The benefits of a strong final deal could be significant. Such a deal would stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and ensure that it could not pursue destabilizing activities in the region with impunity. It would prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and advance greater long-term security for our regional allies. That is why, even as Congress reaffirms its role in reviewing any final agreement, we need to give the administration and its international partners every opportunity to bring these difficult negotiations to a successful conclusion.

With so much at stake for the United States, for Israel, and for the entire world, it is more important than ever that the Senate rise above partisan politics and reaffirm bipartisan cooperation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

I withhold the suggestion of the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank Senator SHAHEEN. She talked about the bipartisan way the committee operated. She played a large part in bringing us together in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and working over the recess. I want to thank the Senator for her input and the manner in which we were able to strengthen our negotiators and maintain the proper role for the Congress.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, if I could respond, I think one of the reasons for the success of the agreement was because of the efforts of Senator CARDIN and Chairman CORKER to solicit input from members of the committee to see what people could agree to and, where we had concerns, to respond to those in crafting the legislation. It truly was a bipartisan, very statesmanlike effort, and I thank the Senators.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:31 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT—Continued

Mr. CARPER. 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. FRANKEN. 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. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. FRANKEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1112 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I yield the floor to the good Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today and for the next few days we will have the opportunity to consider a very important piece of legislation, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015—a piece of legislation that, like all the legislation we consider here, is important, but this particular legislation is important to our national security and, indeed, it is important to the peace and security of our allies around the world.

This bill represents a good, bipartisan effort. It passed unanimously out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by a vote of 19 to 0 earlier this month.

The reason this legislation is so important is because it would guarantee Congress the opportunity and the time necessary to scrutinize any agreement reached between the Obama administration and the P5+1 nations that are currently negotiating on the Iranian nuclear capacity. It would also prohibit the President from lifting sanctions on Iran during this period of review.

This is not important because we are U.S. Senators; this is important because we represent the American people, and the American people need to understand what is in this agreement and what it means to their safety and security and to that of future generations.

I think it is critical that Congress have this opportunity to understand completely and thoroughly any deal that is cut between this administration and Iran and, of course, its implications, particularly on a matter that is so vital to our national security. If the Congress can have a voice on ongoing trade negotiations—which we do—with many of our allies, how much more so should Congress have, at the very least, a review of the final negotiated deal with one of our stated adversaries?

As I have made clear before, I have serious reservations about the framework that has been announced with Iran. This framework, as it is called, is right now very vague, and it strikes me as somewhat convoluted. It also represents a significant departure from longstanding U.S. policy to prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon and instead puts us on a path—a feeble path, at that—to try to contain an Iranian nuclear weapon. Such an outcome is irresponsible, unacceptable, and dangerous. We simply cannot trust the Iranian leadership with threshold nuclear capabilities, which is exactly what the President's framework would do at this point. The concept of good-faith negotiations between us and Iran is a fantasy. Iran is a rogue regime and the world's foremost sponsor of international terrorism, and to trust them—to trust them—would be laughable and also reckless.

Iran and its proxies have been attacking and killing Americans and attempting to undermine our national security interests for at least the last three decades. Unfortunately, Iran's proxy war throughout the Middle East is well documented. Right at this moment, Iran's regional adventurism continues to destabilize areas where American interests are at stake, including war-torn Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. Even

more worrisome, Iranian officials have publicly stated that even during this period of ''understanding,'' while the details are being worked out, Iran has made clear that its true intentions are to destroy one of the United States' most stalwart allies, Israel, and to further Iran's aspiration as a regional hegemon and Iranian empire. This is the kind of country—a country that has been on our own State Department's sponsors of terrorism list since 1984. This is the administration that is being negotiated with by the Secretary of State and the Obama administration's representatives. That is why this bill is so important, because we need a congressional backstop against an Iranian regime that is well known for being deceptive and, frankly, lying to international institutions and inspectors.

One thing this legislation does do, which I applaud, is it guarantees Congress the time and the opportunity for us to scrutinize, debate, and judge this deal if it is made by the summer. Many of our Senate colleagues have ideas about how to further improve the bill, which is admittedly not perfect. No piece of legislation ever is.

I look forward to a lively and healthy debate on the Senate floor. This will be an important debate on a serious matter of national security and one that has a clear ramification for generations yet to come. That is what the United States—the Founders of our country—designed the Senate for. I expect the Senate will be doing what only it can do—having a lively debate, having a fulsome review of this legislation, and then voting on the outcome. But I am thankful to those who produced this bipartisan piece of legislation, and I am glad that we are united in our strong belief that robust congressional review of any potential Iranian deal is an absolute necessity.

On behalf of the American people, America's elected representatives should be able to get any and every detail on this emerging deal. We should have the time and the space to review it and make sure we understand its terms and its implications. We need to be able in this debate to voice our concerns and ultimately have a timely opportunity to prevent this deal from being implemented if we conclude in the end that it is not in America's best interests.

Going forward, I hope the spirit of bipartisanship that has brought us this far, so far, is evidenced in this Chamber over the debate that will ensue. I look forward to discussing this legislation and providing a clear path for congressional review of any potential deal President Obama may make with Iran.

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. KING. 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. KING. Mr. President, I rise today to speak to the bill that is before us with regard to the Iran negotiations. I wish to address two fundamental and major segments of this process. One is the process and the other is the substance of the agreement which, hopefully, will come before this body at the end of June or July.

First is the process. We are operating in a constitutional gray area. There is no question that the Constitution assigns principal responsibility for the conduct of foreign policy to the President, but it also assigns responsibility to the Congress—responsibility with regard to treaties, responsibility with regard to funding the foreign policy of the United States, and responsibility with regard to approving foreign policy officials. So there is an opportunity here for us to break, in a sense, new ground to establish a rational, formal, predictable process for considering this important issue.

If we don't pass a bill, such as the one that is before us today, we will be in a kind of disorganized, chaotic situation of what will be the congressional reaction, what is Congress's role, how will it be played out, and how will it work. I believe that it is very important for us to establish this process before the agreement is laid before the world and the American people. It sets forth a process whereby Congress with can weigh in in a meaningful way and determine the merits and the quality of the arrangement that is being set before us.

I cannot imagine a more solemn responsibility for this body than the consideration of this matter. This is a decision which will affect the United States, our ally Israel, and all the countries of the Middle East for generations to come. This is a consideration that must be taken on the merits, on the facts, on the data, on the actual alternatives—and I will talk about that in a minute—that we have to the deal, or the arrangement, that we hope will ultimately be brought to us later this summer. Let's treat this issue on its merits, and, please, to my colleagues, let's not treat it as simply another partisan issue.

We have a tendency around here for everything to become a partisan issue. A great Republican Senator of the 1950s said that ''politics should stop at the water's edge.'' That means that this kind of issue, which involves war and peace and ridding or preventing a major country from obtaining nuclear weapons and thereby destabilizing the region and possibly the world, is the most solemn kind of issue that we can face.

I know that there are people in this body who are not supportive of the President. They oppose the President. They don't like what he did on health care or don't like what he did on immigration. This is not the place for partisan politics. That does not mean I am saying we should roll over and do whatever the President says. I don't mean that at all. What I mean is that this matter should be considered in the context of the facts and the merits. What will it actually do and what are the alternatives?

It is not about whether we agree with this President or whether we want this President to have an international accomplishment on his resume. We have to try to separate ourselves from that kind of consideration.

Let's talk a bit about the agreement itself. The first thing to say about it is that it doesn't exist yet. It has not been finalized. We don't know what it is. I am a little surprised, frankly, when I hear many of my colleagues say that it is a terrible deal and won't work, when we don't even know what it is.

It is true that we have a framework. Interestingly enough, many of the same people who are saying this is a terrible deal are the same people who said that the joint plan of action 1½ years ago was terrible—a historic mistake. It turned out to be a very important step toward an agreement and essentially froze Iran's nuclear program for the past 18 months.

Let's take a deep breath and reserve judgment about whether this is a good deal, a bad deal or something in between until we actually see what it is and see what is signed. Hopefully, there will be something signed. We don't even know that for sure.

Clearly, the framework agreement that was announced a few weeks ago is an important step in this process. It gives us some information, but it does not give us the all-important detail.

First, let's do ''ready, aim, fire,'' not ''ready, fire, aim.'' Let's understand what it is we are debating and talking about before we fill the airwaves with rhetoric about whether this is a good or bad deal.

Second, it has to be a good deal or we should not approve it. If the deal is illusory and structured in such a way that Iran has a clear path to the bomb and it would not slow them down, and, in fact, would facilitate it in some way, clearly we should not approve it and it should not be before us.

I start with the premise that, A, we should hold our fire until we see what it actually says, and, B, it has to say the right things. It has to affirmatively stall, delay, and prohibit Iran's path to a nuclear weapon, and it must be totally verifiable. Ronald Reagan, of course, said ''Trust, but verify.'' In this case, it is don't trust and verify to the nth degree.

I will submit that verification is the heart of the agreement, and it has to involve technology and people on the ground. It has to involve an openness to inspections that is unprecedented. We have experience from dealing with North Korea. We had a ''kind of'' agreement with North Korea which turned out not to be sufficient, and, in fact, they moved toward nuclear weapons by cheating.

We cannot make that mistake again, and verification is the heart of it. It has to be as vigorous and as intrusive as is necessary in order to assure us and the world that Iran is not cheating and is not moving in any way, shape, or form toward a nuclear weapon.

In this regard, I think we are extraordinarily fortunate in this moment of history when this particular negotiation is taking place, in that one of the President's principal advisers, the Secretary of Energy, happens to be a nuclear physicist. I don't know if we have ever had a nuclear physicist in that position before, but he is uniquely positioned to understand the details and the implications and the alternatives that can help us to assure that this arrangement provides the protection that we believe must be the case.

In assessing this arrangement—whatever it is—I start with the premise that it has to be solid, verifiable, and meaningful. It cannot be just window dressing. It has to stop Iran's progress toward a bomb and create at least a 1-year breakout period so that the other alternatives can be exercised if they start moving in that direction. In order to assess that deal, it is imperative that we also assess alternatives. We cannot just say: Well, this is good or bad. It has to be, compared to what? There are really only two alternatives that I can see. If we don't make this arrangement, one alternative is more severe sanctions—more sanctions. Some people throw that out as if it was easy. ''More severe sanctions'' comes ''trippingly on the tongue,'' as Shakespeare would say.

What is missing in this discussion is that we are not the only player here. This is not Barack Obama and the Supreme Leader. This is not the United States and Iran. This includes five other major countries, members of the Security Council of the United Nations, major countries that are involved in this whole discussion and negotiation, but most importantly, they are engaged in the sanctions.

There is no doubt that our sanctions are important, but it is not only our unilateral sanctions that are necessarily providing all of the pressure on Iran. In fact, an argument can be made that it is the participation in sanctions by other countries in the world, not only by the P5+1, but by other countries as well that are not buying Iranian oil. We have not bought Iranian oil for 35 or 40 years. But people not buying Iranian oil include countries such as China, India, and Japan. Their decisions are contributing to the pressure that has brought Iran to the negotiating table.

If the world decides this is a sufficient deal and sufficiently restricts Iran and that the verification is as vigorous as it needs to be—if the world decides that and we say, the heck with you, we are walking away, they may say that we have taken that step unilaterally and against the best judgment of what this deal means for keeping Iran from a nuclear weapon. Then the sanctions regime starts to fray, and, indeed, it starts to unwind. We can do all we want. We can stomp our feet and do more sanctions, but if the rest of the world is not with us, it is not going to be effective.

The idea that somehow in this body, in this Congress, in this city we unilaterally can make the decision to impose additional sanctions that will bring Iran to its knees when the rest of the world doesn't agree with us is not a valid observation. So it is not so easy to say, oh, well, the alternative here is that if we don't like this deal, we will just go to more sanctions.

Now, if the other members of our negotiating group decide they agree with us that it is not a good deal, then sanctions will continue and, indeed, probably strengthen. But I don't think we should feel that we have this kind of unilateral ''the heck with the rest of the world, we are going to do this ourselves'' mentality. I think that is a very important point to understand, that we are part of an international community that is negotiating this deal, and what other members of the community are doing in the way of sanctions is important, as well as our sanctions.

Of course, the other alternative is military action. The other alternative is some kind of strike. There are various estimates I have heard in various forums and settings, but the most common estimate I have heard is that we could destroy their entire atomic infrastructure. We could level the buildings, destroy all the centrifuges, and we would set back their nuclear weapons program by 2 to 3 years. But what if we did that? We set it back by 2 to 3 years. We can't erase the knowledge they have. We have simply erased their infrastructure. The infrastructure can be rebuilt, and three things will have changed: No. 1, they will have the knowledge; No. 2, they will never ever negotiate; and No. 3, we will have created enemies of an entire new generation of Iranian people. We will have alienated those people to the point where it will be impossible to negotiate, and we will be in a situation of some kind of military intervention as far as the eye can see.

The military option has to be on the table. The President has to retain that option, and he has. But I think we have to be realistic about what that option means and the commitment it entails both from us and our allies. I am not saying it is off the table. I am not saying it would never happen. But what I am saying is we have to assess the negotiated arrangement in light of the realities of either the deterioration of the sanctions regime or the realities of facing military action.

Finally, I know that as this debate continues there are going to be a series of amendments and a lot of those amendments are going to be appealing. For example, as part of the condition of the deal, Iran shall recognize Israel's right to exist or as part of the negotiation of the deal, Iran must forswear terrorism or the President has to certify that Iran forswears terrorism. Those are desirable, but they will never happen. Iran will not agree to those. So when we propose an amendment such as that, what we are really saying is we don't want an agreement, because that is never going to be an idea they are going to accept.

I would submit I think Iran is a mischievous—that is too light a word—a dangerous country in terms of exporting terrorism. We see it throughout the region. There is only one scenario worse than an Iran that is attempting to support terrorism and destabilize regimes in the region, and that is an Iran that is supporting terrorism, destabilizing the region, armed with nuclear weapons.

We can't solve all the problems in the region with this agreement. The purpose of this agreement is to keep Iran from achieving a nuclear weapon. That is what we have to keep our eye on. And if amendments—no matter how desirable, no matter how good they sound, no matter how politically appealing, if those amendments will undercut or effectively eliminate our ability to keep our eye on the main ball, which is to keep them from having nuclear weapons, those amendments will not serve us, our interests, Israel's interests, the Middle East's interests, or the world's interests.

We have to focus on what it is we are trying to achieve, and what it is we are trying to achieve is incredibly important. A nuclear-armed Iran is a danger to the region, and it is a danger to the world. Right now, I think it is a very pivotal moment as to whether we are going to be able to achieve a realistic agreement that will make that less likely.

Now, it may be that the agreement which we agree to and which goes into place doesn't work. It may be that they cheat. I would submit that at that point, we will be right where we are now. We can then talk with the rest of the world about additional sanctions. We do have the military option. We are no worse off than we are if we at least try to achieve a resolution of this grave issue through diplomacy, negotiation, and working with the rest of the world to try to eliminate this one problem.

We are not going to eliminate all the world's problems with this one arrangement or negotiation, but if we can keep Iran, through this process, from achieving a nuclear weapon, from aspiring to a nuclear weapon, then we will have achieved something important for ourselves, for the future generations not only in the Middle East but in America and the world.

Before I close, I would like to share my thoughts on the role of Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN in bringing this matter to us in a thoughtful, responsible, deliberative

way. This is the way the Senate is supposed to work—committee consideration, debate, discussion, review of amendments, and bringing a bill to the floor for discussion and debate. I wish to acknowledge the work of the Senator from Tennessee, who has taken this so seriously and who is doing it in the best traditions of this body.

I think we are embarking upon an important and solemn project here that can have enormous ramifications for ourselves and for our posterity.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak about the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. I think this is a very important debate, very consequential. A nuclear Iran is a global threat to everyone everywhere. The world deserves our best effort at stopping Iran's illicit nuclear program.

This does not mean we need to yield to Iran on important points just to win vague promises that they will give up their dreams of a nuclear weapon. I realize that. President Obama says he understands it would be better to have no deal than to have a bad deal. I agree with the President. This legislation is about making sure that any agreement the administration reaches with Iran is truly a good deal.

President Obama made it clear that he did not want this bill. He fought tooth and nail to make sure this legislation would not succeed, even threatened to veto it. The President wanted members of his administration to do all of the negotiating in private. He wanted to decide for himself what is best. Well, that is not how things this important to our Nation are supposed to work.

When the stakes are high, the American people deserve a say. The Vice President knows that. Back in 2008, JOE BIDEN was the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I served under him. He said, ''I have often stated that no foreign policy can be sustained without the informed consent of the American people.'' Well, that informed consent includes allowing Congress to review important foreign policy decisions like any agreement over Iran's nuclear program.

Now, I have my concerns about the parts of this deal that have been made public so far. I am also concerned about some of the confusion there seems to be between the White House and the Iranians. There is a clear disagreement about the lifting of economic sanctions against Iran. Iran has said a final deal must remove all of the economic sanctions on day No. 1. The administration has said sanctions will be lifted in phases and only if Iran complies with different steps along the way.

So if a final deal is ever reached, it is going to be very important that we, the American people, have a very clear airing of all of the terms and an understanding of really what is in the deal. We need to make sure everyone agrees on what the deal actually says. I believe Iran is simply not trustworthy and we cannot afford to take chances with something this important.

Any agreement must be enforceable, any agreement must be verifiable, and any agreement must be accountable. The President has now accepted that he needs to come to Congress and to get the support of the American people before he goes to the United Nations. Under the bill, the President must certify a few things every 90 days: He has to certify that Iran is fully implementing the agreement. He has to certify that Iran has not committed a material breach. He needs to certify that Iran has not engaged in any covert action to advance its own nuclear weapons program. The President has to confirm to Congress that Iran is playing by the rules.

Now, if the President cannot do that, the bill creates an expedited process for Congress to take action. The way this bill was originally written, by Republicans and Democrats together, the bill also said something that many Americans believe is vitally important: It said the President must certify that Iran was not directly supporting or carrying out an act of terrorism against the United States or against an American citizen anywhere in the world.

To me, this was a very important part of the original bipartisan bill, a bill which had bipartisan support and bipartisan sponsorship. During the negotiations in the committee, this consequential part of the original bill was removed.

Congressional sanctions, I think, have been devastating to Iran's economy. It is what brought Iran to the negotiating table in the first place. Once the sanctions are lifted, Iran will have a lot of money that it did not have before. Now, I do not believe Iran is going to use that money to build schools or hospitals or roads or to improve the lives of the people in their country. Iran is going to have access to tens of billions if not over $100 billion that it can use to finance groups like Hamas and Hezbollah.

Will there be any meaningful part of the final deal that guarantees that they will not use that money to support terrorists? Congress and the American people need to know if Iran is directly supporting acts of terrorism against our country and our people. The Iranian nuclear issue is absolutely intertwined, in my opinion, with terrorism. The two cannot be separated. So during the process of negotiating this bill, this was the only certification requirement that was left out. All the other parts stayed in. The critical part about making sure Iran was not supporting terrorism against our country came out. The President didn't want it there. Why wouldn't the President want to tell the American people about the terrorist threats facing our country and our citizens? If Iran is supporting terrorist attacks on Americans, then why would we trust them to keep their word on the nuclear program? So I have proposed an amendment that would restore the terrorism certification that was in the original bipartisan bill. That is all.

I think it is very important that the American people hear from the President on this important point. Now, I understand some Senators do not like the idea of the President having to certify something like this. Some people have said that this requirement would compromise the ability of the United States to continue its negotiations. I disagree. My amendment simply says that if Iran is supporting acts of terrorism against our Nation and our people, then Congress will have a more streamlined process to address it. It is all very simple.

That same process applies to all of the other things that the President has to certify. Would those other things compromise our ability to negotiate? This amendment would not get rid of the rest of our agreement on Iran's nuclear program, it would just allow a clear picture of whom we are dealing with. It would make it easier for Congress to act. It does not make it automatic. Congress still has to decide what to do. This just makes it easier.

That is what my amendment does. It is not the only thing I would like to change in the bill. I hope we can have other amendments as well. It is important for Congress and the American people to have their say on any final deal. It is just as important that the oversight we provide be meaningful and that Congress state clearly that we will not tolerate Iran's support of terrorism. If our negotiators reach a final agreement with Iran, I will be giving it very close scrutiny in the Foreign Relations Committee and on the floor of the Senate. This is a consequential piece of legislation. It is an important bill, and there are ways we can make it even stronger. My amendment is a start.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, let me thank Senator BARRASSO for his help in bringing this bill forward. He made valuable contributions during the committee's consideration and the managers' amendment. I know how strongly he feels about the certification issue.

I want to point out—I know Senator BARRASSO is aware of this—with his help and Senator CORKER's help and all of the members' of the committee, we have added very strong language in this bill that requires the President to

report to Congress periodically on the status of Iranian activity in the areas he is concerned about.

For example, the President must make an assessment of whether any Iranian financial institutions are engaged in money laundering or terrorist finance activity, including names of specific financial institutions if applicable; Iran's advancements in the ballistic program, including developments related to its long-range and intercontinental ballistic missile program; an assessment of whether Iran directly supported, financed, planned or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or United States persons anywhere in the world; whether and the extent to which Iran supported acts of terrorism, including acts of terrorism against the United States or United States persons anywhere in the world; all actions, including in international fora, being taken by the United States to stop, counter, and condemn acts by Iran to directly or indirectly carry out acts of terrorism against the United States and United States persons; the impact on the national security of the United States and the safety of U.S. citizens as a result of any Iranian actions reported in this paragraph.

Then, we require an assessment of whether violations of internationally recognized human rights in Iran have changed, increased or decreased, as compared to the prior period.

I just point that out because Senator BARRASSO raises a very valid point about Congress having information in order to carry out its responsibilities. We made this bill very clear that our interest in Iran goes well beyond its nuclear weapons program. We are concerned about Iran's sponsorship of terrorism. We are concerned about Iran's human rights violations. We are concerned about Iran's ballistic missile program. As the framework in the April 2 agreement points out, nothing will affect the sanctions that are currently in place as it relates to terrorism, human rights violations or the ballistic missile program.

So I understand the Senator's concerns. I thank him for helping us develop a bill that I think is well balanced in the area of his concerns.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I, too, want to thank the Senator from Wyoming for his continually constructive role and just the tone in which he talked about this last issue. I will say that in negotiations with Senator CARDIN, we added all kinds of reporting mechanisms. It is true that the negotiations that are underway have nothing to do with alleviating any kinds of terrorist sanctions, human rights sanctions or ballistic missile testing sanctions. I will just say that should Iran commit an act of terrorism against an American, sanctions would be the minimum, I think, they would have to be worried about. I would think bombs and missiles on heads would be what they would be concerned about.

I think we have in place mechanisms that allow us to know these things. I have a feeling that if Iran, again, commits any kind of act of terrorism against Americans—which is what is being talked about here—significant kinetic activity would be taking place. Sanctions, to me, would be the least of their worries.

But I am pleased that we were glad to clear up all of the reporting requirements but also to stipulate, again, that in this particular bill we are talking about the nuclear file, not alleviating sanctions on any of the other components.

Let me just say, if there is a deal—and this is something I have tried to make clear from day one—I hope it is a good deal. I know the Senator from Wyoming does too. We know the best route for us is to have a negotiated good deal.

But in the event we end up with a negotiated good deal and sanctions are relieved, these four tranches of sanctions that we put in place since 2010 are then available to us to reapply in the event we find human rights violations, we find ballistic testing is getting out of hand or we have terrorist activity, to add again an additional crushing blow to the Iranian economy.

I thank the Senator for his steadfast concern in this regard. I thank him for the way he works with all of us. I hope we are going to be in a process very soon to be voting on some amendments. I know we think we have agreed to some language, and hopefully that will begin very soon.

Mr. CARDIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

(The remarks of Ms. WARREN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1109 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mrs. MURRAY pertaining to the introduction of S. 1112 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mrs. MURRAY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

EDUCATION REFORMS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate the ranking member on the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions on the outstanding occurrence last week where the committee, on a 22-to-0 vote, voted out the education reforms that are going to affect young people throughout our country. It was a great undertaking, and I think it speaks to her willingness to reach across the aisle and to solve problems that matter so much to all of our constituents. I wanted to thank her for being here today and for being a part of this debate.

Mrs. MURRAY. If I could just thank the Senator. I was very impressed with the work of Senator ALEXANDER on the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. He worked with all our members to make sure we replace the No Child Left Behind Act—which I think most Americans agree is not working today—with a bipartisan approach. I am hopeful we can bring it to the Senate floor and move it through quickly because this is a law that does need to be fixed.

Mr. CORKER. 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. JOHNSON. 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. 1150 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1140

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up my amendment No. 1150.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I just want to know which amendment the Senator is calling up. Is this the amendment that would change this into a treaty obligation?

Mr. JOHNSON. That is correct.

Mr. CARDIN. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. JOHNSON], for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. TOOMEY, and Mr. CRUZ, proposes an amendment numbered 1150 to amendment No. 1140.

Mr. JOHNSON. 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 declare that any agreement reached by the President relating to the nuclear program of Iran is deemed a treaty that is subject to the advice and consent of the Senate)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. TREATY SUBJECT TO ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any agreement reached by the President

with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran is deemed to be a treaty that is subject to the requirements of article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States requiring that the treaty is subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, with two-thirds of Senators concurring.

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON SANCTIONS RELIEF.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions under any other provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran that includes the United States, commits the United States to take action, or pursuant to which the United States commits or otherwise agrees to take action, regardless of the form it takes, whether a political commitment or otherwise, and regardless of whether it is legally binding or not, including any joint comprehensive plan of action entered into or made between Iran and any other parties, and any additional materials related thereto, including annexes, appendices, codicils, side agreements, implementing materials, documents, and guidance, technical or other understandings, and any related agreements, whether entered into or implemented prior to the agreement or to be entered into or implemented in the future, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate as a treaty, receives the concurrence of two thirds of the Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin is recognized.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, this deal the administration is involved in making with Iran has serious implications not only for America's long-term national security but for really the peace and security of the world.

It is true that at this point in time, nobody knows what is really in the deal. We certainly have been given a framework in terms of what the deal is supposed to be. But what we do know is that even within that framework as has been described to the American public, there are some serious discrepancies in terms of the way this administration has typified that framework of the deal and what the Ayatollah in Iran—how they have described that deal.

For example, according to our President, the sanctions will only be lifted once Iran has complied with major components of the agreement. According to the Ayatollah, those sanctions will be lifted immediately. That is a big discrepancy.

According to this administration, we will have the right to inspect to ensure verification and accountability of any agreement. The Ayatollah disagrees with that. The Ayatollah certainly says there will be no inspections on military sites. If we want to enter into this agreement to prevent Iran from creating a nuclear weapon, surely we should have the right to inspect the military sites.

Another pretty serious discrepancy in terms of the administration's understanding of what this framework is versus the Ayatollah's understanding, what is going to happen with the 10,000 kilograms of enriched uranium? According to this administration, it is going to be shipped out of the country, not available for any kind of nuclear program. According to the Ayatollah, no way; it is going to stay in Iran.

So those are major discrepancies in terms of what this agreement is all about, the types of discrepancies that certainly need to be fully vetted, and the American people need to understand what that is.

There have also been some real deceptions about this agreement. For example, we have heard repeatedly in hearings that this administration will insist that any agreement will ensure that the nuclear program within Iran will be for peaceful purposes.

I have to point out that there is no peaceful purpose for Iran to have nuclear enrichment. If they want peaceful nuclear power, they can certainly do what a number of other countries that have peaceful nuclear power have done: They can purchase that uranium fuel, that nuclear fuel from outside countries. The only reason Iran would subject itself to the sanctions, to the isolation, to the economic harm to its economy and its people, is because it wants nuclear weapons to blackmail the region and the world.

Of course, this administration talks about snapback of sanctions. That is deceptive because once these sanctions are relaxed, once these sanctions are lifted, it will be virtually impossible—once tens of billions, if not hundreds of billions of dollars of investment from the West and from other countries start flowing to Iran, it will be impossible or almost virtually impossible to put those sanctions back in place.

We have had a sanctions regime going back to—U.N. resolutions dating back to 2006. It took years for those sanctions to really take hold, to have the teeth that brought Iran to the bargaining table. Unfortunately, in its negotiations, this administration relaxed those sanctions and basically acknowledged Iran's right to enrich uranium and, in that event, basically lost these negotiations before they ever began.

So there are an awful lot of deceptive typifications about what this deal is and what it won't be and what it will be. The purpose of my amendments is to bring clarity to what the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act would be and what it is not.

I give the chairman and the ranking member of our Senate Foreign Relations Committee a great deal of credit for trying to come up with some sort of deal, some sort of law that will give Congress some kind of role in this incredibly important deal. But this is not Congress's rightful role. This is not what the Framers felt, in article II, section 2 of the Constitution, would be advice and consent. It is far from it.

There are basically three forms of international agreements: There is a treaty, there is a congressional executive agreement, and then there is just an executive agreement. There is really no set criteria of what makes one international agreement a treaty, a congressional executive agreement, or an executive agreement. They are considerations. There is precedent. What, in fact, basically is the final determination is how that particular agreement is ratified or approved by Congress or not approved by Congress.

I believe when we take a look at the considerations in the State Department's own foreign policy manual, consideration No. 1 is ''the extent to which this agreement involves commitments or risks affecting the nation as a whole.'' I would say this agreement with Iran certainly involves risks that affect our entire Nation.

Consideration No. 3 is whether the agreement ''can be given effect without the enactment of subsequent legislation by the Congress.'' The whole point of this particular act is that we have put sanctions in place by passing laws in Congress, and Congress does realize that we have a role in any lifting of those sanctions.

Consideration No. 5 is ''the preference of Congress as to a particular type of agreement.'' Well, there can be some dispute, and that is really at the heart of what my amendments would do, is involve Congress in determining what exactly this deal is. Is it a treaty? Is it a congressional executive agreement? Is it simply an executive agreement that really does not have long-lasting effects?

Now, that is really the point of my first amendment. I believe that this is of such importance, that this deal is so important to the security of this Nation and to world peace that it rises to the level of a treaty. So my amendment simply strikes the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act and replaces it with a simple statement that this Congress deems this agreement with Iran as a treaty.

The other thing my amendment does is it removes the waiver authority this Congress granted this President as relates to those sanctions. That would then require this President, upon completion of the deal with Iran, to come to this Congress—as was contemplated by article II, section 2 of the Constitution—for the advice and consent of this body, so that 67 Senators would have to vote affirmatively that this is a good deal, that basically the American public would be involved in the decision through their elected representatives. We are not being given that opportunity. The American public is not being given that opportunity right now. What is happening right now under this Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act is we have turned advice and consent on its head. We have lowered the threshold to what advice and consent means as relates to this Iran deal.

Hopefully we are going to vote—and it sounds as if we will—on this amendment.

I have a second amendment. In case this one does not succeed, I have a second amendment. If this Congress, this Senate doesn't want to treat this as a treaty, we should at a minimum treat it as a congressional executive agreement. I am willing to lower that

threshold under expedited procedures to a simple majority vote of both Houses, 50 percent.

I contemplated and I had actually written an amendment to really detail what this review act really is—a low-threshold congressional executive agreement. And when I say ''low threshold,'' I mean that what is going to happen here if we pass the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act is we will get a vote of disapproval. If 60 Senators agree this is a bad deal for America and they disapprove of it, we can pass that disapproval, and then that goes to the President for signature. He can veto that. Of course, if he vetoes that, it would take two-thirds of this body to override that veto and two-thirds of the House to override that veto. That requires 67 Senators. If we are unable to muster those 67 votes to override the veto of our vote of disapproval on a bad deal between Iran and America, what we, in fact, have done is we have given 34 Senators the ability to approve that bad deal.

When I offered that amendment to the Parliamentarian—that would basically show with real clarity that what this Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act really is, is a very low threshold approval by this body—the Parliamentarian I think very appropriately ruled that amendment out of order, unconstitutional. You can't approve something with just 34 votes in the Congress, in the Senate. I think that is my point.

I appreciate the fact that we will be able to vote on my amendment deeming this deal between America and Iran a treaty so that the American people have the ability to weigh in, to have a say in whether this is important enough to be affirmatively approved—as our Constitution contemplated with an international agreement of this importance—be affirmatively approved by 67 Senators, and I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator for his active involvement on our Foreign Relations Committee. He is a valuable member, and I appreciate his concern about this issue. I know he understands that this is an amendment that is likely not to pass. Let me tell you why.

Four times since 2010, Congress has put in sanctions that most people believe is what brought Iran to the table—four different tranches. They began in 2010. In almost every one of these cases they have had huge bipartisan support. I know the Senator knows this. But what happened was when those were done—as a matter of fact, this Senator three of those four times voted to give the President a national security waiver on the congressionally mandated sanctions. I know the Senator knows this as well. We talked about it extensively. I know he has had conversations with the Secretary of State—former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, as I have multiple times, and she agrees this is an executive agreement. Let me tell you why.

The reason it is an executive agreement is right now the President has the ability to go straight to the U.N. Security Council, working with the other members, and alleviate the U.N. Security Council's sanctions. Obviously, he has the ability to do that with the Executive sanctions that he himself put in place.

What Congress has done—and I know the Senator participated because he, too, wanted to make sure we sanctioned Iran to bring them to the table, as we have. But I know this Senator has been here long enough that in three of those times, he gave—he gave—the President the unilateral ability to waive these sanctions.

I was very concerned about this and wrote a letter to the President about 2 months ago asking how he planned to do this. The President—obviously, I got a response from the Chief of Staff, and they made it very clear. They plan to go straight to the U.N. Security Council, and it is my understanding that what they plan to do is use something called a nonbinding political commitment—that is what they plan to do with Iran if they come to an agreement—and then have that endorsed by the U.N. Security Council.

While I very much appreciate the sentiment of the Senator—whom I love working with and I am glad we have a businessman of his caliber here—I think he knows that what we are actually doing here is something that is unprecedented; that is, that we are taking back from the President authority that has already been given to him, causing him to have to bring this agreement to us. I know it is not to the level he would like—candidly, not to the level I would like. I agree with that.

Let me say this: We know that in the event that this amendment were to pass, it would be vetoed and, therefore, it is a substitute for the bill that is before us. So what that would mean is no limitation would be on the President's use of waivers to suspend sanctions that we put in place, no requirement that Congress receive the deal at all, never mind the classified annexes that we all know are a big part of this and, by the way, the American people are never going to see.

Without the bill that is on the floor, the American people will never see it. We will see it on their behalf because we believe that on behalf of the American people, somebody should go through this bill and this deal in detail, if there is a deal reached. There will be no review period for Congress to see the deal and vote before it is implemented, no requirement that the President certify that Iran is complying, no mechanism for Congress to rapidly reimpose the sanctions, and no reporting on Iran's support for terrorism, ballistic missile development, and human rights violations.

Now, look, if I could wave a magic wand or all of a sudden donkeys flew around the Capitol, I would love for us to have the ability to deem this a treaty. I really would. I think the Senator knows I mean that. I would love for us to have to affirmatively approve this. But unfortunately, a lot of us are article II folks, and we think the President has the ability to negotiate things. We had no idea this President would consider suspending these sanctions ad infinitum forever—no idea. I think even people on this side of the aisle were shocked. As a matter of fact, TIM KAINE, thankfully, in a meeting where Secretary Kerry—I am sorry, was being one tick too cute at one of our hearings—said: You are going to have the right to vote on it. Of course, what he meant was 5 years down the road, 6 years down the road, after the sanctions regime has been eliminated.

Look, I have strong agreement with the sentiment of our Senator from Wisconsin, somebody I love serving with, but let's not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Let's ensure that we have the ability to see the details of this deal that it lays before us, that the clock doesn't start until we get all of the classified annexes on behalf of the American people, some of whom are here in the Gallery watching this. On their behalf, we have the ability to see what is in this.

By the way, if we don't like it, yes, there is a large hurdle in the Senate. We know the way the Senate operates. We have to have a 60-vote threshold. In the House, it is a simple majority. It is a simple majority in the House.

Look, I agree with the sentiment. This is one of the biggest geopolitical issues that will potentially happen if an agreement is reached in our lifetime here in the Senate. I hope people, in spite of the fact that I agree with the sentiment, will vote against the Johnson amendment when it comes to the floor and make sure we can pass the bill that is before us so that on behalf of the American people, we have the opportunity to see it, to weigh in. By the way, one of the things that is very important, that lives beyond—lives beyond—is that every 90 days the President is having to comply that Iran is—or is having to certify that Iran is complying with the agreement.

Again, I thank the Senator. I appreciate his sentiments.

I yield the floor.

I see that the distinguished minority leader is here on the floor. My sense is he has something to say.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have said on a number of occasions, and I have told the Senators, but not with both of them present, how much I admire their legislative skills. What they have brought to the Senate is a work of art. I will always be amazed at how they were able to accomplish this 19 to 0 coming out of that committee.

As I said earlier today, I hope we can preserve the structure of this great piece of legislation that the two fine Senators were able to come up with.

OPPORTUNITY AND HOPE

Mr. President, on another subject, we are all saddened by what we have witnessed unfold in the streets of Baltimore. A man is dead who should not be dead. His name was Freddie Gray. Freddie Gray's name will not be forgotten.

This young man's death is the latest in a series of disturbing and unnecessary deaths of young men of color at the hands of police and vigilantes. To be clear, violence is never acceptable in any regard. It is never an acceptable response, even in tragedies such as these.

The rioting and looting we are seeing on the streets of Baltimore will only further damage a community in a great American city that is already hurting. We should not let the violence perpetrated by a few become an excuse to ignore the underlying problem: that millions of Americans feel powerless in the face of a system that is rigged against them.

It is easy to feel powerless when you see the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer. The opportunities to build a better life for yourself and your family are nonexistent, nonexistent in your community. It is easy to feel devalued when schools in your community are failing. It is easy to believe the system is rigged against you when you spend years watching what President Obama called ''a slow-rolling crisis'' of troubling police interactions with people of color.

No American should ever feel powerless—no American. No American should ever feel their life is not valued, but that is what our system says to many of our fellow citizens. No American should be denied the opportunity to better their lives through their own hard work, but that is a reality too many face.

In a nation that prides itself on being a land of opportunity, millions—not thousands, millions—of our fellow citizens live every day with little hope of building a better future no matter how hard they try.

We cannot condone the violence we see in Baltimore, but we must not ignore the despair and hopelessness that gives rise to the claim of violence. This is not just about inner cities. This is about the deep, crushing poverty that infects rural and suburban communities across our great country.

It does not matter if you live in Searchlight, NV, or the metropolitan Las Vegas area—which is now more than 2 million people—or in Baltimore, rural America, when there is no hope, anger and despair move in. That is the way it is. We cannot ignore that. So let's condemn the violence, but let's not ignore the underlying problem.

Let's not pretend the system is fair. Let's not pretend everything is OK. Let's not pretend the path from poverty—like the one I traveled—is still available to everyone out there as long as they work hard because it is not.

For hard work to bear fruit, there must be opportunity and there must be hope.

I cannot imagine what direction my life would have taken without the hope of the American dream. As a little boy I had that. As a teenager I had it. I had it in college. So instead of turning a blind eye, let's work together and take the problem seriously.

There is bipartisan work being done on criminal justice, and that is a good start. We need criminal justice reform. That is a good start, but it is only a start. Ensuring that populations are not unfairly targeted for incarceration will be a positive step, a real positive step. But we also need to be investing in inner cities and rural areas and ensuring that jobs and training and educational opportunities are available where they are needed the most.

Looking out at the year ahead, the only piece of legislation I see on the agenda that does anything to create jobs is the surface transportation bill. There is nothing else. Look around. That is not enough. We need to do more. It is up to us in this Capitol to create these jobs. Democrats and Republicans must work together to make sure Americans have a right to succeed and America continues to be a land of opportunity for all of our citizens, not some of our citizens.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me first thank Leader REID for his comments about the circumstances in Baltimore. I spoke a little bit earlier today about Baltimore. It is my home city, the city I love. It is a people I love. We are really hurting from what happened. I appreciate the leader's comments about it.

We are going to get through this, we are going to restore order in Baltimore, and there will be justice for Freddie Gray. We are all going to work together. I appreciate the outreach we have received from the White House and from the Federal and State in helping Baltimore restore the order in our city.

AMENDMENT NO. 1150

Mr. President, I just want to respond very briefly. I see Senator ISAKSON is here. I will not take too much more of his time. Let me respond briefly in support of Senator CORKER's concerns concerning Senator JOHNSON's amendment. I oppose that amendment.

The determination of a treaty is an Executive decision. The ratification of a treaty is a legislative decision. When we go through treaty negotiations and ratification, we delegate legislative authority. It would then be up to a different entity to make decisions.

I know my colleagues are very concerned about treaty obligations and the ratification of treaties. This clearly would raise some constitutional issues with this type of legislation.

Let me just give you the practical problem we have here. In 2012, we entered into a treaty for disabilities. I don't believe it is controversial at all. It does not change any of our laws. We have not acted on that yet.

In 1994, the United States entered into a treaty with the Law of the Seas. Most countries have ratified that treaty, not the United States. That was 1994. So now if Senator JOHNSON's amendment became law, the President would have no authority to implement this agreement because the waiver authorities will be gone and it would require ratification to move forward. We cannot pass a disability treaty in this body. We can't even pass a tax treaty in this body.

It would be beyond belief that this really would allow us to move forward with a negotiation with Iran. This is what we call a poison pill. It would prevent this bill—one of a couple of things. This bill would not become law. It would not pass or it would be vetoed by the President, and he would not override the veto. If it became law, it would kill negotiations. There would be no negotiations. The United States would be isolated because our negotiating partners would be wondering why we are withdrawing from the negotiations, not Iran. The United States would be isolated.

And the final line, it would make it more likely, not less likely, that Iran will become a nuclear weapon state. That is why Senator CORKER and I strongly oppose Senator JOHNSON's amendment. At the appropriate time, we will be asking our colleagues to vote against it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE OF BALTIMORE

Mr. ISAKSON. First, Mr. President, to Senator CARDIN, the people of Maryland and Senator MIKULSKI, on behalf of the people of Georgia, our prayers and sympathy go to your great State in a time of trouble. Anytime there is violence in a city in America, whether it is Atlanta or whether it is Baltimore, whether it is Washington, whether it is Los Angeles, it is a problem for all of us. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Baltimore, and we hope that peace returns as quickly as possible.

My purpose in rising is to first talk about the deal that is before us in terms of the congressional review act, in terms of the Iranian deal that is being negotiated by the President.

I thank the ranking member, Senator CARDIN, and the previous ranking member, Senator MENENDEZ, for their hard work, and I thank Senator CORKER for his leadership as chairman.

This is a most important deal. As a politician, when I travel in my State, I have two great tests that I use to understand the veracity of a deal. The first is the tear test, and second is the nod test.

Sunday night, I attended a celebration of the 67th anniversary of the independence of the State of Israel, which was at a synagogue in Atlanta, GA. I was asked to speak. In my speech I said: One thing you can count on for sure is that I thank God for the nation of Israel and for the fact that in 1948 it found a home. Equally, I thank God for the fact that I serve in the Senate.

I will have a vote over the congressional review of any deal made with Iran, and I promise the people of Israel that no deal with the Iranians will be mentioned or agreed to as long as I have anything to say about it as long as the people of Israel are not respected, protected, and honored not only by us but the people of Iran as well. That is essential to me, and I think this congressional review act gives us the opportunity to do that. A tear came out of Rabbi Bortz's eye. She thanked me for looking out for the people of Israel and thanked me for the United States being their friend.

The nod factor happened to me on the previous Sunday when I spoke to the Association of County Commissioners in Savannah, GA. When I stood up for that speech, it was supposed to be about local government, trade, zoning, and land use. Instead, I opened up by saying: I want everybody in the audience to know whether you have an interest or not in the Iranian nuclear deal that is being negotiated by the President, I, as your Senator, promise that there will be no deal unless there is congressional oversight, congressional review, and a congressional vote. The nods went all through the audience.

There were farmers and county commissioners from all over the State. This is an issue you would think would be removed from them, but it is not. For the people of Georgia this is a primary issue for our country and our security, and it is so for a very good reason. The Iranians have not proven to be very trustworthy with their negotiations in the past.

I thank Senator CARDIN and Senator CORKER for their agreement to put language in this bill that reports the sense of the Senate in terms of the value of the hostages that were held by the Iranian Government in 1979 and 1980.

A lot of people have forgotten what happened in 1979. In 1979, the Iranian troops jumped on the American Embassy in downtown Tehran. They captured 52 American diplomats, held them for 444 days, beat them, tortured them, and harassed them. They finally let them go shortly before the swearing in of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States. When they did, President Carter negotiated the Algerian Accords, which said that the Iranians would release these hostages but they would not be held accountable to pay those hostages any reparations. We negotiated away from them what almost every other hostage has ever received; and that is reparations from their captives.

In the committee, I introduced sense of the Senate legislation that says the Iranians should pay and the sanctions money that was paid under the previous sanctions bill that is now in place should be used to pay those hostages and their families and the survivors. Forty-four of them are left. Some have committed suicide and some have died of natural causes. But all of them were tortured, beaten, and badly abused in 1979 and 1980. We owe it to those Americans to look out for them and to make sure they are compensated, and it should come from the money that would have gone to the Iranians that was taken in the penalties for doing business with Iran under the sanctions legislation.

Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN have done an outstanding job. They have crafted legislation that not only represents the best interest of the country of the United States but also the best interest of our people. I want everybody to understand one thing loud and clear. You can call it an Executive order, you can call it a treaty, you can call it a wink and nod. It is the single most important vote that any Member of this Senate is going to take in a long, long time because this one is for all the marbles.

A nuclear-armed Iran is a danger not just to the Middle East but to the peace and security of the entire world. Giving the Senate and House oversight on this agreement is absolutely essential to the American people so they know that they have oversight. We are the eyes, we are the ears, and we are the conscience of the people we represent.

I can tell you from the winking and nodding theory that I have, and from the tears that I saw shed by the people of Israel Sunday night, this treaty is important to the United States of America, it is important to the world, and it is important to see to it that the congressional review action takes place and this bill passes.

I commend Senator CORKER for his leadership, and I commend Senator CARDIN and Senator MENENDEZ, the previous ranking member, for the work they did to see to it that this happens.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. President, the Senate Finance Committee met until about 11 p.m. last Thursday night. We passed TPA, trade promotion authority. Get this, the President of the United States has asked for it. The Senate Committee on Finance voted 20 to 6 to pass it, and it is coming to the Senate floor soon. It will promote trade and give the President the authority to negotiate trade deals. And the Senate has the authority to approve them up or down. It will send a signal to the rest of the world that we are open for business in America.

When I first came to the Congress in 1999, one of my first votes was fast-track for President Clinton, a Democratic President. As I served in the House, I later voted for President Bush to have TPA. I will vote for TPA for President Obama because it is in America's best interest.

Trade should not be, nor is it ever intended to be, a partisan issue. It is about the well-being and the jobs of the American people.

A lot of us talk about managing expenses through cutting expenses and a lot of us talk about raising our revenue to pay for expenses. Raising prosperity for the American people is the best way to raise their revenue and raise their hope and opportunity. This bill does exactly that. Fast-track promotes American agriculture, American manufacturing, and American innovation.

In 2007, I went to the nation of India with MIKE ENZI and LAMAR ALEXANDER, two members of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. We went to follow up on a book written by Tom Friedman called ''The World is Flat.'' It was all about the jobs that were being taken away from America by the Indian people because of the ability to use the computer, the change in time zones, and to fill American employment and put help desks overseas in India.

A lot of people rose up against the jobs going to India, and they sent us over there to find what was happening. One of the things we did in India was visit Mr. Murthy, the president of Infosys. Infosys is the largest market cap from India on the NASDAQ in America. It is a tremendous success story. It is a high-tech engineering and technology company.

In the boardroom of Infosys, we asked this question: Mr. Murthy, the American people ask us, as Members of the Senate, why is it that all of our jobs are going to India? He answered very quickly. He said: Mr. ISAKSON, I will tell you this. When I started my company 20 years ago, I drove an Indian car, drank an Indian soft drink, and banked with the Bank of India. Today, I drink Coca-Cola, I drive a Ford, and I bank with the Bank of America.

That is what doing business with the world does. It opens up opportunities. That is what trade promotion authority is going to do for America. It will open up opportunities for the American people. It will expand trade and opportunity. It will empower us through jobs and work.

We should make sure that trade never becomes a partisan issue, and that when we vote, we have a bipartisan vote to pass trade promotion authority for the President and for the best interest of our people.

We should remember this. We should never choose isolation over innovation. Trade promotion is innovation. We should never fear competition. We should always see that competition is rewarded by hard work, and we should never cower in fear of those who compete with us. We should always be the leader we have always been in terms of American technology, ingenuity, and trade.

Trade promotion authority is good for America, good for the world, good for this country, good for the economy of the United States, and good for middle-class America. It promotes manufacturing and jobs around this country.

Lastly, there are those who fear it might prompt immigration increases. This bill gives the Congress the authority to override any change in the law that is current in the United States made by the President in any trade deal. So immigration will not be expanded, and it will not be broadened. The President will be given no more authority, but instead, America will be going to the trade table, making deals, raising prosperity, not through higher taxes but through higher engagement, more jobs, and better work.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I commend Senator ISAKSON for always playing such a constructive role. I know he played a big role on the TPA issue, which is, as he mentioned, very important. I know from a geopolitical balance standpoint, it is very, very important for us to be able to consummate the TPA arrangement.

I also thank him for the constructive role he always plays on foreign relations. For a couple of year he was off the committee, and we missed him greatly. We are glad to have him back and very much appreciate his support of not only the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act but his constant and vigilant effort to ensure that people who have not been compensated properly end up being compensated properly.

I look forward to the markup of his bill in the committee. I thank him for consistently and steadfastly pursuing this issue and, again, for the many constructive ways in which he works to cause this body to function in a productive manner.

With that, 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. BLUNT. Madam 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. 1155 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1140

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up amendment No. 1155.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, is this the amendment that deals with the report date?

Mr. BLUNT. It is.

Mr. CARDIN. I have no objection.

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

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mr. BLUNT] proposes an amendment numbered 1155 to amendment No. 1140.

Mr. BLUNT. 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 extend the requirement for annual Department of Defense reports on the military power of Iran)

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF ANNUAL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REPORTS ON THE MILITARY POWER OF IRAN.

Section 1245(d) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84; 123 Stat. 2542), as amended by section 1277 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291), is further amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''December 31, 2026''.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I am pleased to call up this amendment. This amendment extends what would now be a sunset on the Department of Defense annual report on the military power of Iran and adds another 10 years to that annual reporting date. Currently, the law would end that annual report in December of 2016. This amendment would extend the reporting time until December 2026.

I think this amendment sends a message to the American people that Congress understands the lengths that Iran's military is willing to go to promote instability around the world. Pentagon officials today reported that the United States is monitoring the seizure by Iran of a Marshall Islands-flagged cargo ship which was reportedly moving through the Straits of Hormuz. Iranian patrol vessels fired warning shots across the bow of the boat.

Just yesterday, it was reported by Politico that the commander of Iran's ground forces was of the opinion that America was behind the attacks on 9/11. We currently see Iran's deadly influence in a negative way into other countries, including Yemen, Iraq, and other countries. I think we need to continue to monitor the military strength and the military capacity of Iran. This annual Department of Defense assessment of Iran's increasingly destabilizing military is possibly more important even now than it was when these reports started.

Every year, the Department of Defense provides Congress with a review of Iran's military. There is no reason this report should expire at the end of 2016. This commonsense amendment extends the sunset on this annual report we have been having through December of 2026.

I encourage a ''yes'' vote on this amendment.

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. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I see the Senator from Pennsylvania, my old friend Mr. TOOMEY, standing up like he wants to offer something. There are a couple of us who want to have a colloquy for a few minutes, Senator DURBIN, Senator BLUMENTHAL and myself, on an issue involving veterans and veterans' financial assistance for school.

I do not want to get in the way of Senator TOOMEY if he has something he wants to offer, just as long as it does not take forever. May I ask a question through the Presiding Officer? What do you think he has to offer and for how long?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I would direct the question to the Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I would assure the Presiding Officer, for the purpose of passing on to any interested Senators, that I, in fact, would not take forever. In fact, I think I can do this in—it probably will take 15 or 20 minutes.

Mr. CARPER. I would just ask the Senator, if he could take closer to 15, that would be great.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I rise to address two issues this afternoon. The first is amendment No. 1190. I will be as quick as I can on this because I want to spend more time dealing with the Johnson amendment, which I also will address.

Amendment No. 1190 arises because of the very unusual procedural circumstances we find ourselves in. As the Presiding Officer probably knows very well, for technical procedural reasons, the Senate has chosen to conduct a debate about the Corker-Cardin bill, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, on a House legislative vehicle that was sent over to us. But in order to do this, all of the language from the House bill gets stripped out and it goes away.

That original House bill, H.R. 1191, was the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act. I want to talk a little bit about it. But here is my amendment. It is pretty simple. I just want to restore the language from that House-passed vehicle. It is pretty simple. I do not think it is controversial.

Let me just sum up what this is about. This is a bill that was offered in the House by Congressman LOU BARLETTA from Pennsylvania. It is a bill that would protect volunteer firefighters from some unintended consequences of ObamaCare. More specifically, it exempts volunteer firefighters from counting toward the trigger for the employer mandate.

I do not think it was ever intended that volunteer firefighters would be counted this way, but nonetheless the danger arises because of an IRS ruling.

So the IRS issued a guidance back in 2013 that suggested that volunteer firefighters would have to count any benefits they got as income.

It raises the question of whether they would be counted toward the ObamaCare limit. They have gone back and forth. They have issued a ruling that says volunteer firefighters would not be counted toward triggering the number of employees that invokes ObamaCare, but that is just an administrative ruling at this point. It could change at any point in time.

If it were to change, and if every volunteer fire department in America that had 50 or more volunteer firefighters had to be deemed to be an employer requiring full ObamaCare coverage, I dare say it would put out of business virtually every volunteer fire department in America because none of these volunteer fire departments have the kind of money it would take to go out and buy health care for those volunteer firefighters, nor was ObamaCare ever intended to cover these folks.

This would be a huge problem, particularly in Pennsylvania where we have 2,400 volunteer fire departments, more than any other State in the Union, and we have over 50,000 volunteers in Pennsylvania alone, but there are over 750,000 nationally. So, as I said, the IRS did give us a ruling that, for now, they will not deem volunteer firefighters to be employees for the purpose of triggering ObamaCare mandates.

But I would like—and I am not the only one who would like to have this codified in law so this danger goes away so volunteer fire departments can continue to thrive. This passed the House unanimously. There is bipartisan support in the Senate.

I thank the chairman of the committee and the ranking member. My understanding is there is no opposition from either of them to this amendment, which is very straightforward.

I would be delighted with a voice vote when the time is appropriate for that. I would be very grateful. I have said my piece about the volunteer firefighters, but I do think it is a great opportunity to get this taken care of.

AMENDMENT NO. 1150

What I would like to address, though, is the incredibly important debate that we are having now about the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. Now, let me state very clearly, I think the underlying bill that Senators CORKER and CARDIN have produced is a very important good-faith effort to give Congress some say in something Congress absolutely should have a say in.

But I do think there is an underlying problem with the bill. The underlying problem with the bill is that the reality is, at the end of the day, an agreement announced by the President with Iran, should that come to pass, could be opposed by a majority of Senators—it could be opposed by a big majority of Senators and it would still go into effect, despite the provisions in this underlying bill.

Specifically, why I say that is, in the first place, in order to prevent the congressionally authorized sanctions from being waived, we would need to pass a resolution of disapproval. That takes 60 votes in the Senate. So any 41 Senators could prevent that from taking place and then the deal goes forward, the sanctions get lifted.

If we have a supermajority, more than 60, and we could pass this legislation and send to it the President, he could veto it. Then it would take 67 votes to override the President's veto. So the math is pretty clear. Any 34 Senators in support of the agreement could permit the agreement to go ahead, while 66 Senators could oppose the agreement and yet it would take place. It seems to me that this turns an important part of the Constitution on its head, and that is article II, section 2 that says: The President ''shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur.''

So, in my view, this certainly ought to be deemed to be a treaty because it rises to that level of importance. A treaty, generally defined, is an agreement through negotiations signed by nations. I think that is what we are talking about here. Certainly something of this enormous importance as arguably the most dangerous regime in the world on a path that might very well enable them to obtain the most dangerous weapon in the world, it is hard to imagine things that are much more important than that.

So I think it certainly ought to rise to the level of a treaty. We routinely treat matters of much lesser import as treaties. This is not just sort of an abstract, theoretical question of Presidential authority. There are very specific, very real consequences. It is my view that we are on a path toward a very bad, very dangerous deal. The only way I can think of that we change the path we are on is if there is a plausible, credible possibility for Congress to stop this, which would then cause these negotiations to change their course, which is what I think has to happen to avoid a very dangerous outcome.

Let me be clear. My goal is not to kill any deal, my goal is to get a good deal, one that provides for the security and safety our country needs.

I do not think that is the direction we are on right now. Let me explain a few of the reasons why. I guess the simple summary was very aptly put by the Prime Minister of Israel when he spoke to the joint session of Congress and he said: The problem with this deal is that it would not block Iran's path to a bomb, it paves it. That is exactly what I am concerned about, ultimately.

Let me explain why I am concerned about that. I see three big categories of reasons; first, the administration has already made too many concessions; second, the Iranian regime is a regime we cannot trust; third, while the administration says don't worry, you don't need to trust them because we can verify and enforce this agreement and, boy, if they step out of line, we will snap those sanctions back in a heartbeat, that is a fantasy. I do not see that working. Let me explain these three categories.

With respect to the concessions, first, we ought to be concerned, I think, about the concessions that were made before the negotiations even began—the concessions that we wouldn't even address, the ongoing ballistic missile program that the Iranians continued to pursue and make ever more sophisticated.

We wouldn't address their active, ongoing support for terrorist organizations throughout the Middle East and around the world. That wouldn't be on the table.

We wouldn't address their open declarations that they want to wipe Israel off of planet Earth.

These things were permitted just to be set aside. That is a very major round of concessions before we ever got to the table.

My next concern is the way the administration has been moving the goalpost throughout these discussions. The initial goal stated by the President in the fall of 2013 was to ensure that Iran would not have a nuclear bomb. That was the right goal. The only problem is that is not the goal anymore.

Now the goal is, according to the administration, that we would have about 12 month's notice if the Iranians decide to develop and deploy nuclear weapons. That is a huge, huge concession, and, I think, a very dangerous one.

Finally—and maybe the most disturbing concession—it seems to me that the framework of this deal, as it has been described by the administration, allows Iran to retain a nuclear infrastructure—actually, an industrial-scale nuclear infrastructure, with the underground facility at Fordow and the plutonium reactor Arak—thousands of centrifuges for a country that doesn't need a single centrifuge.

If their intended purpose really is just to have peaceful nuclear energy, they don't need a single centrifuge. They can buy enriched uranium. They don't need to have the domestic capability of enriching centrifuges. But it has already been conceded that they will have thousands.

None of this, by the way, is going to be destroyed. Anything that is deactivated is locked away, but it is still there.

Frankly, I am worried about the next round of concessions. If you listened, as I have, to the way the administration has described the framework of this agreement, and then you listened to how the Iranians have described it, there are some huge divergencies there. For instance, with respect to the sanctions, the administration has said that the sanctions would be lifted gradually, only as and when the Iranians comply with the terms of agreement.

The Iranians have said: Absolutely not. The sanctions get lifted immediately upon execution of the agreement.

And on inspections, this essential part of the enforcement mechanism, the administration has said: We will have the ability to inspect anytime, anywhere.

The Iranians have said: No, you won't. You will only do inspections by permission, and military sites are off limits all together.

I think this is a very disturbing range of concessions that have already been made, and the deal is not finished yet.

The second point I make is that we can't trust this regime. I just think that is abundantly obvious. I think it is very clear that they have not reached the decision as a nation that they want to abandon their quest for a nuclear weapon. I don't think they have.

And, if you look at their behavior, they have been killing Americans since 1979, including nearly 1,500 U.S. soldiers in Iraq with the sophisticated IEDs they make.

Iran is the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism. They are promoting radical Islam in many places in the Middle East. They recently were plotting to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador by a bomb planted in a DC restaurant.

They have repeatedly declared their intention to wipe Israel off the map, and they have a history of cheating on agreements and violating U.N. resolutions. Why do we think this time would be different?

Well, as I said, the administration says: Don't worry. You don't have to trust. We will have verification, enforcement, and snapback sanctions.

Well, I don't think that is realistic at all. But it is not only my view. Henry Kissinger and George Shultz wrote, I thought, a very important essay about this. They mention, among other things, the difficulty we are probably going to have in even discovering that cheating is going on. I quote from the Kissinger-Shultz article. They say: ''In a large country with multiple facilities and ample experience in nuclear concealment, violations will be inherently difficult to detect.''

Not only that, it looks like we are, in a way, subbing out the endorsement to the U.N.—populated, I might remind my colleagues, by countries that are often not terribly friendly to the United States. There we will have the challenge of proving violations that we do discover, proving that they are, in fact, violations. Again, Kissinger and Shultz point out that when cheating or a breakout occurs, it is unlikely to be a ''clear-cut event.'' Rather, it is likely to be ''the gradual accumulation of ambiguous evasions.''

So we discover these ambiguous evasions, and what do we do? We have to go to the U.N. and convince them. I suspect the Iranians will deny them. And how long will this process go on while this is adjudicated and while the Iranians remain in violation? And what are our chances that we will eventually convince the people we need to convince at the U.N. that we are right and they are wrong?

But even if we are successful in all of this, the administration says: Well, that is when we will just snap the sanctions right back in place.

How can that even be a serious notion when the sanctions regime is crumbling right now? I mean, it is already crumbling. The Russians are selling air defense systems now to the Iranians.

Why is the President so reluctant to have Congress have a role in this, in any case? If the President can make the case that America will be more secure as a result of this agreement, he should be able to convince the American public and the Senate, get the votes, and then he would have a much more enduring agreement.

A treaty is binding indefinitely, and it would have the approval of Congress. It wouldn't have the temporary nature of the executive agreement.

I think it is our responsibility that we have to uphold the Constitution. It is our responsibility that we have to maximize the safety of the American people to the extent we can. So I hope my colleagues will support the Johnson amendment, which will simply deem this agreement to be a treaty and require the two-thirds vote for ratification that a treaty requires.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, if I could respond, just briefly, I know there are speakers who would like to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I thank the Senator for his amendment. My sense is that over the course this debate, there will be a pathway forward.

Secondly, I thank him for cosponsoring the legislation that is before us.

As to deeming it a treaty, I wish to point out that the Senator has been in the Senate almost 6 years, which leads me to believe that at on at least three occasions, the Senator has already voted to give the President unilateral ability to implement this by a national security waiver. That is why this now is an executive agreement. And I think everyone here knows that what the President plans to do is to take what Senator TOOMEY and others have granted to him—a national security waiver—and go directly to the U.N. Security Council and, therefore—as a matter of fact, if we had not granted that security waiver, it would take a majority of people here to lift that. However, in putting these sanctions in place, all of us who put these four tranches of sanctions in place since 2000 have granted the President a national security waiver.

In a letter in response to me, the Chief of Staff made it clear that they plan to go straight to the U.N. Security Council with this waiver in hand. They plan to waive these sanctions ad infinitum way down the road. Secretary Kerry has testified to us that maybe 5 years down the road, after the sanctions regime has totally dissipated, we would have the ability to vote. So my sense is that I agree with the sentiment that is being laid out.

I just wish to say again, if the Johnson amendment were to pass, ultimately this bill would not pass. Let me just say there would be no limitation on the President's use of waivers to suspend sanctions that we put in place, which brought them to the table, and no requirement that Congress receive the deal at all—never mind the classified annexes that go with it—no review period for Congress to seal the deal and vote before it is implemented, no requirement that the President certify Iran is complying, no mechanism for Congress to rapidly reimpose sanctions, and no reporting on Iran support for terrorism, ballistic missile development, and human rights violations.

So my sentiment is with the Senator. I hope his amendment will very soon become law, and I appreciate his diligence there.

I think he understands that this body, in putting the sanctions in place, gave the President the ability to do this unilaterally. What this bill does is to take back some of that authority. I hope we will be able to do that collectively.

I appreciate the ranking member's efforts in this regard.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I come to the floor today to join Senators CARPER and BLUMENTHAL on a subject we would like to speak to by way of colloquy, without objection by my colleagues.

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

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND OUR VETERANS AND SERVICEMEMBERS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, Senator CARPER, Senator BLUMENTHAL, and I have come to the floor to discuss a terrible loophole in Federal law. It is the Federal 90–10 rule that limits the amount of Department of Education title IV dollars for for-profit colleges. They can receive 90 percent of their revenue from the title IV. The intent was to make sure for-profit colleges were not totally reliant on Federal taxpayers for operations and that they could survive without taxpayer dollars.

Well, I think 90 percent is way too high to accomplish that goal. What is more, the law doesn't count non-title IV Federal programs as revenue when they calculate the 90 percent. The Department of Veterans Affairs Post-9/11 GI bill and Department of Defense tuition assistance and MyCAA dollars are some of the biggest examples of Federal revenue not counted in the 90 percent calculation.

It means that some for-profit colleges get vastly more than 90 percent from the Federal Government. These are supposed to be private institutions in the private sector? No way. If they were standing alone as an industry, the for-profit colleges and universities would be the ninth largest Federal agency in Washington. They get that much money.

Who are some of these schools that get more than 90 percent of their revenue from federal taxpayers? Well, names you might have heard: Everest College in Newport News, VA; Everest College in Portland, OR; Heald College campuses in Fresno, San Francisco, and Stockton, CA. If the names sound familiar, it is because they are part of the now bankrupt and out-of-business Corinthian Colleges system that defrauded students, lied to the Federal Government, and raked in $1.4 billion annually in title IV dollars and another $186 million from GI bill benefits.

Ashford University in Clinton, IA, is another notorious story of a for-profit school that received more than 90 percent of their revenue from Federal dollars when the Department of Defense and VA funds are included. I know that one very well.

A past Bloomberg news article really demonstrated the depths these companies will sink to in order to ensnare or enroll veterans and servicemembers who qualify for Federal benefits.

James Long was reported to have suffered a brain injury when artillery shells hit his humvee in Iraq. The Ashford recruiter came to a barracks for wounded marines at Camp Lejeune while Long was recovering from his brain injury and pitched to him to go to Ashford University, this for-profit school. Their parent company, Bridgepoint Education, is under investigation by at least three State attorneys general.

I could go through the list, but I will yield the floor for my friend from the State of Delaware, Senator CARPER, to say a few words as well.

Westwood College, based out of Colorado, in my State of Illinois, is under investigation by the Illinois attorney general. I have been contacted by their students, including veterans, who have been lured into their worthless degree programs and use up their GI bills as a result of it.

There are many other schools included on this list of schools that receive more than 90 percent of their revenue from federal taxpayers. Vatterott College and Coyne College are in my home State. There are schools owned by Apollo, the largest for-profit college and university in the United States, which is currently under investigation by two State attorneys general.

Career Education Corporation—which is another notorious for-profit school—is under investigation by 17 different State attorneys general. And there are schools owned by Kaplan, which used to be owned by the Washington Post, which now is on its own, and is under investigation by three different States attorneys general.

Why do we allow this to happen? These schools are targeting our veterans and our servicemembers and members of their family.

I was listening to Pandora the other day and I heard American Military University advertising. Well, they know it is Washington, DC. There are a lot of people in uniform in Washington, DC.

The American Military University is not part of any official part of our military. They just picked up the name. It is a for-profit school raising questions, again, about whether they are providing our veterans and servicemembers with any value for their GI benefits.

So I have joined with a number of my colleagues, Senator CARPER, and 18 other colleagues, in writing to the Secretary of the Department of Education to publish its annual 90–10 data with all the Federal education benefits, including the Department of Defense and VA benefits.

According to documents obtained by the Center for Investigative Reporting, the Department of Education has produced data internally. So it is there, and it is time that it be shared with the public.

I thank Senator CARPER. Many people have heard me come to the floor and talk about for-profit colleges and universities and probably think: Well, there goes DURBIN again.

Well, this time I am joined by a couple of my outstanding colleagues, and one of them is the Senator from Delaware, who helped me to bring together 20 Senators to sign this letter.

I yield to Senator CARPER.

Mr. CARPER. I thank the Senator from Illinois for yielding.

Madam President, I don't know about your family, but my dad and his brother served in World War II. They were both combat veterans, one in the Navy and one in the Army. On my mom's side of the family, two of her brothers ended up serving in the Navy. One was killed in a kamikaze attack on an aircraft carrier out in the Pacific. He never had a chance to participate in the GI bill, but my dad did. Later, in the Korean war, my uncle Ed, who married my mom's sister, had a chance to participate in the GI bill. It was a great benefit. It is one of the things—when we look back in time, we know this is one of the wonderful things that happened in our country. It helped lift us up and prepare a workforce to make us a preeminent nation in the second half of the 20th century.

But as it turned out, as the benefits were offered and taken advantage of by veterans, scam artists emerged on the heels of World War II. The same thing happened again after the Korean war. It seems as if every time we have renewed and extended the GI bill for a new generation of veterans, the same thing has happened.

I served on Active Duty from 1968 to 1973 in the Vietnam war—as a naval flight officer—served 5 years on Active and another 18 years beyond that as a P–3 aircraft mission commander, a retired Navy captain. I had a chance to get a master's degree near the end of the Vietnam war, and I moved from California to Delaware and got an MBA on the GI bill. I think we got $250 a month.

The GI bill today—men and women who have served 3 years of Active Duty, including some time in Iraq or Afghanistan, get tuition free to pretty much any college or university—public—in their State. They get tuition assistance. They not only get tuition, they get book fees, and if they need tutoring, they get that free. They also get about a $1,500-a-month housing allowance. Vietnam veterans got 250 bucks a month. This is a lucrative GI benefit. And if the GI doesn't use it today, their spouse can use it. If their spouse doesn't use it, it is transferrable to their dependent children. It is a great benefit.

Not surprisingly, just as scam artists emerged at the end of World War II, at the end of the Korean war, and at other times, they have emerged again this time as well. Some of them are private colleges; some of them are not. Some of the private colleges actually do a good job, but too many of them do not. They are in this for money. They see a rich benefit, and one of their goals is to try to make sure they cash in. In some cases, it is at the expense of the veteran and the taxpayers.

Congress put in place in I want to say 1992 a rule that said we want to combat this by injecting some market forces. So since the beginning of 1992, no university, college, whatever, could get more than 85 percent of their revenues from the Federal Government—no more than 85 percent from the Federal Government. We changed that in 1998 and said that no college or university—private, for profit, whatever—could get more than 90 percent of their revenues from the Federal Government. They had to raise 10 percent from other sources, such as people who paid their own money or who got private loans or whatever to go to college.

Somewhere along the line, though, we changed the rules to say that 90 percent did not include the GI bill, that 90 percent did not include something called tuition assistance for people on Active Duty. So 90 percent today is not a full picture. It is student loans and it is Pell grants. It is not the GI bill. It is not tuition assistance from people on Active Duty. So if we put it all together, we find out that today there are over 100 colleges and universities—again, almost all private—that are getting way more than 90 percent of their revenue from the Federal Government. I don't think that is a good thing. It is not a healthy thing. What was meant to be an approach that provided some market correction doesn't work anymore.

For years, Senator DURBIN and I have introduced legislation designed to restore the integrity of the original 85–15

rule or the 90–10 rule, which says, look, if you are a college or university, if you are a for-profit, private, public, the 90 percent should be included all in. It is college loans, it is student loans, it is Pell grants, it is the GI bill, it is tuition assistance—the whole deal. If you are a college or university, you can get up to 90 percent of your revenues from those sources but not 100 percent—as too many of them are doing today.

We have talked about Corinthian, which has gone down. Corinthian has cost taxpayers probably billions of dollars. A lot of men and women who risked their lives and served our country in sometimes very dangerous situations have now gotten out of the military and they have literally been put at risk again. They have been put in a position where they have squandered their GI bill benefits.

We ask sometimes why there is bad morale in some cases, low morale, why some Veterans take their own lives. Well, sometimes it is because they get sucked into these scams. Sometimes that is what happens.

We can fix this. It is the right thing to do for our veterans. It is the right thing to do for our taxpayers.

I know Senator BLUMENTHAL is here. He is also a distinguished veteran and the father of a distinguished veteran, and I am happy to yield to him.

(Mr. GARDNER assumed the Chair.)

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank Senator CARPER and Senator DURBIN, two of our most distinguished colleagues who have fought ceaselessly for the interests of students and veterans. I am very proud to be here with them today. I do have a very personal interest as the dad of a veteran and also of a currently serving young man whom I hope will be a veteran one day.

Nothing is more important than this issue of making sure we keep faith with our veterans and protect them because the phenomena we have described today often create incentives for schools to lure veterans into education deals, and they are often education deals that fail them, that don't make sense for them, that don't give them the education and the qualifications they think they are going to receive. So very often they are failed by these programs, and they fail to complete their courses and leave with mountains of debt but no degree.

These kinds of abuses that bring us here today involve some for-profit schools in effect scamming our Nation's veterans.

We all know that for-profit schools are prohibited from receiving more than 90 percent of their total revenue from Federal student aid, but, as my colleagues have so well stated, the Department of Defense and Veterans' Administration education benefits are not counted toward that 90 percent. That loophole causes the for-profits to target those servicemembers and veterans, often with predatory marketing practices that lure them into those deals that make no sense for them.

We need to change that law. We need to change the law so that DOD and VA benefits count under the 90-percent cap on Federal revenue. That is really our ultimate goal.

I thank the President for including such a provision in his budget request for fiscal year 2016. I look forward to working with my colleagues and with the President in moving that legislative effort forward.

In the meantime, we need a more accurate picture of this problem because when it comes to for-profit schools and veterans, there are some things we definitely need to know and our veterans need to know.

Here is what we do know. We know there are a large number of for-profit schools that would be in violation of the 90–10 rule if we made this change today. In fact, a 2013 Department of Education analysis identified 133 for-profit schools that would be in violation. We also know that the current loophole in that 90–10 rule creates those incentives for certain institutions to conduct aggressive, relentless, often predatory recruitment of veterans.

What we lack and what we need is comprehensive, complete information on the exact scope of the problem. That part should be easy. The Department of Education already collects the information we are asking them to publish. It is a simple task of publishing how much revenue schools receive from all Federal education programs, including the DOD and the VA. That would bring accuracy and transparency to the debate over the 90–10 rule. Disclosure and transparency are part of the battle. Most importantly, this information and these statistics would provide veterans themselves and servicemembers better data and information to make informed choices about higher education.

Let me briefly mention another tool that I think is very important because it encourages veterans to make informed higher education choices, and that is the VA's GI bill comparison tool. I am glad—and I thank Secretary McDonald—the VA has launched this vitally important resource for veterans in response to the President's Executive order, which established principles of excellence for schools that serve veterans. I also think Secretary McDonald can take steps to improve this tool, specifically by adding a risk index that would highlight unscrupulous bad actors in the industry.

As our Nation's veterans decide where to spend their taxpayer-funded education benefits—their money but taxpayer funded—they deserve to know if the school they are considering is under investigation for deceptive practices, what its record is on this score, what its graduates do, what the value is of education and courses there. They deserve to know if the school they are considering has been placed on heightened cash monitoring status, a specific status from the Department of Education. They deserve to have this information. It is vital not only to them but to their smart use of taxpayer dollars.

Let me finish by saying that for-profit schools have been problematic in many ways. The Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, on which I served during my first 2 years, conducted an investigation. I was very proud to be a part of the effort to reform for-profit schools. Our former colleague Tom Harkin worked very hard on this issue.

We should not tar every for-profit school with too broad a brush. We should note improvements that have been made. This problem is discrete, identifiable, critically important, and I thank my colleagues for giving me the opportunity to talk about it and work with them on it.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank Senator BLUMENTHAL and Senator CARPER, and I also thank Senator LEE, who has waited patiently for the last 15 minutes or so. I will conclude my part of this by first saying that I thank my colleagues for joining me.

If I said we were dealing with an industry—the for-profit colleges and universities—that has 10 percent of the high school graduates in America attending and 44 percent of all the student loan defaults, it might raise some question. If I said that at least 90 percent of the revenue these for-profit colleges and universities receive is often from the Federal Treasury, a Federal subsidy—sometimes more than 90 percent, which is the point we are making here—and if I said that many of these schools are literally exploiting our veterans and servicemembers, I think that is a clarion call for Members of Congress to stand up and first do something to protect the men and women in uniform and the veterans and second to make sure taxpayers' dollars are well spent.

This Corinthian College collapse is an indication of how we can lose $1.4 billion a year for a worthless college system, for-profit college system.

If I said at the end of the day that I don't know what the term ''crony capitalism'' means—I will go and look it up after this speech, but it looks to me as if they are calling themselves private schools. They might as well be Federal agencies and, as such, should be held accountable.

I thank my colleagues for joining me.

Mr. CARPER. If I can add just one thing, Mr. President, 5 years ago, 6 years ago, our Federal budget deficit hit $1.4 trillion. It has come down since, bit by bit. Now it is down by about two-thirds. But it is still a lot—like $400 billion or so. That is a lot of money.

I think the key to further reducing deficits is threefold: No. 1, tax reform that broadens the base and lowers the corporate rates so we are competitive with the rest of the world but also generates some revenues for deficit reduction.

No. 2, entitlement reform that saves money and saves programs for our children and grandchildren and doesn't savage old people or poor people.

No. 3, look at everything we do in the Federal Government and say: How do we get a better result with less money? This is one of those things we need to look at and put under a microscope.

Again, are all for-profit schools bad? No, they are not all bad. Some do a very good job. But we have millions of jobs out here in this country waiting to be filled. We have a lot of people who would like to have a job and don't have the skills. We are spending a ton of money through the GI bill and tuition assistance, and we need to better ensure that the folks—particularly who are veterans—are getting their money's worth and that we are getting our money's worth and that we are getting the workforce we need to fill up those millions of jobs.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I would add one last note. My colleague Senator DURBIN has very appropriately mentioned the Corinthian debacle. We should note that this debacle is not an innocent failure. It is not a victimless debacle. Behind that staggering number of $1.2 billion are thousands of real people with huge debt and no value in the courses they have taken in terms of a degree that can give them marketable qualifications. There are real-life stories of huge debt, no degrees, and people who are tragically trapped in financial situations really beyond their own fault because of this situation.

So that, too, is a phenomenon we need to keep in mind when we talk about this 90–10 rule. Those veterans who are failed, who are marketed to, who are lured into this system are often left in tragic situations that they don't deserve and that they wouldn't have undertaken if they had been well-informed, which is what ultimately this Nation owes them.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendments and call up amendments Nos. 1141, 1145, and 1148 on behalf of Senator RUBIO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, Senator CORKER and I have been working very hard to get amendments considered in a very orderly way. We have three amendments that are pending. We are attempting to get to those amendments in a way that we can have votes. We do not want a lot of amendments pending while we are debating certain amendments. For that reason, I must object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CARDIN. 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to speak on the legislation before the Senate, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, and I specifically want to create a focus for our colleagues on the essential question before the Senate. The essential question before the Senate is, Does the Senate want to have a role in opining upon any agreement that may be concluded between the United States and the P5+1 and Iran? Right now, there is no clear mechanism for the Senate and the Congress of the United States to have a say about that potential final agreement.

The reality is that an Iran that does not have nuclear weapons capability is an Iran that at the end of the day enures to a status in which the national security of the United States is better preserved and in which our ally the State of Israel's security is better preserved. But, in fact, an Iran that does have nuclear weapons capability is a national security threat to the United States and to the State of Israel, our ally, which clearly would face an existential threat.

The problem is that many of us, myself included—personally, I abhor the Iranian regime. I abhor its human rights abuses. I abhor its promotion of terrorism in the world. I abhor that they are holding U.S. citizens hostage and so much more. But as much as I abhor all of that reality, what I really have a concern about is the Senate not having a say over any final agreement, particularly when I have some serious reservations about where this framework agreement to this date takes us; the questions of the differences in views between the P5+1 and Iran about what the framework agreement says and doesn't say; the reality, it seems to me from what I read, that Iran can advance in its research and development in a way that ultimately allows them to have, for example, centrifuges that can spin more efficiently, more quickly, and therefore reduce the breakout time; my concern about the question of what happens after 10 years—are we, in essence, relegated to a nuclear-armed Iran; my concern about what I understood was a threshold redline issue in which the International Atomic Energy Administration was going to have anytime, anyplace, anywhere inspections based upon any agreement; and many other elements.

But all of those concerns—and we will see whether a final agreement, if there is a final agreement, ultimately addresses those concerns—will be for naught in terms of having a way to express my concerns if, in fact, there is no process that ultimately creates the potential for a judgment on any final agreement and an action in response to that judgment and a continuing oversight obligation and opportunity for the Senate.

So while I abhor all of the things on which many of my colleagues offer amendments, this is not necessarily the only Iran piece of legislation we have to consider. But if we want to have a say on the fundamental question of any potential agreement, then don't load up this legislation that came out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously. And God knows we don't get too many unanimous votes in this Chamber, much less in committees. And the good work of Senator CORKER as the chairman and the work of Senator CARDIN in the negotiations and, I would like to believe, many of us who were on this legislation before we got to this point and some of us who have been following Iran since my days in the House of Representatives—ultimately, that was the type of structured process that creates a say for the Senate and for the Congress in a meaningful way.

Could we seek other legislation to deal with Iran's terrorism? The answer is yes, even though this legislation has reporting requirements to ensure that we have senses of that and, most importantly, doesn't repeal any other sanctions that may be related to terrorism, which was my original concern when we had language as it related to the question of terrorism.

Do we have the opportunity to look at Iran's missile capacity and program and what that means to the national security of the United States and our allies and the State of Israel? Yes.

Do we have the opportunity to continue to express ourselves about Iran's use of its resources not for its people but to promote terrorism in the world? Yes.

Does it all have to be in this legislation? No. Because what we are going to do is sink the legislation, and there will be no say, there will be no opportunity to deal with any potential final agreement.

As the author, along with others, of the sanctions regime that brought Iran to the table in the first place to discuss it—I always find it interesting because I hear the administration at times talk in two ways about the sanctions regime: Either the sanctions regime cannot be enhanced because to do so would break the coalition, and by the same token—and don't expect that Iran would respond to any further sanctions—by the same token, I hear that the reason Iran is at the negotiating table and wants to strike a deal as an expression of their sincerity is because of the sanctions. So you can't have it both ways.

By the way, I have often heard that any enhancing of the sanctions regime would ultimately lead to a breaking of the coalition. I heard that many times before, and that sanctions regime didn't create that.

But I am willing to forgo enhanced sanctions at this time to get the fundamental opportunity of the Senate having a say on any final agreement because that is the threshold question—whether we will have a say on the most important nuclear nonproliferation national security issue, I would say, of our time.

So I hope my colleagues, as earnest as I believe they are in some of their amendments, understand that at the end of the day, pursuit of such an amendment, however worthy it might be, would sink the very opportunity to have a law in place that would give us a process and a say, because there is none right now.

So whether you want to change this to a treaty, which has all types of other legal consequences to it far beyond—I don't think people have thought that through because far beyond, a treaty has legal requirements on both sides or multiple sides when you enter into a treaty. I don't know that I want Iran having that legal precedent or ability to use against the United States at any given time if things don't go the way we want them to. I don't know that, in fact, I want to have a set of circumstances in which Iran can ultimately rear its ugly head by the use of our own very same purposes in legislation, which I think people haven't thought about fully, the unintended consequence of some of their legitimate goals, haven't thought it fully through. But most of all, I don't think they have thought about the consequences of the Senate not having a say on any final agreement. That, to me, is paramount.

So I hope very much that as our colleagues are considering this—I am sure the chairman and the ranking member will try to work, when appropriate, with individual Members who ultimately may have language that doesn't strike at the heart of the legislation, that may be able to be accommodated, that may enhance it. By the same token, we have to decide whether we want a political victory or a national security victory.

If we want a national security victory, then we will try to keep the legislation that came out on a unanimous bipartisan version from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee pretty much intact. If we want a political victory to say that someone is stronger than someone else or one group is stronger than someone else about national security or about our support of the State of Israel—for which I take a backseat to no one in this Chamber—then we can have that opportunity, but that will mean not having a final say on any agreement, and that, I think, would be of historical proportion a huge mistake.

So I look forward to the debate that continues. I hope we can keep a measured look. I am happy to work with other colleagues who want to further advance issues which I think are legitimate as it relates to Iran but not necessarily as it relates to the determinative factor as to whether we will have a say on any potential final agreement as it relates to a nuclear agreement with Iran. I think that is paramount. I hope we don't lose sight of it. I hope we can have the same strong, incredibly bipartisan votes that we have had on Iran because that sends a clear message to our allies as to our expectations, it sends a clear message to Iran of what we will expect and the standard that we will hold them up to. Anything short of that will only create the opportunity for those who have a different vision about what we seek to achieve to try to accomplish it. I do not think we want that. I do not think that is anybody's intention. I do not judge anyone in terms of their intent. I only ask to think about the consequences to our greater goal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I would like to ask unanimous consent in a moment.

First, I would like to thank the distinguished Senator from New Jersey, who has been as much as anybody in this entire congressional body, both House and Senate—actually he and Senator KIRK have been stalwarts on Iran. Without his efforts, we would not even be in a negotiation right now. I cannot thank him enough for his positive contributions, for his leadership as ranking member and chairman. I want to thank him.

AMENDMENT NO. 1150

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 6:10 p.m. today be equally divided in the usual form and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the following amendment: Johnson amendment No. 1150; further, that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendment and that it require a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for adoption of the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, if I could follow up, I have been in extensive conversations with former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who I know has tremendous respect on this side of the aisle. She sent out a release today in response to this amendment that is coming before us today that the proposed Iranian nuclear agreement is classically an executive agreement and does not need to be a treaty with the advice and consent of the Senate—this is our former Secretary of State under George W. Bush—but Congress should be able to opine, given the congressionally mandated sanctions would have to be lifted. I think everybody on our side of the aisle understands that with four tranches of sanctions that Congress put in place—we brought them to the table with Senator MENENDEZ leading that effort, and in each of those cases, which is traditionally done, we gave a national security waiver. No one ever thought the President would use the national security waiver to kick the can down the road for years on the congressionally mandated sanctions without our approval. But everybody in this body who has been here in recent times participated in giving the President—if you voted for these sanctions and in some cases they were unanimous—the unilateral ability to waive the sanctions.

If we pass this underlying bill, on which we now have 67 cosponsors, we are taking back that authority. But to try to deem this as a treaty is a losing effort. In essence, it will destroy our ability—it will destroy our ability to have any say-so, as the Senator just mentioned, in one of the biggest geopolitical events of our time.

If this amendment were to pass, the outcome would be no limitation on the President's use of waivers to suspend the sanctions we put in place, none—no requirement that Congress receive the deal at all, never mind the classified annexes that go with it but which, by the way, the American people will never see—will never see, but on their behalf we would like to see—no review period for Congress to seal the deal and vote before it is implemented, no requirement that the President certify Iran is complying, no mechanism for Congress to rapidly reimpose sanctions, and no reporting on Iran's support for terrorism, ballistic missile development, and human rights violations.

I just want to say to my friends, voting for this treaty is, in essence, saying that we are willing to throw what has been put together aside, even though we have 67 cosponsors. Look, I wish we had the ability to vote affirmatively, but we gave that away. Almost everybody in this body was a part of giving that national security waiver away.

This is an executive agreement. Our former Secretary of State, whom we love and cherish, says this is an executive agreement. We can wish it was a treaty or we can try to deem it as a treaty, but the effect is we will have no role if we were to pass this amendment by JOHNSON, a friend of mine. We will have no role in this.

I urge people to vote no. I know there will be debate between now and 6:10. I appreciate the ranking member being here with me.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, I want to join Senator CORKER in thanking Senator MENENDEZ for his leadership on this issue—I said that on previous occasions on the floor—clearly, his leadership, working with Senator CORKER and working with Senator KAINE, who developed the bill for the appropriate review for Congress. I wish to thank Senator MENENDEZ very much for all of his hard work on this bill.

I want to identify myself with the comments of Senator CORKER in opposition to the Johnson amendment. But

let me give you one more reason. I respect the intent of those who support this amendment, but let me tell you what it means. It means that if this were, in fact, a treaty, we would be saying that we would be delegating to other entities the decision on whether to eliminate the sanction regime we in Congress imposed.

I have listened to my colleagues, particularly on the Republican side, who say they do not want to delegate that authority, that Congress should keep its legislative authority.

If you believe Congress should keep its legislative authority, that it is up to us to determine whether we are going to change or eliminate or modify the sanction regime, then you cannot be for a treaty because a treaty would give away that power. I do not think you really mean to do that, but that is the intent, if this were to be turned into a treaty, that we would be giving up our power.

Secondly, I don't know how we are going to explain it to our colleagues in the House of Representatives. The Presiding Officer served in the House. I served in the House. Senator MENENDEZ served in the House. The last time I checked, we imposed these sanctions because a bill passed both the Senate and the House, and now we are saying that the approval process is going to ignore the House of Representatives, solely going to be a matter for the U.S. Senate on a ratification of a treaty? That does not seem like a workable solution.

My point is to concur in the observations of Senator CORKER. This is clearly an amendment that if it were adopted would say we are not going to have an orderly review process for Congress to be able to weigh in. We are not going to be able to get the material to set up the logical review by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that we are going to lose all the benefits of this bipartisan bill if this amendment were to be approved.

For all those reasons, I would urge my colleagues to reject this amendment. I think I have about 1 minute remaining. I will be glad to yield that to Senator JOHNSON, if he would like to have a minute and a half to try to rehabilitate his amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator from Maryland yielding time.

If I could ask a question, if this amendment fails in terms of involving the House, I have another amendment that if the Senate decides not to deem this a treaty—and I believe it should be deemed a treaty—we can also deem this a congressional executive agreement which, of course, would have to be voted on by both Houses.

I think the fact is this does rise to the level of a treaty. Again, there is no specific criteria in terms of what creates a treaty or comprises a treaty and what doesn't. In the end, what determines whether something is a treaty is how it is approved by Congress.

From my standpoint, when we take a look at the considerations in the Foreign Affairs Manual, in terms of what actually causes something to become a treaty, the extent to which the agreement involves commitments or risks affects the Nation as a whole. I think this deal between Iran and America and the world affects and risks—certainly affects the Nation as a whole.

Another consideration is whether the agreement can be given effect without the enactment of subsequent legislation by the Congress. I think the fact that we are even debating this bill lends credence to the fact that Congress needs to be involved.

In the end, though, it is not about involving Congress. This is about involving the American people. I think the American people should have a say through their elected officials as to whether this is a good deal or a bad deal. The fact that this bill does allow some involvement, some role, forces the administration to, for example, provide us the details of the bill. Can you imagine the arrogance that they would not even provide the details without this bill?

Again, I appreciate the Senator yielding time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 39, nays 57, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 167 Leg.]

YEAS—39

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Heller	Roberts
Boozman	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott
Collins	Kirk	Sessions
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	McConnell	Thune
Daines	Moran	Tillis
Enzi	Murkowski	Toomey
Fischer	Paul	Vitter
Gardner	Portman	Wicker

NAYS—57

Alexander	Blumenthal	Cantwell
Ayotte	Booker	Capito
Baldwin	Boxer	Cardin
Bennet	Brown	Carper
Casey	Hirono	Perdue
Coats	Isakson	Peters
Cochran	Kaine	Reed
Coons	King	Reid
Corker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Donnelly	Leahy	Schatz
Durbin	Manchin	Schumer
Ernst	Markey	Shaheen
Feinstein	McCain	Stabenow
Flake	McCaskill	Tester
Franken	Menendez	Udall
Gillibrand	Merkley	Warner
Hatch	Murphy	Warren
Heinrich	Murray	Whitehouse
Heitkamp	Nelson	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Cruz	Mikulski
Graham	Rubio

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The majority whip.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, the evidence of climate disruption caused by carbon pollution is clear and overwhelming. Yet the Senate is sleepwalking through this history. I am here today for the 97th time to say that we must wake up. Climate disruptions are felt in every corner of the globe, from the ocean floor to the reaches of the atmosphere and from pole to pole.

Indeed, the United States is an Arctic Nation. We have been so since Secretary of State Seward negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1878 for about $7 million. From our vantage point at the Arctic Circle, we are witnessing some of the direst climate disruptions.

The Arctic region has been warming now for decades, twice as fast as the rest of the planet. Alaska's warmest year on record was 2014, going back to at least 1918. Here I am talking about measurements, not a theory. This year the Alaskan winter was so mild that the start of the famous Iditarod race had to be moved from Anchorage to Fairbanks, more than 300 miles to the north, so that the mushers could find snow and hard, frozen rivers to sled on.

The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment, a project drawing on more than 250 scientists from 15 countries, detailed the risk to the iconic wildlife and landscape of the Arctic. The report's chief scientist said:

> Polar bears and other highly adapted organisms cannot move further north, so they may go extinct. We risk losing several species forever.

The report is clear. Climate change is the most serious threat to Arctic biodiversity and to its fisheries and tourism. Arctic warming has wreaked havoc on the ice cover of the Arctic terrain and ocean.

Look at the Greenland ice sheet. In 2012, the National Snow and Ice Data Center recorded melting over a larger area than ever in more than 30 years of satellite observation.

Here is a map of the average annual days of melting across the Greenland ice sheet from 1979 to 2007. That is the average. Here is 2012. Some areas, such as along here, the southwestern coast, saw more than 120 days of melting in 2012. Scientists estimate that the water pouring out of this ice sheet accounts for 30 percent of current global sea level rise. If the entire Greenland ice sheet were to melt, the seas would rise 6 meters.

Here is what 20 feet of sea level rise would look like for the east coast. Much of Rhode Island's coastline here would be lost. Florida, ground zero for climate change, would lose the entire southern region of the State. Here is Miami, completely underwater. Here is Tallahassee's new oceanfront.

Sea ice in the Arctic, not just land ice, is also in full retreat. Our scientists at NASA track disappearing sea ice using satellites. Since NASA started measurements in 1979, Arctic ice coverage has diminished in almost all regions and seasons. The winter record low ever—ever—was this March.

The ice is not just a feature of the Arctic landscape. It supports the way of life of Native people. Thinning ice, dangerous to traverse, threatens traditional sustenance such as quail hunting. Sea ice protects the shoreline from powerful ocean storms and waves. As that ice barrier fades away, land and infrastructure flood and wash away. Entire villages are facing wholesale relocation, as Senator MURKOWSKI from Alaska has indicated on the floor. It is the climate that has sustained them for generations that is being disrupted.

A new national security theater has opened in the Arctic as melting ice frees up the Northwest Passage for transportation and shipping, for new fishing grounds, and for its natural resources. The Departments of Homeland Security and Defense need new strategies and equipment to protect American interests in this new theater.

In 2013, the Pentagon released its ''Arctic Strategy.'' Then Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, the former Republican Senator, said:

> Climate change is shifting the landscape in the Arctic more rapidly than anywhere else in the world. While the Arctic temperature rise is relatively small in absolute terms, its effects are significant—transforming what was a frozen desert into an evolving navigable ocean, giving rise to an unprecedented level of human activity.

His words are echoed by former Coast Guard Commandant ADM Robert Papp, Jr., who is now the U.S. Special Representative to the Arctic Region. It is his job to help manage risk in this remote but increasingly accessible region of the world. He had this to say about the disruptions of the Arctic climate:

> I am not a scientist. I can read what scientists say, but I am in the world of consequence management. My first turn in Alaska was thirty-nine years ago, and during the summertime we had to break ice to get up to the Bering Strait and to get to Kotzebue. Thirty-five years later, going up there as commandant, we flew into Kotzebue at the same time of year; I could not see ice anywhere. So it is clear to me there are changes happening, but I have to deal with the consequences of that.

Last weekend, Secretary Kerry headed to the Canadian city of Iqaluit to assume the chair of the Arctic Council on behalf of the United States. The Arctic Council is the international forum for Arctic nations to work together to ensure a secure and sustainable Arctic future. Secretary Kerry made it clear that climate disruption would be a focus for America's chairmanship, saying plainly:

> The ability of future generations to be able to adapt, live, and prosper in the Arctic the way people have for thousands of years is tragically but actually in jeopardy. . . . So if we want to know where the problem begins, all we have to do is look in the mirror.

Secretary Kerry sees this problem for what it is and knows we need to lead in addressing climate change. Congress, too, should seize the opportunity to do big things, to understand the changes that are occurring, and to protect against these climate disruptions. Our executive homeland and national security leaders must deal in real world consequences. So should we. They do not have the privilege of shrugging off serious risk analysis; neither should we.

But the big polluters and their front organizations ignore the consequences of carbon pollution, cherry pick the evidence, and traffic in denial, doubt, and delay. Deniers are quick to point out that Antarctic sea ice is increasing while Arctic sea ice is melting. But the fact is that, overall, the globe is losing sea ice at a rapid peace. Since satellite measurements began, the planet has been losing sea ice at an average rate of 13,500 square miles per year.

The deniers usually also leave out the melting of the great ice sheets of Antarctica. Remember, see ice floats on the sea and its melting does not much raise the sea level. Ice sheets rest on land. Their melting adds to the seas. Scientists now warn that the melting of some of those massive Antarctic ice sheets may have ''passed the point of no return.''

Rhode Island has already experienced nearly 10 inches of sea level rise. The implications of an Arctic ice sheet melting are measured in feet, not inches. Many thought that the Alaska Purchase was a mistake. Some called it ''Seward's folly.'' But Secretary Seward had vision when he secured Alaska for the United States, and now it is a treasured part of this great Nation.

We in Congress, in the Senate, should try to see through the haze of polluter influence and muster some vision ourselves on what scientists and world leaders alike call the greatest challenge of our time. The United States should be leading—not stalled by special-interest politics. Secretary Kerry knows we should lead. He has made fighting carbon pollution a priority for the State Department in the lead-up to the global climate talks in Paris this fall. More than 100 Democratic Members of Congress sent a letter last month to the President, supporting U.S. leadership in these talks. We told the President: ''We stand ready to help you seize this opportunity to strengthen the global response to climate change.''

But what do our Republican colleagues try to do? They try to undermine American leadership. The majority leader openly warned other countries that the United States would not be able to meet its climate plan and that they should proceed with caution before entering into a binding, unattainable deal. It is past time to take action. The price of being wrong on this will be very high, particularly if the reason turns out, in the eyes of history and of our fellow nations, to have been partisan politics and special-interest influence.

One of America's great powers is the power of our example. What a sickening example we are setting now. Our inaction is our folly. It is, indeed, time to wake up.

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. BOOZMAN. 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 JOHN PAUL HAMMERSCHMIDT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I honor a longtime champion of Arkansas, Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt, who passed away earlier this month at the age of 92 after a long life as a dedicated public servant.

As a member of the ''greatest generation,'' John Paul served as a combat pilot during World War II and was a decorated war hero. As a Congressman from the Third District of Arkansas for 26 years and the only Republican member of the delegation at the time, he worked across the aisle to provide infrastructure and various improvements to Arkansas, paving the way for the growth in the northwest corner of the State.

Even following his retirement more than 20 years ago, John Paul continued to serve the people, who fondly referred to him as ''JPH.'' He always put Arkansas first. His vision for a two-party system in Arkansas led him to seek elected office. He paved the way for the

Republican Party in the State, and his vision continues to be realized as the party continues its growth in the State.

''John Paul'' is a name that is just as familiar in Arkansas as it is to my colleagues in the Senate who served with him before serving in this Chamber as well as the many Members in the House who worked alongside him during his years of elected service and through decades more of providing assistance to his beloved Arkansas.

You would have been hard-pressed to find a kinder, gentler man than John Paul Hammerschmidt. As a mentor and friend, John Paul's wisdom and counsel have shaped my Washington experience more than anyone else. When I ran for Congress in 2001, I sought John Paul out for advice. I quickly learned, as a newly elected Member of Congress for the Third District of Arkansas, how fond his former colleagues were of him. Senior Members of the House of Representatives had so much respect for him that they welcomed me into their inner circle because he had given his approval.

It was John Paul who taught me that after the election is over, there are no more Republicans, no more Democrats, there are only the people of Arkansas. His dedication to his constituents during his career of public service was unmatched and is a marker we should all strive to meet. During his time in Congress, he served in the minority, but he would disagree without being disagreeable.

I always valued John Paul's friendship and his continued advice.

John Paul set the standard for helping Arkansans. That bar is something members of the Arkansas congressional delegation continue to strive toward today.

His vision to improve life for Arkansans led him to serve on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee as well as the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. By the time he retired, he served as the latter's ranking member.

Using his position on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, he helped secure funds for roads and infrastructure projects, including Interstate 540, which now bears his name, the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport, as well as protecting the Buffalo River and getting a designation as the first national river.

John Paul left big shoes to fill. He believed he could make a difference in the lives of Arkansans because he believed in loving his fellow man. We are capitalizing on the benefits he helped provide—a testament to his time in Washington.

From all Arkansans, I thank John Paul for his devotion to public service, his leadership, and his dedication to Arkansas. His example is something we should continue to strive for in Washington.

REMEMBERING SERGEANT EDWARD GOBEL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of SGT Edward Gobel, a long-time resident of Las Vegas, NV, who passed away on April 1, 2015. Ed Gobel was a man whose strong sense of duty to his Nation drove him to continuously seek new ways to help others and improve his community, and I am grateful for his years of service. He will truly be missed.

Sergeant Gobel proudly served in the 101st Airborne Division during the Vietnam war. After his military service left him confined to a wheelchair, he drew from his personal experiences to help enact positive change in Las Vegas. He became a leading advocate for military veterans and the disabled in Nevada. Recognizing the importance of being involved in his community, Sergeant Gobel took on numerous roles, from director of the Council of Nevada Veterans Organizations to State commander of the Veterans of the Vietnam War. His tireless efforts to push key bills through the Nevada Legislature, such as a bill to create Nevada's first veterans home, earned him the Jefferson Award for Public Service in 2003. And in 2014, he was honored with the Chapel of Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Gold Medallion for his giving nature and commitment to service. I am impressed by Sergeant Gobel's investment in the people and issues that mattered most to him and by his continuous belief that change was possible.

Sergeant Gobel is survived by his wife of nearly 40 years, Caryl Gobel, along with his sister, children, and grandchildren. My thoughts are with his family as they celebrate him and a life well lived.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY CASES BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this morning, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments on the marriage equality cases. The legal principle at stake is whether the 14th Amendment to the Constitution protects marriages between individuals of the same sex. But at the heart, these cases represent something more fundamental. They are about the right of every American to marry the person they love and to have their relationships treated with the respect and dignity to which every American is entitled.

I am proud that my home State of Vermont has embraced love, equality, and freedom in its active and leading role on marriage equality. In 2000, Vermont was the first in the Nation to provide for civil unions. As the years went by, Vermont came to see that civil unions were insufficient to provide the protections all American couples are entitled to, and in 2009, the Vermont Legislature on a bipartisan vote was the first State legislature to enact marriage equality into law. Vermont, which has led by example, is now one of 37 States and the District of Columbia that recognizes marriage equality.

While the arguments in the cases today analyzed legal principles and precedent, we should remember that they are ultimately about love and recognizing the extraordinary commitment between two people. Jim Obergefell had been with his partner, John Arthur, for over 20 years. They wanted to marry, but the marriage laws in their home State of Ohio would not allow it. Bedridden and incapacitated with ALS, John could neither drive nor fly commercially to get married in another State. It took the generosity of friends and family, along with the kindness of coworkers and others, to cover the cost of a $12,700 chartered, medically equipped private plane.

After more than 20 years together, Jim and John finally married during a seven and one-half minute ceremony in an airplane at a Baltimore airport. Upon their return to Ohio, the State refused to recognize their marriage. And John passed away just a few months later. Jim, now a widower, should not have to live in a State like Vermont to be able to have his 20-year relationship validated and recognized by the State. He should not have had to fly to another State to say his vows and pledge his commitment to his partner. Jim's current fight—and our current fight—is to show that relationships like his should be treated with the same respect and dignity that has been accorded to all other Americans. It is to persuade the Supreme Court to live up to the motto engraved in Vermont marble above its own building, which declares ''Equal Justice Under Law.''

Nearly five decades ago when the Supreme Court decided Loving v. Virginia, the Court recognized that:

> Marriage is one of the 'basic civil rights of man,' fundamental to our very existence and survival. To deny this fundamental freedom on so unsupportable a basis as [] racial classifications . . . is surely to deprive all the State's citizens of liberty without due process of law. The Fourteenth Amendment requires that the freedom of choice to marry not be restricted by invidious racial discriminations. Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual, and cannot be infringed by the State.

In the marriage equality cases heard today, the Court has a simple job to do. It need only apply these same constitutional principles to hold that the same principle applies equally regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

When the Supreme Court issues its decision this summer, I am hopeful that it will be another landmark moment demonstrating that ours is a more perfect union when it is a more inclusive union. And that the name Obergefell will come to signify love, equality, and freedom the same way it does when Loving and Windsor are invoked.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am objecting to consideration of the nomination of Brodi Fontenot to be Chief Financial Officer of the Treasury Department.

In May 2014, I found out about questionable hiring practices at the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, known as FinCEN. The problem occurred after the agency posted job requirements for openings in the enforcement division. Eligible candidates were disqualified for a criterion that was never in the original job posting: a law degree. This is illegal under Federal hiring guidelines.

In the process, FinCEN rejected qualified veterans who applied for the positions. Instead, FinCEN hired three former Federal prosecutors for the positions. Veterans preference doesn't guarantee veterans a job, but it does give them extra consideration for jobs for which they are qualified. The unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans is significantly higher than the rate for the general population. These men and women are extremely capable. They have an array of job skills to offer in the workplace. It is inexcusable for FinCEN or any other Federal agency to reject qualified veterans who faithfully served our country. Our veterans deserve better from the Obama administration.

As part of my investigation, I requested all emails sent between the Treasury Department and FinCEN pertaining to this issue. To date, I have received a total of four emails. The Treasury Department has tried to convince me that no other relevant emails exist, but I am still not convinced. Their search was limited to only the 8 months when the vacancy announcements were open. This excluded any email communications that took place in preparation for posting the announcements or during 2014 when problems with the announcements were found.

As a result, I placed a hold on the former Assistant Secretary for Management at the Treasury Department who was nominated to be Deputy Secretary at HUD. Instead of simply providing the requested documents so that I could release the hold, former Majority Leader REID ignored what was done to veterans and pushed through the nomination over my objections.

In January 2015, I requested any emails sent between FinCEN and main Treasury using alternate email and handheld devices, as well as any email messages that were printed and saved by FinCEN but no longer retained in the electronic email system. The response from the Treasury Department outlined the Federal Government's records retention regulations but did not include any of the requested documents.

This is unacceptable. Therefore, I am objecting to consideration of Mr. Fontenot's nomination.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I was unable to cast a vote on the nomination of Dr. Dava Newman to be the Deputy Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. I missed the vote yesterday because I was meeting with turkey growers in Minnesota who are struggling with the avian influenza outbreak, and I attended the funeral services for my long-time friend, colleague and mentor, John Mooty. My vote would not have changed the outcome and had I been present I would have voted in support of Dr. Newman's nomination.

The work being done at NASA pushes the boundaries of innovation, science, and exploration, and it is critical we have strong leaders like Dr. Newman in place to lead those initiatives. Dr. Newman is well known for her cutting-edge work in developing the next generation of space suits. As a professor of aeronautics and astronautics and engineering systems at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dr. Newman will bring a strong academic, research, and technical background to this position. As a member of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, I supported Dr. Newman's nomination when it was considered by the committee earlier this year. I am pleased that Dr. Newman was confirmed by the Senate to be the Deputy Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

STEVE GLEASON ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I support the Steve Gleason Act, which passed the Senate last week. I would especially like to thank Senator VITTER for championing this important legislation that will ensure patients on Medicare have access to critical speech-generating devices.

I am so glad that we were able to come together to pass this bipartisan bill and take an important step toward giving patients their voices back.

For Americans affected by debilitating diseases, speech-generating devices aren't a luxury—they are a lifeline. Without these devices, many people who are suffering from diseases like ALS and Parkinson's can't communicate with their family members, caregivers and friends. Many patients use their devices in conjunction with eye gaze technology because they no longer have use of their hands, arms, and other parts of their body. And these new technologies allow patients to use the Internet and email—technologies most us take for granted but are crucial to help keep patients connected with their communities.

Unfortunately, recent policy changes have threatened patients' access to these important devices and associated technologies.

Under the new policy, Medicare will stop paying for speech-generating devices if a patient is admitted to a hospital, nursing facility, or hospice. It is at this time that patients are most vulnerable and most in need of being able to communicate with their doctors, caregivers, and loved ones.

I have heard heartbreaking stories of patients who have lost their ability to communicate when they enter a care facility. One person told of having to put her mother in hospice care. When her mother entered hospice, Medicare would no longer cover her mother's device. The daughter was devastated that she could no longer understand what her mother was saying. She could tell how frustrated her mother was by this new isolation, but she was helpless to do anything about it.

I have also heard from people who have decided to forego treatment in hospice or a nursing home because they would rather suffer at home than lose their voice. This is simply unacceptable.

That is why I have worked with Senator VITTER to restore full access to speech-generating devices for those who need them.

The Steve Gleason Act will ensure that patients have continuous access to their speech-generating devices, no matter where they are receiving treatment. And the bill will allow patients to use eye-tracking technology with their devices—technology that is vital for patients who can no longer use their arms or hands.

Ultimately, these changes will ensure that Americans who have been robbed of their ability to speak by diseases like ALS aren't also robbed of relationships with their caregivers and loved ones.

Again, I thank my colleagues in the Senate for passing this important bill and I urge the House to pass this legislation and give patients their voices back.

REMEMBERING SHAWN PHILLIP SOMITS

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, today I honor the life and service of Shawn Phillip Somits of Muncy, PA, a Federal corrections officer at USP Allenwood and a U.S. Army veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, whose life tragically ended on April 2, 2015.

Shawn Somits was born on July 1, 1975, in Williamsport, PA, the son of John and Charlotte Somits, of Muncy. Shawn was a 1994 graduate of Muncy High School and attended both Penn College and Bucknell University. In 2003, Shawn married his wife, Daisy, and welcomed the birth of his first child, Faith. At this time, Shawn was dutifully serving his country in OIF/OEF in the U.S. Army, where he was deployed to both Iraq and Kuwait from February 2003 until April of 2004. Upon his return from deployment in 2004, Shawn entered into Federal service with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Prisons as a corrections officer at USP Allenwood,

where he would serve for nearly 11 years.

Shawn Somits' life ended suddenly and tragically on April 2, 2015, following a long battle with post traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, suffered as a result from his combat service. He is survived by his wife, Daisy, and their two children, Faith and Wesley.

Today I express my condolences to the family of Shawn Somits and honor Shawn's service to his country both as a combat veteran and a Federal law enforcement officer. Tragic losses such as this provide us a chance to reflect on the sacrifices dedicated public servants like Shawn make in order to keep us all safe from harm. Shawn Somits was a dedicated soldier, officer, husband, and father. His loss leaves a deep void in the lives of those who knew and loved Shawn.

MONROE COUNTY, OHIO BICENTENNIAL

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I honor Monroe County, OH, as it celebrates its bicentennial anniversary. On January 29, 1813, an act to form the County of Monroe made up of parts of Belmont, Washington, and Guernsey Counties was passed by the Ohio Legislature.

Although Monroe County had already been established, it did not function as a county until it was officially organized in 1815. On February 3, 1815, an act was passed by the Ohio Legislature to attach another part of Washington County to Monroe County and to organize Monroe into a separate county. The act went into effect on March 1, 1815, which was when Monroe began to formally function as a county. Residents named the county in honor of James Monroe, who at the time was U.S. Secretary of State and eventually became the fourth President of the United States. However, the official bicentennial celebration begins this month since the first Monroe County officials were elected in April of 1815.

I congratulate the citizens of Monroe County and all who are involved in planning the yearlong celebration, which will feature a variety of events recognizing 200 years of history and heritage throughout Monroe County.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SAFETY WEEK

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the construction industry plays a major role in promoting economic growth, employing workers across a variety of trades, and literally building communities. It is a noble profession, yet today it remains one of the most dangerous occupations. Building codes and workplace safety regulations have made great strides but there is more to be done. We all share a responsibility to ensure that men and women who offer their most valuable asset—their labor—not only earn fair wages but also work in safe environments so they can safely return home after every shift.

I am proud that in my hometown of Portland, OR, various public, private and nonprofit stakeholders have formed the SafeBuild Alliance to promote and share best practices for worksite safety. This collaboration is so important because we know that with proper planning, communication and controls, reducing workplace injuries and fatalities is not only possible, it is already happening.

The SafeBuild Alliance is leading the way with its Zero Incidents Through Collaboration initiative, which facilitates safe performance by promoting the sharing of best practices among industry professionals. From general contractors to property owners, public and private entities, architects and engineers, to building and construction trade associations, industry vendors and insurers—everyone has a role in promoting safe worksites.

It is my great privilege to recognize the Safebuild Alliance for their work and advocacy for safe workplaces on behalf of all our workers engaged in the construction industry. Safety must be priority No. 1, every job, every day. And to further heighten awareness, I am pleased to offer my support in the official observance of May 3 to 9, 2015 as Construction Industry Safety Week.●

REMEMBERING DICK GINSBURG

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I wish to honor an icon in Oregon's legal community and a long-time friend who passed away on March 1. Dick Ginsburg was a long-time resident of the small Washington County community of Cornelius, and a founding member of the Oregon chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, AILA. Dick was one of those rare human beings who brought both reason and compassion to every issue on which he worked. And I know everyone who met Dick will always remember his engaging smile, his joyful enthusiasm and that infectious laughter—regardless of the issue.

Dick often referred to the lifelong impact he felt from his experience in the Peace Corps in Paraguay, surely much of it attributable to his loving wife of 40 years who he met there, Rosalia. Along with their wonderful children, Brian and Laura, the Ginsburg family was always exceptionally generous and created an extended family, not only in Oregon, but everywhere he went.

As a friend during my early days at Legal Aid, Dick showed himself to be a thoughtful, compassionate, and dedicated lawyer. He understood the intricacies of immigration law and devoted his life to making it work with equal justice for businesses and people alike.

While Dick will be remembered by all whose lives he touched, I will especially remember my friend as a mentor, a guiding force, and one of those people who made the world a better place just for being here.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, without amendment:

S. 1124. An original bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to improve the Act.

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. HELLER (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 1105. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize per diem payments under comprehensive service programs for homeless veterans to furnish care to dependents of homeless veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1106. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to allow the Secretary of Education to award Early College Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 1107. A bill to provide for an equitable management of summer flounder based on geographic, scientific, and economic data and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 1108. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to include court security officers in the public safety officers' death benefits program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 1109. A bill to require adequate information regarding the tax treatment of payments under settlement agreements entered into by Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1110. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the

role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 1111. A bill to provide equal treatment for utility special entities using utility operations-related swaps, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 1112. A bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to expand coverage under the Act, to increase protections for whistleblowers, to increase penalties for high gravity violations, to adjust penalties for inflation, to provide rights for victims or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 1113. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to remand certain civil actions transferred by the judicial panel on multidistrict litigation; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 1114. A bill to enhance rail safety and provide for the safe transport of hazardous materials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 1115. A bill to close out expired, empty grant accounts; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 1116. A bill to require that the Federal Government procure from the private sector the goods and services necessary for the operations and management of certain Government agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. LEE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. TOOMEY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 1117. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to remove senior executives of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct to include removal of certain other employees of the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. REED) (by request):

S. 1118. 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; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 1119. A bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BURR):

S. 1120. A bill to make aliens associated with a criminal gang inadmissable, deportable, and ineligible for various forms of relief; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. VITTER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mr. DAINES):

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; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 1122. A bill to provide that chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code, relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements, shall not apply to enrollment agreements made between students and certain institutions of higher education, and to prohibit limitations on the ability of students to pursue claims against certain institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 1123. A bill 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; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

S. 1124. An original bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to improve the Act; from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1125. A bill to authorize and implement the water rights compact among the Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, the State of Montana, and the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S.J. Res. 14. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission regulating broadband Internet access; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 152. A resolution recognizing threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world and reaffirming freedom of the press as a priority in efforts of the United States Government to promote democracy and good governance; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CORKER (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. Res. 153. A resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Japan relationship to safeguarding global security, prosperity, and human rights; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 139

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 139, a bill to permanently allow an exclusion under the Supplemental Security Income program and the Medicaid program for compensation provided to individuals who participate in clinical trials for rare diseases or conditions.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program, and for other purposes.

S. 171

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 171, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for coverage under the beneficiary travel program of the Department of Veterans Affairs of certain disabled veterans for travel in connection with certain special disabilities rehabilitation, and for other purposes.

S. 183

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 183, a bill to repeal the annual fee on health insurance providers enacted by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 330

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 330, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 335

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 335, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve 529 plans.

S. 356

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 356, a bill to improve the provisions relating to the privacy of electronic communications.

S. 398

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms.

COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 398, a bill to amend the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 and title 38, United States Code, to require the provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans at all Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers and to expand access to such care and services, and for other purposes.

S. 441

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 441, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to clarify the Food and Drug Administration's jurisdiction over certain tobacco products, and to protect jobs and small businesses involved in the sale, manufacturing and distribution of traditional and premium cigars.

S. 488

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 488, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists to supervise cardiac, intensive cardiac, and pulmonary rehabilitation programs.

S. 491

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 491, a bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 512

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 512, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to safeguard data stored abroad from improper government access, and for other purposes.

S. 525

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 525, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) to reform the Food for Peace Program, and for other purposes.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) 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. 564

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 564, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to include licensed hearing aid specialists as eligible for appointment in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 599

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 599, a bill to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.

S. 615

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 615, a bill to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 682

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 682, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 694

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 694, a bill to exempt certain 16- and 17-year-old children employed in logging or mechanized operations from child labor laws.

S. 746

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) 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. 776

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 776, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 776, supra.

S. 798

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 798, a bill to provide for notice to, and input by, State insurance commissioners when requiring an insurance company to serve as a source of financial strength or when the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation places a lien against an insurance company's assets, and for other purposes.

S. 838

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 838, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish a national usury rate for consumer credit transactions.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) 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. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 859

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 859, a bill to protect the public, communities across America, and the environment by increasing the safety of crude oil transportation by railroad, and for other purposes.

S. 865

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 865, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the disability compensation evaluation procedure of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for veterans with mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma, and for other purposes.

S. 877

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 877, a bill to establish a pilot grant program to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in purchasing body-worn cameras for law enforcement officers.

S. 889

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 889, a bill to provide regulatory relief

to alternative fuel producers and consumers, and for other purposes.

S. 890

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 890, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the Land and Water Conservation Fund to maximize the effectiveness of the Fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 925

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 925, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to convene a panel of citizens to make a recommendation to the Secretary regarding the likeness of a woman on the twenty dollar bill, and for other purposes.

S. 928

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 928, a bill to reauthorize the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund of 2001, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of S. 933, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the timing of elections and pre-election hearings and the identification of pre-election issues, and to require that lists of employees eligible to vote in organizing elections be provided to the National Labor Relations Board.

S. 970

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 970, a bill to allow more small insured depository institutions to qualify for the 18-month on-site examination cycle, and for other purposes.

S. 982

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 982, a bill to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, and to require the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to develop water planning instruments consistent with State law.

S. 993

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 993, a bill to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems.

S. 1013

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 1013, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage and payment for complex rehabilitation technology items under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1019

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1019, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to repeal certain provisions relating to criminal penalties and violations of foreign laws, and for other purposes.

S. 1040

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1040, a bill to direct the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Academy of Sciences to study the vehicle handling requirements proposed by the Commission for recreational off-highway vehicles and to prohibit the adoption of any such requirements until the completion of the study, and for other purposes.

S. 1043

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1043, a bill to ensure that transportation and infrastructure projects carried out using Federal financial assistance are constructed with steel, iron, and manufactured goods that are produced in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1065

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1065, a bill to amend title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide grants for the development of asthma management plans and the purchase of asthma inhalers and spacers for emergency use, as necessary.

S. 1071

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1071, a bill to amend the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 to expand the amount available for victims of child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, and other crimes, and for other purposes.

S. 1083

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1083, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require drug manufacturers to provide drug rebates for drugs dispensed to low-income individuals under the Medicare prescription drug benefit program.

S. 1085

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1085, a bill to expand eligibility for the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to expand benefits available to participants under such program, to enhance special compensation for members of the uniformed services who require assistance in everyday life, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 10

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 10, a concurrent resolution supporting the designation of the year of 2015 as the ''International Year of Soils'' and supporting locally led soil conservation.

S. RES. 143

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 143, a resolution supporting efforts to ensure that students have access to debt-free higher education.

AMENDMENT NO. 1141

At the request of Mr. RISCH, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

At the request of Mr. LEE, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

At the request of Mr. COTTON, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1142

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1142 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1142 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1143

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1143 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1144

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1144 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1145

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1145 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1145 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1147

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1147 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1148

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1148 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

At the request of Mr. LEE, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1148 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1150

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1150 proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1151

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1151 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 1108. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to include court security officers in the public safety officers' death benefits program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. REID. 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. 1108

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Stanley Cooper Death Benefits for Court Security Officers Act''.

SEC. 2. PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' DEATH BENEFITS.

Section 1204(9) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b(9)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C)(ii), by striking ''; or'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(E) a court security officer who is under contract with the United States Marshals Service.''.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated $1,000,000 for each fiscal year to carry out the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 4. APPLICABILITY.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply to any injury sustained on or after January 1, 2010.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 1109. A bill to require adequate information regarding the tax treatment of payments under settlement agreements entered into by Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Truth in Settlements Act. This bipartisan legislation, which I introduced earlier today with my colleague from Oklahoma Senator LANKFORD, the Presiding Officer, will help the public hold Federal agencies accountable for settlements they make with corporate wrongdoers.

When companies break the law, Federal enforcement agencies are responsible for holding them accountable. In nearly every instance, agencies choose to resolve cases through settlements rather than a public trial. They defend this practice by arguing that settlements are in the best interest of the American people. That sounds good, but their actions paint a very different picture.

If agencies were truly confident that these settlements were good deals for the public, they would be willing to publicly disclose all of the key details of those agreements. Instead, time after time, agencies do the opposite, hiding critical details about their settlements in the fine print—or worse, hiding them entirely from public view.

Consider that copies of these agreements or even basic facts about them are not easily accessible online. Many agencies regularly deem agreements confidential without any public explanation of why the public cannot see what has been done in their name. When agencies do make public statements about these agreements, they often trumpet large dollar amounts of money recovered for taxpayers while failing to disclose that this sticker price isn't what the companies will actually pay, since the number that is listed includes credits for engaging in routine activities and doesn't reflect massive tax deductions that many of these companies get.

Add all of these tricks, and you will end with a predictable result. Too often the American people learn only what the agencies want them to learn about these agreements. That is not good enough.

These hidden details can make a huge difference. Below the surface, settlements that seem tough and fair don't always look so impressive.

For example, 2 years ago, Federal regulators entered into a settlement with 10 mortgage servicers accused of illegal foreclosure practices. The sticker price on the settlement was $8.5 billion. Now, that is a big number. But $5.2 billion was in the form of credits, or what the agencies described in their press release as ''loan modifications and forgiveness of deficiency judgments.''

That vague public statement left out a key detail: Servicers could rack up those credits by forgiving mere fractions of large, unpaid loans. For example, a servicer that wrote down $15,000 of a $500,000 unpaid loan balance would get a credit for $500,000—not the $15,000 that was actually written down. That

undisclosed method of calculating credits could end up cutting the overall value of the $8.5 billion settlement by billions and billions of dollars.

Failure to disclose possible tax deductions is another way agencies can hide the ball. Two years ago, a Federal court found that a company that allegedly defrauded Medicare and other Federal health programs—for years—was entitled to a $50 million tax deduction for government settlements that it had made. That deduction came on top of earlier tax deductions the company had already taken in their settlement payment.

The end result? A $385 million settlement that was touted at the time as the largest civil recovery to date in a health care fraud case was, in fact, $100 million smaller once taxpayers had picked up part of the settlement.

At least in these two cases, the text of the settlements was public, allowing the American people the chance to dig into the fine print and uncover these unflattering details. But for settlements that are kept confidential, the public is kept entirely in this the dark.

Recently, Wells Fargo agreed to pay the Federal Housing Finance Agency $335 million for allegedly fraudulent sales of mortgage-backed securities to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. That is about 6 percent of what JPMorgan Chase paid in a public settlement with FHFA to address very similar claims. Now, in what ways did the actions of Wells Fargo differ from those of JPMorgan? We will never know, because while the JPMorgan settlement is public, the much smaller Wells Fargo settlement is held confidential.

The American people deserve better. These enforcement agencies don't work for the companies they investigate; they work for us. Agencies should not be able to cut bad deals and then hide the embarrassing details. The public deserves transparency.

The Truth in Settlements Act requires that transparency. It requires agencies making public statements about their settlements to include explanations of how those settlements are categorized for tax purposes and what specific conduct will generate credits that apply toward the sticker price. The bill also requires agencies to post text and basic information about their settlements online. And while the legislation does not prohibit agencies from deeming settlements confidential, it requires agencies to disclose additional information about how frequently they are invoking confidentiality and their reasons for doing so.

If we expect agencies to hold companies accountable for breaking the law, then we should be able to hold agencies accountable for enforcing the law. We cannot do that if we are being held in the dark. The Truth in Settlements Act shines a light on these agency decisions and gives the American people a chance to hold agencies accountable for enforcing our laws.

I introduced this bill in the last Congress with Senator LANKFORD's predecessor, Senator Coburn. The bill advanced through the Senate's Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee by voice vote but was blocked on the Senate floor.

I hope that in this Congress we can finally make this commonsense legislation law.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 1112. A bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to expand coverage under the Act, to increase protections for whistleblowers, to increase penalties for high gravity violations, to adjust penalties for inflation, to provide rights for victims or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the need for a safer and healthier workplace and to urge my colleagues to join me and Senator MURRAY in supporting the Protecting America's Workers Act, which I am proud to introduce today.

Today, April 28, is Workers' Memorial Day—a day for our Nation to remember and focus on those workers who have died or been injured on the job. Today is also a day to acknowledge the significant suffering experienced by families and communities when workers die or are injured and to recommit ourselves to maintaining safe and healthy workplaces for all of our workers.

April 28 is also the anniversary of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, the OSH Act, which created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. When the bill was passed on a bipartisan basis and signed into law by President Nixon 45 years ago, 14,000 workers were dying on the job each year. Now the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that there were 4,405 worker fatalities in 2013. That is a huge improvement, and it would not have happened without the OSH Act. But it also means that far too many workers are still getting hurt and dying on the job.

Our workforce and workplaces have changed significantly in 45 years, but our laws have not kept pace. We have made no real updates to our workplace safety laws even though thousands of workers die every year on the job, many in large industrial disasters that could be prevented.

Unfortunately, too often, we are told that we cannot afford to strengthen our workplace safety laws. But I believe our country cannot afford the economic and emotional costs incurred by middle-class families when workers lose their lives or their livelihoods on the job. And it is not just those families; law-abiding businesses that invest in safe workplaces cannot afford to subsidize the corporations that cut corners on workplace safety and then leave the American public to pick up the tab.

Let me remind you of a few of the tragedies that have happened in just the past decade that show the cost to our country.

On March 23, 2005, fire and an explosion at BP's Texas City Refinery killed 15 workers and injured more than 170 others. On February 7, 2008, 13 people were killed and 42 people were injured in a dust explosion at a sugar refinery in Port Wentworth, GA.

On April 17, 2014, 15 people were killed—13 of them volunteer first responders—and another 200 people were injured after a fertilizer company in West Texas exploded. The explosion leveled roughly 80 homes and a middle school. Mr. President, 133 residents of a nearby nursing home were trapped in the ruins.

And just last week, we recognized the 5-year anniversary of the explosion and sinking of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. That accident killed 11 workers and is considered the largest accidental marine oilspill in the history of the petroleum industry, costing millions to the local economy and causing unprecedented damage to the environment.

All of the reports following these accidents cited weak compliance and gaps in our safety laws. They all point to the fact that our workplace safety laws are too weak. They are so weak that they cannot ensure the safety of American workers, and they do not level the playing field for law-abiding businesses that make sure their workers are safe.

These are not isolated incidents. Since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began collecting data on worker fatalities on the job in 1992, over 124,000 workers have died on the job. To put that in perspective, on average, in the United States, about six times as many people die on the job each year as died in airplane crashes last year worldwide. The fact is that many of these accidents could have been prevented. Many of these workers could still be with their families today. But, unfortunately, even after the reports outlining the details of these accidents and recommending commonsense updates to our laws to protect workers from these types of incidents, there have been no significant updates made to the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

We all rely on the sacrifice of American workers who are employed in difficult and often dangerous industries. We all depend on construction, manufacturing, natural gas production, and agriculture to help build and heat our homes and put food on the table. The Americans who work in those fields should not have to choose between their health and safety and providing for their families.

We can do something about that. That is why today I am proud to reintroduce the Protecting America's Workers Act with Senator PATTY MURRAY, who has long been a champion of workers' rights. After 45 years, this legislation will modernize the Occupational Safety and Health Act for the 21st century.

This legislation will expand the number of workers in safe workplaces and make it harder to violate workplace safety laws. It will also protect whistleblowers who bravely speak out about unsafe work conditions for themselves, their coworkers, and their families. This legislation protects the public's right to know about safety violations and about OSHA investigations. It will also help us track and respond to workplace safety issues by requiring tracking of worker injuries.

Nothing can bring back the workers lost in Texas City; Port Wentworth, GA; West Texas; the Deepwater Horizon disaster; or the many tens of thousands of other workers who have lost their lives on the job. But we owe it to those who have died and to their surviving families to learn from those accidents and to try to stop them from happening so that other families do not have to suffer the same loss.

Good jobs are safe jobs, and I believe this bill will help us create safer workplaces. I urge my colleagues to join me and Senator MURRAY in supporting the Protecting America's Workers Act.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I believe that we in Congress should be working to grow the economy from the middle out, not from the top down, and we should make sure that our government is working for all of our families, not just the wealthiest few. An important part of this is making sure that workers have access to a safe and healthy workplace and the basic protection of earning a living without fearing for their safety.

That effort takes on special meaning today. April 28, today, is Workers' Memorial Day, the day when we remember those who lost their lives just for doing their job. When a worker is injured or is killed on the job, it has devastating impacts for their families and their communities. In 2014, more than 4,500 workers were killed on the job. That is more than 12 deaths every single day.

So we need to do everything we can to make sure employers are taking the necessary precautions to keep their workers safe.

So today, let's keep the families and communities that have suffered from these losses in our thoughts, and let's make sure this Workers' Memorial Day is about recommitting ourselves to improving safety protections at workplaces across the country. Every worker in every industry should have basic worker protections. While workers are doing their jobs, employers should be doing everything they can to protect them.

In 1970, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act to protect workers from unsafe working conditions. Back in 1970, that law finally gave workers some much needed protection so they could earn a living without sacrificing their health or safety.

Since then, of course, American industry has changed significantly. Businesses have become more complex. Workers are performing 21st-century tasks, but we are still using a 1970s approach to protect employees. That doesn't make sense, and it is time for it to change.

I support the bill Senator FRANKEN introduced today called Protecting America's Workers Act. I want to note that Senator FRANKEN is the new ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety. In that role, he will bring a focus and a passion for moving this legislation forward, and I look forward to working with him to that end.

The Protecting America's Workers Act is a long overdue update to the Occupational Safety and Health Act and is a good step toward making workplaces across America safer and healthier. The legislation will increase protections for workers who report unsafe working conditions, and adding these whistleblower protections will protect workers from retaliation. The bill will make sure workers have the option to appeal to Federal courts if they are being mistreated for telling the truth about dangerous practices. This bill will also improve reporting, inspection, and enforcement of workplace health and safety violations. It expands the rights of victims of unsafe workplaces and makes sure employers quickly improve unsafe workplaces to avoid further endangering worker health and safety because we owe it to all workers to make sure they are truly protected on the job.

Our economy is finally recovering after the worst downturn since the Great Depression. We are not all the way back yet, and there is a lot more that needs to be done to create jobs and help our middle class and working families. But while we continue that work, we must also recommit to our bedrock responsibilities to workers and their safety. Workers should be able to go to work confident their employers are doing their part to provide safe and healthy workplaces, and they should know their government is looking out for them, their families, and their economic security.

Today, I urge my colleagues to reflect on the workers who lost their lives this past year. I am hopeful we can honor their legacy by working together to pass the Protecting America's Workers Act and make these commonsense updates to meet our obligations to the best workforce in the world and continue our work growing the economy from the middle out, not the top down.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. REED) (by request):

S. 1118. 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; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, Senator REED and I are introducing, by request, the administration's proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016. As is the case with any bill that is introduced by request, we introduce this bill for the purpose of placing the administration's proposals before Congress and the public without expressing our own views on the substance of these proposals. As Chairman and Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee, we look forward to giving the administration's requested legislation our most careful review and thoughtful consideration.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BURR):

S. 1120. A bill to make aliens associated with a criminal gang inadmissable, deportable, and ineligible for various forms of relief; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to discuss a bill I am introducing today with my colleagues from North Carolina, Senators TILLIS and BURR, related to criminal gangs. Our bill would reform our immigration laws to protect the homeland and the public's safety by ensuring that criminal gang members are not eligible for deportation relief and are swiftly removed from the country.

Under current immigration laws, alien gang members are generally not deportable or inadmissible based on their gang membership, and they are eligible for various benefits and forms of relief.

Just this month, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, USCIS, admitted it erred in granting deferred deportation to a known gang member who is now charged with four counts of 1st degree murder in North Carolina. In response to a letter Senator TILLIS and I sent them, USCIS stated that Emmanuel Jesus Rangel-Hernandez's request for deferred deportation under President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, executive order ''should not have been approved'' based on its procedures and protocols. This individual was placed in the removal process in March 2012, following drug charges, but was shielded from removal by USCIS even though the agency knew of his gang membership. After having received DACA, Mr. Rangel-Hernandez allegedly murdered four people.

Secretary Johnson testified today before the Senate Judiciary Committee and said, ''If you are a member of a gang, a known member of a criminal gang, you should not receive DACA. You should be considered priority for removal.'' The Secretary said that Rangel-Hernandez should not have been approved for DACA, and that there was a lapse in the background checks for this applicant.

The Rangel-Hernandez case shows that USCIS is not doing a thorough job reviewing the individuals who it allows

to stay in this country under the President's deferred action program. It remains unclear whether USCIS has a zero tolerance policy for criminals and criminal gang members applying for DACA, or any other immigration benefit or form of relief from removal. It is unclear how many individuals have received DACA that shouldn't have. So far, since 2013, 282 individuals who are known gang members or criminals have had their DACA benefit terminated. The review of all cases, as ordered by Secretary Johnson, is ongoing, so that number could climb.

In April 2015, nearly 1,000 gang members and associates from 239 different gangs were arrested in 282 cities across the U.S. during Project Wildfire, a 6-week operation led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's, ICE, Homeland Security Investigations. Of those arrested, 199 were foreign nationals from 18 countries in South and Central America, Asia, Africa, Europe and the Caribbean.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director expressed concern about criminal gangs and said, ''Criminal gangs inflict violence and fear upon our communities, and without the attention of law enforcement, these groups can spread like a cancer.''

Despite the concern about violent criminal gangs, ICE arrests are down. According to the Center for Immigration Studies, ''arrests peaked in 2012, then dropped by more than 25 percent in 2013, and continued to decline in 2014.''

Furthermore, under the Fourth Circuit's decision in Holder v. Martinez, former gang members may argue that their status as a former gang member similarly entitles them to remain in the United States. This ruling has opened the door to violent gang members renouncing their membership as a ruse to stay in the country. Unfortunately, the Department of Justice didn't appeal the ruling, signaling support for gang members to remain in the country.

The Grassley-Tillis-Burr bill seeks to ensure that alien gang members are not provided a safe haven in the United States. It defines a criminal alien gang, renders them inadmissible and deportable, and requires the government to detain them while awaiting deportation. The bill also prohibits criminal alien gang members from gaining U.S. immigration benefits such as asylum, Temporary Protected Status, Special Immigrant Juvenile visas, deferred action or parole, with limited exceptions for law enforcement purposes. Lastly, the bill provides an expedited removal process for terrorists, criminal aliens and gang members.

I hope my colleagues will agree that our immigration laws, and the administration's policies, must be reformed so that those who pose a threat to the public are not allowed to remain in the United States and take advantage of the benefits we provide.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 1122. A bill to provide that chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code, relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements, shall not apply to enrollment agreements made between students and certain institutions of higher education, and to prohibit limitations on the ability of students to pursue claims against certain institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 1122

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Court Legal Access and Student Support (CLASS) Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. INAPPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER 1 OF TITLE 9, UNITED STATES CODE, TO ENROLLMENT AGREEMENTS MADE BETWEEN STUDENTS AND CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code (relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements) shall not apply to an enrollment agreement made between a student and an institution of higher education.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given such term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON LIMITATIONS ON ABILITY OF STUDENTS TO PURSUE CLAIMS AGAINST CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

Section 487(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(30) The institution will not require any student to agree to, and will not enforce, any limitation or restriction (including a limitation or restriction on any available choice of applicable law, a jury trial, or venue) on the ability of a student to pursue a claim, individually or with others, against an institution in court.''.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 1123. A bill 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; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, almost 2 years ago, Vermonters and the American people learned for the first time the shocking details of the National Security Agency's dragnet collection program. Relying on a deeply flawed interpretation of section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act, the NSA has been indiscriminately sweeping up Americans' private telephone records for years.

It is long past time to end this bulk collection program. Americans have made clear that they will not tolerate such intrusion into their private lives. The President has called for an end to bulk collection under section 215. The Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General supported legislation last year that would have shut this program down. National security experts have testified that the program is not necessary, and the American technology industry has called for meaningful reform of this program because it has lost billions to competitors in the international marketplace due to a decline in the public's trust.

Yet in the face of this overwhelming consensus, Congress has failed to act. Last year, when we had an opportunity to pass my bipartisan legislation to end this program and reform other surveillance authorities, some Members of this body chose to play political games rather than engage in constructive debate.

The time for posturing and theatrics is over. It is time for Congress to answer to the American people.

Today, I—along with Senator MIKE LEE—introduce the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015. This bipartisan bill is also being introduced in the House today by Congressman JIM SENSENBRENNER, House Judiciary Committee chairman BOB GOODLATTE, ranking member JOHN CONYERS, and a large bipartisan group of House Judiciary Committee members.

If enacted, our bill will be the most significant reform to government surveillance authorities since the USA PATRIOT Act was passed nearly 14 years ago. Most importantly, our bill will definitively end the NSA's bulk collection program under section 215. It also guarantees unprecedented transparency about government surveillance programs, allows the FISA Court to appoint an amicus to assist it in significant cases, and brings the national security letter statutes in line with the First Amendment.

The bipartisan, bicameral bill we introduce today is the product of intense and careful negotiations. It enacts strong, meaningful reforms while ensuring that the intelligence community has the tools it needs to keep this country safe.

Some will say that this bill does not go far enough. I agree. But in order to secure broader support for reform legislation that can pass both the House and Senate and be signed into law, changes had to be made to the bill that I introduced last year. This new bill

does not contain all the reforms that I want. It contains some provisions I believe are unnecessary but that were added to secure support from the House Intelligence Committee. But we should pass it and continue fighting for more reform.

I have been in the Senate for more than 40 years—and I have learned that when there is a chance to make real progress, we have to seize it. This is not my first fight and certainly will not be my last. I have a responsibility to Vermonters and the American people to do everything I can to end the dragnet collection of their phone records under section 215. And I know for a fact that the upcoming June 1 sunset of section 215 is our best opportunity for real reform. We cannot squander it.

Last year, a broad and bipartisan coalition worked together to craft reasonable and responsible legislation. Critics resorted to scare tactics. They would not even agree to debate the bill. I hope that we do not see a repeat of that ill-fated strategy again this year. The American people have had enough of delay and brinksmanship. Congress now has an opportunity to show leadership and govern responsibly.

The intelligence community is deeply concerned about the possibility of a legislative standoff that could result in the expiration of section 215 altogether. The USA FREEDOM Act is a path forward that has the support of the administration, privacy groups, the technology industry—and most importantly, the American people. I urge congressional leaders to take up and swiftly pass the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015—because I will not vote for reauthorization of section 215 without meaningful reform.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 152—RECOGNIZING THREATS TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND EXPRESSION AROUND THE WORLD AND REAFFIRMING FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AS A PRIORITY IN EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 152

Whereas Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in Paris, France on December 10, 1948, states that ''[e]veryone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.'';

Whereas in 1993, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 3 of each year as ''World Press Freedom Day'' to celebrate the fundamental principles of freedom of the press, evaluate freedom of the press around the world, defend against attacks on the independence of the media, and pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession;

Whereas on December 18, 2013, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 163 (2013)) on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, that unequivocally condemns, in both conflict and nonconflict situations, all attacks on and violence against journalists and media workers, including torture, extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and intimidation and harassment;

Whereas 2015 is the 22nd anniversary of World Press Freedom Day, which focuses on the theme ''Let Journalism Thrive! Towards Better Reporting, Gender Equality, and Media Safety in the Digital Age'';

Whereas the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act of 2009 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note; Public Law 111-166), which was passed by unanimous consent in the Senate and signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2010, expanded the annual Human Rights Reports of the Department of State to include the examination of freedom of the press;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, freedom of the press suffered a ''drastic decline'' across all continents;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, 69 journalists and 19 citizen-journalists were killed in connection with the collection and dissemination of news and information;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in 2014, the 3 deadliest countries for journalists on assignment were Syria, Ukraine, and Iraq;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, more than 40 percent of the journalists killed in 2014 had been targeted for murder and 31 percent of journalists murdered had reported receiving threats;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 650 journalists were killed between 1992 and April 2015 and the perpetrators have not been punished;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, the 5 countries with the highest number of unpunished journalist murders between 2004 and 2014 are Iraq, Somalia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Syria;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, 853 journalists and 122 citizen-journalists were arrested;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, as of December 1, 2014, 221 journalists worldwide were in prison;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, the 5 countries with the highest number of journalists in prison as of December 8, 2014, were China, Eritrea, Iran, Egypt, and Syria;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, the 5 countries with the highest number of journalists threatened or attacked were Ukraine, Venezuela, Turkey, Libya, and China;

Whereas, according to the 2015 World Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders, Eritrea, North Korea, Turkmenistan, Syria, and China were the countries ranked lowest with respect to ''media pluralism and independence, respect for the safety and freedom of journalists, and the legislative, institutional and infrastructural environment in which the media operate'';

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in 2014, Syria was the world's deadliest country for journalists for the third year in a row;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, the Government of the Russian Federation continued to pressure the media to control independent news outlets to an extent that may lead to the termination of the outlets;

Whereas Freedom House has cited a deteriorating environment for Internet freedom around the world and in 2014 ranked Iran, Syria, China, Cuba, and Ethiopia as the countries having the worst obstacles to access, limits on content, and violations of user rights among countries and territories rated by Freedom House as ''Not Free'' ;

Whereas freedom of the press is a key component of democratic governance, activism in civil society, and socioeconomic development; and

Whereas freedom of the press enhances public accountability, transparency, and participation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses concern about the threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world following World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2015;

(2) commends journalists and media workers around the world for their essential role in promoting government accountability, defending democratic activity, and strengthening civil society, despite threats to their safety;

(3) pays tribute to journalists who have lost their lives carrying out their work;

(4) calls on governments abroad to implement United Nations General Assembly Resolution 163 (2013);

(5) condemns all actions around the world that suppress freedom of the press, including: brutal murders of journalists by the terrorist group Islamic State in Syria, violent attacks against media outlets such as the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, and the kidnappings of journalists and media workers by pro-Russian militant groups in eastern Ukraine;

(6) reaffirms the centrality of freedom of the press to efforts of the United States Government to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance domestically and around the world; and

(7) calls on the President and the Secretary of State—

(A) to improve the means by which the United States Government rapidly identifies, publicizes, and responds to threats against freedom of the press around the world;

(B) to urge foreign governments to conduct transparent investigations and adjudications of the perpetrators of attacks against journalists; and

(C) to highlight the issue of threats against freedom of the press year round.

SENATE RESOLUTION 153—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP TO SAFEGUARDING GLOBAL SECURITY, PROSPERITY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. CORKER (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 153

Whereas the United States-Japan alliance is a cornerstone of global peace and stability and underscores the past, present, and future United States commitment to the stability and prosperity of Japan and the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas the United States and Japan established diplomatic relations on March 31, 1854, with the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Amity;

Whereas 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, a conflict where the

United States and Japan were enemies, and the strength of the alliance is a testament to the ability of great nations to overcome the past and to work together to create a more secure and prosperous future;

Whereas January 19, 2015, marked the 55th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan;

Whereas the United States and Japan are both free societies committed to the principles of inclusive democracy, respect for human potential and individual character, and the belief that the peaceful spread of these principles will result in a safer and brighter future for all of mankind;

Whereas the Governments and people of the United States and Japan can help realize this future through further strengthening their economic, political, social, cultural, and security relationship;

Whereas the United States and Japan are indispensable partners in tackling global challenges, and have pledged significant support for efforts to counter violent extremism, including the threat of ISIL; combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; prevent piracy; improve global health; promote human rights; contribute to economic development around the world; and assist the victims of conflict and disaster worldwide;

Whereas the Governments and people of the United States and Japan share a commitment to free and open markets, high standards for the free flow of commerce and trade, and the establishment of an inclusive architecture for regional and global trade and development;

Whereas Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has also reiterated that his cabinet will uphold the stance on the recognition of history of previous prime ministers, including the Murayama statement;

Whereas the United States-Japan security alliance has evolved considerably over many decades and will continue to transform as a partnership, sharing greater responsibilities, dedicated to ensuring a secure and prosperous region and world;

Whereas the Government of Japan has reinterpreted its constitution to allow for the collective self-defense of its allies, including the United States, an action that strengthens the alliance's ability to defend Japan and to continue to safeguard regional security;

Whereas the United States-Japan alliance is essential for ensuring maritime security and freedom of navigation, commerce, and overflight in the waters of the East China Sea;

Whereas Japan stands as a strong partner of the United States in efforts to uphold respect for the rule of law and to oppose the use of coercion, intimidation, or force to change the regional or global status quo, including in the East and South China Seas, which are among the busiest waterways in the world;

Whereas the United States and Japan are committed to working together towards a world where the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) does not threaten global peace and security with its weapons of mass destruction and illicit activities, and where the DPRK respects human rights and people can live in freedom;

Whereas the United States and Japan have a long history of successful technical cooperation and joint scientific research and development;

Whereas, on May 7, 1843, the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States, and Japanese-Americans have made significant contributions to the advancement, including our former colleague, the late Senator Daniel Inouye, of the United States;

Whereas people-to-people ties between the United States and Japan are long-standing and deep, as exemplified by the gift of the beautiful cherry trees which dot our nation's capital from the People of Japan to the People of the United States in 1912, signifying an unbreakable bond between the two nations; and

Whereas, on April 29, 2015, Prime Minister Abe will address a Joint Meeting of Congress at the invitation of the Speaker of the House: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

The Senate—

(1) reaffirms the importance of the United States-Japan alliance for maintaining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond, including through United States extended deterrence, the revision of the Guidelines for United States-Japan Defense Cooperation, and Japan's policy of ''Proactive Contribution to Peace'' based on the principles of international cooperation;

(2) supports ongoing efforts to further strengthen the United States-Japan alliance to confront emerging challenges, including cyber and space;

(3) supports strong cooperation between the United States and Japan in safeguarding maritime security and ensuring freedom of navigation, commerce, and overflight in the East and South China Seas;

(4) recognizes that although the United States Government does not take a position on the ultimate sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands, the United States acknowledges that they are under the administration of Japan and opposes any unilateral actions that would seek to undermine such administration;

(5) reaffirms that the unilateral actions of a third party will not affect the United States acknowledgment of the administration of Japan over the Senkaku Islands and that the United States remains committed under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security to respond to any armed attack in the territories under the administration of Japan;

(6) recognizes the support of the Government of Japan in addressing global challenges that threaten the security of people everywhere;

(7) supports the expansion of academic and cultural exchanges between the United States and Japan, especially efforts to encourage Japanese students to study at universities in the United States, and vice versa, to deepen people-to-people ties;

(8) encourages the expansion of scientific research and development and technical cooperation with Japan, to address global challenges;

(9) promotes deepening the economic and trade ties between the United States and Japan, including the empowerment of women, which is vital for the prosperity of both our nations, the Asia Pacific region, and the world; and

(10) calls for continued cooperation between the Governments of the United States and Japan in the promotion of human rights.

SEC. 2. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this resolution shall be construed as a declaration of war or authorization to use force.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1177. Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. COTTON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1178. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1179. Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra.

SA 1180. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1181. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1182. Mr. ROBERTS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1183. Mr. ROBERTS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1184. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1185. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1186. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1187. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1188. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1189. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1190. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1191. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1192. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1193. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1177. Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. COTTON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr.

RUBIO, and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 3. RECOGNITION OF JERUSALEM AS THE CAPITAL OF ISRAEL AND RELOCATION OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to recognize Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the State of Israel, both de jure and de facto.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Jerusalem must remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic and religious group are protected as they have been by Israel since 1967;

(2) every citizen of Israel should have the right to reside anywhere in the undivided city of Jerusalem;

(3) the President and the Secretary of State should publicly affirm as a matter of United States policy that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital of the State of Israel;

(4) the President should immediately implement the provisions of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–45) and begin the process of relocating the United States Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem; and

(5) United States officials should refrain from any actions that contradict United States law on this subject.

(c) AMENDMENT OF WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–45) is amended—

(1) by striking section 7; and

(2) by redesignating section 8 as section 7.

(d) IDENTIFICATION OF JERUSALEM ON GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any official document of the United States Government which lists countries and their capital cities shall identify Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

(e) RESTRICTION ON FUNDING SUBJECT TO OPENING DETERMINATION.—Not more than 50 percent of the funds appropriated to the Department of State for fiscal year 2015 for ''Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad'' may be obligated until the Secretary of State determines and reports to Congress that the United States Embassy in Jerusalem has officially opened.

(f) FISCAL YEARS 2016 AND 2017 FUNDING.—

(1) FISCAL YEAR 2016.—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated for ''Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad'' for the Department of State for fiscal year 2016, such sums as may be necessary should be made available until expended only for construction and other costs associated with the establishment of the United States Embassy in Israel in the capital of Jerusalem.

(2) FISCAL YEAR 2017.—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated for ''Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad'' for the Department of State for fiscal year 2017, such sums as may be necessary should be made available until expended only for construction and other costs associated with the establishment of the United States Embassy in Israel in the capital of Jerusalem.

(g) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''United States Embassy'' means the offices of the United States diplomatic mission and the residence of the United States chief of mission.

SA 1178. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 16, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

''(C) REPORT ON ACTIONS BY IRAN AFFECTING US COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL.—In addition to any other information required to be submitted to Congress under this paragraph, the President shall also report to Congress not later than seven days after any action by the Government of Iran that could compromise the commitment of the United States to the security of Israel or the support of the United States for Israel's right to exist.

SA 1179. Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; as follows:

On page 2, line 13, insert '', and specifically including any agreed Persian text of such agreement, related materials, and annexes'' after ''and annexes''.

SA 1180. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 4, line 18, insert '', including military bases,'' after ''suspicious sites''.

SA 1181. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 6, strike line 8 and all that follows through page 26, line 19, and insert the following:

''(1) REVIEW PERIOD.—

''(A) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—During the first 60 days that the House of Representatives is in session following transmittal by the President of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a), the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives shall, as appropriate, hold hearings and briefings and otherwise obtain information in order to fully review such agreement.

''(B) SENATE.—During the first 60 days that the Senate is in session following transmittal by the President of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a), the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate shall, as appropriate, hold hearings and briefings and otherwise obtain information in order to fully review such agreement.

''(2) LIMITATION ON ACTIONS DURING PERIOD OF CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW PERIOD.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in paragraph (3), during the period for congressional review provided in paragraph (1), the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a).

''(3) EXCEPTION.—The prohibition under paragraph (2) does not apply to any new deferral, waiver, or other suspension of statutory sanctions pursuant to the Joint Plan of Action if that deferral, waiver, or other suspension is made—

''(A) consistent with the law in effect on the date of the enactment of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; and

''(B) not later than 45 calendar days before the transmission by the President of an agreement, assessment report, and certification under subsection (a).

''(c) EFFECT OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTION WITH RESPECT TO NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN.—

''(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

''(A) the sanctions regime imposed on Iran by Congress is primarily responsible for bringing Iran to the table to negotiate on its nuclear program;

''(B) these negotiations are a critically important matter of national security and foreign policy for the United States and its closest allies;

''(C) this section does not require a vote by Congress for the agreement to commence;

(D) this section provides for congressional review, including, as appropriate, for approval, disapproval, or no action on statutory sanctions relief under an agreement; and

''(E) even though the agreement may commence, because the sanctions regime was imposed by Congress and only Congress can permanently modify or eliminate that regime, it is critically important that Congress have the opportunity, in an orderly and deliberative manner, to consider and, as appropriate, take action affecting the statutory sanctions regime imposed by Congress.

''(2) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, action involving any measure of statutory sanctions relief by the United States pursuant to an agreement subject to subsection (a) or the Joint Plan of Action—

''(A) may be taken, consistent with existing statutory requirements for such action, if, during the period for review provided in subsection (b), the Congress adopts, and there is enacted, a joint resolution stating in substance that the Congress does favor the agreement;

''(B) may not be taken if, during the period for review provided in subsection (b), the Congress adopts, and there is enacted, a joint resolution stating in substance that the Congress does not favor the agreement; or

''(C) may not be taken if, following the period for review provided in subsection (b), there is not enacted any such joint resolution.

''(3) DEFINITION.—For the purposes of this subsection, the phrase ''action involving any measure of statutory sanctions relief by the

United States'' shall include waiver, suspension, reduction, or other effort to provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to, Iran under any provision of law or any other effort to refrain from applying any such sanctions.

''(d) CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT OF IRANIAN COMPLIANCE WITH NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall keep the appropriate congressional committees and leadership fully and currently informed of all aspects of Iranian compliance with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a).

''(2) POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT BREACHES AND COMPLIANCE INCIDENTS.—The President shall, within 10 calendar days of receiving credible and accurate information relating to a potentially significant breach or compliance incident by Iran with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a), submit such information to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership.

''(3) MATERIAL BREACH REPORT.—Not later than 30 calendar days after submitting information about a potentially significant breach or compliance incident pursuant to paragraph (2), the President shall make a determination whether such potentially significant breach or compliance issue constitutes a material breach and, if there is such a material breach, whether Iran has cured such material breach, and shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership such determination, accompanied by, as appropriate, a report on the action or failure to act by Iran that led to the material breach, actions necessary for Iran to cure the breach, and the status of Iran's efforts to cure the breach.

''(4) SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 calendar days after entering into an agreement described in subsection (a), and not less frequently than once every 180 calendar days thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership a report on Iran's nuclear program and the compliance of Iran with the agreement during the period covered by the report, including the following elements:

''(A) Any action or failure to act by Iran that breached the agreement or is in noncompliance with the terms of the agreement.

''(B) Any delay by Iran of more than one week in providing inspectors access to facilities, people, and documents in Iran as required by the agreement.

''(C) Any progress made by Iran to resolve concerns by the International Atomic Energy Agency about possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.

''(D) Any procurement by Iran of materials in violation of the agreement or which could otherwise significantly advance Iran's ability to obtain a nuclear weapon.

''(E) Any centrifuge research and development conducted by Iran that—

''(i) is not in compliance with the agreement; or

''(ii) may substantially enhance the breakout time of acquisition of a nuclear weapon by Iran, if deployed.

''(F) Any diversion by Iran of uranium, carbon-fiber, or other materials for use in Iran's nuclear program in violation of the agreement.

''(G) Any covert nuclear activities undertaken by Iran, including any covert nuclear weapons-related or covert fissile material activities or research and development.

''(H) An assessment of whether any Iranian financial institutions are engaged in money laundering or terrorist finance activities, including names of specific financial institutions if applicable.

''(I) Iran's advances in its ballistic missile program, including developments related to its long-range and inter-continental ballistic missile programs.

''(J) An assessment of—

''(i) whether Iran directly supported, financed, planned, or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world;

''(ii) whether, and the extent to which, Iran supported acts of terrorism, including acts of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world;

''(iii) all actions, including in international fora, being taken by the United States to stop, counter, and condemn acts by Iran to directly or indirectly carry out acts of terrorism against the United States and United States persons;

''(iv) the impact on the national security of the United States and the safety of United States citizens as a result of any Iranian actions reported under this paragraph; and

''(v) all of the sanctions relief provided to Iran, pursuant to the agreement, and a description of the relationship between each sanction waived, suspended, or deferred and Iran's nuclear weapon's program.

''(K) An assessment of whether violations of internationally recognized human rights in Iran have changed, increased, or decreased, as compared to the prior 180-day period.

''(5) ADDITIONAL REPORTS AND INFORMATION.—

''(A) AGENCY REPORTS.—Following submission of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a) to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership, the Department of State, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense shall, upon the request of any of those committees or leadership, promptly furnish to those committees or leadership their views as to whether the safeguards and other controls contained in the agreement with respect to Iran's nuclear program provide an adequate framework to ensure that Iran's activities permitted thereunder will not be inimical to or constitute an unreasonable risk to the common defense and security.

''(B) PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON NUCLEAR INITIATIVES WITH IRAN.—The President shall keep the appropriate congressional committees and leadership fully and currently informed of any initiative or negotiations with Iran relating to Iran's nuclear program, including any new or amended agreement.

''(6) COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION.—After the review period provided in subsection (b), the President shall, not less than every 90 calendar days—

''(A) determine whether the President is able to certify that—

''(i) Iran is transparently, verifiably, and fully implementing the agreement, including all related technical or additional agreements;

''(ii) Iran has not committed a material breach with respect to the agreement or, if Iran has committed a material breach, Iran has cured the material breach;

''(iii) Iran has not taken any action, including covert action, that could significantly advance its nuclear weapons program; and

''(iv) suspension of sanctions related to Iran pursuant to the agreement is—

''(I) appropriate and proportionate to the specific and verifiable measures taken by Iran with respect to terminating its illicit nuclear program; and

''(II) vital to the national security interests of the United States; and

''(B) if the President determines he is able to make the certification described in subparagraph (A), make such certification to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership.

''(7) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

''(A) United States sanctions on Iran for terrorism, human rights abuses, and ballistic missiles will remain in place under an agreement, as defined in subsection (i)(1);

''(B) issues not addressed by an agreement on the nuclear program of Iran, including fair and appropriate compensation for Americans who were terrorized and subjected to torture while held in captivity for 444 days after the seizure of the United States Embassy in Tehran, Iran, in 1979 and their families, the freedom of Americans held in Iran, the human rights abuses of the Government of Iran against its own people, and the continued support of terrorism worldwide by the Government of Iran, are matters critical to ensure justice and the national security of the United States, and should be expeditiously addressed;

''(C) the President should determine the agreement in no way compromises the commitment of the United States to Israel's security, nor its support for Israel's right to exist; and

''(D) in order to responsibly implement any long-term agreement reached between the P5+1 countries and Iran, it is critically important that Congress have the opportunity to review any agreement and, as necessary, take action to modify the statutory sanctions regime imposed by Congress.

''(e) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the event the President does not submit a certification pursuant to subsection (d)(6) or has determined pursuant to subsection (d)(3) that Iran has materially breached an agreement subject to subsection (a) and the material breach has not been cured, Congress may initiate within 60 calendar days expedited consideration of qualifying legislation pursuant to this subsection.

''(2) QUALIFYING LEGISLATION DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ''qualifying legislation'' means only a bill of either House of Congress—

''(A) the title of which is as follows: ''A bill reinstating statutory sanctions imposed with respect to Iran.''; and

''(B) the matter after the enacting clause of which is: ''Any statutory sanctions imposed with respect to Iran pursuant to _____ that were waived, suspended, reduced, or otherwise relieved pursuant to an agreement submitted pursuant to section 135(a) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 are hereby reinstated and any action by the United States Government to facilitate the release of funds or assets to Iran pursuant to such agreement, or provide any further waiver, suspension, reduction, or other relief pursuant to such agreement is hereby prohibited.'', with the blank space being filled in with the law or laws under which sanctions are to be reinstated.

''(3) INTRODUCTION.—During the 60-calendar day period provided for in paragraph (1), qualifying legislation may be introduced—

''(A) in the House of Representatives, by the majority leader or the minority leader; and

''(B) in the Senate, by the majority leader (or the majority leader's designee) or the minority leader (or the minority leader's designee).

''(4) FLOOR CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(A) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If a committee of the House to which qualifying legislation has been referred has not reported

such qualifying legislation within 10 legislative days after the date of referral, that committee shall be discharged from further consideration thereof.

''(B) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—Beginning on the third legislative day after each committee to which qualifying legislation has been referred reports it to the House or has been discharged from further consideration thereof, it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the qualifying legislation in the House. All points of order against the motion are waived. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House has disposed of a motion to proceed on the qualifying legislation with regard to the same agreement. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

''(C) CONSIDERATION.—The qualifying legislation shall be considered as read. All points of order against the qualifying legislation and against its consideration are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the qualifying legislation to final passage without intervening motion except two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the sponsor of the qualifying legislation (or a designee) and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the qualifying legislation shall not be in order.

''(5) CONSIDERATION IN THE SENATE.—

''(A) COMMITTEE REFERRAL.—Qualifying legislation introduced in the Senate shall be referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

''(B) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If the Committee on Foreign Relations has not reported such qualifying legislation within 10 session days after the date of referral of such legislation, that committee shall be discharged from further consideration of such legislation and the qualifying legislation shall be placed on the appropriate calendar.

''(C) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—Notwithstanding Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order at any time after the committee authorized to consider qualifying legislation reports it to the Senate or has been discharged from its consideration (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of qualifying legislation, and all points of order against qualifying legislation (and against consideration of the qualifying legislation) are waived. The motion to proceed is not debatable. The motion is not subject to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of the qualifying legislation is agreed to, the qualifying legislation shall remain the unfinished business until disposed of.

''(D) DEBATE.—Debate on qualifying legislation, and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between the majority and minority leaders or their designees. A motion to further limit debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment to, or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the qualifying legislation is not in order.

''(E) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—The vote on passage shall occur immediately following the conclusion of the debate on the qualifying legislation and a single quorum call at the conclusion of the debate, if requested in accordance with the rules of the Senate.

''(F) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCEDURE.—Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to the application of the rules of the Senate, as the case may be, to the procedure relating to qualifying legislation shall be decided without debate.

''(G) CONSIDERATION OF VETO MESSAGES.—Debate in the Senate of any veto message with respect to qualifying legislation, including all debatable motions and appeals in connection with such qualifying legislation, shall be limited to 10 hours, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees.

''(6) RULES RELATING TO SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(A) COORDINATION WITH ACTION BY OTHER HOUSE.—If, before the passage by one House of qualifying legislation of that House, that House receives qualifying legislation from the other House, then the following procedures shall apply:

''(i) The qualifying legislation of the other House shall not be referred to a committee.

''(ii) With respect to qualifying legislation of the House receiving the legislation—

''(I) the procedure in that House shall be the same as if no qualifying legislation had been received from the other House; but

''(II) the vote on passage shall be on the qualifying legislation of the other House.

''(B) TREATMENT OF A BILL OF OTHER HOUSE.—If one House fails to introduce qualifying legislation under this section, the qualifying legislation of the other House shall be entitled to expedited floor procedures under this section.

''(C) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEASURES.—If, following passage of the qualifying legislation in the Senate, the Senate then receives a companion measure from the House of Representatives, the companion measure shall not be debatable.

''(D) APPLICATION TO REVENUE MEASURES.—The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply in the House of Representatives to qualifying legislation which is a revenue measure.

''(f) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS.—

''(1) DEFINED TERM.—In this subsection, the term ''joint resolution'' means a joint resolution either approving or disapproving—

''(A) an agreement subject to subsection (a); or

''(B) the Joint Plan of Action.

''(2) INTRODUCTION.—During the period described in subsection (b), a joint resolution may be introduced—

''(A) in the House of Representatives, by the Speaker (or the Speaker's designee) or the minority leader (or the minority leader's designee); and

''(B) in the Senate, by the majority leader (or the majority leader's designee) or the minority leader (or the minority leader's designee).

''(3) COMMITTEE REFERRAL.—

''(A) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—A joint resolution that is introduced in the House of Representatives shall immediately be referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

''(B) SENATE.—A joint resolution that is introduced in the Senate shall immediately be referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

''(4) DISCHARGE.—If the committee of either House to which joint resolution has been referred has not reported such joint resolution within 10 session days after the date of referral of such resolution, that committee shall be discharged from further consideration of such resolution and the joint resolution shall be placed on the appropriate calendar.

''(5) FLOOR CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(A) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—After the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives reports the joint resolution to the House of Representatives or has been discharged from its consideration, it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the joint resolution in the House. All points of order against the motion are waived. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House has disposed of a motion to proceed on the joint resolution. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

''(B) CONSIDERATION.—The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against the joint resolution and against its consideration are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to its passage without intervening motion except 2 hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the joint resolution shall not be in order. No amendment to, or motion to recommit, joint resolution shall be in order.

''(C) APPEALS.—All appeals from the Chair relating to the application of the Rules of the House of Representatives to the procedure relating to the joint resolution shall be decided without debate.

''(6) FLOOR CONSIDERATION IN THE SENATE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order at any time after the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate reports the joint resolution to the Senate or has been discharged from its consideration (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of joint resolution, and all points of order against the joint resolution (and against consideration of the joint resolution) are waived. The motion to proceed is not debatable. The motion is not subject to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of the joint resolution is agreed to, the joint resolution shall remain the unfinished business until disposed of.

''(B) DEBATE.—Debate on the joint resolution, and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between the majority and minority leaders or their designees. A motion to further limit debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment to, or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the joint resolution is not in order.

''(C) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—The vote on passage shall occur immediately following the conclusion of the debate on the joint resolution and a single quorum call at the conclusion of the debate, if requested in accordance with the rules of the Senate.

''(D) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCEDURE.—Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to the application of the rules of the Senate, as the case may be, to the procedure relating to joint resolution shall be decided without debate.

''(E) CONSIDERATION OF VETO MESSAGES.—Debate in the Senate of any veto message with respect to joint resolution, including all debatable motions and appeals in connection with such joint resolution, shall be limited to 10 hours, to be equally divided between,

and controlled by, the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees.

''(7) RULES RELATING TO SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(A) COORDINATION WITH ACTION BY OTHER HOUSE.—If, before the passage by one House of the joint resolution introduced in that House, that House receives joint resolution from the other House—

''(i) the joint resolution of the other House shall not be referred to a committee; and

''(ii) with respect to joint resolution of the House receiving the legislation—

''(I) the procedure in that House shall be the same as if no joint resolution had been received from the other House; but

''(II) the vote on passage shall be on the joint resolution of the other House.

''(B) TREATMENT OF JOINT RESOLUTION OF OTHER HOUSE.—If one House fails to introduce or consider a joint resolution under this section, the joint resolution of the other House shall be entitled to expedited floor procedures under this section.

''(C) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEASURES.—If, following passage of the joint resolution in the Senate, the Senate receives a companion measure from the House of Representatives, the companion measure shall not be debatable.

'' (g) RULES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE.—Subsections (e) and (f) are enacted by Congress—

SA 1182. Mr. ROBERTS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, between lines 21 and 22, insert the following:

''(v) the Russian Federation is not providing to Iran, through sales, leases, or other lending, weapons systems in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929 (2010) or sophisticated air defense systems; and

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SA 1183. Mr. ROBERTS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 15, between lines 18 and 19, insert the following:

''(L) An assessment of whether the Russian Federation is providing to Iran, through sales, leases, or other lending, weapons systems in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929 (2010) or sophisticated air defense systems.

SA 1184. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, between lines 21 and 22, insert the following:

''(v) Iran has ceased the development of a nuclear warhead and delivery systems that could be used for a nuclear attack; and

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SA 1185. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, between lines 21 and 22, insert the following:

''(v) Iran has ceased the development of a nuclear warhead; and

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SA 1186. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

''(C) ASSESSMENT OF INADEQUACIES IN INTERNATIONAL MONITORING AND VERIFICATION SYSTEM.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A report under subparagraph (A) shall include an assessment by the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the heads and other officials of relevant agencies, detailing existing inadequacies in the international monitoring and verification system as outlined and in accordance with findings and recommendations pertaining to verification shortcomings contained within—

''(I) the September 26, 2006, Government Accountability Office report, ''Nuclear Nonproliferation: IAEA Has Strengthened Its Safeguards and Nuclear Security Programs, but Weaknesses Need to Be Addressed'';

''(II) the May 16, 2013, Government Accountability Office Report, ''IAEA Has Made Progress in Implementing Critical Programs but Continues to Face Challenges'';

''(III) the Defense Science Board Study, ''Task Force on the Assessment of Nuclear Treaty Monitoring and Verification Technologies'';

''(IV) the IAEA Report, The Safeguards System of the International Atomic Energy Agency; and the IAEA Safeguards Statement for 2010;

''(V) the IAEA Safeguards Overview: Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols;

''(VI) the IAEA Model Additional Protocol; and

''(VII) the IAEA February 2015 Director General Report to the Board of Governors.

''(ii) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The assessment required under clause (i) shall include recommendations based upon the reports referenced in such clause, including recommendations to overcome inadequacies or develop an improved monitoring framework and recommendations related to the following matters:

''(I) The nuclear security program's long-term resource needs.

''(II) A plan for the long-term operation and funding of the IAEA and relevant agencies increased activities in order to maintain the necessary level of oversight.

''(III) A potential national strategy and implementation plan supported by a planning and assessment team aimed at cutting across agency boundaries or limitations that impact its ability to draw conclusions—with absolute assurance—about whether Iran is developing a clandestine nuclear weapons program.

''(IV) The limitations of IAEA actors.

''(V) Challenges within the geographic scope which may be too large to anticipate within the sanctioned treaty or agreement or the national technical means (NTM) monitoring regimes alone.

''(iii) PRESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the Secretary of State submits a report under subparagraph (A), the President shall certify to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership that the President has reviewed the Secretary's shortfall assessment required under this subparagraph, including the recommendations contained therein, and has taken necessary actions to address existing gaps within the monitoring and verification framework.

''(D) CLASSIFIED ANNEX.—A report under

SA 1187. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

''(4) JOINT INTERPRETATION OF AGREEMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 10 days after the President transmits an agreement under paragraph (1), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a joint fact sheet signed by the President and the President of the Republic of Iran certifying a clear interpretation of the agreement as seen by both parties.

''(B) ELEMENTS.—The joint fact sheet shall include the following elements:

''(i) A joint commitment of understanding by the United States and Iran that the agreement will halt the Iranian pursuit of nuclear military capability.

''(ii) A delineation of the ongoing agreed maximum allowable levels of declared uranium, uranium, and percent purity.

''(iii) A timeframe for the lifting of sanctions, and a mutual understanding that if Iran violates the deal, sanctions can be reimposed within 30 days.

''(iv) A statement clarifying the dispute resolution process envisioned.

''(v) A certification that—

''(I) Iran has provided the necessary explanations that enable the IAEA to clarify the two outstanding practical measures, as outlined in the February 19, 2015, IAEA Board of Governors meeting; and

''(II) Iran has proposed new practical measures in the next step of the Framework for Cooperation as previously agreed on.

''(vi) A statement of Iran's continued agreement to provide the IAEA with access to centrifuge assembly workshops, centrifuge rotor production workshops, and storage facilities.

''(vii) A description of the level of allowable ballistic missile development and capability.

''(viii) A joint statement describing the research and development into advanced centrifuges that is permissible.

''(ix) An outline of the agreed upon schedule and parameters that have been agreed to by the P5+1 countries.

SA 1188. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

''(v) Iran has not acquired and deployed advanced integrated air defense systems, as defined by the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, and including long-range surface-to-air missiles such as the Russian-made S300; and

''(B) if the President determines he is able to make the certification described in subparagraph (A), make such certification to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership.

''(7) IMPOSITION OF UNITED NATIONS SANCTIONS.—In the event the President does not submit a certification pursuant to paragraph (6) or has determined pursuant to paragraph (3) that Iran has materially breached an agreement subject to subsection (a) and the material breach has not been cured, the President shall direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to impose sanctions in accordance with United Nations Resolution 1929 (2010).

''(8) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of

SA 1189. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 3. PETROLEUM-RELATED SANCTIONS.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership (as that term is defined in subsection (h)(3) of section 135 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as added by section 2) 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 (as that term is defined in subsection (c)(3) of such section 135) by the United States will result in greater exports of Iranian petroleum to the global market than permitted by the Joint Plan of Action (as defined in subsection (h)(5) of such section) and under the sanctions described in subsection (c)(1)(A) of such section.

(b) REMOVAL OF EXPORT RESTRICTIONS.—Beginning 30 calendar days after 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 as of the date of the 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 1190. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND CERTAIN NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 4980H of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (6), (7), and (8), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

''(5) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

''(A) EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS.—Qualified services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to an eligible employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the terms 'qualified services', 'bona fide volunteer', and 'eligible employer' shall have the respective meanings given such terms under section 457(e).

''(B) CERTAIN OTHER GOVERNMENT AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to a specified employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee.

''(ii) BONA FIDE VOLUNTEER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'bona fide volunteer' means an employee of a specified employer whose only compensation from such employer is in the form of—

''(I) reimbursement for (or reasonable allowance for) reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of services by volunteers, or

''(II) reasonable benefits (including length of service awards), and nominal fees, customarily paid by similar entities in connection with the performance of services by volunteers.

''(iii) SPECIFIED EMPLOYER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'specified employer' means—

''(I) any government entity, and

''(II) any organization described in section 501(c) and exempt from tax under section 501(a).

''(iv) COORDINATION WITH SUBPARAGRAPH (A).—This subparagraph shall not fail to apply with respect to services merely because such services are qualified services (as defined in section 457(e)(11)(C)).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

SA 1191. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 31, strike lines 7 through 11 and insert the following:

''(9) NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM.—The term ''nuclear weapons program'' means any effort whatsoever, including research and development efforts, to develop, design, obtain, procure, create, fabricate, manufacture, assemble, or test, in any fashion or manner, a nuclear explosive device or any component thereof, as well as any effort whatsoever to obtain, procure, or create, including through enrichment, fissile material of any type, including plutonium or uranium, that is enriched to a sufficient level for use in a nuclear explosive device, and includes any nuclear weapon related materiel program (''NWRMP''), which includes the research, development, manufacture, or procurement of components used to detonate, test, or deploy a nuclear device.

''(10) P5+1 COUNTRIES.—The term ''P5+1 countries'' means the United States, France, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

''(11) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term

SA 1192. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 13, line 17, strike ''enhance'' and insert ''reduce''.

SA 1193. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 11, strike line 16 and all that follows through ''significant breach'' on page 12, line 4, and insert the following:

''(2) POTENTIAL BREACHES AND COMPLIANCE INCIDENTS.—The President shall, within 10 calendar days of receiving credible information relating to a potential breach or compliance incident by Iran with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a), submit such information to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership.

''(3) MATERIAL BREACH REPORT.—Not later than 30 calendar days after submitting information about a potential breach or compliance incident pursuant to paragraph (2), the President shall make a determination whether such potential breach

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHARLES GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of Brodi L. Fontenot, to be Chief Financial Officer at the Department of the Treasury, dated April 28, 2015.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on May 5, 2015, at 2:30 pm, in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Continuing America's Leadership: Realizing the Promise of Precision Medicine for Patients''.

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Jamie Garden of the committee staff on (202) 224–1409.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 9 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The State of the Insurance Industry and Insurance Regulation.''

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled ''Staying Afloat: Examining the Resources and Priorities of the U.S. Coast Guard.''

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled ''FAA Reauthorization: Aviation Safety and General Aviation.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. CORKER. 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 April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Creating a More Efficient and Level Playing Field: Audit and Appeals Issues in Medicare.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. CORKER. 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 April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Continuing America's Leadership: The Future of Medical Innovation for Patients.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORKER. 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 April 28, 2015, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Securing the Border: Biometric Entry and Exit at Our Ports of Entry.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Oversight of Homeland Security.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 11 a.m.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 28, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Examining the Proper Role of Judicial Review in the Federal Regulatory Process.''

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Chris Stavish, an education fellow, and Karen Armitage, a health policy fellow, both in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

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

MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY WHISTLEBLOWER ACT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 36, S. 304.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 304) to improve motor vehicle safety by encouraging the sharing of certain information.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 304

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Motor Vehicle Safety Whistleblower Act''.

SEC. 2. MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY WHISTLEBLOWER INCENTIVES AND PROTECTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter IV of chapter 301 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 30172. Whistleblower incentives and protections

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) COVERED ACTION.—The term 'covered action' means any administrative or judicial action, including any related administrative or judicial action, brought by the Secretary or the

Attorney General under this chapter that in the aggregate results in monetary sanctions exceeding $1,000,000.

''(2) MONETARY SANCTIONS.—The term 'monetary sanctions' means monies, including penalties and interest, ordered or agreed to be paid.

''(3) ORIGINAL INFORMATION.—The term 'original information' means information that—

''(A) is derived from the independent knowledge or analysis of an individual;

''(B) is not known to the Secretary from any other source, unless the individual is the original source of the information; and

''(C) is not exclusively derived from an allegation made in a judicial or an administrative action, in a governmental report, a hearing, an audit, or an investigation, or from the news media, unless the individual is a source of the information.

''(4) PART SUPPLIER.—The term 'part supplier' means a manufacturer of motor vehicle equipment.

''(5) SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION.—The term 'successful resolution' includes any settlement or adjudication of a covered action.

''(6) WHISTLEBLOWER.—The term 'whistleblower' means any employee or contractor of a motor vehicle manufacturer, part supplier, or dealership who voluntarily provides to the Secretary original information relating to any motor vehicle defect, noncompliance, or any violation or alleged violation of any notification or reporting requirement of this chapter which is likely to cause unreasonable risk of death or serious physical injury.

''(b) AWARDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If the original information that a whistleblower provided to the Secretary led to the successful resolution of a covered action, the Secretary, subject to subsection (c), may pay an award or awards to 1 or more whistleblowers in an aggregate amount of not more than 30 percent, in total, of collected monetary sanctions.

''(2) PAYMENT OF AWARDS.—Any amount payable under paragraph (1) shall be paid from the monetary sanctions collected, and any monetary sanctions so collected shall be available for such payment.

''(c) DETERMINATION OF AWARDS; DENIAL OF AWARDS.—

''(1) DETERMINATION OF AWARDS.—

''(A) DISCRETION.—The determination of whether, to whom, or in what amount to make an award shall be in the discretion of the Secretary.

''(B) CRITERIA.—In determining an award made under subsection (b), the Secretary shall take into consideration—

''(i) if appropriate, whether a whistleblower reported or attempted to report the information internally to an applicable motor vehicle manufacturer, part supplier, or dealership;

''(ii) the significance of the original information provided by the whistleblower to the successful resolution of the covered action;

''(iii) the degree of assistance provided by the whistleblower and any legal representative of the whistleblower in the covered action; and

''(iv) such additional factors as the Secretary considers relevant.

''(2) DENIAL OF AWARDS.—No award under subsection (b) shall be made—

''(A) to any whistleblower who is convicted of a criminal violation related to the covered action for which the whistleblower otherwise could receive an award under this section;

''(B) to any whistleblower who, acting without direction from an applicable motor vehicle manufacturer, part supplier, or dealership, or agent thereof, deliberately causes or substantially contributes to the alleged violation of a requirement of this chapter;

''(C) to any whistleblower who submits information to the Secretary that is based on the facts underlying the covered action submitted previously by another whistleblower;

''(D) to any whistleblower who fails to provide the original information to the Secretary in such form as the Secretary may require by regulation; or

''(E) to any whistleblower who fails to report or attempt to report the information internally to an applicable motor vehicle manufacturer, parts supplier, or dealership, unless—

''(i) the whistleblower reasonably believed that such an internal report would have resulted in retaliation, notwithstanding section 30171(a); or

''(ii) the whistleblower reasonably believed that the information—

''(I) was already internally reported;

''(II) was already subject to or part of an internal inquiry or investigation; or

''(III) was otherwise already known to the motor vehicle manufacturer, part supplier, or dealership.

''(d) REPRESENTATION.—A whistleblower may be represented by counsel.

''(e) NO CONTRACT NECESSARY.—No contract with the Secretary is necessary for any whistleblower to receive an award under subsection (b).

''(f) PROTECTION OF WHISTLEBLOWERS; CONFIDENTIALITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 30167, and except as provided in paragraphs (4) and (5) of this subsection, the Secretary, and any officer or employee of the Department of Transportation, shall not disclose any information, including information provided by a whistleblower to the Secretary, which could reasonably be expected to reveal the identity of a whistleblower, except in accordance with the provisions of section 552a of title 5, unless—

''(A) required to be disclosed to a defendant or respondent in connection with a public proceeding instituted by the Secretary or any entity described in paragraph (5);

''(B) the whistleblower provides prior written consent for the information to be disclosed; or

''(C) the Secretary, or other officer or employee of the Department of Transportation, receives the information through another source, such as during an inspection or investigation under section 30166, and has authority under other law to release the information.

''(2) REDACTION.—The Secretary, and any officer or employee of the Department of Transportation, shall take reasonable measures to not reveal the identity of the whistleblower when disclosing any information under paragraph (1).

''(3) SECTION 552(b)(3)(B).—For purposes of section 552 of title 5, paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be considered a statute described in subsection (b)(3)(B) of that section.

''(4) EFFECT.—Nothing in this subsection is intended to limit the ability of the Attorney General to present such evidence to a grand jury or to share such evidence with potential witnesses or defendants in the course of an ongoing criminal investigation.

''(5) AVAILABILITY TO GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Without the loss of its status as confidential in the hands of the Secretary, all information referred to in paragraph (1) may, in the discretion of the Secretary, when determined by the Secretary to be necessary or appropriate to accomplish the purposes of this chapter and in accordance with subparagraph (B), be made available to the following:

''(i) The Department of Justice.

''(ii) An appropriate department or agency of the Federal Government, acting within the scope of its jurisdiction.

''(B) MAINTENANCE OF INFORMATION.—Each entity described in subparagraph (A) shall maintain information described in that subparagraph as confidential, in accordance with the requirements in paragraph (1).

''(g) PROVISION OF FALSE INFORMATION.—A whistleblower who knowingly and willfully makes any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation, or who makes or uses any false writing or document knowing the same to contain any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry, shall not be entitled to an award under this section and shall be subject to prosecution under section 1001 of title 18.

''(h) APPEALS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any determination made under this section, including whether, to whom, or in what amount to make an award, shall be in the discretion of the Secretary.

''(2) APPEALS.—Any determination made by the Secretary under this section may be appealed by a whistleblower to the appropriate court of appeals of the United States not later than 30 days after the determination is issued by the Secretary.

''(3) REVIEW.—The court shall review the determination made by the Secretary in accordance with section 706 of title 5.

''(i) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Motor Vehicle Safety Whistleblower Act, the Secretary shall promulgate regulations on the requirements of this section, consistent with this section.''.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) ORIGINAL INFORMATION.—Information submitted to the Secretary of Transportation by a whistleblower in accordance with the requirements of section 30172 of title 49, United States Code, shall not lose its status as original information solely because the whistleblower submitted the information prior to the effective date of the regulations if that information was submitted after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) AWARDS.—A whistleblower may receive an award under section 30172 of title 49, United States Code, regardless of whether the violation underlying the covered action occurred prior to the date of enactment of this Act, and may receive an award prior to the Secretary of Transportation promulgating the regulations under section 30172(i) of that title.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents of subchapter IV of chapter 301 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''30172. Whistleblower incentives and protections.''.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 304), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP TO SAFEGUARDING GLOBAL SECURITY, PROSPERITY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 153, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 153) recognizing the importance of the United States-Japan relationship to safeguarding global security, prosperity, and human rights.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 153) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

AUTHORIZING APPOINTMENT OF ESCORT COMMITTEE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join with a like committee on the part of the House of Representatives to escort His Excellency Shinzo Abe into the House Chamber for the joint meeting at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, April 29, 2015.

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

NOMINATION REFERRED

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the nomination of Peter V. Neffenger, of Ohio, to be an Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security, be referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; that upon the reporting out or discharge of the nomination, the nomination then be referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs for a period not to exceed 30 calendar days, after which the nomination, if still in committee, be discharged and placed on the Executive Calendar.

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

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 29; 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 be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, until 10:30 a.m., with the time equally divided in the usual form; further, that at 10:30 a.m., the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair to allow for the joint meeting with the Japanese Prime Minister, His Excellency Shinzo Abe; and finally, that following the joint meeting, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 1191.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, Senators are asked to gather in the Chamber at 10:35 a.m. tomorrow to proceed as a body to the Hall of the House for the joint meeting.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. BOOZMAN. 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 7:08 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, April 29, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

PETER V. NEFFENGER, OF OHIO, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE JOHN S. PISTOLE, RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JEFFREY G. LOFGREN

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MICHAEL G. DANA

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

ERIC R. DAVIS

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

JUSTIN C. LEGG