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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable LUTHER STRANGE, a Senator from the State of Alabama.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, our King, we are grateful that righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne. Give our lawmakers such a connection with You that they will hate evil. Let the light of Your wisdom shine upon them, providing them with the joy of doing right. Save them from life's pitfalls, providing them with the protection of the shield of Your favor. Lord, remind them of Your faithfulness so that they will trust the unfolding of Your loving providence. Help them to remember that You have sustained America throughout its history. Remembering how You have led us in the past, may our Senators feel confident that You will complete the work You have started.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 26, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable LUTHER STRANGE, a Senator from the State of Alabama, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. STRANGE thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate is continuing to move forward on President Trump's outstanding judicial nominations. Many of the well-qualified men and women the President has nominated enjoy substantial bipartisan support.

Unfortunately, Senate Democrats have decided to continue wasting the Senate's time with the pointless obstruction of these nominees. Time and again, they have erected partisan procedural hurdles that are designed not to change the outcome—they don't change the outcome—but simply to waste the Senate's time. Often, Democrats do not even oppose the nominee in question.

Let's compare the number of times this days-long delay has been invoked for nominees of the last two Presidents during the first years of their Presidencies—during the first year of the Obama Presidency and the first year of the Trump Presidency. Republicans required cloture on one of President Obama's judicial nominees during his first year—cloture one time on a judicial nominee for President Obama in

his first year. Democrats have invoked this delay for every single one of President Trump's judicial nominees, so far, except one. This week, they are at it again.

Today, we will have a cloture vote on the nomination of Trevor McFadden to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Not a single Democrat on the Judiciary Committee registered an objection to the nomination; yet we still have to waste time in overcoming a procedural hurdle from our Democratic colleagues before the Senate can take up the nomination and consider it. It came out of committee with no opposition.

We are not going to let these mindless attempts to slow progress stop us from confirming the President's nominees to the judiciary. If that means more cloture votes and more time focused on this task, that is what we will do, but we will confirm these nominees. You can count on it.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, for families in Kentucky and across the Nation, the devastation of opioid abuse can be a constant and painful reality. Communities are forced to endure grief, worry, and loss. A recent report showed that my home State suffered more than 1,400 fatalities as a result of drug overdoses last year alone.

Despite the troubling statistics, however, there are glimmers of hope. The Republican-led Senate has worked hard to pass important legislation like Jessie's Law, the 21st Century Cures Act, and the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. These measures are important steps that should lead to real progress. There are many other important efforts across the country as well. From coast to coast, we hear stories of men and women in recovery who are managing their addictions. We are heartened by these testimonies that

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



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proper treatment offers real hope. They help remind everyone as to why we must continue to press forward. The task that remains is staggering, but we are committed.

Later today, President Trump will help our country take another step forward. We expect that he will formally recognize the opioid epidemic for the public health emergency that it is. This announcement builds upon years of progress that Congress has made in responding to addiction with comprehensive action, including prevention, enforcement, and treatment.

I commend the President for his continued commitment to this cause. When he visited us in the Senate earlier this week, he discussed the national epidemic and his administration's efforts to fight back. Along with my colleagues, I stand ready to work with him on future proposals to provide the necessary tools to protect our communities from this scourge.

A single bill or program is never going to solve this crisis on its own. Only a sustained, committed effort can do that. I am proud of our efforts to combat opioid addiction already. I also know that we will continue to push forward with continued collaboration with many groups both in Washington and in States and communities all across our country so that, one day, we can finally say that our country has beaten this crisis once and for all.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office came out with a score for the bipartisan Alexander-Murray bill. The CBO report confirms that the Alexander-Murray bill is a great deal for the American people. It does precisely what it was intended to do. It stabilizes the marketplaces, helps to prevent premiums from skyrocketing, and reduces the deficit, by CBO's estimate, nearly \$4 billion.

As Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY noted, the report shows that their bill "will benefit taxpayers and low-income Americans, not insurance companies."

Even the Wall Street Journal editorial board—no liberal cabal, that is for sure—said today: "The bipartisan compromise proposal crafted by Sens.

LAMAR ALEXANDER (R-Tenn.) and PATTY MURRAY (D-Wash.) now officially falls into the category of 'so obvious it should pass immediately.'"

That is not CHUCK SCHUMER talking. That is not even MITCH MCCONNELL talking—for those on the hard right who might doubt MITCH MCCONNELL's fidelity. It is the beacon of the hard right, the Wall Street Journal editorial page.

They say, again: Alexander-Murray "falls into the category of 'so obvious it should pass immediately.'"

So, my fellow Republicans, what are you waiting for? Everyone on your side wants the bill. Jump on it. Support it. Let's get this done, and let's help stabilize our markets, whatever our views are on healthcare.

Above all, these reports should be all the evidence that President Trump needs to come off the sidelines and endorse the bill. It doesn't bail out the insurance companies; that is what he said he was worried about. It doesn't cost the government money, and, in fact, it reduces the deficit by \$4 billion. So there is no good reason for President Trump to continue to obscure his position.

Leader MCCONNELL has said he will put it on the floor if the President says he will sign it. By delaying, the President is harming healthcare markets, causing significant uncertainty, and doing nothing but hurting Americans who are trying to afford healthcare.

So, Mr. President—President Trump, not my dear friend, the Acting President pro tempore, the Senator from Alabama—President Trump, if you don't pursue this bill, the consequences will fall on your back. Make no mistake about it.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on taxes, later today, the House will likely vote on whether to pass the budget resolution that recently passed the Senate. My colleagues in the House should be aware that this budget will explode the deficit by \$1.5 trillion. That is under the best of circumstances. That is under circumstances where they find \$4 trillion of pay-fors. That is probably unlikely. It will slash Medicare and Medicaid by \$1.5 trillion, and it will set up the same awful partisan process that caused the Republican effort on repeal and replace to fail, because when you try to do it with one party, it is fraught with peril. If you do it in a bipartisan way, a few people on either side will try to pull the bill off course but they will not succeed because they don't have the votes.

I remind my friends in the House who purport to be deficit hawks: You are voting for a budget that will increase the deficit by \$1.5 trillion. Many of these House Members, particularly in the conservative wing of the caucus, particularly those in the Freedom Caucus, have spent their entire careers on the barricades, railing against the evils

of deficits. What a stunning hypocrisy it would be to abandon those principles today and vote for this budget simply because it gives tax cuts to the wealthiest of Americans and the most powerful, largest of our corporations.

Now I would also remind my Republican friends in the House—particularly those in New York, New Jersey, California, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Illinois, Washington, and Minnesota—that voting for the budget today is tantamount to voting for the elimination of the State and local tax deduction, and that would sock it to the middle-class taxpayers in their States and districts. To most of our Republican friends from those States, they are blue States, but there are red districts that are suburban, well-off. They will get clobbered if they take away the State and local deduction. Those are the constituents hurt the most—not the rich and not the poor—the middle class and the upper middle class. Not only will it raise their taxes dramatically, but most people would lose deductions between \$10,000 and \$20,000. That ain't chickenfeed.

It would lower home prices. A recent study by the National Association of Realtors done by Pricewaterhouse Coopers, the esteemed accounting firm, showed that eliminating State and local would erode property values, the rock of the middle class, by 10 percent. To middle-class folks in New York and, I believe, around the country, their home is their piece of the rock. They struggle each month, paying the mortgage, paying the taxes, paying for the upkeep, but they are hoping that by the time they reach later middle age they will own that home, and that gives their kids a place or gives their kids a nest egg when they pass it on. But this bill, by eliminating State and local, reduces across America, on average, home values by 10 percent. So it is a double whammy to the middle class, raising their taxes and lowering their home values. Why would we do that?

You don't have to take it from me. I will tell this to my Republican colleagues. PETER KING is a hard, rock-ribbed Republican who has a lot of courage and who this morning was on TV talking about investigating Hillary Clinton, but here is what he said about repealing the State and local deduction. He said that it "will devastate my district forever." That is a solid middle-class and upper middle-class Republican district on Long Island.

Here is what else PETER KING said: "How anybody from New York and New Jersey can vote for this budget without knowing what is in the tax bill is beyond me." He was referring to the State and local tax deductions.

I salute PETER KING for telling it like it is. Having the courage to stand up and say to his own party's leadership: I will not forsake my constituents for a tax bill when I don't even know what the details will be. The remaining Members of the New York, New Jersey, California, and other delegations have

a decision to make. Will they protect the middle class and tens of thousands of homeowners in their districts or go along with the hard-right agenda that will cost their constituents hard-earned money for groceries, home repairs, and other needs, and do that all so that the very wealthy can get a huge tax break and all so that the biggest corporations which are flush with money can have even more money—wrong.

I hear on the other side that we are talking about a tax bill for the middle class. To eliminate State and local deductibility hurts the majority of middle-class people in this country. That is what will happen if they keep that in there.

Now, some will say, in the House—and I have heard one of my colleagues from New York, a Republican: Oh, that SCHUMER is a Democrat; he is beating up on Republicans. But I went through this in 1986, the last time we had tax reform. It was the Democrats who were pushing the bill—Senator Bradley, a legend in this Chamber, and Leader Gephardt, one of the Democratic leaders in the House. Despite their entreaties, I told them not only would I not vote for any reform bill that had State and local deductibility in it, but I would lead the charge and round up others, and I did. I got a lot of flak from my fellow Democrats, but it was the right thing to do for my middle-class constituency in southern Brooklyn. So when I ask our Republican colleagues to buck their leadership to help their middle-class constituents, it is something I did with the Democratic leadership the last time tax reform was on the floor.

Some are already rationalizing their vote to approve the budget by putting their hopes in the vague possibility of some kind of compromise on State and local deductibility. The harsh fact is, there is no good compromise to be had on State and local. If you want to make taxpayers choose between the mortgage deduction and the State and local, it is like asking taxpayers to decide whether they want to cut off their right arm or their left arm. Some are talking about a cap. Well, where are you going to cap it? More than 50 percent of the total value of the deduction goes to taxpayers with incomes below \$200,000. Cap it too low, and almost all those middle-class taxpayers get whacked. Cap it too high, and it doesn't raise enough money to offset all the cuts my Republican friends want to give the corporations and the top 1 percent. Republicans in the House shouldn't stake the votes on the prospect of a good compromise on State and local because there is not one to be had.

The bottom line is, any Republican plan that limits SALT is the equivalent of robbing middle-class families of tax benefits and handing it over to the wealthiest Americans and biggest corporations. There is no—no—compelling reason to do it. People aren't clam-

oring for it. We don't need to take a trillion dollars from working families and give it to millionaire CEOs, period.

If that weren't enough reason to vote no, the Republican leadership is still debating capping pretax contributions to 401(k) plans. Do you hear that, retirees and potential retirees? In their craving thirst to give the wealthiest people in America a tax break, they are going to say: You can't save money for retirement tax-free. What a gut punch to the middle class that would be. Despite the President's claims to the contrary, Representative BRADY and Senator PORTMAN have said that a 401(k) cap is still on the table.

So do you know what this bill has become? Again, in its desperation to help the wealthiest, it is like a quiz show. Which way do we hurt the middle class to pay for it? Door one is State and local deductibility. Door two is cap retirement. Who knows what they will pick in door three? It could be the mortgage deduction. Asking middle-class people to choose which poison to take so they can help the wealthiest makes no sense.

I would urge my colleagues in the House and here in the Senate: Stop doing this partisan bill that was dictated by the hard right, very wealthy individuals, very rich corporations, huge corporations. Work with us. We want to create a bipartisan bill that helps the middle class. We are for tax reform, and we can get something done.

Please stop this train in its tracks early on before it is too late and you will regret it. There are large numbers of Democrats, including this minority leader, who want to sit down with Republicans and come up with a deficit-neutral, middle-class, small business-oriented, bipartisan tax relief bill, not a plan to benefit the richest 1 percent or the largest and most powerful corporations that are already flush with cash. We want to work with our Republican colleagues on a real bipartisan deal. Defeat this budget, and we will.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Palk nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from West Virginia.

TAX REFORM

Ms. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise to again highlight the importance of enacting tax reform. I listened to the Democratic leader's speech. I have heard that speech a thousand times—a thousand times how only wealthy Americans are going to benefit from anything the Republicans can come up with. Well, do you know what? Americans are smarter than that. Americans are smarter than that.

I represent a State, West Virginians who have struggling economic situations. If I were to go out on the street in West Virginia, and as I talked to individuals there, and asked them: Would you like more of your hard-earned money at the end of the day and have a tax cut and tax relief, I can guarantee you 100 percent would say: Heck, yeah. I can spend my money better at home with my priorities than what you are doing in Washington, DC. So let's not let that argument rule the day. As I said, we are smarter than that.

Let's talk about what this bill does. This is now my fourth, actually, in a series of something I believe in, which is tax reform for everybody in this country.

My first speech described the benefits we will have in economic growth. Something that was not mentioned by the previous speaker is how we have been stagnated for so long. The economic growth will rise all boats. Every middle-class worker will benefit from this, and every small business will benefit from this. My second speech was about small businesses. Ninety-five percent of my State is small business. Last week, I highlighted the importance of passing the budget resolution to allow Congress to move forward, and we did that.

Today, I want to talk about the importance of tax reform for middle-class families and the impacts this bill will have on them, the very real impact. You know what, raising a family is very expensive today. A recent study from the Department of Agriculture found that middle-income households will spend over \$230,000 raising a child. It is staggering—staggering.

The Federal Reserve found that almost half of American families are struggling right now to come up with \$400 if they have an emergency expense. In West Virginia, where the median income is \$41,000—hardly the wealthy—families are forced to make hard tradeoffs as they balance their checkbooks each month.

Expenses are going up. Yet most Americans haven't received a raise in years. So we need to help working families, especially those living paycheck to paycheck, and this is one of the primary goals of our tax reform. We want middle-class, middle-earned-income

folks, hard-working folks to get more in their pocket to decide what they want to do with their money. I raised three children. I know just putting shoes on your children is an expensive proposition. Maybe you want to plan for a trip or save for college. Well, to pay for childcare and to save for college at the same time is almost impossible for our young families today.

The framework we have set forward, I think, will help our families in many ways. First, it calls for a significant increase in the child tax credit. Yesterday, a number of my colleagues from the House and the Senate, joined with Ivanka Trump to highlight what an improved child tax credit would mean for working families. The tax reform proposal would allow families to take a higher per child credit, saving money on their taxes—money they have earned, money the families deserve to spend on their own, and money that could have significant impact to our families.

We will also create a \$500 tax credit for families who are caring for a nonchild dependent. Many Americans find themselves in the sandwich generation, where they are not only caring for their children, they are caring for their parents at the same time. This will help those families.

Second, the proposal nearly doubles the standard deduction or the zero tax bracket. It raises it up to \$24,000 for married taxpayers and up to \$12,000 for single taxpayers.

What kind of impact would this have on a State like mine? Well, 83 percent of the taxpayers in West Virginia take the standard deduction. They are going to get a doubling in their standard deduction. That is more money for them to take home, to put the value of where they want to spend it with their own families. So four out of five West Virginia working families will benefit from that. That is an enormous savings, and even more taxpayers are likely to benefit, as the larger standard deduction means fewer people will itemize. We expect that figure to go up—from 83 percent up. It makes filing taxes simpler, and it makes it so our taxpayers can file on a single form without all of the extra forms, time, and money it takes.

Finally, and most importantly, families will benefit from the economic growth that tax reform will bring to our country. This is probably the biggest impact that tax reform will have for working families. We will lower the corporate rate, yes, for companies, but we have to make our companies competitive across the globe. We are not. We are not competing. What kind of effect does that have? Fewer jobs and lower wages. Companies know that if they invest in their workforce, if they invest in the wages of their workforce, they are going to have a more productive workforce to produce products, to sell products, to enhance the quality of life of their communities.

Many of these large corporations that are scattered around our country

really do a lot of work in the community service parts of our country, whether it is helping with schools or whether it is helping with the baseball teams or sponsoring a robotics team. Why does that matter to working families? More than \$2 trillion in profits earned by American companies is kept offshore because of the flaws in our current tax system—\$2 trillion—and I think some of those estimates might be low. Shifting to a more fair and competitive system will bring those dollars back to the United States. Those companies want to invest in our country because they know we have the safest investments, we have the most technologically advanced and we have the best workforce, and this is great news for American families.

The White House Council of Economic Advisers estimates that lowering that tax rate—that corporate tax rate—from 35 to 20 could increase the pay for the average American by about \$4,000. At my small business roundtable, when I asked, what would you do with tax relief, the first thing she said was “raise the wages of my seven employees.”

So I think that this would be good news for working families, certainly good news for 50 percent of the West Virginia workers who work in small business. We need to make sure we work together, that we target our tax relief to middle-class families.

I say to the Acting President pro tempore, you and I were at lunch the other day with the President. Priority No. 1, the President said that this tax cut must be targeted to the middle class, the working families in this country. That is what this bill has put forward: larger tax credit, larger standard deduction, unlocking the wages by lowering the competitive tax rate. Despite our hard work, too many middle-class families are falling behind, and we want to make sure that trend stops.

So all of us, I think, can join together. This is going to go through committee. Both parties will have lots of opportunity to weigh in, and I look forward to looking into the eyes of the working men and women in my State and saying: Not only is help on the way, but help is here.

Thank you so much.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I think it is going to be a very robust conversation about taxes. When we look into the eyes of working Americans, I hope my Republican colleagues are ready to answer this question, and that is, Why do they, the Republican Party, want to send \$3.5 trillion of tax benefits to the top 1 percent? Why not spend the tax benefits on the middle class?

Well, my colleagues keep coming to the floor and saying this is all about the middle class, but they don't mention that, in fact, every single major change is all about benefits for the richest 1 percent.

Changing the dynasty tax to create a dynasty loophole, wow, that really doesn't benefit anybody in the working class. Lowering the top bracket while raising the bottom bracket, well, that doesn't help anybody in the working class. Providing a special passthrough for those who can put their business activities into limited liability corporations and have a special low rate, well, that certainly doesn't help anybody in the middle class.

One provision after another, after another is targeted at the richest Americans, while coming and preaching help for the middle class. Oh, the American people will see right through this scheme. They are going to ask: Why is it you do so little for those at the bottom? In fact, you do nothing for those in the bottom third. Why is it you do so little for those in the middle class? In fact, many of them will see a tax increase. Why do you send the vast bulk of the benefits to the richest Americans when the richest Americans are already so much richer than anyone else?

The debate we are going to have is important. For my colleagues who think they can fool the American people by talking about the middle class and instead are targeting the richest to be richer, I have news: It is not going to work.

CLIMATE DISRUPTION

Now, Mr. President, I will turn to a different topic. Climate disruption is a seminal challenge of our generation. It affects everything from our forests to fisheries and farming. Rural America is the core target of the impacts of the changing climate, and we see the impacts worldwide. We see it in disappearing ice sheets and melting permafrost and the reduced number of glaciers around the world and dying coral reefs. We see it in migrating animals and insects. We certainly see it in the more powerful hurricanes hitting the United States in Texas and Puerto Rico and Florida.

In response, communities around the world are transforming their energy economies. They are increasing the efficiencies of their buildings, their vehicles, and their appliances. They are working to replace carbon-polluting fossil fuel energy with clean and renewable energy.

Well, how much do you know about the changes underway? Let's find out. Welcome to episode 6 of the “Senate Climate Disruption Quiz.” Here we go.

First question: In December of 2016, vehicle emissions and coal production in the United States of America were each at record lows since what year? Were they at record lows since 1970, 1974, 1980, or 1986? Lock in your answers.

The answer is not 1970 or 1974 or 1980; the answer is 1986. We are now working on over three decades, despite a vast increase in the vehicle miles traveled. We have reduced the emissions, and we certainly reduced the emissions in coal production. We are experiencing quite

a change. We see the transition through clean and renewable energy irrevocably underway.

Let's go to the second question. How many Republican Representatives—Members of the House—asserted that climate change has the potential to adversely impact all Americans? How many Republican Members of the House? Was it 13 or 17 or 20 or 22? Admittedly, it is a modest number.

The number was 17. The answer is B. These 17 Republican lawmakers introduced a resolution warning that “if left unaddressed, the consequences of a changing climate have the potential to adversely impact all Americans.” So this is a very big deal, that 17 Republicans in the party financed by the coal and oil billionaires, who have really taken complete control of the U.S. Senate, stood up to them and said: We are going to speak on behalf of our responsibility, as citizens of the United States of America, to protect our citizens from the assault on our farming and our forestry and our fishing from climate disruption. I praise those 17 for having done so. It is a powerful, bipartisan step in the right direction of championing the cause of all Americans—and for that matter, the entire planet.

Question No. 3: In July of this year, California extended its cap-and-trade program to which year? Did it extend it for just a couple of years to 2020 or to the year 2025, 2030, or 2035? How long did California lay this vision into the future? Lock in your answers.

The answer is 2030. The program would have otherwise expired in 2020, so they extended it another decade. It was basically a statement of confidence that the program that they laid out, that they have in place now, is working and deserves extension. It is the only program of its kind in the country, and it is the second largest in the world.

Under this vision, this new and expanded program, California will cut its emissions of carbon dioxide 40 percent from its 1990 levels, despite having a vastly expanded economy. That is a powerful vision and a vision we need to extend through completely eliminating the burning of fossil fuels in the next three decades.

Question No. 4: How many acres of our citizen-owned—that is, our Federal—fossil fuels were leased to industry as of October 2016? Had we leased out 30 million acres of Federal land for the extraction of fossil fuels or 45 million or 53 million or 67 million? Any of these is really a vast amount of what we own as citizens. Lock in your answers.

The answer is at the top end of the spectrum—67 million acres. What this means is that for years and even decades into the future, we have already contracted for a vast amount of fossil fuels to be extracted from our citizen-owned lands. These extractions add to the problem facing rural America and the impact on our farmers and our fish-

ermen and our forests. That area which has been leased out for the extraction of fossil fuels, which, as citizens, you and I own, is the size of Colorado—a vast sea of fossil fuel extraction leases on public lands. It shows the dire need to pass the Keep It in the Ground Act.

The only responsible thing for us to do is to not do any more leases of our citizen-owned oil or coal or gas. The responsible thing to do, the right thing to do, especially as we work in partnership with the world, is to say no new leases that expand this 67 million acre number.

Now let's turn to Question No. 5. Which U.S. community was the first to make a decision to divest all of its oil and gas stocks because of the impact of oil and gas on destroying our Nation? Was it Cooperstown, NY; Salem, OR; Lawrence, KS; or Walla Walla, WA? Lock in your answers.

The answer is Cooperstown, NY. There is quite an interesting story behind this, a remarkable story. At the center of the story is a man named Louis Allstadt. Mr. Allstadt is a retired ExxonMobil executive. At one point, he managed all of Mobil Oil's exploration in the United States, Canada, and Latin America, so he knew the oil industry, the fossil fuel industry, inside-out from the very top level.

After retiring, he ran for town trustee in Cooperstown. As a town trustee, he then spearheaded an effort for Cooperstown to become the first town in the United States to divest its oil and gas stocks. Mr. Allstadt summed it up this way: “You don't just keep driving your car when you see a cliff ahead.” Well said. Yet so many in this Chamber are determined to drive the car over the cliff.

From the high reaches of the executive suites of Exxon Mobil, Mr. Allstadt could see the damage being done to the planet by the continued burning of fossil fuels. He saw the absolute need to stop, and he took a principled, moral stand on behalf of us all.

Thank you, Mr. Allstadt, for doing that and setting that example. It is one we should all pay attention to. Every city council and every mayor across the country should ask the question: Should we follow Mr. Allstadt's example, the example of Cooperstown, NY? Because if we continue in the direction we are going, we will do fabulous amounts of damage from which we will not easily recover—if we can recover at all.

So there you have it, folks—episode 6 of the “Senate Climate Disruption Quiz.” These questions were ripped from the headlines. Facts on the ground are changing fast as climate disruption increases and communities across the globe respond. We are racing the clock, and we have no time to spare. So stay engaged in the fight.

In the near future, I will bring you episode 7 of the “Senate Climate Disruption Quiz.”

Thank you, Mr. President.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TAX REFORM

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, over the next few weeks, the Senate, the House, Congress—everybody here in Washington is going to be engaged in what I think is one of the most important and potentially impactful debates we have had here in a long time. For a place that has been so criticized for not doing anything, we have a chance to actually do something that is going to matter and help real people and help the country. It is called tax reform.

I think the great thing about a tax reform debate is that it actually goes to the heart and soul of our identity as a nation and who we want to be and who we have been up to this point.

We are a nation that has embraced free enterprise. There are people who don't believe in free enterprise. There are people who believe in different variations of free enterprise. By and large, America has believed in free enterprise. That basically means the government doesn't try to control too much of the economy. People have private property and private businesses. You have rules to make sure people don't cheat and steal from one another or hurt people, but by and large, we believe in a private economy. Why do we believe that? I think the answer to that is not just a purely economic one; you look back at our founding.

One of the unique things about this country that we have taken for granted and do not do a good enough job of teaching young Americans is that America was not created as a nation to bring together a common race or a common ethnicity or a common religion. There are a lot of nations around the world—in fact, I would argue that most of the nations that have ever existed have been a homeland for the people who were born and have lived in that one place—not us. We were founded on the idea that you could bring different kinds of people from different backgrounds and unite them as one people, despite their differences in background and ethnicity and religion. You could unite them behind a very powerful idea—the idea that all of us are created equal because we were born with a God-given right to life and to liberty and to pursue happiness.

That is not just a revolutionary idea; it has changed the world. It has been the identity of our country. It is among everything else that makes us unique and special. In every generation, it has been challenged economically, socially, and culturally. We need to continue to fight for that.

One of the core principles behind equal opportunity is the ability to fulfill your economic potential—to grow up and be who you want to be, do what you want to do, open a company or work for a certain industry or career or

stay home and raise children. Whatever your choice is, they are all legitimate. We are a nation that believes we all have the God-given right to pursue that, and that is something which free enterprise makes possible.

The difference between free enterprise and people who want government to control everything is—the best analogy I can think of is, imagine a pie. Let's use a pie as an example. I can't bring one on the floor to graphically detail it, but imagine one in your mind. Imagine if I said to you: This pie will never grow. It will always be the same size. Every single one of us gets a slice.

Well, if the pie can't grow and everyone gets a slice, then the bigger your slice, the smaller my slice. That is what people who don't believe in free enterprise argue. They argue that the pie really can't grow, and so you need government to make sure that pie is sliced equally or equal enough among everybody. The Tax Code is one of the ways they do it.

There is another argument. It is the one I believe in. It is the one that I think has made this country the most prosperous in human history. It is the argument that that pie doesn't have to stay that size. We can make it a pie that is a lot bigger and make sure it keeps growing. Therefore, it doesn't matter how big the other person's slice is, as long as your slice is big too. More for them doesn't mean less for you. That is one of the unique attributes of free enterprise: Everyone can be better off without anyone being left worse off. That is the theory, but it doesn't always work in practice for a lot of different reasons. That doesn't mean anarchy. We do need government. I am not anti-regulation; I am anti-over-regulation.

I fly on airplanes. Everybody here flies on a lot of airplanes. I am sure we are all glad that airplane is inspected and the person who is flying it is really a pilot and not just someone who stayed at Holiday Inn Express.

I think all of us want to make sure that when you open a bottle of medicine prescribed to you, what is in that bottle is actually the medicine and not something fake or something different.

When we eat food, we want to make sure it is not poisonous or going to spread disease. These are all products of regulation.

The same is true in economics. That is why we have antitrust laws. That is why we take on anti-competitiveness, because it actually undermines free enterprise. I am not talking about corporatism, because there are a lot of countries around the world that claim to be free enterprise, but they really aren't. Four or five big companies control everything, and everybody else either works for them or is unemployed. That is not what I am talking about.

I am talking about free enterprise—a nation and a system in which someone can quit their job, open a business, compete with their former employer,

and put them out of business—or at least take away some of their customers—because you are better than they are. That is free enterprise. That is what we believe in, and the Tax Code is a part of it.

What has challenged free enterprise in this country in the 21st century and you sense it in people's frustrations? There are two things.

The first is there is a lot of overcompetition. It wasn't true in the sixties and seventies. We forget Germany and Japan. These countries were wiped out completely during World War II. It took them decades to rebuild. America was the only show in town for much of the fifties, sixties, up into the seventies. But all of these other countries watched us grow, and they started doing the things we did. They started deregulating, and they most certainly started cutting taxes.

The result has been that over the last 20 or 25 years, most countries in the industrialized world, the big economies, charge companies a lot less in taxes than we do. What that does over time is make us uncompetitive. That is why not a day goes by that you don't read about some American company that was bought by a company in another country and moved over there. Do you know why? Because they pay less in taxes over there than they do here. Anyone who doesn't realize that is missing a big part of it.

We are not the only show in town anymore. We have to compete, and that is why our Tax Code is important. If it becomes uncompetitive, you are basically forcing and/or inviting companies to leave the United States for a more favorable tax treatment—and that has happened.

Do you know who has paid the price? Not the rich people. If you are a wealthy investor, you can invest your money anywhere in the world. Even if you make your money here, I promise you, you have the best lawyers and the best accountants to find every creative loophole to save money. And if that loophole doesn't exist, you will hire the best lobbyist to make one.

In the end, the truly wealthy—the billionaires, the owners with these extraordinary amounts of wealth—they will figure it out. Do you know who gets hurt? The people who get paid every 2 weeks. That is who gets hurt because when those companies leave the United States, they take their jobs with them. The fewer of those there are and the more people we have competing for fewer jobs, the less people get paid at a time when everything costs more.

There is another thing that is hurting us, and it is not part of the tax reform, but it is the way growth is now distributed. We can no longer just assume that if the economy grows, everyone will be better off automatically, because the truth is, in the 21st century, there are some careers, some industries, and some jobs that pay substantially more.

Do you want to talk about the haves and have-nots in the 21st century? The haves and the have-nots are the people who have advanced education and the right skills and the people who do not. We have to close that gap. Vocational training—that is a separate topic that has to be dealt with and is critically important in the way growth is distributed. But you have no growth to distribute if you don't have growth. So that is why this is so important.

When you hear all this talk about wealthy corporations getting huge tax breaks, it is not necessarily true. It is really, really important for people to pay attention to the details and not just the talking points on this.

For example, let's say company X is a publicly traded company, so they sell stock on Wall Street and the like. Next year, because we lower taxes, that company makes \$1 million more than they did this year. What can they do with that million dollars for a publicly traded company? There are really only four things they can do with that money, and all four of them help working Americans.

The first thing they can do is grow the business. They can say: We like our business a lot. We now have a million dollars more than we thought we were going to have, but we believe so much in our future that we are going to take that million dollars and we are going to invest it to grow the company. We are going to open a new factory. We are going to open more stores and hire more people as a result. We are going to invest in more equipment, which means the people who make that equipment have more work. That is the first thing you can do with the money you might save on taxes.

The second thing you might have to do—maybe you don't grow your business, but with that million dollars extra that you have from the tax cuts, you are going to have to pay your employees more because, if not, they are going to quit and go to work for somebody else. So all of a sudden, you are now in a position to be able to hire good people and retain them by paying them more and by offering better benefits to keep them. That is the second thing you can do with the money.

The third thing you can do with the million dollars from the tax cut that you didn't plan on having is lower prices. You can say: I am in competition with these five other businesses to sell the same thing. We are going to use our million dollars to lower our prices just a little bit, just enough so that people buy it from us instead of them. Do you know what that other company is going to have to do? They are going to have to lower prices, too, to compete with you. Do you know who benefits from the lowering of prices? The middle class. The people who are going to shop are going to be paying less because of the competition. That is the third thing that can happen.

The fourth thing that can happen and the one that gets the most criticism is,

well, they will just pay it to the shareholders in dividends. OK. Who are the shareholders? The shareholders are wealthy people who trade in Wall Street and spend all day in front of a computer and have these brokerage accounts and people who handle their accounts. They are a part of it.

You know who else are shareholders? Millions and millions of Americans. If you are a firefighter or a police officer with a union pension, you are a shareholder. You might not be aware of the companies you have shares in, but it is in your pension, and the future of your pension will depend on how those investments go. If you are a 401(k) holder, you are a shareholder. Just because you are not in front of the computer every day, checking your TD Ameritrade account to see how much money you have in X stock and Y stock does not mean you are not a shareholder. You are a shareholder.

Virtually every sort of investment mechanism for retirement in America is invested in what is called equities, is invested in the market, is invested in stocks and bonds. If, in fact, those things are doing better, it is helping you retire.

That is why the business side of this is so important. It will help grow the economy, but it actually will also help people because there is nowhere else for that money to go.

The other type of small business, which is actually the majority, has been called a passthrough, and that is what most businesses are organized as. That is where you pay on your personal rate. If you are a small business owner with three employees, you are an S corporation, and at the end of the year, you pay your taxes on your personal rate. Your rate is actually higher than the companies, the corporations, except you can't hire the lawyers and the accountants and all the other expertise. You are actually, in many cases, paying more than the big companies. These small businesses need to be helped, too, and they would be with tax reform that lowers their rate and makes them competitive.

Beyond ensuring that people are either going to have better retirement funds, lower prices, more pay, more jobs, and we are helping small businesses, the vast majority of which are owned by people who are not multimillionaires and billionaires, the other thing we can do to help working-class people in this country is an expansion of the child tax credit. It is an idea that Senator LEE and I have been pushing for the better part of 2 years. It wasn't always universally popular, but I am going to explain three reasons why it is important. In fact, not only is it important, but it has to happen. If we don't do this, then someone could argue that this is not a middle-class tax cut. If we do it, it will be, perhaps, the single largest middle-class tax cut in modern history.

The child tax credit is a credit you get per child. Obviously, it phases out

at some point—the more money you make. Why do we have it? We have it for two reasons: No. 1, we truly believe that the family is the most important institution in society and parenting is the most important job you will ever have. I don't care who you are. If you are the President, if you are a Senator, if you are a Congressman—I don't care what you do—the most important job you will ever have, the most influence you will ever have, the most impactful thing you will ever do is to raise a family, so our Tax Code accounts for that. It should.

The second thing is that raising children is expensive. If you are raising children right now or have at any time in the near past, you know how expensive it is. I don't know where they get these numbers, but they sound right to me. The Department of Agriculture estimates that to raise children from the time they are born to the time they are 18 is about \$235,000 per child. That is a staggering amount of money. That doesn't even account for college, by the way.

All you have to do is spend just 10 minutes; just go out one day this weekend and talk to the people you know who are working parents, and ask them. They are going to tell you one of the most expensive things they face, especially between the time their children are born and the time they turn 4 or 5, is childcare. In over two-thirds of the States in this country, this costs more than it does to go to college. Imagine that you make \$800 a week that you take home, but you have to spend \$400 a week on childcare for your two kids. That is half your paycheck.

I am not saying a child tax credit fixes all of that. I am saying that is a cost that keeps going up. It is a reason why the tax credit has lost about \$300 in value from the time it was last expanded in 2003.

The other thing to add to it is, if you look at some of the changes being proposed on the personal deduction, that is another \$500 off. In essence, at \$800 per child, we are just breaking even. That is why we have to have a child tax credit that is at least \$2,000 to really have an impact.

The other thing we have to do is make it refundable. What that means is it has to apply against payroll tax. Medicare, Social Security taxes—that comes from FICA; it comes immediately off your paycheck. Everybody pays that tax.

Not everybody pays income tax. If you don't make more than a certain amount of money, you don't have an income tax liability, but you are paying taxes. It is called the payroll tax. If we don't deal with that, if we don't make the child tax credit apply to that, then we are basically not cutting taxes or not helping the vast majority of people who need it. There has been some speculation that this would be too expensive and cost a lot of money. It is not true.

No. 2, it is their money. You don't get it unless you owe it, and you don't

owe it unless you are working. All we are saying is let people keep more of their money to pay for their cost of living.

By the way, they are going to have to spend that money. We know that a large number of families in this country are living beyond what they make. That is why credit card debt has risen over the last 20 years. They are going to take that money, and they are going to spend it. They are going to spend a lot of it on raising their children. They are going to spend a lot of it on the things that we talked about.

I am not saying this alone will change it, but, hopefully, the child tax credit, combined with a growing economy in which there are more jobs that pay more and prices are lower, is going to truly help people, and we have to help people in that regard. So this has to be a critical component of tax reform.

I wanted to set the stage for that, because, unfortunately, it is a complicated thing. Unfortunately, taxes are very complicated, more than they really should be.

There is going to be a lot of misinformation out there about who this actually helps and how the economy actually works. So it is really important for us to be clear and upfront about why it is that we are doing the things we are doing.

When I hear all this talk about helping millionaires and billionaires—they are probably the people who care the least about some of the tax reforms. They are going to be finding their way; they just want to know what the rules are. They just want to know what the rules are because they are going to figure it out one way or the other. If their taxes are too high, they will take their money to another country. If they are low enough, they might invest it here. Either way, they are going to be fine.

The people we really want to help are working people and small businesses, and the Tax Code is a part of that. It is not the only part of that, but it is a big part of it. That is why this has to happen. It has to happen. It has been far too long.

I want to take a step back and say that 50 years from now, when people read about this time in American history, they are going to ask themselves: What was wrong with those people? Did they not realize that all these other countries were taking their jobs, and one of the ways those jobs were leaving is that they were giving them away. They were literally inviting people to leave by acting so arrogant about themselves that they thought they could charge them anything they wanted in taxes, and they would stay. That is just not true anymore. I am not sure it ever was entirely true, but it is less true today than it ever was before.

In the end, the people who are really being hurt by this are the people whose jobs don't pay enough at a time when everything costs more.

The people who are really being hurt by this are the people who wish they

could start their own business, but they can't because they don't think they can make enough money to survive.

The people who are really being hurt by this are parents who are trying to raise their children at a time when everything costs more, but their paychecks aren't keeping pace.

The people who are really being hurt by this are the people who sit down every month, and they write down on a piece of paper: This is our budget for the month. And about 14 or 15 days into the month, something comes in the mail that they didn't expect was on its way, and all of a sudden, that whole budget gets blown out, and now they have to use a credit card to pay for it.

The people who are being hurt by this are the people whose kids are now 17 years old, and they say: I want them to go to college, but I have no idea whether they are going to be able to go. Even with financial aid, they are going to have to borrow money to go to school, and now they are in debt. Before they even vote in their first election, they already owe \$10,000. We have to help them if we are going to rebuild the country's economy, and tax reform is a key part of it.

Here is my last point. There has been a lot of talk about debt—that this is going to grow the debt. That actually doesn't have to be true. If you lower the tax rate and businesses are hiring more people, creating more jobs, and growing, that is going to grow your economy. When you grow your economy, you have more taxpayers. When you have more taxpayers, you have more revenue. Even though you didn't raise the rate, you will still collect more money because even though you don't have more taxes, you have more taxpayers. That is a big chunk of this.

Just a normal, not unrealistic growth rate would more than pay for the money that people are saying we are not going to collect as a result of this. That is part one of it.

The other thing that is interesting to me is if we stood here today and said "Let's take \$1.7 trillion and spend it to build stuff that the government does," there would be no problem with that. That would be seen as stimulus. That is positive. That is good debt spending. But, somehow, if we say "Let's take money and give it back to people so they can spend it themselves," that is bad debt. That is ridiculous.

The third thing I would say is that you are never going to tax your way out of debt anyway. Even if we tax everyone in America next year—if, for everyone in America who made \$1 million next year, we confiscated every penny of it and said "Your tax rate this year is 100 percent," it would not even make a dent on the debt. That is how big the debt is and how fast it is growing. So you can't tax your way out of this, and you can't just cut your way out of it, either, by the way. So the only solution to our debt long term is that you have to do two separate things, and you have to do them both.

No. 1, you have to grow your economy. You have to. That pie has to grow. No. 2, the debt has to be held back so it doesn't grow as big as the economy. If you grow the economy by 4 percent and you grow the debt by 4.5 percent, then you are not going to get there. You have to do both. This is part one—grow the economy.

Part two is going to have to be to bring our spending on a sustainable path so that the growth and the benefits of the growth and the revenue from the growth aren't being taken and used to pay for even more government.

To use a best analogy, if you owe a lot of money and you only make \$2,000, and next month you get paid \$3,000 a month but you add \$1,500 a month of expenditures, then you are still owing more money. So you have to do both. You have to generate more revenue through growth—not through more taxes—and you have to hold the long-term line on spending. This is step one of that two-step process. We have a chance to do it here before the year is out. We have to do it, and I believe we will. It will be hard. It should be hard.

I always laugh when I read these articles that say: Oh, tax reform is divisive, and people are arguing about it. They should argue about it. They don't have a lot of arguments about economic policy in China, by the way, because there is not much of an opposition, but in America, we are a republic. There are different ideas. There should be different ideas. Tax reform should be controversial. It is important. There should be debate, and there will be so we arrive at good public policy. There is nothing wrong with that. It is a good thing, not a bad thing, as long as that debate is geared toward reaching a result.

In the end, I will tell you this, if we don't do it, I actually think it will hurt our economy, not keep it the way it is. It will actually hurt it because a lot of businesses, a lot of employers, and a lot of Americans assumed that this would happen, given who won the elections in 2016. They have already made investment decisions on the assumption that some of this was going to happen. I am telling you, if it doesn't happen, the collapse of confidence will hurt the economy badly. Failing to act will actually reverse whatever gains we have already made this year on the expectation of growth and will actually shatter people's confidence in America's future.

If you are sitting there today thinking: Where am I going to open this big plant and hire 1,000 people, and you see tax reform collapse in the United States, and the people in the House, in the Senate, and in the White House are all supportive of tax reform, and you still couldn't get it done, you are going to say to yourself: Guess what; I am not going to invest in that place because even when the people who are in favor of it are in charge, they still can't get it done.

Not doing tax reform will not lead to the status quo. It will actually leave us

worse off. That is why we must do it. That is why the child tax credit has to happen, by the way, because not only can we not pass it without it, but we can't justify it without it.

I am optimistic that we are going to get there. It will be a lot of work, but it will be good work. It will be the reason why so many of us are here to begin with. We come here to make a difference. We come here because we want to contribute toward making things better—not perfect, but better. This will make things better.

For all the people who complain that we spend years here and nothing ever happens, this is the chance to see something happen in our time here and be able to look back when our service here is done and say: We made a difference while we were there.

That is what we are endeavoring to do, and I am excited about the fact that I believe we are going to do it. It will be long, it will be hard, but it will be fun and it will be good for our country and for our people. If we do it right, it will be one of the most rewarding things any of us will ever do in our time here in public service.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Minnesota.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the urgent need for action on the Children's Health Insurance Program and other vital safety net programs.

On September 30 of this year, 3 weeks ago, funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, expired, and funding for community health centers also expired, as did funding for the National Health Service Corps. These three cornerstone programs provide essential health services to hundreds of thousands of my constituents and to millions of people across the country.

Although these programs have historically secured strong bipartisan support and, ostensibly, still do today, the Republican majority has not moved these bills forward toward passage, and it is really time to act.

My home State of Minnesota is one of the first States to exhaust its funding for its Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, a program that covers 125,000 low-income children and 1,700 pregnant women.

While the Federal Government has provided some emergency stop-gap funding, that, too, is slated to run out by the end of November. Minnesota has a long tradition of insuring coverage to vulnerable populations. So coverage for low-income children will continue, no matter what. However, over the next few weeks, if CHIP funding is not reauthorized, the State will have to decide whether it will take extraordinary measures and incur significant financial losses to continue providing coverage for vital services, like prenatal and postnatal care for the pregnant women, whose coverage is currently funded by CHIP. This is a terrible

choice that States shouldn't have to make, and it doesn't have to be that way.

Minnesota is not alone. Five other States and the District of Columbia will see their funding dry up by December, and 25 more States will exhaust their funding by early next year.

Pretty soon, thousands of families could receive notices informing them that their coverage will be terminated. Imagine for a second what that moment would feel like. You have a son or a daughter with a serious medical condition, and, perhaps, they are even in the hospital. You find out that their health insurance is going to be cut off because the Republican-controlled Congress couldn't get its act together to continue funding for a bipartisan program that has been in existence for decades. I would be livid. That is why we have to act now.

For most of this year, the Republican majority has been consumed with destructive and counterproductive debates focused on repealing ObamaCare. They have done little else. That meant that not only did we blow past the funding deadline for the Children's Health Insurance Program, but we also blew through the funding deadlines for community health centers and the National Health Service Corps program. Now this critical reauthorization is on hold because Republicans can't agree on how to pay for it. This comes just a week after Republicans in the Senate endorsed the budget to increase the debt by up to \$1.5 trillion over 10 years for tax cuts that will largely benefit the wealthiest Americans. In fact, the Tax Policy Center estimates that 80 percent of benefits of the Republican tax plan would go to the top 1 percent of income earners in this country.

This is truly a case of the absurd. When it comes to providing healthcare for needy children and keeping Americans healthy, Republicans are saying they can't do it unless it is paid for, and, often, that means making cuts to other safety net programs in which vulnerable individuals rely. But when it comes to tax cuts for the wealthy, which costs many, many, many, many times more than the cost of providing children with health insurance, my Republican colleagues are perfectly happy to do that without demands for offsets and, instead, adding costs to the debt. This is not responsible budgeting, and it is not just kids that stand to lose under this type of budgeting approach. Let me tell you about the other programs at risk in my State of Minnesota.

In Minnesota, there are more than 70 community health center clinics that receive a total of \$27 million in funding to care for the uninsured and the underinsured in the State. If this funding is not reauthorized soon, these community health centers and the patients they serve are going to experience serious losses and not just financial losses.

Take, for example, Sawtooth Mountain Clinic, which provides care to

some of the most isolated and rural counties up in the northeastern corner of my State, in the Arrowhead. Sawtooth reports that it would lose up to \$1 million, which would force them to cut back on staff and services, having a drastic ripple effect across the entire community.

The CEO of the clinic in Grand Marais explains:

We are the only clinic and providers in all of Cook County—

Parenthetically, that is a big county—

and also one of the only providers serving the Grand Portage band.

That is the band of the Chippewa or Ojibwe.

Since 1965, Congress has provided this stable and critically important funding that supports our isolated and rural communities. Congress needs to do its work and needs to act now.

Similarly, without funding for the National Health Service Corps—this is what the program does. It provides financial support and loan repayment for clinicians who practice in underserved areas. I know the Presiding Officer must be interested in that, as Alaska has some underserved areas and needs providers to serve in those areas. Many providers, including those in greater Minnesota, will not be able to recruit or hire new staff.

In a recent news article, the chief executive of a Minneapolis-based network of clinics stated that the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program offered him a unique bargaining chip against the larger health systems. Without this program, he believes he wouldn't be able to successfully compete for providers.

Look, I recognize how we got here and where the time and energy has been spent over the last few months, and I am proud that we were able to abide by the will of the people and successfully stop the effort to repeal the ACA and strip healthcare from millions of people. I would hope that we would recognize that we have here historically bipartisan legislation to reauthorize funding for children's health insurance coverage and other safety net programs. It is incumbent upon us to act, and act now. We have to reauthorize these programs so that Minnesotans and millions of the families across the country are not unnecessarily and unfairly harmed as a result of our inaction.

In the same news story I referred to earlier, the CEO of NorthPoint Health & Wellness, another safety net clinic in Minnesota, stated:

There is a high degree of anxiety for staff and for some of our patients. . . . I think Congress understands that we are vital to the safety net and they have to continue to support the community health centers.

Let's work together to pass this legislation so we don't let these clinics and the patients they serve down. It is time to act, and time to act now.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

WILDFIRE FUNDING

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, in recent months, Americans have been hit by a string of natural disasters—from devastating hurricanes in Puerto Rico, Florida, and Texas, to catastrophic wildfires in Oregon, Montana, and California. Earlier this week, the Senate voted to provide urgent relief to our communities in need.

Although Colorado was fortunate this year—we could have easily had fires, but we were very fortunate, unlike Montana, this year—we know the devastation of wildfires all too well. In 2012, the Waldo Canyon fire raged for 16 days, incinerating 18,000 acres, destroying over 300 homes, and forcing the evacuation of more than 32,000 Coloradans. Years later, our communities are still recovering from the damage.

Out West, wildfires can be catastrophic events. Yet Washington continues to fund them differently than other major disasters, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, or floods. When those disasters strike, we pay for emergency response from an entirely separate account. When a wildfire catches, that cost falls entirely on the U.S. Forest Service. If it is a catastrophic fire, as we see now in Montana and Northern California, those costs can easily exceed the Forest Service budget for fire suppression. That forces the Forest Service to borrow funds from other accounts to make up the difference. That is something no one has to do for any other disaster in America. This is often at the expense of efforts to prevent the next catastrophic fire.

It stands to reason that if we spend less and less on fire prevention, which is what the Forest Service is doing every year because of the way the Congress has set this up, we are going to spend more and more on fire suppression, fighting fires, and that is what is happening. That is exactly what has happened.

In 1995, the Forest Service spent around 16 percent of its budget on fire suppression—16 percent. Last year, it spent over half of its budget. For the first time in the Forest Service's history, they spent over half their budget fighting fires. You might as well call it the fire-fighting agency, not the Forest Service agency. In fact, the number was closer to 60 percent. The Forest Service had to borrow over half a billion dollars from other accounts in the agency—accounts that are important to Colorado, Wyoming, and Alaska.

While we replenished those accounts in disaster aid packages earlier this year, we once again failed to address why they were depleted in the first place. Until we do, we are going to find ourselves in the same position every year. This is no way to run a government. It makes no sense from a fiscal perspective, and it makes no sense from a public welfare perspective. This is not how we should manage our taxpayer dollars. Undercutting fire prevention is the definition of being penny wise and pound foolish. Every dollar we

spend on disaster prevention leads to \$5 of savings down the road.

We need to reinvest in fire prevention and in forest mitigation. In Colorado, our forests are in terrible shape. And it is not just Colorado citizens who need to care about that; anybody who lives downstream of our rivers, which are States all across America, needs to care about the condition of those headwaters. Those headwaters that are owned by the public, entrusted in the Forest Service, are in terrible shape because of this Congress's inability to deal with this.

We have over 800 million dead standing trees in the State of Colorado alone. Our communities, our watersheds, and our infrastructure are at risk. The Forest Service knows how to do this. They know how to mitigate that—by thinning timber and managing prescribed burns. But right now, all of those projects are on hold because the Forest Service anticipates having to fight more catastrophic fires next season. This is ridiculous. This is an affront to the people of Colorado and the people of the West.

We have a solution. It is a simple solution. Let's pay for fire suppression the same way we pay for other disasters. Our bill, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, would do just that. It is backed by seven Democrats and, I am very proud to say, by four Republicans. Unlike a lot of issues in Washington, both parties actually agree on the solution.

I know the administration is eager to fix this problem. Secretary Perdue knows that the current system makes no sense. He said as much at his confirmation hearing and again when he invited—and I so much appreciated this; we didn't ask—a bipartisan group of Senators to the Forest Service in September to discuss this. He knows that important wildfire mitigation projects are not getting done. He wants to fix the problem, and we should. It is far past time. This makes no sense from a fiscal point of view.

I know some colleagues in this Chamber would prefer to couple our proposal with broader forest management reforms. I have been part of forest management discussions in the past, and I want to continue those discussions. In fact, in the last farm bill, we worked across the aisle to improve forest management.

Let's be clear. For years now, efforts to link broad forest management reform with a funding fix have failed. They will not pass the Senate. Each year we do nothing, we continue to shortchange fire prevention, the good people who work for the Forest Service all across the country in our States, and we needlessly expose our communities to greater risks.

We have to act—Colorado and the West cannot wait another year—and we will have a chance when Congress votes on another disaster package over the next few months. We should use that opportunity to finally fix this problem

and put the Forest Service in a stronger position to prevent the next catastrophic fire.

I thank my colleague from Wyoming for his patience and for his leadership on the Budget Committee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, while I am disappointed that we didn't continue the tradition of alternating speakers, I am glad that I got to hear both of the previous speakers.

I used to work with the Senators from Colorado to make sure that there were pictures taken annually from the same spots to show the way the trees are dying. There was an infestation that was causing this. The only reason we don't still take those pictures is all the trees are dead. You can't show that it is spreading when they are all dead. They need to be cleaned up, and I am glad there is work being done on forest management.

On healthcare, there is some effort being made between Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY to get a bipartisan bill, but what we need to do around here is get some of the appointments finished up so that the President can have the people in place to solve these problems. We are having to spend 30 hours on the cloture of a district judge. I have never heard of that. I have been here 21 years now, and I have never heard of that. We have to get the appointments through. That is one of our prime jobs—to provide advice and consent for the President—and it is not happening on a timely basis.

We have had to do 44 cloture motions on different people for the administration. At this point in President Obama's first term, that had only happened five times. With the previous President, it hadn't happened at all, and the previous one, it had only happened once. Already 44 times this year, it has taken us around 30 hours to get somebody through the process, and we have hundreds waiting to get through the process. That is one of our primary jobs. If we can't get those through the process, it is pretty hard for us to do the legislation we need to do.

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

Today, Mr. President, I rise to express my serious concerns on behalf of our Nation's veterans. This is a huge problem in Wyoming. Wyoming is the least populated State in the Nation. If it is a huge problem there, it has to be even greater in States across the country, and I am sure it is a problem in all of them.

In 2014, we learned that several veterans died in Arizona—a lot of veterans died in Arizona while staff at the Phoenix VA medical center entered false information about their wait times and appointments. They kept getting delayed. Later that year, we found that such scheduling manipulation was widespread, including in my home State of Wyoming. Congress responded by creating the Veterans Choice Pro-

gram to help veterans get care in their communities and to get it promptly.

Unfortunately, Wyoming veterans are continuing to experience delays and limited access to care. I have heard from many Wyoming veterans who have been unable to receive the care they need and many providers who have been unable to get reimbursed for medical services. Some doctors and facilities have ended their participation in VA Choice because it is taking too long to get reimbursed or they are unable to get reimbursed at all and they are having to do a tremendous amount of paperwork in order to even get to that final reimbursement. Sometimes when they finally get payment, the check is made out to the wrong provider. Time and again, I hear reports of how difficult it is to get simple answers, let alone care or provider reimbursement, from the VA and the contractor administering the program in Wyoming.

The consequences of this poorly run program are ultimately borne by the veterans. In a frontier State like Wyoming, losing access to one specialist can mean losing access to the only specialist in the area.

Sadly, Wyoming veterans continue to tell me about these problems because the situation isn't getting any better—that is in spite of my having the Secretary in my office and then having him bring his staff in, who had provided the terrible statistics that they were working from.

One such veteran was waiting for a surgery followup and cancer screening and can't go to the same doctor now because VA Choice never paid them. Another veteran was not able to access vision care. Another could not access necessary neurological care because of reimbursement issues. I have even been contacted by veterans who are worried that they will go into collections because of claims that have not been paid by the Choice Program—not by them but by the Choice Program.

Without improvements to the program, our veterans will have to continue to wait for needed care, and their quality of life will continue to be negatively impacted.

I mentioned before that we are the least populated State in the country, and we have so many problems that I send a weekly list to the Secretary. I can't imagine what it is like in a high-population State.

We created VA Choice to better serve the healthcare needs of veterans, not to create a new source of uncertainty about whether they will be able to get the care they need. That is unacceptable. It defeats the entire purpose of the program. Until Congress steps in to improve the program, more providers will drop out of the program and more veterans will be harmed. These men and women have given our country so much, and they deserve quality care in an efficient manner. Their providers need to be paid on time so our veterans can get the treatment they need. When

the system fails those who never failed us, trust degrades. We can do better than this. We must do better than this.

I know my colleagues on the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs are working hard to solve these issues. I am working with them to make sure that any new version of community care for our veterans takes into account the unique challenges that rural and frontier healthcare networks face. We hold the highest debt to our veterans. Let's repay that honor and honor their selfless service by providing them with the care they deserve.

The veterans program was considered to be one of the best-run healthcare programs anywhere, and I heard nothing but compliments about it until the problem in Arizona, and then we found that the system had changed. That might be an indication of what could happen if we went to Federal healthcare for all, but this is one area that needs to be straightened out. It was a prime example of good care, and it isn't. We have to get it restored for our veterans.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, we have a very significant couple of votes coming up. One is the nomination of Scott Palk to be a district judge for the Western District of Oklahoma. We have been working on this for about 2 years now. He is one of the highest qualified individuals.

I thank the leader for moving forward on his nomination this week. I know judicial nominations are a priority of the leader's, and I share his belief in the importance of filling the many vacancies we have with judges who will uphold the rule of law, not predetermine outcomes and not legislate from the bench. Scott Palk fulfills and embodies this philosophy, and I have full confidence that he will be a judge whom Oklahoma and the Nation will be proud of.

This nomination is of great need to the Western District, located in Oklahoma City, which has a very heavy caseload. In fact, we have three vacancies on the bench there. One vacancy goes back over 4 years and another over 3 years, so this nomination is desperately needed.

Mr. Palk was nominated in the last Congress—so it was not this Congress—during the previous administration. He made it through the Judiciary Committee by voice vote before we ran out of time at the end of the 114th Congress. We would have had this done, but we just flat ran out of time. He had bipartisan support in the last Congress

and has in this Congress, with there having been a 17-to-3 vote in the Judiciary Committee. It is not very often that happens.

He also has bipartisan support back home in Oklahoma. He comes highly recommended by David Boren. Everyone here knows who David Boren is. The Presiding Officer remembers David Boren. He was my predecessor in this seat. He was the president of the University of Oklahoma but is retired now. He is a Democrat. Actually, he and I were elected to the House of Representatives in Oklahoma on the same day, so we go back a long way. David Boren knows Mr. Palk very well because Scott Palk has worked at the University of Oklahoma College of Law for about 15 years now after his having left a successful career in both the U.S. attorney's office and as a county district attorney.

David Boren said of Palk—now, this is a Democrat talking about Scott Palk—“He would make an excellent judge,” would be “balanced and fair in his approach,” and has “an excellent reputation for complete honesty and integrity.” I don't know what more you could want in a judge.

That is David Boren talking, my predecessor in the Senate.

Again, I thank the leader for his commitment to fulfilling our judicial vacancies, and I ask that my colleagues support the nomination, as I am sure they will, with a “yes” vote for Mr. Palk.

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

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

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 minutes.

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, we are about to vote on a gentleman named Scott Palk, who was nominated by President Trump to serve as a U.S. district court judge for the Western District of Oklahoma on May 8.

On June 15 of this year, he passed the Judiciary Committee with bipartisan support. It has taken us this long, from June 15, going through the committee process, to finally getting this to the floor in the last days of October.

This is the issue we face as a Senate right now. We have an opening with a judge who has already gone through the committee process, who has already been approved—who will be confirmed, I hope, with wide bipartisan support—but because of the ongoing delay of every nominee, of everything in the process, this is slowing down the wheels of our government across the country. Whether that be judges or whether that be individuals in the executive branch working in the agen-

cies, we are seeing a constant slowing. We have to be able to correct this.

I would state that Americans will be very pleased when they get a chance to see Scott Palk on the bench. He will be a fair judge. He comes from a great family and has a great passion to serve people, both as he served in the U.S. attorney's office in the past and at the University of Oklahoma, working at the law school there. He will make the Nation proud. I am glad we have finally gone through this extremely long process to finally get him on and to get him seated on that bench.

In the days ahead, I look forward to the other positions in government being filled as well with other well-qualified individuals. I look forward to seeing this done. I look forward to seeing Scott Palk not as Scott Palk but as Judge Palk.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Palk nomination?

Mr. COTTON. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 79, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 251 Ex.]

YEAS—79

Alexander	Fischer	Nelson
Baldwin	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Franken	Perdue
Bennet	Gardner	Peters
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hassan	Reed
Brown	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cantwell	Heller	Rounds
Capito	Hoeven	Rubio
Cardin	Inhofe	Sasse
Carper	Isakson	Schumer
Casey	Johnson	Scott
Cassidy	Kaine	Shaheen
Cochran	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	King	Strange
Coons	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Corker	Lankford	Tester
Cornyn	Leahy	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Manchin	Toomey
Cruz	McCaIn	Udall
Daines	McCasKill	Warner
Donnelly	McConnell	Wicker
Durbin	Moran	Young
Enzi	Murkowski	
Ernst	Murray	

NAYS—16

Blumenthal	Hirono	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Gillibrand	Sanders	
Harris	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Heinrich	Whitehouse
Graham	Menendez	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Lamar Alexander, Susan M. Collins, John Boozman, Chuck Grassley, Orrin G. Hatch, Steve Daines, Dean Heller, Bill Cassidy, Cory Gardner, Michael B. Enzi, Thom Tillis, John Thune, John Kennedy, John Cornyn, David Perdue, Joni Ernst, Mitch McConnell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 85, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 252 Ex.]

YEAS—85

Alexander	Coons	Flake
Baldwin	Corker	Franken
Barrasso	Cornyn	Gardner
Bennet	Cortez Masto	Graham
Blumenthal	Cotton	Grassley
Blunt	Crapo	Hassan
Boozman	Cruz	Hatch
Burr	Daines	Heitkamp
Capito	Donnelly	Heller
Cardin	Duckworth	Hirono
Carper	Durbin	Hoeven
Casey	Enzi	Inhofe
Cassidy	Ernst	Isakson
Cochran	Feinstein	Johnson
Collins	Fischer	Kaine

Kennedy	Paul	Stabenow
King	Perdue	Strange
Klobuchar	Portman	Sullivan
Lankford	Reed	Tester
Leahy	Risch	Thune
Lee	Roberts	Tillis
Manchin	Rounds	Toomey
McCain	Rubio	Udall
McCaskill	Sasse	Van Hollen
McConnell	Schatz	Warner
Moran	Schumer	Wicker
Murkowski	Scott	Young
Murphy	Shaheen	
Nelson	Shelby	

NAYS—12

Booker	Harris	Peters
Brown	Markey	Sanders
Cantwell	Merkley	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Heinrich	Menendez	Whitehouse
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 85, the nays are 12.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I rise to discuss an issue that is extremely important to me and to many of my colleagues on this side of the aisle—the issue of judicial vacancies. I came here to work and am honored to serve on behalf of the people of the State of Nevada who sent me to Washington. One of the most pressing issues I have found since being here is, all too often Members of Congress go home before their work is finished.

Many of you here know the first piece of legislation I have introduced for the past two Congresses is my No Budget, No Pay Act. The concept is simple. If Congress can't pass a budget and all of its spending bills on time, then Congress itself shouldn't get paid.

The Senate should apply the same concepts, in my opinion, to confirming judges. I commend our majority leader for bringing two more judges to the floor this week, but there is a lot more work to do. We need to work day and night to confirm those judges who are already on our calendar and have moved out of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The Senate has an incredible opportunity right now to confirm Federal judges who will uphold the Constitution. We should be here every day, for as long as we need, to ensure all judicial vacancies are filled.

Our conference must be willing to work together in order to get the business of the Senate done. Right now, there are 149 judicial vacancies. Let me repeat that. There are 149 judicial vacancies, and the Senate has only confirmed 8 judges this session—149 vacancies, 8 judges confirmed. That means, in 9 months, with well over 100 vacancies and over 60 judicial emergencies, we have only managed to confirm 8 judges.

The minority party has undercut the confirmation process of the administration's nominees and judicial appointments. When new Presidents are elected, they have always been given an opportunity to put their team in place in short order. Historically, this is not just common courtesy, it is an expectation of the American people to have a seamless transition of power, resulting in a functional Federal Government.

One of the eight judges confirmed was Neil Gorsuch, who I am thankful now serves on the Supreme Court. Justice Gorsuch is an example of the type of judge we have the chance to put in place. As with Justice Gorsuch's confirmation, we need to do all that is necessary to fill these vacancies with great judges like him.

President Trump has nominated many judges and has more to nominate. For those he has already nominated, it is our duty to carefully review these nominations and ensure that these judges are confirmed in a timely manner. We must be willing to put in as much time as needed, whether that means working weekends, canceling State work periods, or working all through the night to get these Constitution-loving judges confirmed.

I know this is important to all of us, but we need to do better. Last week, I was a proud partner with Senator PERDUE and several of my other colleagues in calling on the Senate to work 24/7 until we get our work done. We have a substantial list of important work to complete, including confirming the judicial nominees the President has sent us, passing tax reform, fixing our broken healthcare system, and funding the government. The American people elected us to complete these critical tasks. They elected us to deliver a simpler, fairer tax code and to make sure our Federal judiciary is fully occupied with judges whose sole purpose is to uphold the Constitution as it was written.

To my fellow Senators, I am calling on all of us to do what the people have sent us to do and not let a light schedule stop us from fulfilling our duties. The American people don't go to work 4 days a week, and neither should we. This isn't France. We need to work a full workweek. We must make it clear to our constituents that we are fighting for the hard-working Americans every single day. Americans do what it takes to get the job done, and we should do the same.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I don't often come to the floor of the Senate to give a speech like the one I am going to give now, but today I plan to start sounding the alarm, both from the standpoint of the process and the substance of what is known about the Republican tax plan as of this afternoon.

This morning, the House passed the budget so now it is on to tax. The debate, if the Republicans have their way, will happen at the speed of light. If they have their way, this all could be wrapped up before most Americans have even been able to put a dent in their holiday shopping.

That is exactly what the majority of Republicans is counting on. The Republicans are rushing to drive the tax giveaway to the superwealthy and the powerful corporations and to do it so quickly that most of America will really have no idea what will be going on. Their hope is simple—to do it in a way so that nobody catches on. So this afternoon, as the ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee, I am going to look at this from a few different angles—first, as to the process and, then, as to the policy that is on offer from the Republicans as of right now.

Right off the top, I am sure that Senators have heard that, here in the Senate and Congress, there is going to be a real debate that is going to play out in a careful and deliberate way and that there is going to be plenty of give and take. As of right now, my message to the American people is this: You have been fooled. Don't buy that. Here is what is going to happen. Anybody who expects a repeat of the kind of bipartisan, deliberate process that took place in 1986, when the Democrats and Ronald Reagan got together, is in line for some very disappointing times.

Our former colleague Senator Bradley, who served on the Finance Committee with such distinction and was a key author of the 1986 reform bill, called a couple of days ago, and I explained to him what was going on. He was just incredulous. He could not believe that this was going to be the process—that it would all be over in a matter of weeks and that it would not even be like healthcare, with the debate moving in fits and starts and stretching out over months.

If Republicans have their way, as my family used to say, this is going to be over lickety-split, and it is coming up quickly. The House plans to offer up a bill in about a week, and the Ways and Means Committee is going to jump into action. The Senate bill could come out in a matter of days later, and then it would be the Finance Committee's turn.

As most people in the Senate know, there is a normal process for these debates in committee. You usually put out draft legislation. You refine your ideas. You update your work. You share with both sides of the aisle the ideas that would make sense—those that get both sides to say: Hey, bipartisanship is about taking each other's good ideas, and politics is about taking each other's bad ideas. In this case, it is not about trying to make any bipartisan efforts at all. The normal process involves exercising a little patience, giving the officials at the Joint Committee on Taxation and in the Congressional Budget Office time to really make sense of what the numbers mean.

This is not Washington lingo. What do the numbers mean for middle-class people—the folks who are really hurting now, who are walking on an economic tightrope in trying to pay bills? We ought to make sure that people who are knowledgeable about this have the time to really look at the numbers and give us some general sense of what this means, particularly for America's hard-working middle class. Yet for this partisan tax cut and a process that will be hyperpartisan—it is designed to be an off-ramp to partisanship only—the Republicans are just blowing right by those steps that constitute the normal process that I have described.

The Congress is headed for a debate on legislation that has the potential to reshape our entire economy at a crucial time when we understand the challenge from global competition and change, but the Republicans, as of now, are not going to wait to see the facts and figures, never mind that the bill is going to affect every taxpayer in the country in one way or another. The Republicans have said that we are going to do some leaping without looking. They may not even have legislative hearings to examine the Republican tax cut bill and what the impact of it could be, which was what Senator Bradley was just stunned about because he and others worked for months with the Reagan administration in trying to do what was normal and, as of now, is not going to happen.

What is even more ominous is that, if the bill clears the Finance Committee, the debate on the Senate floor will happen in a flash. That is because, since day one of this administration, the Republicans have said—and Leader McConnell has said this repeatedly—that they want to use the most partisan process around to move the tax cut. It is another round of what is called budget reconciliation.

What this comes down to is a rejection of the kind of bipartisanship that has been proven to work on tax reform. Ronald Reagan worked hand in hand with Democrats on tax reform in 1986. The two sides brought forward their best ideas. They worked for months and months and, as Senator Bradley told me, for several years. There were dozens of hearings that dug into the specifics and carefully examined the issues. After the bill came out, the committee met over 18 days to debate and vote on the amendments. There was committee consideration—what is called a markup—that lasted a total of more than 45 hours. Then the bill came to the floor of the Senate, and, as is fitting for a piece of legislation that can reshape the whole American economy, the debate took almost a month. That is the textbook of how you successfully write bipartisan tax reform legislation. By the way, that is the model by which our former colleague Dan Coats—now a member of the Trump administration—worked with me to produce a bipartisan Federal income tax reform bill.

Yet we are not going to see any of that kind of work this time around.

The road that the majority is taking us down in 2017 makes a mockery out of the bipartisan process that brought Ronald Reagan and the Democrats together. As of now, there will be 20 hours of debate—20 hours. That is it—on a bill that will transform the bottom line for every American family and will affect the hopes and aspirations of our middle class, which will drive 70 percent of the economic activity in our country for years and years. Then the debate will be over, and it will be time to vote.

What I am going to try to do here—and we will be talking often in the days ahead—is to lay out what this really means for hard-working middle-class people, because, so far, what we have seen is kind of one hand giveth and the other hand taketh away. The details for the top of the top, the megawealthy, are spelled out, but we do not see exactly how the middle class is not going to go into the hole. As of now, the numbers suggest, particularly if you have a couple of children and are in a place with high State and local taxes, that you really could fall behind. If we do not spell out what is actually at stake here and give the American people the opportunity to tune in and be heard, this process is just going to race by before anybody notices, and that is what the Republicans are counting on.

The bottom line is that, when the middle class and the American people find out what is in the Republican tax plan as it is known today, the less they are going to like it. There have been sort of two versions of it. The first came out, I believe it was, late in the spring. It was a page long—shorter than the typical drug store receipt. We got a bit more information a few weeks ago, but in both instances, as I have described, it looks like the middle class is going to get hurt, and folks who are successful and those who are at the top of the top are, basically, going to get even more.

We want all Americans to be successful. We want to give everybody the chance to get ahead, but we do not want tax breaks skewed to the very top. As of right now, the Republican tax plan is a feast for the very wealthy, and the middle class is on the menu. Even the President's top campaign adviser on taxes said that the Republicans have made \$4 trillion worth of promises in this tax proposal, perhaps even more, but because of budget rules, that pricetag has to come down to \$1.5 trillion for the bill to get through the Senate. That means that somebody has to pay for a whole lot of that \$4 trillion of corporate goodies and handouts to the wealthy.

The Republicans seem almost allergic to raising revenue by asking those at the top to pay their fair share. Every proposal that the Republicans have put forward to pay for this tax giveaway to the top has reached right into the pockets of the middle class. Take the elimination of the State and

local deduction. It will cause pain for millions of Americans across the country, not just in the West—in places like California and Oregon—and the Northeast but for those in scarlet red areas who voted for the President on election day—places like North Carolina, Georgia, Wisconsin, and Texas. Then there is the plan to double the standard deduction while simultaneously getting rid of personal and dependent exemptions.

When you cut out all of the tax lingo—as I have said, one hand giveth and the other hand taketh away—what it means, based on the information that is out now, is that a family of six in Medford, OR, could see its taxes increase by thousands of dollars per year. That is a holiday surprise. My guess is that people are going to say that it is the nightmare before Christmas if this plan becomes law.

Even more middle-class Americans who checked on the news over the last few days probably had the wind knocked out of them when they read that their 401(k)s may be on the ropes under the Republican plan. A few days ago, the President said: No, do not touch the 401(k). But it seems to me like Republicans just cannot help themselves. When the President was asked about it again, the new Trump position was that middle-class retirements are a bargaining chip to get this lopsided tax handout through the Congress.

Let me repeat that last part. The President of the United States said that middle-class retirements are a bargaining chip in this crusade to cut taxes for the most fortunate. Nothing illustrates more clearly how this process has gone horribly wrong, and I want to make clear to the American people to watch the details. Watch the details because every time a new detail leaks out, the middle class loses.

So my bottom line, colleagues, is real tax reform ought to be about putting more dollars back in middle-class pockets, but right now the majority is taking a different tack. It amounts to a hunt for ways to force the middle class to pay for the tax breaks for those at the top.

This scheme will explode the deficit. It is a con job on the middle class. It is failed economic policy, but it could rocket in the Congress in the weeks ahead before the American people catch on.

So my counsel is, everybody ought to strap in and get ready for what is coming. Every step of the way in the Finance Committee and here on the floor, I will continue working with my Democratic colleagues to fight for middle-class priorities and tax reform, and I hope we will have some from the other side of the aisle join us. We intend to keep sounding the alarm on a Republican plan that as of now gives trillions of dollars of handouts to those at the top while hiking taxes on millions of middle-class families.

Now that the House has passed its budget, this is kicking off the debate,

and the idea that we would have a bunch of fake promises to the middle class, very specific gifts to folks at the top, and somehow unicorn theories of growth that will justify this, while really creating deficits that hurt Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and our safety net—those are the issues the American people deserve to know more about. We are going to tell them a lot more about the details in the days ahead because we believe in tax reform that puts the middle-class first, doesn't give gifts to the people in the very top 1 percent, doesn't clobber Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid, and, as Bill Bradley said earlier this week in a conversation with me, is based on the kind of bipartisanship that a hugely important issue like tax reform warrants.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, that at 5:30 p.m., Monday, October 30, all postcloture time on the McFadden nomination be considered expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; further, that it be in order to proceed to the following nominations during today's session of the Senate: Calendar Nos. 368, 369, 432, and 433.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 368, Amy Barrett.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented

under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Thom Tillis, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Marco Rubio, James Lankford, Richard Burr, Steve Daines, Todd Young, Ben Sasse, Mike Crapo.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 369, Joan Larsen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Joan Louise Larsen, of Michigan, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Joan Louise Larsen, of Michigan, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Steve Daines, Tom Cotton, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Patrick J. Toomey, John Barrasso, Cory Gardner, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 432, Allison Eid.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Steve Daines, Tom Cotton, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Patrick J. Toomey, John Barrasso, Cory Gardner, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 433, Stephanos Bibas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Steve Daines, Tom Cotton, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Patrick J. Toomey, John Barrasso, Cory Gardner, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the pending cloture motions ripen following the disposition of the McFadden nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, in my opening remarks today, I commended President Trump once again for the outstanding judicial nominations he has made, and I reiterated the Senate's determination once more to continue confirming them regardless of the often mindless partisan obstruction we have been seeing across the aisle.

This pointless obstruction is designed simply to waste time, not to change an outcome, and it will not. It didn't stop the Senate from confirming Scott Palk, it will not stop the Senate from confirming Trevor McFadden, and it will not stop the Senate from confirming even more outstanding nominees next week. You can count on it.

I have filed cloture on four more well-qualified nominees for our Nation's circuit courts: Notre Dame law professor Amy Barrett, a nominee for the Seventh Circuit; Michigan Supreme Court Justice Joan Larsen, a nominee for the Sixth Circuit; Colorado Supreme Court Justice Allison Eid, a nominee for the Tenth Circuit; and University of Pennsylvania law professor Stephanos Bibas, a nominee for the Third Circuit.

By confirming these nominees, we can take a big step toward restoring our Nation's courts to their proper role, interpreting and applying the law based upon what it actually says, not what a judge might wish it to say. It is quite a departure from the last administration's philosophy when it came to selecting judicial nominees.

For the last 8 years, we had a President who said a criterion for lifetime positions was the ability to empathize with certain groups over others. It came to be known as the "empathy standard." That is a great standard if you are the party in the case for whom the judge has empathy, not so great if you are the other person. It also is not in keeping with the longstanding American legal traditions of applying the law equally to all, giving every litigant a fair shake, and ruling based on the actual meaning of our Constitution

and laws, not what a judge or some preferred political constituency might wish they meant. That, I believe, is the view of the American people.

President Trump has done a terrific job of nominating judges who are already helping to restore the courts to their intended function in our system of government. The nominees we will consider next week are sure to do the same.

We will continue our efforts with consideration of the Barrett nomination on Monday. Amy Barrett is a professor of law at one of our Nation's premier law schools. Notre Dame happens to be a Catholic University. Amy Barrett happens to be a nominee who is a Catholic and who speaks freely and openly about her faith and its importance to her. For some on the left, that seems to be a disqualifying factor for her nomination.

I would remind colleagues that we do not have religious tests for office in this country. There is no religious test for office in the United States of America.

Amy Barrett's nomination has received outstanding reviews. She is clearly well qualified for the office to which she has been nominated. As the president of Notre Dame recently wrote, "Her experience as a clerk for Judge Laurence Silberman of the U.S. Court of Appeals and Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia is of the highest order. So, too, is her scholarship in the areas of federal courts, constitutional law, and statutory interpretation."

Amy Barrett is going to make an outstanding Federal Circuit Court judge. So, too, will Ms. Larsen, Ms. Eid, and Mr. Bibas. I look forward to the Senate confirming all of them next week.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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. MCCONNELL. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise to address the latest mass shooting in our country. This one took place last week in my own State of Maryland, in the city of Edgewood, in Harford County, which is northeast of Baltimore.

In this case, the suspect gathered coworkers at his place of business, Advanced Granite Solutions, and began shooting. He killed three coworkers

and critically wounded two others who remain in critical condition at the Maryland Shock Trauma Center. The suspect then fled to Delaware.

According to an article in the Baltimore Sun, he shot an acquaintance in the head at a car dealership. The victim was in stable condition and later identified his attacker to police. The suspect was finally arrested after a brief foot chase, and police said the suspect threw a gun at them after spotting law enforcement approaching.

This terrible shooting in Maryland came a few weeks after the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history, which occurred in Las Vegas, NV, on October 1. This mass shooting from a hotel room targeting concertgoers at an outdoor music festival left 58 dead and more than 500 people wounded, with dozens of victims still in the hospital today, some of whom are in critical condition. These are just staggering numbers. But I want to put a human face on this for my colleagues and talk about one Marylander who was injured in the Las Vegas attack.

The Baltimore Sun shared the story of Tina Frost. Tina is a native of Crofton in Anne Arundel County, MD. She is a 2008 graduate of Arundel High School in Gambrills. She was a star soccer player in school, and she now lives in California and works at the accounting firm of Ernst and Young.

The story begins:

Before a bullet from 32 stories above cut through her face, Crofton native Tina Frost drove from San Diego with her boyfriend to see one of her favorite country artists in Las Vegas. . . . Becky Frost said her 27-year-old sister had lost her right eye and was in a Las Vegas intensive care unit after a two-hour surgery. [She] said her bubbly and charismatic older sister was in a coma that the family expected to last about a week. Another sister wrote on Facebook that the family was waiting to see the extent of the brain damage. "We're sticking together and praying," Becky Frost said.

Tina Frost did wake up from the coma and was recently transferred to Maryland for additional surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. According to family members, she underwent a second successful surgery last week. The family's website update said: "We are thankful Tina is still being a true fighter and warrior!"

Today, I want Tina and the entire Frost family to know that they are in our thoughts and prayers. I understand that their community has already been raising funds to help defray Tina's medical expenses for her recovery.

This is just one example of hundreds who were victimized in Las Vegas. I am just heartbroken by the terror in Las Vegas. With the entire country, I am grieving for the senseless loss of life and praying for the victims, their families, and all those who were injured like Tina Frost, whether by gunshots or the chaos that ensued.

Much thanks also goes to the first responders, including our police, fire, ambulance, and emergency medical workers, who saved countless lives by

helping those around them and running toward danger instead of running away from it.

Thoughts and prayers console victims and their families, but actions speak much louder. We must be outraged at this latest shooting, and we must act. Congress must act. States must act. Weapons of war should not be in the hands of civilians. We see the deadly results in Las Vegas just as we have seen before in Orlando, Blacksburg, San Bernardino, Aurora, Sandy Hook, the streets of Baltimore, and elsewhere across this great country. We need to do everything in our power to stop the carnage of these shootings. How high does the death toll have to get before we enact real, bipartisan reforms that will make the American public safer and reduce the risks that come from allowing such easy access to dangerous weapons primarily designed for the battlefield? Assault weapons are not needed to hunt deer or ducks; they are only meant to kill people, and they do far too often in this country.

I urge my colleagues to be bold and fight to break the cycle of what could only be described as a callous disregard for the victims of gun violence. More talk will not save lives; only action and real change and Federal and State laws can.

This attack and others like it in recent years tear at the heart and leave us angry, frustrated, and confused. We as a nation must resolve to stop those who wish to do harm to Americans from committing, encouraging, and abetting acts of terror. We as a nation, as a community, and as an American family must take action to change minds, hearts, and finally change policies. We can stop others and save lives by taking immediate action.

I was disappointed that Congress missed yet another opportunity to enact commonsense, reasonable gun safety measures after the June 2016 shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, FL, which killed 49 people and injured 53 others. The mass shooting in Las Vegas has now sadly surpassed those numbers.

In the Las Vegas massacre, Stephen Paddock used a bump fire stock device, which allowed a semiautomatic rifle to fire at a rate similar to that of a fully automatic weapon—a rate of about nine bullets a second. Fully automatic weapons are generally illegal under current law. Paddock also stockpiled a virtual arsenal in his hotel room, as police found 23 firearms in the room. Police also found a large quantity of ammunition, including numerous high-capacity magazines capable of holding up to 100 rounds apiece.

The preliminary assessment—with the understanding that the investigation is still ongoing—from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is that the shooter legally purchased all these guns, bump stocks, and ammunition. It is outrageous that a mass shooter was legally able to pur-

chase a device designed to convert his gun into a military-style weapon with no legitimate civilian use. It is outrageous that a mass shooter was legally able to purchase high-capacity magazine clips with no legitimate civilian use. These are weapons of war. You don't need them for hunting, and you don't need them for self-defense.

Earlier this month, I convened a roundtable meeting with law enforcement officials at the First Baptist Church of Highland Park in Prince George's County, MD. The group included officials from the local, State, and Federal levels, including the sheriff, police chief of Prince George's County, State delegates, the State attorney general of Maryland, and representatives of the U.S. attorney's office.

Maryland has progressive laws on gun safety and has taken steps to ban weapons of war and high-capacity magazines that have no legitimate civil purpose. The group echoed the concern to me that if Maryland has strict laws relating to gun safety that protect both the public and police officers, what is to stop someone from driving over the border to one of our neighboring States in order to procure guns? That is why we need a strong national law to protect all Americans, and Congress should act on commonsense gun safety measures.

What can we do in Congress? I have cosponsored the Automatic Gunfire Prevention Act, which Senator FEINSTEIN introduced. In the Las Vegas shooting, the gunman was able to unleash hundreds of rounds of gunfire on the crowd, likely by using the bump stock device.

Fully automatic guns or machine guns are already banned for civilian use under the National Firearms Act, but a loophole exists that allows for these bump stock devices, as well as similar accessories, to convert semiautomatic weapons to emulate automatic weapons. Senator FEINSTEIN's legislation would close the loophole in current law that allows conversion devices and accessories to be available to the public. The bill bans the sale, transfer, importation, manufacturing, or possession of bump stocks, trigger cranks, or anything that accelerates a semiautomatic rifle's rate of fire. Semiautomatic rifles typically have a rate of fire of 45 to 60 rounds per minute; a bump stock could increase the semiautomatic rifle rate of fire to 700 rounds per minute or 9 per second.

I have also cosponsored the Large Capacity Ammunition Feeding Device Act, also known as the Keeping Americans Safe Act, introduced by Senator MENENDEZ. It prohibits the possession or transfer of large-capacity ammunition magazines—more than 10 rounds per magazine—with limited exceptions for law enforcement personnel. Senator MENENDEZ's bill authorizes a buyback program for high-capacity magazines using Byrne JAG grants.

To me, these two bills represent a practical, commonsense approach to

promoting gun safety and reducing the threat of gun violence without impinging on the rights of legitimate owners.

As NBC News recently reported, more Americans have died from gunshots in the last 50 years than in all the wars in America's history. Since 1968, more than 1.5 million Americans have died in gun-related incidents, according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

I have also cosponsored the Background Check Expansion Act, introduced by Senator MURPHY. This bill would expand Federal background checks to cover the sale and transfer of all firearms by private sellers, just as licensed dealers are required to do so under the existing Brady law, with certain limited exceptions.

Under current law, unlicensed or private sellers are not required to conduct a background check prior to transferring a firearm. This is outrageous, and Congress should act right now to close this dangerous loophole. It should not matter whether you buy a gun at a local gun store or a gun show or the internet—you should have to pass a basic background check to make sure the guns are kept out of the hands of people who should never have one.

Congress has an obligation to act. As I have indicated before, we need to act. Inaction is not an option. Many of our States have acted as well, including my own State of Maryland, but we need a national law that applies to all 50 States to ban bump stocks, prohibit the sale or transfer of high-capacity magazine clips, eliminate the private ownership of assault-type weapons, and require universal background checks for all purchasers.

The time for action is now. We cannot wait. Congress should come together and address the real problem, which is lax gun safety laws, and should pass commonsense gun safety measures to protect all Americans. Let's not wait for the next mass shooting, when we send our thoughts and prayers to victims and then stand by and pretend we are helpless and powerless to prevent another tragedy. Let's take action now.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from North Dakota.

TAX REFORM

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise once again today to talk about how we are working to reform our outdated Tax Code and to provide much needed tax relief to our Nation's small businesses and to hard-working families and ranchers. We are working to not only provide hard-working taxpayers with tax relief but also to strengthen our economy and to stimulate job creation.

Along with the regulatory relief we have already provided and are working to continue to provide, this tax relief is all about a growing economy, more

jobs, and higher wages for hard-working Americans and then making sure that they not only keep more of their earnings after tax but that they see growing wages due to a stronger economy that is so important after the last decade of stagnant wages and income. It is important to understand that this tax relief is both. It is absolutely about lowering the tax burden, but it is also about moving wages and incomes higher. That is the rising tide that lifts all boats in our country.

Today, the House of Representatives passed a budget resolution that the Senate sent them last week, so now we have completed the first step in terms of enacting pro-growth tax reform that, as I said, will provide tax relief to millions of middle-class families who have been struggling to get ahead over the past decade.

Today, I want to focus on how our tax proposal will reduce the tax burden on small businesses. Small businesses make up 96 percent of all employers in my State and over 90 percent of the businesses in the country. Over 90 percent of the businesses in this country are small businesses.

Earlier this week, we had a very productive meeting with the President to talk about our priorities for tax relief, and I specifically highlighted to him the importance of ensuring that tax reform works for our small businesses. When you talk about small businesses, you are talking about farmers and ranchers. As I said, 90 percent of all the businesses in this country are small businesses. So we are working with the administration and with the House to enact tax reforms that will enable American families to keep more of their hard-earned money and, as I said, empower our small businesses to invest and grow.

Our effort is about growing our economy and regaining our economic competitiveness in a global economy. Our Tax Code needs to ensure that our small business owners and entrepreneurs can compete in that global economy.

Small businesses, as I said, are the engine that drives our economy. They are the backbone of our economy. Small businesses create more jobs and employ more people than major corporations. They are the heart and soul of Main Streets across America. These businesses earn the majority of all business income in the United States and employ over half the private sector workforce in 49 out of 50 States. They employ over half of the private sector workforce in 49 of our 50 States.

Over the past month, I have hosted tax reform roundtables across North Dakota to hear directly from our job creators—from our State's small businesses, from our ag leaders, from our farmers, and from our ranchers. What are their priorities when we talk about tax relief and tax reform?

Our tax blueprint supports those small businesses throughout the country by promoting job creation, eco-

nomie growth, and, as I said earlier, global competitiveness. We propose to do this in a number of ways, but the biggest and most impactful thing is that we are lowering the tax burden. It needs to be tax relief.

Right now, for our small businesses, the marginal tax rate can reach as high as 44.6 percent. Think about that. Almost half of their income is going to Federal income tax. That is nearly twice the average rate of the rest of the industrialized world. So here we are trying to compete with that high tax rate—almost double compared to the average rate of the rest of the industrialized world.

By reducing the maximum tax rate for sole proprietorships, partnerships, and S corporations to 25 percent, we are creating greater economic growth and opportunity as small businesses reinvest in their businesses, in their employees, in their communities, and generate job growth.

Additionally, many small businesses, including farmers and ranchers, do not have access to the equity they need to operate, instead relying heavily on debt financing to fund their businesses. They go to the bank and borrow. This is particularly true for new and beginning enterprises, including new startups in technology—not just farming and ranching and traditional businesses but businesses across the board.

Our Tax Code needs to incentivize our Nation's entrepreneurs to start their business, and we need to make sure they can get access to capital. They need to be able to get access to that capital, but when they do, by and large, they are going to the bank and borrowing. That means they have to pay interest on that debt. So it is very important for small businesses that the interest on that debt be deductible. That is a huge cost, particularly for our farmers and ranchers. They don't have opportunities to float equity. They don't raise equity for their farming operation when they need to buy a tractor or a combine or you name it. They have to go to the bank and borrow.

So the deductibility of that interest expense to them is absolutely vital in their interests. That is true with small businesses across the board. When you look at small businesses in your community, they go to the bank and they borrow, and that interest cost is a big part of their business expense. They need to be able to continue to deduct it.

In the framework that we have proposed, another very important issue is being able to expense investments. If you really want to trigger growth, you encourage that investment. So the tax reform framework or proposal that we have put forward allows, in the first 5 years, full expensing of new investments. That is very stimulative to our economy. It is very pro-growth.

The other piece that I think is very important here is that we keep the section 179 expensing longer term. I think,

as we proposed it now, we would have expensing in the first 5 years—full expensing. That is great. That is, as I say, stimulative to the economy. But beyond that, then we need to make sure that section 179 expensing is there so that small businesses, farmers, ranchers, and others will know that they are going to continue to be able to expense their investment in new plants and new equipment. That is what keeps those small businesses growing. That is what keeps them hiring more people. That is what creates more jobs, and that is what pushes wages and income higher.

Also, we need to simplify and streamline the Tax Code. Right now, the Tax Code is nearly 70,000 pages long—talk about being difficult and complex. Americans, right now, currently spend 6 billion hours a year complying with that Tax Code. That is ridiculous. Can you imagine 6 billion hours a year just to figure out how to pay your taxes? So here is somebody who wants to pay their taxes. They spend all that time and all that effort just to figure out how much they have to pay. Obviously, we can do a lot better than that.

Our goal through tax reform is to allow the vast majority of Americans to file their tax return on a single simple page. I will mention that again. I think it is important. Our goal is for the vast majority of Americans, in essence, to file their tax return on one page and to make it easier to pay your taxes, to figure out what you owe, and to take away all that stress and all that difficulty in just trying to pay your taxes.

Many economists agree that high business taxes reduce wages to workers, raise costs for consumers, and reduce returns on retirement savings. Maintaining these high tax rates do nothing to improve the fairness of our system. They only punish everyday, hard-working, tax-paying citizens and reduce economic opportunity in America.

I will conclude on the same point that I started with, and that is by saying that there are two objectives here. It is not just to simplify and reduce the tax burden, so that people have more of their earnings in their pocket after paying taxes, but the other is to make sure they earn more and that we move wages and income higher. If you look at the growth rate in our economy over the last decade, it has struggled, in essence, to get to 2 percent. But compare that to the period from World War II to the present. Over that longer period, we averaged 3.3 percent. We want to get that growth rate back up.

We started to get that growth rate back up by reducing the regulatory burden. Over the course of this year, the administration and this Congress have done a lot to reduce the regulatory burden. Our growth rate has ticked up in the most recent month to 3.1 percent, the highest it has been in a long time. So what we want to do is to combine that regulatory relief and tax

relief and get that higher growth rate. We also want to add an infrastructure package. When you put those things together, what do you get? You get more jobs, higher wages, higher income, and a higher standard of living for hard-working American citizens across this great Nation. That is the objective. That is what we are trying to do.

We all need to work together, and our goal is to get that done before the end of the year.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

ROHINGYA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, earlier this week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on an issue that I consider one of the greatest moral tests of our time in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy—the situation in Burma, where the Burmese military is committing ethnic cleansing and is perpetrating atrocities.

We have a humanitarian crisis. We have perpetrators who expect impunity and a situation, under the watch of the international community and the Trump administration, that is allowing for the perpetration of atrocities.

Ethnic cleansing is defined by the United Nations Commission of Experts as “rendering an area ethnically homogenous by using force or intimidation to remove persons of given groups from an area.” Half of the population of the Rohingya in Burma have left—600,000 people out of 1.2 million. I might add that, of those who remain, many are dislocated. There has been a systematic burning of their villages. This didn’t just start. It has been a campaign that has gone on for a long period of time, since a 1982 law that denies the Rohingya citizenship, even though they have been residents for generations.

The Rohingya are denied freedom of movement. They are denied freedom of education. They are denied healthcare. This has been a systematic effort to destroy an ethnic community.

We have seen this happen far too long in too many places around the world. Once again, we see this happening today in Burma. Once again, this is the expectation: Well, it is far away; we will just let it go along.

The Senate should be outraged about what is happening. We need to see the international community come together and say: No, we will not let this continue. We will hold accountable those who are responsible for these actions, we will provide humanitarian need immediately, and we will stop this type of conduct in a civilized society. This just cannot occur.

In fact, I think what is transpiring in the Rakhine State today is genocide. I know there will be some discussion about whether it is genocide or not based upon technical definitions. Yet what we see in Burma today clearly meets the definition of “deliberately

inflicting on a group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” That is what is happening in Burma, and that is genocide.

The Burmese military is clearly trying to destroy the Rohingya population. For decades, the Burmese Government has systemically repressed the Rohingya people. This is a fact, and they have deliberately failed to integrate the population into the general population. As the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights correctly stated, the “decades of persistent and systematic human rights violations . . . have almost certainly contributed[d] to the nurturing of violent extremism, with everyone ultimately losing.” They complain about extremism. Yet they are creating it.

In my opinion, we are witnessing a military-sponsored ethnic cleansing campaign on the Rohingya, and it will take significant engagement from the international community, at the highest levels and in partnership with the Burmese civilian government, to address and to hold the perpetrators accountable for these horrific acts.

Seventy-five years ago, the world and the United States could have claimed ignorance or lack of information as an excuse for inaction in the face of crimes against humanity, genocide, and barbarism. Today, we have no excuse.

Unfortunately, the Rohingya crisis is not the only vexing challenge Burma faces. The Burmese military continues to hold significant influence in politics and in the economy. The peace process, which sought to end a longstanding civil war in the country, has stalled. There are significant reports of human rights issues such as human trafficking, free speech infringement, and political repression. The military control Burma today. That is unacceptable, and that is why we imposed sanctions, because of military control. Sanction relief was given for what? So that people could be ethnically cleansed?

I was pleased to hear State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi committed to implementing all of Kofi Annan’s Rakhine State recommendations and to ensure that the Rohingya, who have fled in the face of brutal military repression, have a right to return to their homes. However, she must continue to make this a top priority and work with the international community to provide both the safety of the Rohingya left in Burma and those who want to come home. It is going to be difficult since their villages have been destroyed. Are they going to live in camps? Will they have protection? Will they be safe? If the past is any indication, we have real challenges ahead of us.

Although I would count myself among those who have been disappointed with the civilian authorities and think they should have been more vocal, I am keenly aware of the real limits of their power and ability to

govern under the current Burmese Constitution and the military's control of a large portion of Burma's economy.

We have a challenge on our hands in Burma, and we need to be engaged. But the civilian leadership must take responsibility and must speak out. Too often, the international community has done too little, waited too long, or been caught unprepared by events that should not have surprised us. We continue to forget the lessons of the past and fail to live up to the post-Holocaust pledge of "never again." Ignoring the genocide war crimes and crimes against humanity that continue to rage around the world sends a message to the global community that atrocity crimes are tolerable. We must respond robustly to the crisis unfolding in Burma because it is the right thing to do and because it is in our national interest to do so.

The United Nations is calling the military campaign "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing" against Rohingya Muslims. From credible human rights organizations and newspapers, there are consistent accounts of widespread extrajudicial killings, arson, rape, and other atrocities. At least 288 villages have been decimated, according to Human Rights Watch, which has used satellite imagery as evidence of the devastation caused by the so-called "clearance operations."

These current attacks on the Rohingya follow decades of state-led persecution and dehumanization. Government efforts to deny Rohingya citizenship rights, to restrict their freedom of movement and the practice of their faith, and to deny their basic human rights have all been identified as precursors to a genocide.

The U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights found that the attacks were executed in a well-organized, coordinated, and systematic manner by the Myanmar Security Forces, often supported by the armed Rakhine Buddhists. They have described the attacks as a "cynical ploy to forcibly transfer large numbers of people without possibility of return."

There were also appalling acts of sexual violence, which clearly amount to crimes against humanity and/or acts of genocide that must not be forgotten. Women and girls, some as young as 5, were raped by men in uniform in front of their families. U.N. and other health workers said that after this most recent August 2017 military crackdown, they treated dozens of Rohingya women and girls who escaped to Bangladesh for injuries consistent with violent sexual attacks.

One woman told Human Rights Watch that she and four other women were taken to a hut, slashed with knives, and sexually assaulted. The soldiers then set the hut on fire. She was the only one to escape alive. Another woman who was raped still has injuries from the machete attack and beatings that accompanied the rape and said she barely managed to escape from a burning house.

I also want to draw attention to the needs of the survivors, their families, and communities. There is an acute lack of healthcare available to the survivors, including reproductive health, psychosocial, and other critical services.

Seventy-five years ago, the world—and the United States—could have said they did not know what is happening. Today we do. Today we have no excuse. Instead, the international community must hold the perpetrators accountable. In addition, to date, no real progress has been made either holding perpetrators of serious violations accountable or in addressing the root causes underlying the situation in Burma. Therefore, there is an urgent need to act.

The strong statements by Ambassador Haley and last month by the Vice President must be followed up with action. The administration should lead efforts for action in the Security Council. The Security Council should insist that persons responsible for grave abuses be held accountable for their crimes. It also should press the Burmese authority to cooperate with the U.N. factfinding mission established by the United Nations Human Rights Council and grant unfettered access to its staff to Burma, including the Rakhine State.

We need to know what is happening on the ground. We need to know that in order to protect people and to get the evidence necessary to hold the perpetrators accountable. The Council should send a clear message that it stands ready to take additional steps to ensure justice, including through the International Criminal Court, and urge member states to pursue other mechanisms that might provide justice for recent abuses.

I should also add that Bangladesh deserves credit for keeping its borders open to the influx of refugees—600,000 have fled to Bangladesh, and they kept their borders open. Bangladesh has been one of the few bright spots in the current crisis and should continue to honor its promise to build shelters for new arrivals, accelerate humanitarian assistance, and provide the needed medical service for this traumatized group.

I also believe the United States needs to reevaluate our policy and approach to Burma. We need to have a policy in regard to Burma that we understand, that addresses these human rights violations, that reevaluates our approach for our relationship with the Burmese military, and that relooks at how to best use sanctions as a way to seek additional leverage with the Burmese Government and military.

I am working with a number of my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, on legislation to seek to clarify U.S. policy and to address some of these issues.

As the President prepares for his upcoming trip to the ASEAN Summit in the region, Congress will be watching

closely to see if he makes Burma and human rights a top priority during this trip and to see what he and his administration choose to undertake in the coming days to address the tragedy unfolding in Rakhine State.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

SOMALIA TERRORIST ATTACK

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the recent terrorist attack in Somalia.

On October 14, a truck filled with explosives detonated in a crowded district in Mogadishu—Somalia's capital. The blast was especially devastating because the truck blew up next to a fuel tanker, causing a massive fireball and leveling structures, including the nearby Safari Hotel, which collapsed and trapped many people under its rubble. According to Somali authorities, the target of the attack may have been the city's international airport which also houses many Embassies.

This is the worst terrorist attack in Somalia's history. Three hundred fifty-eight people were killed, hundreds have been injured, and dozens are still missing.

As a Minnesota Senator, I represent the largest Somali-American population in the Nation. For Minnesota, this wasn't just a massive attack overseas. It affected every one of my estimated 74,000 Somali-American constituents.

Among those killed is Ahmed Eyow. He was from Bloomington, MN. He had attended Normandale Community College and Metropolitan State University. He left behind his wife and three children.

Another Somali-American who was killed in the blast was Mohamoud Elmi. He had lived in Ohio and had moved back to Somalia about 2 years ago. He was a young man with a bright future, working at the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management in Somalia.

There was Abukar Mohamed. He lived in Virginia before moving back to Somalia, where he worked in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. He was killed along with his wife, Shadiye Hassan. They left behind seven children who are between the ages of 3 and 20.

Hundreds of others perished in that heinous attack. They all have their own stories. They left behind their wives, their husbands, their children, their friends, their parents.

Somalia is one of the most, if not the most, fragile nations on Earth. It has been an incredibly difficult country to

govern ever since the civil war tore the country apart in 1991. It suffers from the massive displacement of people, hundreds of thousands of refugees, lack of sufficient public services, and warring factions and clans. To make matters worse, a severe drought has ravaged Somalia, leaving 6 million people—half of the nation's population—facing food shortages. The combination of instability, lack of security, and shortage of goods and services has enabled terrorist groups like al-Shabaab—widely believed to be the culprit in this attack—to gain a foothold in Somalia.

We have to have a comprehensive strategy to help the people of Somalia. One component of that strategy is to help Somalis root out terrorism. The Government of Somalia has announced its intent to step up the fight against al-Shabaab. The United States has and will continue to aid those efforts, as will the African Union Mission in Somalia—a multinational peacekeeping force that is supported by the United States.

At the same time, we have to erode and eliminate the conditions that enable terrorist groups to thrive. That means redoubling our efforts to help stabilize fragile nations. That means supporting good governance, reducing extreme inequality, and helping marginalized, disenfranchised individuals who are preyed upon time and again by terrorist recruiters.

It is more important than ever that we fully fund our international programs that support these efforts, for humanitarian and security reasons. Unfortunately, the administration's 2018 budget proposal does the opposite. It includes a 30-percent cut to programs that seek to bring stability, rule of law, and humanitarian assistance to places that need it the most. The administration's budget is making the world, and us, less safe. And I want to urge the President to rethink his approach to foreign aid.

My colleagues, Senators JOHN MCCAIN and TIM KAINE, put it this way in a recent op-ed they coauthored, saying:

Today, 80 percent of our assistance provides relief and promotes stability in conflict zones and states on the verge of collapse. There are U.S. Agency for International Development programs in many of the countries most plagued by terrorism, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mali, Yemen and Somalia. We're saving lives and creating partners to help address the instability that produces the threats our military risks life and limb to fight.

In conclusion, I urge my colleagues and the American people to not forget about the terrible tragedy in Somalia. I urge everyone to keep Somali victims and other victims of terror acts throughout the world in their thoughts and prayers.

The world needs to know that the United States will continue to support Somalia and other nations that are fighting those who are wreaking havoc on their nations. But we have to re-

member that we will all be more successful when we combine military efforts with diplomatic and humanitarian ones. While we cannot bring back those who perished, if we focus on rooting out the conditions that give rise to terrorism, we can have a shot at averting the next one.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HEALTHCARE

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to reauthorize Federal funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. Children's health insurance is not a partisan issue in this country, and it never has been.

In 1997, the bill to create the Children's Health Insurance Program passed with bipartisan support. It was introduced by the late Senator Ted Kennedy, a Democrat from Massachusetts, and our colleague, Senator ORRIN HATCH, Republican from Utah. This program has been a resounding success. Tens of millions of kids from all over the country have received access to preventive care, doctors' visits, prescriptions, dental and vision coverage as a result of this act of Congress.

Children's healthcare is not a partisan issue in Nevada—the great State that I represent—either. Over the past 20 years, more than 60,000 of Nevada's kids have benefited from our State CHIP program, Nevada Check Up. Together with the gains we have made due to the ACA's Medicaid expansion, our rate of uninsured children has fallen by half, making our program one of the biggest successes in the country.

Today, 9 million children from low-income families nationwide, including 27,000 from Nevada, get their health insurance through CHIP. If Congress continues to do nothing, those 9 million children will not be able to go to a doctor for their annual checkup; 9 million children will not be able to afford their prescriptions. The parents of those 9 million children will have to wait until their child's headache or infection or sore throat becomes an emergency before taking them to the hospital.

In 2008, the last time funding for CHIP was on the chopping block, Senator Ted Kennedy said that the test of a great nation is in the way it treats its children. We are a great nation. We know how to take care of our kids. Americans understand that children's healthcare is the kind of thing that should be beyond the reach of partisan politics.

Governors from both parties, medical professionals, care providers, and advo-

cates from across this Nation have already called on Congress to do its job and move as quickly as possible to reauthorize this funding. Nevada's Republican Governor, Brian Sandoval, is one of those voices. Republicans and Democrats alike know that kids can't go to school, they can't go to soccer practice, they can't learn their times tables or their fractions, they can't do things that healthy, happy kids like to do if they do not feel well.

But don't ask me why funding for CHIP is important. Listen to the voices of parents who lie awake at night, worried that the cough they are hearing down the hall in their child's room will not go away on its own. It is scary enough to have a sick child. No parent should have to live with the additional fear that they will not be able to afford the care their child needs. No parent should have to choose between treating a cough that has been getting worse and worse for weeks and paying next month's rent. People across the country are working every single day just to make ends meet. CHIP is their lifeline.

Just ask Lisa, a self-employed mom. Her children are able to see the whiteboard in math class because CHIP allowed her family to afford glasses.

Ask Glenna, whose daughter broke her arm on the monkey bars when she was 4. Without CHIP, Glenna would have had to take out loans to pay off that medical bill.

Hear from Vanessa about the excellent healthcare her daughter received after she contracted meningitis at age 12, which was paid for with health insurance Vanessa purchased through CHIP. Vanessa says that CHIP is the reason her daughter is alive today.

These are just three of the countless stories I have heard from people who just don't know what they would do if private health insurance were the only option available to their family.

Illness, injury, these things happen. All of us get sick sometimes, but going bankrupt trying to pay for your son or daughter's medical treatment, that is not normal. That should not be something we accept as part of our everyday lives.

Every time I go home to Nevada, I hear the same things over and over from people I meet. They say to me: My medical bills are out of control. Please do something to help.

We should be working night and day around the clock to fix our healthcare system and relieve the burden of healthcare costs on working people.

Allowing funding for CHIP to expire, allowing State governments to go bankrupt, allowing rural hospitals and our community medical centers to shut their doors and go out of business, this is not what the American people sent us here to do. We are the representatives of this great Nation, and it is time to act like it and stop playing politics with children's health.

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

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

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 251, on the nomination of Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.

Madam President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 252, on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia. Had I been present, I would have voted nay. •

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH, THE FOUNDER OF THE BAHÁ'I FAITH

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I wish to extend my support for the Baha'i community in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith.

Baha'u'llah preached a message of justice, unity, and peace. The religion that he founded has spread across the world, including to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. While the Baha'i people have and continue to face persecution for their beliefs, they persevere by promoting a message of peace and equality and with a commitment to service. I congratulate the Baha'i community of Pennsylvania who have contributed so much to the spirit of the Commonwealth on this momentous anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO JIM MCCLOUGHAN

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, today I wish to reflect on Veterans Day and the debt of gratitude each of us owes those who are willing to serve our country in our Armed Forces.

Each year I have the honor of attending Veterans Day events across Michigan. At each parade, commemoration, and solemn ceremony, I am struck by the profound patriotism of our veterans, but also their deep humility and lasting dedication to serving others.

One amazing example of this is Jim McCloughan of South Haven. In May of 1969, he was 23 years old and far from home, serving as a medic in Vietnam after being drafted into the Army.

The orders were to attack Nui Yon Hill. However, Private First Class McCloughan and his company were sur-

rounded by more than 2,000 enemy fighters. Over 2 days of battle, Private First Class McCloughan put himself in danger time and again in order to rescue his fallen brothers.

His head and arm were bloodied by shrapnel and small-arms fire; yet he refused to stop. When the battle was over, he had saved the lives of 10 members of his company.

Private First Class McCloughan received the Combat Medical Badge, two Purple Hearts, two Bronze Stars with "V" device for valor, and the U.S. Army Valorous Unit Citation, among other awards. He was a hero in every sense of the word. However, he remained focused on only one thing: how he could best serve others. That is just what he did.

Jim McCloughan returned home and taught and coached at South Haven High School until retiring in 2008. That might have been where his story ended had it not been for his one-time platoon leader, LT Randall J. Clark.

Lieutenant Clark never forgot about Private First Class McCloughan's heroism and worked tirelessly to get him the recognition he had earned. In 2016, I passed a bill to make Private First Class McCloughan eligible for our Nation's highest military honor. In July, I was honored to be at the White House as Private First Class McCloughan was finally awarded the Medal of Honor by President Donald Trump.

Jim McCloughan's story is extraordinary, but he is not alone. Across our Nation—and throughout our history—people of common backgrounds and uncommon courage have put their lives on the line in defense of our Nation. Time and again, these brave men and women have come home only to continue serving in our schools, churches, elected offices, and civic organizations.

Veterans like Jim owe us nothing and keep giving us everything. It is our solemn duty to keep our promises to them. Like Lieutenant Clark, we must continue working to provide them all that they have earned, whether it is healthcare, education, the chance at a good job, or the Medal of Honor.

"I'm humbled, very humbled," Jim McCloughan said about receiving his award. "And, of course—as many individuals who are blessed to receive something like this—I'm receiving it for all of my men."

The spirit of service lives on in Jim McCloughan, in Lieutenant Clark, and in our veterans in Michigan and across this Nation. On this Veterans Day, we remember them, we thank them, and we renew our commitment to serving them.

Thank you.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT PHILIP J. IYOTTE

Mr. ROUNDS. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the courage and bravery of a fallen soldier, SGT Philip J. Iyotte of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. After 66 long years of waiting,

Sergeant Iyotte's remains are finally being laid to rest this week in his hometown of White River, SD.

Sergeant Iyotte was born in White River on December 22, 1929. At just 18 years of age, Iyotte enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to Company E, 2nd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, during the Korean war.

Upon being deployed overseas to Korea, Sergeant Iyotte's battalion was one of the first sent into battle in 1950. During combat, Sergeant Iyotte was wounded, but returned to the battlefield in just 3 weeks.

Months later, Sergeant Iyotte was detailed to Operation Thunderbolt on February 9, 1951. During this assignment, Sergeant Iyotte was captured and ultimately held at a prisoner-of-war camp in Changsong, where he passed away in 1951. However, his remains never made it home.

Due to his many heroic efforts, Sergeant Iyotte was awarded the Purple Heart Medal, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Prisoner of War Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Korean War Service Medal.

Through the combined effort of Sergeant Iyotte's family, the U.S. Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and the Department of Veterans Affairs, Sergeant Iyotte's remains were positively identified earlier this year. This week, they return to his family so he can finally be laid to rest near his home in South Dakota.

With this, I welcome the opportunity to recognize the life of a fallen hero, SGT Philip James Iyotte, and commemorate his return to White River, SD. He is finally home.

REMEMBERING RICHARD DUDMAN

Mr. KING. Madam President, today we remember Richard Dudman, who passed away this August in Blue Hill, ME, at the age of 99. Throughout his long and illustrious career as a journalist, Richard was never one to turn away from a good story, even if chasing it meant putting himself in danger.

After college, Richard served his country in the Merchant Marine and the Navy before becoming a reporter for the Denver Post. In 1954, he moved to Washington, DC, to work for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch's Washington bureau. In this position, he would cover the assassination of John F. Kennedy and the Watergate Scandal, as well as war and revolution all over the world.

Richard will perhaps be most remembered for the time he spent in Cambodia as a prisoner of the Viet Cong. He and his colleagues were mistaken for CIA operatives and were kept captive for 40 long days. Towards the end of their captivity, once it had become clear that the journalists were not, in fact, working for the CIA, their captors began to refer to them not as prisoners of war, but as "travelers who lost their

way." It was this experience that inspired Richard to write the well-received "Forty Days with the Enemy."

Even after retiring, Richard did not stop reporting. In fact, on his last day at the Post-Dispatch in 1981 Richard raced out of his own retirement party to cover the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan. From his home in Ellsworth, ME, Richard continued to contribute to the Post-Dispatch and wrote editorials for the Bangor Daily News until 2012.

In retirement, Richard and Helen, his wife of 69 years, were active and constructive members of the Maine community. Ellsworth City councilor Gary Fortier, a friend of the couple, described them as "true givers," saying that "Ellsworth is a much better place because they have been part of it." Richard and Helen received the Golden Eagle Award from the Boy Scouts of America in 2014 in recognition of their outstanding community service.

Richard's dedication to covering the news, regardless of how far from home it occurred, won him the prestigious George Polk Award in Journalism in 1993. In 2014, in recognition of that same dedication, Richard was inducted into the Maine Press Association Hall of Fame. I am pleased to be just one of many to remember and praise the many achievements of Richard's career. The State of Maine was incredibly lucky to have him for the time that we did. He will be deeply missed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING ALLEN CHORMAN & SON, INC.

• Mr. COONS. Madam President, it is with great pleasure that I rise, along with Senator TOM CARPER of Delaware and Representative LISA BLUNT ROCH-ESTER of Delaware, to recognize Allen Chorman & Son, Inc., a longstanding Delaware business that has provided exemplary service to the State and its surrounding areas for 30 years.

Since 1987, Allen Chorman & Son, Inc., has played a vital role in the success of one of Delaware's key economic resources: farming. With the largest aerial spraying business in the State, Allen Chorman & Son, Inc., has assisted farmers in increasing crop efficiency via pesticide spraying and fertilizer spraying—sometimes in instances when ground conditions are not conducive to tractor services. Allen Chorman & Son, Inc., also provides critical mosquito spraying for both rural and urban areas. We are honored to extend our sincere thanks for their commitment and unyielding efforts to support one of our Nation's most valuable industries: agriculture.

In addition to aiding farmers within Delaware and the surrounding areas with critical crop services, Allen Chorman & Son, Inc., has assisted in environmental preservation efforts, monitoring artificial reefs off of the

Delaware and Maryland coasts, as well as spraying invasive plants that, if uncontrolled, can choke area wetlands. We are truly honored to extend our appreciation for everything the business has accomplished.

We wholeheartedly congratulate the many staff members past and present of Allen Chorman & Son, Inc., on 30 years of service to the State of Delaware and surrounding areas. Your quality of service and continued care for our farms and environment set an exemplary standard of service for many others to follow. We wish you continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING KING CROP INSURANCE, INC.

• Mr. COONS. Madam President, it is with great pleasure that I rise, along with Senator TOM CARPER of Delaware and Representative LISA BLUNT ROCH-ESTER of Delaware, to honor one of Delaware's longstanding businesses that has provided exemplary service to the State of Delaware for the past 50 years: King Crop Insurance, Inc.

Since 1967, King Crop Insurance, Inc., has played an essential role in meeting the needs of Delaware farmers and those in its surrounding areas. From providing financial assistance and support—ensuring that farms have the economic security to repay loans—to aiding those same farmers in expanding and growing their businesses, King Crop Insurance has committed itself to the people of our great State, while exhibiting unyielding support of one of our Nation's most valuable industries: agriculture.

The values of hard work and giving back to their community have always been a part of the King family. Catherine, Jackie, Donna, and the entire family are known throughout the State of Delaware for their generosity and support of local agricultural programs, such as the 4-H. The Kings are visible examples of serving others, as well as sowing seeds of success for the future. We are truly grateful for all they have done to inspire business growth and development, as well as preparing future generations for success in farming.

We wholeheartedly congratulate King Crop Insurance, Inc., on 50 years of service to the State of Delaware and surrounding areas. Your quality of service and continued care for our farming community serves as a wonderful example for many others. We wish everyone the best.●

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL GARY L. SAYLER

• Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, today, together with my colleague Senator JIM RISCH, I wish to recognize the service of MG Gary L. Sayler as he retires from leading the Idaho National Guard this month.

With more than 40 years of his distinguished 45-year military career dedicated to the Idaho National Guard,

Major General Sayler has served Idaho in a variety of leadership capacities, including 7 years as Idaho's adjutant general. Under Major General Sayler's direction as commander, the 124th Fighter Wing played vital roles in numerous overseas missions, including Operation Provide Comfort in 1994, Operation Allied Force in 1999, and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and 2004. He subsequently served as assistant adjutant general from 2004 to 2010 before being appointed as adjutant general for the Idaho National Guard in 2010, during the fighter wing's ongoing missions in the Middle East in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Inherent Resolve, and Operation Freedom's Sentinel. The 124th Fighter Wing has received numerous accolades under his steady guidance. These include the prestigious Spaatz Trophy in 2016 and again in 2017; the Governor's Outstanding Unit Award; and the U.S. Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

Major General Sayler has built on his extensive experience to lead with practical knowledge. His educational background includes a bachelor of science in history and education at North Dakota State University in 1971 and later courses at the Air Command and Staff College, Weapons School, and Air War College. Major General Sayler began his first assignment in the U.S. Air Force in Thailand, flying combat missions in Southeast Asia before joining the Idaho Air National Guard in 1977 as a weapons systems officer for the 124th Tactical Reconnaissance Group. With a master navigator rating, he has extensive experience flying multiple aircrafts and has logged more than 4,100 flight hours. These include 392 combat hours that also account for his combat missions flying the F4-G over Iraq during Operations Southern Watch and Provide Comfort. His promotions and list of major awards and decorations that he has earned for his outstanding service are extensive and include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Air Medal with silver oakleaf cluster.

Based on these accomplishments, Major General Sayler has provided reasoned and experienced council as we have worked together to address the needs of the Idaho National Guard, including protecting and advancing the flying mission at Gowen Field as an exemplary force within the National Guard for generations to come. While visionary in his goals for the Idaho National Guard, a hallmark of Major General Sayler's leadership has been his high regard for the servicemembers he leads and their families. In addition to the attention and support he has devoted to Idaho guardsmen and their families, Major General Sayler has also been instrumental in forging enduring relationships with the local communities and Native Tribes undergirding Gowen Field. These bonds will likely propel the Idaho National Guard and Idaho communities forward for years to come.

We congratulate Major General Saylor on a distinguished and exemplary career serving our Nation and leading the Idaho National Guard. Idaho has benefited greatly from his steady, astute leadership. We wish him and his family the very best and thank him for his dedicated service to Idaho and our Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO NORM STEADMAN

● Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, today I wish to honor Norm Steadman for his longtime, dedicated service as mayor of Weippe, ID.

Weippe was incorporated in 1964, but its roots go much further back. The Weippe Prairie is known to have been inhabited by the Nez Perce Indians. The city notes that it was not far from the present townsite in 1805 that Lewis and Clark had their first encounter with the Nez Perce Indians. This beautiful and strong community is nestled among many recreation opportunities, including historic trails, fishing, hunting, skiing, snowmobiling, and all-terrain vehicle resources.

Over the years, the community has seen its share of booms and busts. It has been touched by the fur trade, gold rush, the Homestead Act, and the logging industry. The town's current population of approximately 400 faces many of the challenges experienced by rural western towns with an enduring commitment to their community.

Serving as mayor for a remarkable nearly 50 years following his initial appointment to the position in 1968, Mayor Steadman has led through considerable growing pains with a steady hand and commitment to his community that befit his name. A deep desire to help others and a sense of responsibility to lead his community are clear characteristics of Mayor Steadman's. His decades of leadership and working to overcome challenges with limited resources are commendable. Thank you, Mayor Steadman, for your nearly 50 years of dedicated service. You are truly leading by example by continuously stepping up to assist.●

TRIBUTE TO STEVE FOURNIER

● Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I have the distinct honor of recognizing Steve Fournier of Butte, a tireless advocate for the most vulnerable Montanans. Steve is known by his peers for his dedication, compassion, and integrity working to help the homeless.

For nearly 16 years, Steve has helped Montanans find housing stability through his work as a case manager and service advocate for locally administered housing programs. When the rescue mission served as the emergency housing alternative for the Butte area after it closed earlier this year, Steve helped 22 households find a safe and warm place to stay. His efforts have helped many of his neighbors in southwest Montana overcome crisis situations and transition to a more hopeful path.

Steve's demonstrated commitment to assisting others is a genuine reflection of uncommon moral stamina. The Treasure State is humbled and blessed to have people like Mr. Fournier call Montana home. Thank you, Steve, for repeatedly finding a refuge in times of trouble.●

75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SCHWAN'S COMPANY STILWELL FOOD PRODUCTION FACILITY

● Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I am pleased to recognize the Schwan's Company on the 75th anniversary of their Stilwell food production facility. This is a significant milestone for Schwan's and its employees, but also for Adair County and the entire State of Oklahoma. Throughout their 75 years, Schwan's has been a committed community partner, hiring over 300 residents and supporting hunger relief and youth activities.

The food production facility in Stilwell, originally called the Stilwell Canning Company, first opened in 1942 when World War II drove up the demand for canned items. The company has demonstrated a strong commitment to excellence, first expanding in 1999, when it became the largest frozen dessert production plant in the country. After being acquired by Schwan's Company in 2003, they have continued to invest in the plant and its employees, putting the facility on the leading edge of pie production in the country. Today the plant is a 610,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility that employs about 300 people.

Congratulations on your 75th anniversary, and I look forward to seeing Schwan's continue to make a positive impact in Stilwell.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:55 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 26. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for the unveiling of the American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Chair of Honor.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 469. An act to impose certain limitations on consent decrees and settlement agreements by agencies that require the agencies to take regulatory action in accordance with the terms thereof, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3329. An act to amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3342. An act to impose sanctions on foreign persons that are responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights by reason of the use by Hizballah of civilians as human shields, and for other purposes.

At 1:38 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 469. An act to impose certain limitations on consent decrees and settlement agreements by agencies that require the agencies to take regulatory action in accordance with the terms thereof, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3342. An act to impose sanctions on foreign persons that are responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights by reason of the use by Hizballah of civilians as human shields, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3329. An act to amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, October 26, 2017, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 504. An act to permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communication was laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and was referred as indicated:

EC-3275. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Religious Exemptions and Accommodations for Coverage of Certain Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act" (RIN1210-AB83) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 25, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-130. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Texas rescinding

certain applications made by the Texas Legislature to the United States Congress to call a national convention under Article V of the United States Constitution for proposing any amendment to the Constitution; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 38

Whereas, Over the years, the Texas Legislature has approved resolutions officially applying to the Congress of the United States to call a convention, under the terms of Article V of the Constitution of the United States, to offer various amendments to that Constitution; and

Whereas, While no Article V amendatory convention has yet taken place thus far in American history, nevertheless, there is a very real possibility that one, or more than one, could be triggered at some point in the future; and

Whereas, Regardless of their age, such past applications from Texas lawmakers remain alive and valid until such time as they are later formally rescinded; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas, Regular Session, 2017, hereby officially rescinds, repeals, revokes, cancels, voids, and nullifies any and all, applications from Texas legislators prior to the 85th Legislature, Regular Session, 2017, other than the application provided by H.C.R. No. 31, Acts of the 65th Legislature, Regular Session, 1977, that apply to the United States Congress for the calling of a convention, pursuant to Article V of the United States Constitution, regardless of how old such previous applications might be, and irrespective of what subject matters such applications pertained to; and, be it further

Resolved, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas, Regular Session, 2017, hereby declares that any application to the United States Congress for the calling of a convention under Article V of the United States Constitution that is submitted by the Texas Legislature during or after this Regular Session shall be automatically rescinded, repealed, revoked, canceled, voided, and nullified if the applicable convention is not called on or before the eighth anniversary of the date the last legislative vote is taken on the application; and, be it further

Resolved, That, in a manner which would furnish confirmation of delivery and tracking while en route, the Texas secretary of state shall transmit properly certified copies of this joint resolution of rescission, pursuant to the Standing Rules of the United States Senate (namely, Rule VII, paragraphs 4, 5, and 6), to the vice president of the United States (in his capacity as presiding officer of the United States Senate and addressed to him at the office which he maintains inside the United States Capitol Building); to the secretary and parliamentarian of the United States Senate; and to both United States senators representing Texas; accompanied by a cover letter to each addressee drawing attention to the fact that it is the 85th Texas Legislature's courteous, yet firm, request that the substance of this joint resolution be accurately summarized in the United States House of Representatives' portion of the Congressional Record as an official memorial to the United States House of Representatives, and that this joint resolution be referred to whichever committee or committees of the United States House of Representatives that would have appropriate jurisdiction in this matter.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. McCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Stayce D. Harris, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Paul J. LaCamera, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Twanda E. Young, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Roger D. Murdock, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. David D. Thompson, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Ralph L. Schwader, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Donald B. Absher, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Richard E. Angle and ending with Col. Darren L. Werner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017. (minus 1 nominee: Col. Douglas F. Stitt)

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Keith Y. Tamashiro, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Eric P. Wendt, to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nomination of Vice Adm. Christopher W. Grady, to be Vice Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Bruce H. Lindsey, to be Vice Admiral.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the Records on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nominations beginning with James A. Fant and ending with Dustin D. Harlin, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Air Force nomination of Erik M. Mudrinich, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Scott M. Abbott and ending with Kristina M. Zuccarelli, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nomination of Adrian L. Nelson, to be Major.

Army nomination of Todd M. Chard, to be Major.

Army nomination of Tristan D. Harrington, to be Major.

Army nomination of David S. Lyle, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of George B. Inabinet, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Benjamin A. Barbeau and ending with Blair D. Tighe, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Garrett K. Anderson and ending with Roger D. Plaster, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Joshua A. Akers and ending with D013005, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Jonathan L. Abbott and ending with Bovey Z. Zhu, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Janetta R. Blackmore and ending with Jeffrey E. Oli-

ver, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Steven A. Baty and ending with Alisa R. Wilma, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Wesley J. Anderson and ending with Hope M. Williamson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Gina E. Adam and ending with David R. Zinnante, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with David J. H. Chang and ending with Matthew J. Yandura, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nomination of Samuel A. Redding, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Sativa M. Franklin, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Maurice O. Barnett and ending with Aaron C. Barta, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nomination of Grant R. Barge, to be Major.

Army nomination of Michael W. Chung, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Chemitra M. Clay and ending with John C. Hubbard, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nomination of Charles K. Bergman, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Robert S. Patton, Jr., to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Jason P. Affolder and ending with D012388, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Andre B. Abadie and ending with G001060, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Winfield A. Adkins and ending with D013960, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Marine Corps nomination of John J. Straub, to be Major.

Navy nominations beginning with Suzanne T. Alford and ending with Laura C. Yoon, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Roy A. Aduna and ending with Kirtley N. Yeiser, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Calvin Loper and ending with Billy W. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Maureen M. Derks and ending with Jeffrey P. Sharp, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Daniel T. Barnes and ending with Jacquelyn O. Vermilloherman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Shamire E. Branch and ending with Alanna B. Youngblood, which nominations were received by

the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with David L. Aguilar and ending with David K. Zivnaska, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Rebecca L. Anderson and ending with Kenneth R. Vanhook, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Arthur D. Anderson III and ending with John E. Weaver, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Joshua D. Albright and ending with Lisa L. Snoh, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nomination of Joe F. Moralez II, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Jessica B. Anderson and ending with Miranda V. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Marco A. Acosta and ending with Keith E. Zumar, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with William J. Roy, Jr. and ending with Raquel T. Buser, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Gregory F. Allen and ending with Clinton M. Woods, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2017.

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Peter Henry Barlerin, of Colorado, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cameroon.

Nominee: Peter Henry Barlerin.
Post: Cameroon.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: None.
3. Children and Spouses: Sebastien Barlerin: None; Maximilian Barlerin: None; Ines Barlerin: None.

4. Parents: Henry Barlerin—deceased; Virginia Barlerin—deceased.

5. Grandparents: Francois Barlerin—deceased; Josephine Barlerin—deceased; Charles Gilbert—deceased; Hilda Gilbert—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Michael C. Barlerin and Lisa Paretz: Unknown, Marco Rubio for President.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Joan and Ed Flaherty: None; Jody and Larry Mayer—deceased.

*Kathleen M. Fitzpatrick, of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Nominee: Kathleen M. Fitzpatrick.
Post: Timor-Leste.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: none.
2. Spouse: Richard A. Figueroa: none.
3. Children and Spouses: Elizabeth K. Figueroa (not married): none; Alexandra M. Figueroa (not married): none.

4. Parents: George M. Fitzpatrick—deceased; Virginia M. Fitzpatrick—deceased.

5. Grandparents: Charles J. McAllister—deceased; Gertrude C. McAllister—deceased; C. Emmett Fitzpatrick—deceased; Mary B. Fitzpatrick—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: G. Michael Fitzpatrick/Laura Henderson Fitzpatrick: none; Thomas J. Fitzpatrick/Teresa Lobb Fitzpatrick: none.

7. Sisters and Spouses—no sisters.

*Michael James Dodman, of New York, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

Nominee: Michael James Dodman.
Post: Mauritania.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, Amount, Date, and Donee:

1. Self: Michael Dodman: none.
2. Spouse: Joan Dodman: none.
3. Children and Spouses: Brian Dodman: none; Kaitlin Dodman: none; Margaret Dodman: none; Claire Dodman: none.

4. Parents: Kirk Dodman: none; Pauline Dodman: none.

5. Grandparents: Paul Wiegand: deceased; Eileen Wiegand: deceased; Herbert Dodman: deceased; Sarah Dodman: deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Mark & Tina Dodman: none; Timothy & Colleen Dodman: none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Pamela Dodman: none.

*Peter Hoekstra, of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Nominee: Peter Hoekstra.

Post: Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee.

1. Self: \$1000, 10/11/13, Land for Senate; \$1000, 12/24/13, Land for Senate; \$1000, 12/20/13, Sasse for Senate; \$100, 5/27/13, Huizenga for Congress; \$1000, 8/29/14, Gillespie for Senate; \$1000, 10/30/14, Huizenga for Congress; \$500, 1/21/14, Huizenga for Congress; \$500, 4/7/14, Molenaar for Congress; \$500, 7/28/14, Ellis for Congress; \$400, 7/29/14, Molenaar for Congress; \$500, 8/11/14, Comstock for Congress; \$100, 12/21/14, Comstock for Congress; \$250, 9/30/15, Chrys for Maryland; \$1000, 9/30/15, Kasich for President; \$130, 7/31/15, Greenberg Taurig PAC; \$65, 8/31/15, Greenberg Taurig PAC; \$65, 9/30/15, Greenberg Taurig; \$500, 10/5/16, Upton for all of Us; \$150, 10/5/16, Comstock for Congress; \$500, 10/27/16, Trump Make America

Great Again; \$400, 10/27/16, Trump Make America Great Again; \$400, 10/15/16, Walberg for Congress; \$250, 10/15/16, Toomey for Senate.

1. Spouse: \$1,000, 3/20/14, Land for Senate.
2. Children and Spouses: Erin Hoekstra—none; Allison Hoekstra—none; Bryan Hoekstra—none.
3. Parents—deceased.
4. Grandparents—deceased.
5. Brothers and Spouses: Andrew and Kathy Hoekstra—none.
6. Sisters and Spouses: Grace and Dale Kramer—none.

Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Nominee: Daniel J. Kritenbrink

Post: Hanoi

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: Nami Kritenbrink, None.
3. Children and Spouses: Mia Kritenbrink, None; Joseph Kritenbrink, None.
4. Parents: Donald L. Kritenbrink, None; Joyce A. Kritenbrink, None.

5. Grandparents: John Joseph Kritenbrink—deceased; Ida Kritenbrink—deceased; Gerald Murphy—deceased; Clare Murphy—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: N/A.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Kay L. Wigle (sister), None; Don Wigle (brother-in-law), None; Nancy C. Campbell (sister), None; Matt Campbell (brother-in-law), None.

*Michele Jeanne Sison, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Haiti.

Nominee: Michele Jeanne Sison.

Post: Haiti.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: N/A.
2. Spouse: N/A.
3. Children and Spouses: Alexandra Katherine Knight: N/A; Jessica Elizabeth Knight: N/A.

4. Parents: Pastor Bravo Sison—deceased; Veronica Sison: N/A.

5. Grandparents: Deceased; N/A.

6. Brothers and Spouses: N/A.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Cynthia Morrissey (Patrick Morrissey), \$100, 2012, National Democratic Party; Victoria Morimoto (Miles Morimoto), \$200, 2016, Bernie Sanders; \$100, 2013, National Democratic Party; \$100, 2012, National Democratic Party.

*Jamie McCourt, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the French Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Principality of Monaco.

Nominee: Jamie McCourt.

Post: U.S. Ambassador to the French Republic and U.S. Ambassador to the Principality of Monaco.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$2,600, 6/28/13, Susan Collins, Collins For Senator; \$1,000, 3/20/14, Common Ground PAC; \$2,000, 6/02/14, Susan Collins, Collins For Senator; \$2,500, 10/06/14, DCCC; \$1,000, 10/29/14, McCarthy Victory Fund Joint Fundraising Contribution; \$5,000, 12/23/14, RICKPAC; \$5,200, 2/23/15, John McCain Sedona PAC; \$2,700, 3/31/15, Marco Rubio, Rubio For President; \$2,700, 4/08/15, Michael Bennet, Bennet For Colorado; \$2,700, 6/10/15, James R. Perry, \$2,700, (Rick) Perry For President; 6/10/15, James R. Perry, (Rick) Perry For President; (\$2,700), 9/28/15, James R. Perry, (Rick) Perry For President; \$2,700, 10/23/15, Kamala Harris, Harris for Senate; \$2,700, 12/09/15, Carly Fiorina, Carly For President; \$5,400, 12/14/15, Mimi Walters Victory Fund Joint Fundraising Contribution; (\$2,500), 12/23/15, John McCain Sedona PAC; \$2,500, 12/23/15, John McCain Sedona PAC; \$2,700, 1/29/16, John Kasich, \$12,500, Kasich For America; 7/06/16, Team Ryan Joint Fundraising Contribution; \$100,000, 7/18/16, Trump Victory Joint Fundraising Contribution; \$100,000, 9/20/16, Trump Victory Joint Fundraising Contribution; \$249,200, 10/13/16, Trump Victory Joint Fundraising Contribution; \$5,000, 11/23/16, Trump for America Inc.; \$50,800, 12/13/16, 58th Presidential Inaugural Comm.

2. Spouse: Not applicable.

3. Children & Spouses: Drew McCourt, none; Travis McCourt, none; Casey McCourt, none; Frank Gavin McCourt, none.

4. Parents: Jacob (Jack) Luskin, none; Jeannette Luskin, none.

5. Grandparents: Nathan Luskin—deceased; Dora Luskin—deceased; Samuel Kitt—deceased; Eleanor Kitt—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Cary Alan Luskin, None; Debbie Luskin, none; Kevin Eric Luskin, \$1,000, 3/19/13, Eric Cantor, Cantor For Congress; \$1,000, 3/10/14, Mitch McConnell, McConnell Senate Committee; \$500, 1/25/15, Ed Royce, Royce Campaign Committee. Laurie Luskin, \$1,500, 9/12/15, John Ratcliffe, Ratcliffe For Congress; \$1,500, 9/12/15, John Ratcliffe, Ratcliffe For Congress, \$1,500, 11/09/15, Brian Babin, Babin For Congress; \$1,500, 11/09/15, Brian Babin, Babin For Congress; \$300, 1/29/16, Robert Pittenger, Pittenger For Congress; \$2,700, 1/29/16, Robert Pittenger, Pittenger For Congress; \$300, 2/23/16, Carlos Curbelo, Curbelo For Congress; \$2,700, 2/23/16, Carlos Curbelo, Curbelo For Congress; \$500, 2/29/16, Rob Portman, Portman For Senate; \$1,000, 3/31/16, Joe Heck, Friends of Joe Heck; \$1,500, 3/31/16, Gus Bilirakis, Bilirakis For Congress; \$1,500, 3/31/16, Gus Bilirakis, Bilirakis For Congress; \$1,000, 3/21/17, Josh Mandel, Citizens For Josh Mandel, Inc.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Not applicable.

*Richard Duke Buchan III, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Spain, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Andorra.

Nominee: Richard Duke Buchan III.

Post: Spain and Andorra.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the in-

formation contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$3,000, 2/9/2017, Molinaro for Dutchess; \$5,000, 2/3/2017, Committee to Re-Elect Anderson; \$5,000, 10/28/2016, Trump for America, Inc.; \$2,700, 9/29/2016, Kelly Ayotte for Senate; \$2,700, 9/8/2016, Rubio Victory Committee; \$449,400, 6/29/2016, Trump Victory—Breakdown Below; \$5,400, Donald J. Trump for President; \$233,800, RNC's General, Convention and Building Fund Accounts; \$110,000, State Parties Federal Accounts; \$100,200, RNC Recount Fund Account; \$2,700, 6/8/2016, Kirk for Senate; \$2,016, 4/29/16, Right to Rise Super PAC, Inc.; \$25,000, 3/29/2016, Team Ryan JFC—Breakdown Below; \$19,600, NRCC; \$5,400, Ryan for Congress, Inc.; \$5,100, 3/15/2016, The Pat McCrory Committee; \$2,700, 2/26/2016, Marco Rubio for President; \$2,700, 12/4/2015, Sedona PAC/Friends of John McCain; \$2,700, 11/16/2015, Heaney for Congress; \$2,700, 6/26/2015, JEB 2016, Inc.; \$2,600, 2/21/2014, Chris Gibson for Congress; \$2,600, 2/21/2014, Chris Gibson for Congress.

2. Spouse: \$5,000, 10/28/2016, Trump for America, Inc.; \$2,700, 9/8/2016, Rubio Victory Committee; \$449,400, 6/29/2016, Trump Victory—Breakdown Below; \$5,400, Donald J. Trump for President; \$233,800, RNC's General, Convention and Building Fund Accounts; \$110,000, State Parties Federal Accounts; \$100,200, RNC Recount Fund Account; (\$5,855), 5/2/2016, Refund—Right to Rise Super PAC, Inc.; \$25,000, 3/29/2016, Team Ryan JFC—Breakdown Below; \$19,600, NRCC; \$5,400, Ryan for Congress, Inc.; \$5,100, 3/15/2016, The Pat McCrory Committee; \$2,700, 2/26/2016, Marco Rubio for President; \$2,700, 11/16/2015, Heaney for Congress; \$2,700, 6/26/2015, JEB 2016, Inc.; \$50,000, 3/17/2015, Right to Rise Super PAC, Inc.

3. Children and Spouses: Catherine Swift Buchan (Daughter), none; Richard Duke Buchan IV (Son), none; John Francis Buchan (Son), none.

4. Parents: Richard Duke Buchan, Jr. (Father)—deceased; Betty Joanne Buchan (Mother), \$2,700, 6/23/2015, JEB 2016, Inc.

5. Grandparents: Richard Duke Buchan, Sr. (Grandfather)—deceased; Catherine Mangum Buchan (Grandmother)—deceased; Charles Gray Stainback, Jr. (Grandfather)—deceased; Rose Thompson Stainback (Grandmother)—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: N/A.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Jo Dee DiRuzza (Sister), \$2,700, 11/24/2015, JEB 2016, Inc.; Barry Santi DiRuzza (Brother-in-Law), \$2,700, 11/24/2015, JEB 2016, Inc.

*Larry Edward André, Jr., of Texas, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Djibouti.

Nominee: Larry E. André, Jr.

Post: Djibouti

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Larry E. André Jr., None.

2. Spouse: Ouroukou André, none.

3. Child: Ruhyyih Rahman André, (No spouse) none.

4. Parents:

250.00, 10/12/2014, the 2016 Draft Committee, 250.00, 03/30/2014, Sasse, Benjamin E. via Ben Sasse for U.S. Senate Inc.; 250.00, 09/30/2014, Cassidy William M via Bill Cassidy for U.S. Senate; 250.00, 09/30/2014, Brown, Scott via Strong Country for Today and Tomorrow;

500.00, 08/21/2015, Ward, Kelli via Ward for Senate; 500.00, 12/04/2015, Ward, Kelli via Ward for Senate; 500.00, 04/14/2015, Ward, Kelli via Ward for Senate; 500.00, 07/22/2016, Ward, Kelli via Ward for Senate; 500.00, 06/23/2017, Ward, Kelli via Ward for Senate.

450.00, 07/02/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for Senate; 100.00, 08/01/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for Senate; 100.00, 08/09/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 09/17/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 09/29/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 11/01/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 11/22/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President.

100.00, 11/22/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 12/06/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 12/17/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 500.00, 01/25/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 500.00, 02/15/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 500.00, 02/28/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 500.00, 02/28/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 500.00, 03/06/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; -50.00, 03/21/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; -50.00, 04/25/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President;

450.00, 04/30/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 450.00, 04/30/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 450.00, 07/02/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 250.00, 10/12/2014, Ernst, Joni K via Joni for Iowa; 250.00, 03/29/2014, Wolf, Milton via Milton Wolf for US Senate; 1000.00, 10/24/2016, Trump, Donald J via Donald J. Trump for President, Inc; 250.00, 08/10/2014, Maness, Robert L Col. Ret via Friends of Colonel Rob Maness; 250.00, 09/16/2014, Cotton, Thomas via Cotton for Senate; 250.00, 09/30/2014, Cotton, Thomas via Cotton for Senate.

250.00, 03/30/2014, Bevin, Mathew Griswold via Matt Bevin for Senate Inc.; 250.00, 03/30/2014, Maness, Robert L Col. Ret via Friends of Colonel Rob Maness; 500.00, 08/16/2014, Miller, Joseph W via Citizens for Joe Miller; 250.00, 10/10/2014, Perdue, David via Perdue for Senate; 250.00, 03/31/2014, Shannon, T W via Shannon for Senate; 250.00, 10/14/2014, Tillis, Thom R via Thom Tillis Committee; 100.00, 10/31/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America; 100.00, 11/22/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America.

100.00, 12/06/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America; 100.00, 12/17/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America; 100.00, 08/01/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America; 100.00, 08/09/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America; 100.00, 09/17/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America; 100.00, 09/29/2015, Carson, Benjamin S Sr MD via Carson America; 100.00, 08/01/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 08/09/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 09/17/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President.

100.00, 09/29/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 10/31/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 11/22/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 12/06/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 12/17/2015, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 01/25/2016, Fiorina, Carly via Carly for President; 100.00, 08/09/2015, Rubio, Marco via Marco Rubio for President; 100.00, 09/17/2015, Rubio, Marco via Marco Rubio for President.

500.00, 07/20/2015, Sarah Pac; 250.00, 04/06/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 05/31/2015, Cruz Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz for President; 100.00, 06/29/2015, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Cruz

for President; \$450.00, 07/02/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" via Ted Cruz for Senate.

Larry E. André Sr., Kathleen Ann Hoyt: none.

5. Grandparents: Ruth Eileen André (deceased), Phyllis Bushner (deceased), Harold Bushner (deceased), Sheldon Leo André (deceased).

6. Brothers and Spouses: none.

7. Sister: Regina Kathleen André (no spouse): none.

*Thomas L. Carter, of South Carolina, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Nominee: Thomas L. Carter.

Post: Rank of Ambassador while Representative of the United States of America on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$500, 6/18/13, Lindsey Graham; \$1000, 9/19/13, Martha McSally; \$500 9/21/13 Howie Lind; \$250, 10/21/13, Wendy Rogers; \$250, 4/8/14, Howie Lind; \$1000, 4/10/14, Lindsey Graham; \$250, 6/15/14, Bentley Rayburn; \$250, 7/10/14, Wendy Rogers; \$250, 8/5/14, Lindsey Graham; \$500, 9/18/14, Martha McSally; \$250, 10/20/14, Wendy Rogers; \$1000, 3/31/15, Martha McSally; \$500, 3/31/15, Sam Adcock; \$1000, 6/25/15, Lindsey Graham; \$1000, 10/9/15, John McCain; \$1000, 12/8/15, Tim Scott; \$250, 12/10/15, Lindsey Graham; \$500, 2/17/16, Kelly Ayotte; \$500, 3/25/16, Lindsey Graham; \$500, 3/29/16, Mike McCaul; \$1000, 3/31/16, Martha McSally; \$500, 6/15/16, Jack Reed; \$250, 6/20/16, Will Hurd; \$500, 6/29/16, John McCain; \$250, 9/17/16, John McCain; \$500, 9/21/16, Kay Granger; \$250, 9/27/16, Mike McCaul; \$1000, 10/21/16, Trump Transition (501c4); \$250, 11/15/16, Mike McCaul; \$1000, 2/16/17, Martha McSally.

2. No other contributions by immediate family members.

*Nina Maria Fite, of Pennsylvania, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Angola.

Nominee: Nina Maria Fite.

Post: Luanda, Angola.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: none.
2. Spouse: N/A.
3. Children and Spouses: N/A.
4. Parents: Francis Aloysius Fite—deceased; Neyde Tinoco Fite—deceased.
5. Grandparents: Eugene Fite—deceased; Loretta Fite—deceased; Regulo Tinoco—deceased; Ana Bezerra Tinoco—deceased.
7. Brothers and Spouses: Richard Francis Fite, none; Ruth Fite, \$30, 2016, Hillary Clinton.
8. Sisters and Spouses: Tereza Fite McNamee, Peter McNamee, see attachment for joint contributions; Cynthia Fite—deceased.

Attachment:

Sisters and Spouses: Tereza Fite McNamee, Peter Charles McNamee: \$100, 1/30/2017, Democratic Congressional Campaign Com-

mittee; \$50, 2/01/2017, Emily's List; \$50, 3/09/2017, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; \$35, 10/10/2016, California Democratic Party; \$50, 3/31/2016, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; \$25, 3/01/2016, Democratic Congress; \$50, have receipt letter n/d—2015, Democratic National Committee; \$50, 7/13/2015, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; \$36, 8/06/2015, Democratic Congress; \$50, 3/15/2015, California Democratic Party; \$25, 9/04/2015, Kamala Harris for Senate; \$100, 1/22/2014, Democratic National Committee; \$35, 3/20/2014, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; \$35, 5/19/2014, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; \$50, 7/03/2014, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; \$25, 4/13/2013, California Democratic Party; \$25, 1/03/2013, Democratic National Committee.

*Daniel L. Foote, of New York, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Zambia.

Nominee: Daniel Lewis Foote.

Post: Zambia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

My spouse, immediate family, and I have not made any political contributions.

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: Claudia V. Foote, none.
3. Children and Spouses: Cecilia M. Lopez, none; Daniel C. Foote, none.
4. Parents: Curtiss L. Foote, none; Caroline H. Foote, none.
5. Grandparents: Curtiss E. Foote—deceased; Lorraine C. Foote—deceased; Otto Herold—deceased; Anna Herold—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: Robert E. Foote, none; Dawn G. Foote (spouse), none; John C. Foote, none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Kristen M. Foote, none.

*Richard Grenell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Nominee: Richard Allen Grenell.

Post: U.S. Ambassador to Germany.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$1,000, 6/19/2013, Lindsey Graham; \$250, 9/11/2013, Mitch McConnell; \$1,000, 9/16/2014, Ed Royce; \$5,400, 6/05/2015, Rob Portman; \$1,000, 6/11/2015, John McCain.
2. Spouse: none.
3. Children and spouses: none.
4. Parents: Judith Grenell—none; Denny Grenell—deceased.
5. Grandparents: Nate Grenell—deceased; Esther Grenell—deceased; Rueben Pearson—deceased; Gladys Pearson—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: Bradley Grenell—none; Jeffrey Grenell—none; Kerri Grenell—none; Jane Grenell—none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Deborah Grenell Kells—none; Dennis Kells—none.

*Kenneth Ian Juster, of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of India.

Nominee: Kenneth Ian Juster.

Post: U.S. Ambassador to India.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$1,000.00, 12/21/2016, Republican National Committee; \$32,400.00, 12/21/2016, Republican National Committee; \$5,000.00, 11/22/2016, Trump for America, Inc.; \$500.00, 09/20/2016, Mark Steven Kirk, via Kirk for Senate; \$2,700.00, 08/07/2016, Thomas Cotton, via Cotton for Senate; \$1,000.00, 07/04/2016, Mark Steven Kirk, via Kirk for Senate; \$1,000.00, 06/29/2016, Kelly Ayotte, via Friends of Kelly Ayotte, Inc.; \$1,000.00, 06/12/2016, James French Hill, via French Hill for Arkansas; \$2,700.00, 06/05/2016, Elizabeth Cheney, via Liz Cheney for Wyoming; \$2,700.00, 05/06/2016, John McCain, via Sedona PAC; \$-585.50, 05/02/2016, Right to Rise USA; \$2,700.00, 04/25/2016, Edward Rafael Cruz, via Cruz for President; \$1,000.00, 02/22/2016, James French Hill, via French Hill for Arkansas; \$1,000.00, 01/14/2016, Republican National Committee; \$1,000.00, 12/21/2015, Mark Steven Kirk, via Kirk for Senate; \$2,700.00, 06/18/2015, Jeb Bush, via Jeb 2016, Inc.; \$5,000.00, 05/28/2015, Right to Rise PAC, Inc.; \$5,000.00, 01/11/2015, Right to Rise PAC, Inc.; \$5,000.00, 04/02/2014, Republican National Committee; \$1,000.00, 03/17/2014, Lindsey Graham, via Team Graham, Inc.; \$1,000.00, 03/2014, Daniel Sullivan; \$1,000.00, 02/24/2014, James French Hill, via French Hill for Arkansas; \$1,000.00, 09/30/2013, Mark Steven Kirk, via Kirk for Senate; \$1,000.00, 03/16/2013, Concord 51 Political Action Committee, Inc.; \$2,600.00, 02/2013, Mitch McConnell.

2. Spouse: N/A.

3. Children and Spouses: N/A.

4. Parents: Howard Juster—deceased; Muriel Juster, none.

5. Grandparents: Samuel Juster—deceased; Minnie Juster—deceased; Benjamin Uchitelle—deceased; Lena Uchitelle—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Andrew Juster: \$2,700.00, 06/30/2017, Sean Patrick Maloney, via Sean Patrick Maloney for Congress; \$1,000.00, 12/27/2016, National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, Inc. Political Action Committee; \$1,000.00, 09/25/2015, Jeb Bush, via Jeb 2016, Inc.; \$1,000.00, 09/15/2015, National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, Inc. Political Action Committee; \$1,000.00, 11/13/2014, National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, Inc. Political Action Committee; \$1,000.00, 09/24/2013, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$1,000.00, 07/25/2013, National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, Inc. Political Action Committee; \$2,600.00, 07/24/2013, Team Ryan; Janet Juster (Sister-in-law), none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: N/A.

*W. Robert Kohorst, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Croatia.

Nominee: W. Robert Kohorst (aka William Robert Kohorst).

Post: U.S. Ambassador to Croatia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$32,400, 6/28/2013, Republican National Committee; \$2,600, 10/31/2013, Dinsdale, Sid for U.S. Senate; \$32,400, 10/31/2013, National Republican Senatorial Committee;

\$32,400, 2/3/2014, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$25,000, 3/14/2014, Republican Governors Association; \$1,000, 6/5/2014, Orman, Gregory for U.S. Senate; \$22,600, 6/18/2014, Republican National Committee; \$1,000, 7/1/2014, Orswell, Jack for Congress; \$32,400, 10/31/2014, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$32,400, 1/30/2015, Republican National Committee; \$10,200, 3/31/2015, Rubio Victory Committee for President; \$1,500, 6/16/2015, Barger, Katherine for Los Angeles County Supervisor; \$1,000, 10/17/2015, Orswell, Jack for Congress; \$1,000, 10/18/2015, Young, Todd for U.S. Senate; \$5,400, 10/26/2015, Boozman, John for U.S. Senate; \$85,200, 11/20/2015, Republican National Committee; \$1,000, 11/25/2015, Hoeven, John for U.S. Senate; \$2,700, 12/15/2015, Young, Todd for U.S. Senate; \$250,000, 1/29/2016, Republican National Committee; \$1,500, 1/30/2016, Barger, Katherine for Los Angeles County Supervisor; \$50,000, 2/10/2016, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$50,000, 3/31/2016, California Republican Party Federal Acct; \$50,000, 4/7/2016, Cruz, Rafael Edward "Ted" for President; (\$2,500), 5/13/2016, Rubio, Marco for President—Refund from general; \$1,500, 6/10/2016, Barger, Katherine for Los Angeles County Supervisor; \$2,700, 6/22/2016, Rubio, Marco for U.S. Senate; \$5,400, 6/23/2016, Grassley, Charles for U.S. Senate; \$194,400, 6/23/2016, Trump Victory; \$2,700, 6/23/2016, Rubio, Marco for U.S. Senate; \$5,400, 6/30/2016, Johnson, Ron for U.S. Senate; \$100,000, 6/29/2016, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$5,400, 6/29/2016, McMorris Rodgers, Cathy VIA Cathy McMorris Rodgers for Congress; \$2,700, 6/30/2016, Ernst, Joni for U.S. Senate; \$2,700, 8/10/2016, Ayotte, Kelly for U.S. Senate; \$2,500, 8/29/2016, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$2,700, 8/30/2016, McCain, John for U.S. Senate; \$2,500, 9/10/2016, Hadley, David for California House; \$100,000, 9/26/2016, Trump Victory; \$1,000, 11/5/2016, Guinta, Frank VIA Friends of Frank Guinta; \$1,500, 10/21/2016, Antonovich, Michael for California Senate; \$2,700, 11/22/2016, Kennedy, John for U.S. Senate; \$250,000, 11/27/2016, 58th Inauguration Committee; \$5,000, 11/27/2016, Trump for America (transition team breakfast); \$5,400, 12/12/2016, Royce, Ed for Congress; \$5,400, 12/21/2016, Nunes, Devin for Congress; \$2,700, 1/20/2017, Heller, Dean for U.S. Senate; \$100,000, 1/26/2017, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$2,700, 1/27/2017, Barrasso, John for U.S. Senate; \$2,700, 1/27/2017, Taylor, Scott for Congress; \$2,700, 3/1/2017, Garcetti, Eric for Los Angeles Mayor; \$2,700, 3/20/2017, Thune, John for U.S. Senate; \$25,000, 3/20/2017, McCarthy, Kevin for Congress and PAC.

2. Spouse: Shelley Ann Allen; \$32,400, 6/28/2013, Republican National Committee; \$2,600, 11/20/2013, Dinsdale, Sid for U.S. Senate; \$32,400, 2/3/2014, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$32,400, 1/30/2015, Republican National Committee; \$10,200, 3/31/2015, Rubio Victory Committee for President; \$10,200, 3/31/2015, Rubio Victory Committee for President; (\$10,200), 5/19/2015, Rubio Victory Committee—Refund of duplicate payment error; \$1,500, 6/16/2015, Barger, Katherine for Los Angeles County Supervisor; \$33,400, 1/29/2016, Republican National Committee; \$1,500, 1/30/2016, Barger, Katherine for Los Angeles County Supervisor; (\$2,500), 5/13/2016, Rubio, Marco for President—refund of general election; \$1,500, 6/10/2016, Barger, Katherine for Los Angeles County Supervisor; \$5,400, 6/23/2016, Rubio, Marco for U.S. Senate; \$5,400, 12/12/2016, Royce, Ed for Congress; \$2,700, 3/1/2017, Garcetti, Eric for Los Angeles Mayor; \$2,700, 3/20/2017, Thune, John for U.S. Senate.

3. Children and Spouses: Kevin Allen Kohorst; \$5,300, 9/30/2015, Rubio, Marco for President; \$25,000, 3/29/2016, California Republican Party Federal Acct; (\$2,600), 5/13/2016, Rubio, Marco for President—refund general; \$2,500, 8/29/2016, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$2,700, 1/27/2017, Taylor, Scott for Congress; \$5,000, 2/27/2017, McCarthy, Kevin Victory Fund. Katie Ann Kohorst; \$5,400, 9/30/2015, Rubio, Marco for President; (\$2,700), 5/13/2016, Rubio, Marco for President—refund general; \$2,500, 8/29/2016, National Republican Senatorial Committee. Matthew Allen Kohorst; \$2,700, 6/19/2015, Rubio, Marco for President; \$2,700, 9/29/2015, Rubio, Marco for President; \$25,000, 3/12/2016, California Republican Party Federal Acct; (\$2,700), 5/13/2016, Rubio, Marco for President—refund general; \$2,500, 8/23/2016, National Republican Senatorial Committee; \$5,000, 11/30/2016, Trump for America Inc.; \$2,700, 1/26/2017, Taylor, Scott for Congress; \$5,000, 2/23/2017, McCarthy, Kevin Victory Fund.

4. Parents: William Robert Kohorst, Sr.—deceased; Mary Helen Kohorst—deceased.

5. Grandparents: Clement Bernard Kohorst—deceased; Rose Kohorst—deceased; Elmer Lawrence McGarry—deceased; Francis McGarry—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Garry Stephen Kohorst; \$5,400, 1/28/2016, Rubio, Marco for President; (\$2,700), 3/28/2016, Rubio, Marco for President—refund general; \$20, 6/26/2016, Trump, Donald J VIA Donald J. Trump for President Inc.; \$100, 5/15/2015, Carson, Ben for President. Dawn Kohorst; \$5,400, 1/28/2016, Rubio, Marco for President; (\$2,700), 3/28/2016, Rubio, Marco for President—refund general. Keith Andrew Kohorst; \$50, 2015, UNLV Regent Sam Lieberman. Kimberly Kohorst; none. Brett James Kohorst; none. Natasha Kohorst; none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: none.

*Edward T. McMullen, Jr., of South Carolina, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Swiss Confederation, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Nominee: Edward Thomas McMullen Jr.
Post: Ambassador Switzerland/Liechtenstein.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$1000, 2/1/13, Joe Wilson; \$1000, 1/12/15, Joe Wilson; \$2000, 11/21/11, Lindsey Graham.

2. Spouse: none.

3. Children and Spouses: Margaret Ann McMullen; Edward Thomas McMullen III—none; Katherine West McMullen—none.

4. Parents: Christine McMullen Valliere—deceased; Edward Thomas McMullen: none.

5. Grandparents: Clarence Theodore Cochran—deceased; Helen Cochran—deceased; Katherine Boyle McMullen—deceased; Erwin Oscar McMullen—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Everett John McMullen, none; Melissa McMullen, none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Michelle McMullen Clark, none; Victor Clark, none.

*David Dale Reimer, of Ohio, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Mauritius, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Seychelles.

Nominee: David Dale Reimer.

Post: U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: none.
2. Spouse: Simonetta Romagnolo: none.
3. Children and Spouses: N/A.
4. Parents: Richard Reimer, \$70, 4/4/2013, Wayne County (Ohio) Democratic Party; \$50, 6/4/2013, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC); \$200, 6/12/2014, DSCC; \$200, 6/12/2014, Democratic National Committee (DNC); \$200, 9/1/2014, DSCC; \$100, 4/24/2015, Friends of Sherrod Brown; Lois Reimer: none.
5. Grandparents: Edwin Unruh—deceased; Lenah Unruh—deceased; David Reimer—deceased; Caroline Reimer—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: Paul Reimer, none; Melissa Miller, none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Sue Reimer, none; Craig Praul, none.

*Eric P. Whitaker, of Illinois, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Niger.

Nominee: Eric P. Whitaker.
Post: Niamey, Niger.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: none.
2. Spouse: Jonita—deceased
- 3 Children and Spouses: Ginger Whitaker, \$91, 12/15-03/16, Bernie Sanders; Jordan Whitaker, none.
4. Parents: Edwin Whitaker—deceased; Carmen Whitaker—none.
5. Grandparents: Lowell and Stella Barham—deceased; Edwin and Mame Whitaker—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: Craig and Mary Whitaker—none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: None.

*Carla Sands, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Denmark

Nominee—Carla Herd Sands.
Post: U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$1,000, 12/20/16, Ed Royce Campaign Committee; \$100,000, 12/16/16, 58th Presidential Inaugural Committee; \$810, 10/5/16, David Hadley for Assembly; \$29,434, 7/26/16, Trump Victory Committee; \$5,577.85, 7/26/16, Trump Victory Committee; \$214,988.15, 7/21/16, Trump Victory Committee; \$1,000, 7/20/16, Ron Johnson for Senate; \$1,000, 7/20/16, Ron Johnson for Senate; \$2,700, 7/2/16, Ted Cruz (returned by campaign); \$1,000, 6/30/16, Zeldin for Congress; \$900, 6/14/16, California Republican Party; \$1,000, 6/9/16, Ron DeSantis for Florida; \$2,700, 6/8/16, Friends of Joe Heck; \$2,700, 6/8/16, Friends of Joe Heck; \$1,000, 5/27/16, Sundheim for Senate; \$5,000, 5/26/16, Republican National Committee; \$20,000, 4/29/16,

Trusted Leadership PAC; \$5,000, 4/27/16, New Majority PAC; \$5,000, 4/5/16, Trusted Leadership PAC; \$2,700, 1/31/16, Ted Cruz (returned by campaign); \$5,000, 1/28/16, Stand For Truth, Inc.; \$10,000, 1/19/16, California Republican Party; \$2,700, 1/14/16, Cruz for President; \$2,700, 12/29/15, Cruz for President; \$500, 12/27/15, Paul Chabot for Congress; \$33,400, 9/23/15, Republican National Committee; \$1,600, 9/23/15, Republican National Committee; \$2,700, 8/31/15, Scott Walker, Inc.; \$2,700, 6/19/15, Marco Rubio for President; \$32,400, 10/24/14, Republican National Committee; \$2,000, 9/30/14, McSally for Congress; \$2,600, 9/16/14, Strickland for Congress; \$672.99, 9/11/14, Winning Women for US Senate; \$2,400, 5/28/14, Jobs Growth & Freedom Fund (Cruz Victory); \$5,000, 6/10/14, Ted Cruz for Senate (Cruz Victory Committee); \$2,600, 2/13/14, Strickland for Congress; \$500, 10/16/13, Tea Party Patriots Citizens Fund; \$2,098, 8/9/13, Republican National Committee; \$2,600, 7/30/13, Friends of Pat Toomey; \$574.75, 7/12/13, Kevin McCarthy In-Kind.

2. Spouse: Fred Sands (Deceased); \$33,400, 9/23/15, Republican National Committee; \$1,600, 9/23/15, Republican National Committee; \$2,700, 9/1/15, Scott Walker, Inc.; \$2,700, 6/30/15, Jeb 2016; \$1,440, 6/26/15, Marco Rubio for President; \$2,700, 6/19/15, Marco Rubio for President; \$2,700, 6/3/15, Devin Nunes Campaign Committee; \$1,000, 5/15/15, Carly for America Committee; \$1,000, 3/18/15, Marco Rubio for Senate (Rubio Victory Comm); \$5,000, 2/4/15, Right to Rise PAC, Inc.; \$1,000, 11/21/14, National Republican Congressional Comm; \$2,500, 10/27/14, New Majority California Federal PAC; \$1,000, 10/24/14, New Hampshire for Scott Brown; \$1,000, 10/7/14, Paul Chabot for Congress (Young Guns Victory Committee); \$1,000, 10/23/14, Nestande for Congress (Young Guns Victory); \$1,000, 10/22/14, Carl Demaio for Congress (Young Guns Victory Committee); \$1,000, 10/7/14, Gorell for Congress (Young Guns Victory); \$2,400, 9/30/14, National Republican Congressional Committee (McCarthy Victory Fund); \$5,000, 9/30/14, Majority Committee PAC (McCarthy Victory Fund); \$2,600, 9/30/14, Kevin McCarthy for Congress (McCarthy Victory Fund); \$2,100, 9/16/14, Strickland for Congress; \$672.99, 9/11/14, Winning Women for US Senate; \$400, 5/31/14, Carl Demaio for Congress; \$2,600, 5/31/14, Carl Demaio for Congress; \$2,600, 5/28/14, Carr for Congress; \$2,600, 4/4/14, Walters for Congress; \$2,600, 3/26/14, Ben Sasse for US Senate, Inc.; \$2,600, 3/26/14, Ben Sasse for US Senate, Inc.; \$500, 2/13/14, Strickland for Congress; \$2,100, 2/13/14, Strickland for Congress; \$1,000, 11/26/13, Nestande for Congress; \$2,600, 9/19/13, McConnell Senate Committee '14; \$1,560, 8/9/13, Reclaim America PAC (Rubio Victory Comm); \$2,600, 8/9/13, Marco Rubio for Senate; \$2,600, 7/30/13, Friends of Pat Toomey; \$2,500, 7/22/13, Issa for Congress; In-Kind, \$574.75, 7/12/13, Kevin McCarthy for Congress (McCarthy Victory Fund); \$32,400, 6/26/13, Republican National Committee; \$500, 4/19/13, Strickland for Congress; \$2,400, 3/11/13, Ryan for Congress, Inc.; \$2,600, 3/11/13, Ryan for Congress, Inc.

3. Children: Alexandra Sands: None; Jonathan Sands: \$2,700, 7/11/16, Donald Trump for President.

4. Parents: Jack Herd: \$75.00, 2016, Donald Trump for President. Barbara Herd: None.

5. Grandparents: Deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: John Herd, none; David Herd, none; Paige Herd, none; Nathan Herd, none; Mark Herd, none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Deborah Sicchitano: \$100, 2016, Donald Trump for President. Joseph Sicchitano: \$90.00, 12/31/16, Sun Trust PAC; \$60.00, 11/28/16, Sun Trust PAC; \$30.00, 10/19/16, Sun Trust PAC; \$180.00, 9/30/16, Sun Trust PAC; \$180.00, 6/30/16, Sun Trust PAC; \$360.00, 12/31/15, Sun Trust PAC; \$360.00, 6/30/15, Sun Trust PAC. Rhonda Carver: \$100, 2016, Donald Trump for President. Brian Carver: None.

* Samuel Dale Brownback, of Kansas, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom.

* Michael T. Evanoff, of Arkansas, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Diplomatic Security).

* Jennifer Gillian Newstead, of New York, to be Legal Adviser of the Department of State.

* Manisha Singh, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Economic and Business Affairs).

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination list which was printed in the Record on the date indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that this nomination lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

* Foreign Service nominations beginning with Julie P. Akey and ending with Vera N. Zdravkova, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 2, 2017.

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Liles Clifton Burke, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

Walter David Counts III, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.

Michael Joseph Juneau, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana.

A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

Karen Gren Scholer, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas.

Tilman Eugene Self III, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Georgia.

John F. Bash, of Texas, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas for the term of four years.

Erin Angela Nealy Cox, of Texas, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas for the term of four years.

R. Andrew Murray, of North Carolina, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina for the term of four years.

* Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. PERDUE:

S. 2013. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to provide a safe harbor from certain requirements related to qualified mortgages for residential mortgage loans held on an originating depository institution's port-

folio, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. ERNST (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2014. A bill to require greater transparency for Federal regulatory decisions that impact small businesses; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. PETERS, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2015. A bill to clarify the status of the North Country, Ice Age, and New England National Scenic Trails as units of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2016. A bill to prevent an unconstitutional strike against North Korea; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2017. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide that over-the-road bus drivers are covered under the maximum hours requirement; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 2018. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make the child tax credit fully refundable, establish an increased child tax credit for young children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2019. A bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other statutes to clarify appropriate liability standards for Federal antidiscrimination claims; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2020. A bill to establish a voluntary program to identify and promote Internet-connected products that meet industry-leading cybersecurity and data security standards, guidelines, best practices, methodologies, procedures, and processes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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

S. 2021. A bill to repeal title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for cooperative governing of individual health insurance coverage offered in interstate commerce; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2022. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for reciprocal marketing approval of certain drugs, biological products, and devices that are authorized to be lawfully marketed abroad, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 2023. A bill to require a study regarding security measures and equipment at Cuba's airports, require the standardization of Federal Air Marshal Service agreements, require efforts to raise international aviation security standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. KAINE):

S. 2024. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a tax credit for foster families; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. YOUNG:

S. 2025. A bill to provide for the conduct of demonstration projects to provide coordinated case management services for TANF recipients; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2026. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to make improvements to the treatment of the United States territories under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 2027. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide clarification with respect to the liability of third party payers for medical assistance paid under the Medicaid program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2028. A bill to provide for institutional risk-sharing in the Federal student loan programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2029. A bill to establish a National and Community Service Administration to carry out the national and volunteer service programs, to expand participation in such programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 308. A resolution commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 2nd Infantry Division; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. Res. 309. A resolution expressing support for the designation of October 2017 as "National Protect Your Hearing Month"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KING, and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 310. A resolution recognizing the importance of a continued commitment to ending pediatric AIDS worldwide; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. Res. 311. A resolution honoring the Portland Thorns FC as the champion of the National Women's Soccer League in 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. Con. Res. 28. A concurrent resolution providing for a correction in the enrollment of S. 782; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 108

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 108, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

S. 422

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 422, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 514

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 514, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide access to magnetic EEG/EKG-guided resonance therapy to veterans.

S. 796

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 796, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided education assistance to employer payments of student loans.

S. 808

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 808, a bill to provide protections for certain sports medicine professionals who provide certain medical services in a secondary State.

S. 818

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 818, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals with disabilities to save additional amounts in their ABLE accounts above the current annual maximum contribution if they work and earn income.

S. 872

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 872, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 1027

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1027, a bill to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

S. 1412

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a co-

sponsor of S. 1412, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for a percentage of student loan forgiveness for public service employment, and for other purposes.

S. 1582

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1582, a bill to establish the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission.

S. 1774

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1774, a bill to provide protections for workers with respect to their right to select or refrain from selecting representation by a labor organization.

S. 1850

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1850, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to protect the confidentiality of substance use disorder patient records.

S. 1871

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1871, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1967

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1967, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide additional exemptions to the individual mandate, and for other purposes.

S. 2004

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2004, a bill to increase funding for the State response to the opioid misuse crisis and to provide funding for research on addiction and pain related to the substance misuse crisis.

S. RES. 279

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 279, a resolution reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia.

S. RES. 291

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 291, a resolution affirming the historical connection of the Jewish people to the ancient and sacred city of Jerusalem and condemning efforts at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to deny Judaism's millennia-old historical, religious, and cultural ties to Jerusalem.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2028. A bill to provide for institutional risk-sharing in the Federal student loan programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we all recognize that a postsecondary education is required for most family-sustaining, middle-class jobs, and that an educated workforce is essential to a modern, productive economy. A report by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce found that college-level intensive business services have replaced manufacturing as the largest sector in the U.S. economy, and that while college-educated workers make up only 32 percent of the workforce, they now produce more than 50 percent of the Nation's economic output, up from 13 percent in 1967. A college degree also pays off, as median annual earnings for bachelor's degree holders were \$23,000 higher compared to high school graduates in 2014.

Yet just as there is growing recognition that postsecondary education is indispensable in the modern economy, families are being required to shoulder growing debt burdens that threaten access to college.

According to an analysis of student loan debt by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, between 2004 and 2014, there was an 89 percent increase in the number of student loan borrowers and a 77 percent increase in the average balance size. Today, over 40 million Americans have student loan debt.

This is a growing drag on our economy. As student loan debt has grown, young adults have put off buying homes or cars, starting a family, saving for retirement, or launching new businesses. They have literally mortgaged their economic future.

We know that student loan borrowers are struggling. A recent Department of Education analysis of outcomes for student loan borrowers who began their studies in 1995–96 and 2003–04 found that only 38 percent of the 1995–96 cohort had paid off their loans without default after 20 years, and only 24 percent after 12 years. For the 2003–04 cohort, only 20 percent had repaid their loans without defaulting after 12 years. Worse, 52 percent of students who attended for-profit institutions had defaulted on a student loan within 12 years. Roughly, 8.5 million borrowers currently have a loan in default.

We have seen the costs to students and taxpayers when institutions are not held accountable. Corinthian Colleges and ITT are two examples of institutions that failed their students while benefitting from Federal student aid. Their fraudulent business practices eventually led to their demise, but not before leaving their students and taxpayers on the hook for millions of dollars in student loan debt.

We cannot wait until an institution is catastrophically failing its students before taking action. Institutions need greater financial incentives to act before default rates rise. Simply put, we cannot tackle the student loan debt crisis without States and institutions stepping up and taking greater responsibility for college costs and student borrowing.

That is why I am pleased to introduce the Protect Student Borrowers Act with Senators DURBIN, WARREN, and MURPHY. Our legislation seeks to ensure there is more skin in the game when it comes to student loan debt by setting stronger market incentives for colleges and universities to provide better and more affordable education to students, which should in turn help put the brakes on rising student loan defaults.

The Protect Student Borrowers Act would hold colleges and universities accountable for student loan defaults by requiring them to repay a percentage of defaulted loans. Only institutions that have one-third or more of their students borrow would be included in the bill's risk-sharing requirements based on their cohort default rate. Risk-sharing requirements would kick in when the default rate exceeds 15 percent. As the institution's default rate rises, so too will the institution's risk-share payment.

The Protect Student Borrowers Act also provides incentives for institutions to take proactive steps to ease student loan debt burdens and reduce default rates. Colleges and universities can reduce or eliminate their payments if they implement a comprehensive student loan management plan. The Secretary may waive or reduce the payments for institutions whose mission is to serve low-income and minority students, such as community colleges, Historically Black Institutions, or Hispanic-Serving Institutions—provided that they are making progress in their student loan management plans.

The risk-sharing payments would be invested in helping struggling borrowers, preventing future default and delinquency, and increasing Pell Grants at institutions that enroll a high percentage of Pell Grant recipients and have low default rates.

With the stakes so high for students and taxpayers, it is only fair that institutions bear some of the risk in the student loan program.

We need to tackle student loan debt and college affordability from multiple angles. And we need all stakeholders in the system to do their part. With the Protect Student Borrowers Act, we are providing the incentives and resources for institutions to take more responsibility to address college affordability and student loan debt and improve student outcomes. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill and look forward to working with them to include it and other key reforms in the upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2029. A bill to establish a National and Community Service Administration to carry out the national and volunteer service programs, to expand participation in such programs, and for other purposes, to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, as Americans, we take inspiration from those who have answered the call to serve, whether in defense of our Nation abroad or to strengthen our communities at home. This willingness to make common cause with our fellow citizens and serve a purpose greater than ourselves is a hallmark of our Nation. We should ensure that every American who wants to serve has the opportunity to do so. To that end, I am introducing the America's Call to Improving Opportunities Now (ACTION) for National Service Act with Senators COONS and BLUMENTHAL. Our legislation calls for elevating the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to a cabinet-level agency and supporting up to one million national service positions annually.

Since 1994, over one million individuals have served through the AmeriCorps program. Additionally, roughly 245,000 seniors over the age of 55 volunteer annually through the Senior Corps programs. These individuals have addressed critical community needs in education, economic development, health, and many other areas. They have come to their fellow citizens' aid in times of national disaster, including thousands who have been deployed in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. Unfortunately, we have not created the capacity to support all those who want to serve.

Rhode Island has embraced service. Providence is one of the top AmeriCorps cities in the nation. Across our State, nearly 4,200 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps volunteers are helping students succeed in school, ensuring veterans get access to the services they need, supporting seniors in their communities, protecting the environment, and addressing other critical needs. With additional resources and support, Rhode Island volunteers could accomplish so much more.

We strive to honor those who serve. Even more importantly, we invest in the education and professional development of those who have sacrificed and given so much to our Nation. Developing the talents of our most committed citizens pays life-long dividends. Our investment in the GI Bill not only honors our service members, but also enriches our Nation. Similarly, the education awards for those who have served through CNCS programs have economic impacts beyond the individuals who earn them. Just as we came together on a bipartisan basis to expand and enhance the GI Bill benefits, now is the time to increase the education award for those who serve at

home. The ACTION for National Service Act will ensure that national service volunteers who complete two full terms of service earn an education award equivalent to four years of in-State tuition at a public university. Those who are willing to serve should not have to carry a heavy burden of student loan debt to achieve their educational goals.

Today, as our communities face challenges in a host of areas, we need more people to participate in national service, and we need more partners to support them. As such, the ACTION for National Service Act will establish a National Service Foundation to encourage private sector and philanthropic investment in expanding national service opportunities.

All AmeriCorps members take a pledge to get things done for Americans, to make communities safer, smarter and healthier, and to bring us together. Today, I ask my colleagues to join us in pledging to ensure that all who want to answer the call to serve can do so by cosponsoring the ACTION for National Service Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 308—COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 308

Whereas October 26, 2017, is the 100th anniversary of the organization of the 2nd Infantry Division;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division—

- (1) was established in October 1917 at Bourmont, France, as the 2nd Division;
- (2) was the first division organized on foreign soil; and
- (3) has been proudly serving since 1917;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division is the only Army unit that has ever been commanded by a Marine Corps Officer because, at the time of activation, the 2nd Infantry Division—

- (1) was composed of both Army and Marine units; and
- (2) was commanded during World War I by Marine Corps Generals Brigadier General Charles A. Doyen and Major General John A. Lejeune;

Whereas, since the heroic start of the 2nd Infantry Division, the 2nd Infantry Division has played an integral part in the history of the United States by serving in—

- (1) World War I;
- (2) World War II;
- (3) the Korean War;
- (4) the Cold War;
- (5) Operation Iraqi Freedom;
- (6) Operation Enduring Freedom; and
- (7) current operations in South Korea;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division—

- (1) drew first blood at the Battle of Belleau Wood, France in May 1918; and
- (2) contributed to shattering the 4-year stalemate on the battlefield during the Chateau-Thierry campaign that followed;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division played a central role in other monumental struggles of World War I, such as—

- (1) the Battle of Soissons;
- (2) the Battle of Blanc Mont Ridge;
- (3) the Meuse-Argonne Offensive;
- (4) the 1918 campaigns in—
 - (A) Ile-de-France;
 - (B) Lorraine;
- (5) the Battle of Saint-Mihiel;
- (6) the Battle of the Aisne; and
- (7) the Aisne-Marne Offensive;

Whereas immediately after the establishment of the 2nd Infantry Division (then commonly known as the “Indianhead Division”) the 2nd Infantry Division started to build a prestigious reputation for its service during World War I;

Whereas, by the end of World War I, the 2nd Infantry Division was 1 of only 4 divisions of the United States to remain in active duty, a strong testament to the accomplishments of the 2nd Infantry Division;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division took—

- (1) ¼ of all enemy prisoners captured by the American Expeditionary Forces; and
- (2) ¼ of the total number of guns and weapons seized during World War I;

Whereas 14 members of the 2nd Infantry Division received the Congressional Medal of Honor during World War I;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division—

- (1) remained on occupation duty in Germany to enforce the Armistice until April 1919; and
- (2) came to the United States for the first time in July 1919, having fought in every major United States engagement and emerged as the most decorated United States Division of the American Expeditionary Forces;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during World War I, the 2nd Infantry Division was the recipient of—

- (1) French Croix de Guerre with Palm, Streamer embroidered AISNE-MARNE;
- (2) French Croix de Guerre with Palm, Streamer embroidered MEUSE-ARGONNE; and
- (3) French Fourragère;

Whereas the Headquarters, 2d Division was redesignated on August 1, 1942 as Headquarters, 2nd Infantry Division;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division established the new home of the 2nd Infantry Division in Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, to test new concepts and innovations for the Army;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division became the first command reorganized under the new triangular concept, having 3 separate regiments in the division;

Whereas, in June 1944, the 2nd Infantry Division was called to action and made the assault landing on Omaha Beach 1 day after D-Day, June 7, 1944, which began the liberation of Europe from Nazi control;

Whereas, during World War II, the 2nd Infantry Division fought bravely in France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia from 1944 to 1945;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division continued to provide invaluable service throughout World War II, including—

- (1) fighting for the liberation of France and Belgium;
- (2) fighting for the liberation of Trévières on June 10, 1944;
- (3) assaulting and securing Hill 192;
- (4) fighting at the Battle of the Bulge, where the 2nd Infantry Division pierced the dreaded Siegfried Line and held critical roads leading to the cities of Liège and Antwerp;
- (5) capturing Tincbebray on August 15, 1944;
- (6) capturing the vital port city of Brest, which was liberated in September 1944 after a fierce 39-day battle in streets and alleyways;

(7) capturing the city of Breisig on March 9, 1945;

(8) crossing the Rhine to relieve the 9th Armored Division in Hadamar and Limburg an der Lahn on March 21, 1945;

(9) capturing Merseburg on April 15, 1945;

(10) capturing Leipzig on April 18, 1945; and

(11) crossing into Czechoslovakia and attacking the city of Pilsen on May 4, 1945;

Whereas 6 members of the 2nd Infantry Division received the Congressional Medal of Honor for their gallant actions during World War II;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during World War II, the 2nd Infantry Division was—

(1) the recipient of the Belgian Fourragère World War II;

(2) cited in the “Order of the Day” of the Belgian Army for action at Elsenborn Crest; and

(3) cited in the “Order of the Day” of the Belgian Army for action in the Ardennes;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division returned home to Fort Lewis in Tacoma, Washington, on April 15, 1946;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division arrived in South Korea via Pusan, on July 23, 1950, becoming the first United States unit to arrive directly in South Korea from the United States;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division helped repel attackers on the Pusan Perimeter during a 16-day attack beginning on the night of August 31, 1950, in a battle in which 2nd Infantry Division clerks, bandsman, technical, and supply personnel all joined the fight to repel the attackers;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division was the first unit that broke out of the Pusan Perimeter and led the Eighth Army drive to the Manchurian Border;

Whereas, on November 26, 1950, with the intervention of the Chinese in the Korean War, the 2nd Infantry Division was tasked with protecting the rear and right flank of the Eighth Army;

Whereas fighting around Kunu-ri cost the 2nd Infantry Division nearly ¼ of its strength, but was 10 times costlier to the enemy;

Whereas the 23rd Regimental Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, and the French Battalion were cut off and surrounded by 3 Chinese Divisions on February 13, 1951, at Chipyong-ni, but fiercely fought overwhelming Communist forces in freezing weather conditions for more than 3 days, killing over 5,000 enemies while possessing about ¼ of the enemy’s strength;

Whereas the 23rd Regimental Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division gave the first major defeat to the Chinese at the battle of Chipyong-Ni, a turning point in the Korean War;

Whereas 20 members of the 2nd Infantry Division earned the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Korean War;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during the Korean War, the 2nd Infantry Division was the recipient of—

- (1) the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation Streamer embroidered NAKTONG RIVER LINE;
- (2) the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation Streamer embroidered KOREA; and
- (3) the Presidential Unit Citation;

Whereas, after 4 years of fighting in South Korea, the 2nd Infantry Division was transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington, on August 20, 1954;

Whereas, the 2nd Infantry Division was restructured with personnel and equipment from the 10th Infantry Division in the spring of 1958, and moved to Fort Benning, Georgia;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division was designated as a Strategic Army Corps Unit in

March 1962, and underwent intensified combat, tactical, and field training to improve operational awareness;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division was the first to provide support for 3 brigades supported by armor, cavalry, and artillery under the Reorganization Objective Army Division concept in January 1963;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division returned to South Korea on July 1, 1965 and merged with the 1st Cavalry Division;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division was assigned to guard portions of the demilitarized zone to keep the peace and help deter war on the Korean peninsula;

Whereas members of the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment of the 2nd Infantry Division were killed in a North Korean ambush on November 2, 1966;

Whereas 16 members of the Armed Forces of the United States were killed by enemy attacks in the demilitarized zone;

Whereas Captain Arthur G. Bonifas and First Lieutenant Mark T. Barrett of the United Nations Joint Security Force were attacked and killed during a routine tree-trimming operation on August 18, 1976;

Whereas, in response, the United Nations Command launched Operation Paul Bunyan at 0700 hours on August 21, 1976, when a Republic of Korea Special Forces Company, the 9th Infantry Regiment, and B Company, 2nd Engineers moved in to cut down the infamous Panmunjeom Tree while supported by B-52 bombers and F-5 and F-11 fighter jets aboard a Midway Task Force aircraft carrier standing by offshore;

Whereas members of the 2nd Infantry Division, proudly wearing "Imjin Scout" patches, patrolled the demilitarized zone throughout the 1980s and until 1992, and then remained deployed along the border;

Whereas the 3rd Brigade 2nd Infantry Division—

(1) was reactivated at Fort Lewis, Washington, on March 29, 1995, as part of I Corps; and

(2) became the first Stryker Brigade Combat Team in the Army in May 2000;

Whereas, in the defense of the interests of the United States, the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from November 2003 to November 2004;

Whereas, in August 2004, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division deployed with the Republic of Korea Army, representing the first operational deployment from South Korea;

Whereas the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division was given control of the Eastern half of Ar-Ramadi under the direct command of the 1st Marine Division;

Whereas the elements of the 2nd Infantry Division were attached to the 2nd Marine Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom, a reversal of their respective roles during World War I, where the 5th and 6th Marine Regiment of the 1st Marine Division fought under the United States Army 2nd Infantry Division;

Whereas the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division fought in the Fallujah Offensive in November 2004, which provided Iraqis the opportunity to vote in the historic national elections of January 2005;

Whereas the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division provided humanitarian relief to hospitals, schools, and hundreds of Iraqi civilians who had been displaced;

Whereas the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division redeployed from Iraq to Fort Carson, Colorado, in August 2005;

Whereas the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division deployed

from Fort Lewis, Washington, to assist the Iraqi security forces with counterinsurgency operations in the Ninewa Province in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from June 2006 to September 2007;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division transformed into the ROK-US Combined Division with a Republic of Korea Army unit on June 3, 2015, in a cooperative designed to strengthen the operational capabilities of both the Republic of Korea Army and the United States Army;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division is the last remaining permanently forward-stationed division in the United States Army;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division has been deterring aggression and maintaining peace on the Korean Peninsula since 1965;

Whereas the 2nd Infantry Division received 7 Korean Presidential Unit Citations for its outstanding service in South Korea from 1950 to the present; and

Whereas, since the establishment of the 2nd Infantry Division in 1917—

(1) the 2nd Infantry Division has been present all over the world, assisting in combat and noncombat missions for 100 years;

(2) more than 13,200 members of the 2nd Infantry Division have sacrificed their lives in combat; and

(3) 40 members of the 2nd Infantry Division have received the Congressional Medal of Honor in total; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates on October 27, 2017, the 100th anniversary and a "Century of Service" of the 2nd Infantry Division;

(2) commends the 2nd Infantry Division, now known as the "Warrior Division", for continuing to exemplify the mottos of the 2nd Infantry Division: "Second to None!" and "Fight Tonight!";

(3) honors the memory of the more than 13,200 members of the 2nd Infantry Division who lost their lives in battle;

(4) expresses gratitude and support for all 2nd Infantry Division members, veterans, and families; and

(5) recognizes that the 2nd Infantry Division holds an honored place in the history of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 309—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 2017 AS "NATIONAL PROTECT YOUR HEARING MONTH"

Ms. WARREN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 309

Whereas the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have found that up to 24 percent of adults in the United States, 40,000,000 individuals, may have noise-induced hearing loss in 1 or both ears;

Whereas individuals take part in activities every day that can contribute to increased exposure to harmful noise levels;

Whereas potential sources of noise-induced hearing loss include—

- (1) portable music;
- (2) movie and game systems;
- (3) sports recreation activities, such as auto racing, hunting, and snowmobiling;
- (4) athletic events;
- (5) concerts;
- (6) yard work, such as mowing the lawn; and
- (7) hobbies, such as woodworking;

Whereas workers in the fields of mining, manufacturing, and construction and individuals serving in the military go to work each day in damaging noise conditions and occupational hearing loss is among the most commonly recorded work-related injuries;

Whereas living or working on a farm can also expose individuals to harmful levels of noise, including from farm machinery, other equipment used on farms, and animals;

Whereas musicians of all ages, both amateur and professional, can be regularly exposed to levels of noise that can be harmful;

Whereas, over time, continued exposure to harmful noise levels can lead to permanent noise-induced hearing loss;

Whereas hearing loss from harmful noise can negatively impact communication and quality of life for an individual;

Whereas hearing loss from harmful noise is permanent and is not reversible, but is preventable;

Whereas individuals can protect themselves against noise-induced hearing loss through simple measures to reduce exposure to loud sounds, including turning down the volume, moving away from the source of sound, and wearing hearing protection when involved in a loud activity;

Whereas protecting the ears of children is an important measure to help prevent noise-induced hearing loss because children may be more susceptible to damage than adults and are too young to protect their own ears;

Whereas Congress can help raise awareness among the general public about the importance of protecting hearing; and

Whereas October 2017 would be an appropriate month to designate as "National Protect Your Hearing Month": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of October 2017 as "National Protect Your Hearing Month"; and

(2) recognizes that all individuals in the United States should become more aware of—

(A) the potential for noise-induced hearing loss as a result of daily activities; and

(B) the measures that individuals can take to protect hearing for a lifetime.

SENATE RESOLUTION 310—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF A CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO ENDING PEDIATRIC AIDS WORLDWIDE

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KING, and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 310

Whereas in 2016 approximately half of the 36,700,000 people living with human immunodeficiency virus (referred to in this preamble as "HIV") worldwide are women and 2,100,000 are children;

Whereas HIV is a leading cause of death worldwide among women of childbearing age; Whereas nearly 90 percent of HIV-positive expectant mothers in need of HIV-related services worldwide live in sub-Saharan Africa;

Whereas women around the world rely on essential pre- and post-natal care to provide screening for diseases such as HIV, and to provide care for the health of women and infants;

Whereas the usage of antiretroviral drugs as prophylaxis can reduce the likelihood of mother-to-child transmission of HIV to less than 5 percent;

Whereas in 2005 only 14 percent of women received services for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (referred to in this preamble as “PMTCT”);

Whereas in 2016, 76 percent of women received PMTCT services;

Whereas, since 2001, the number of children born HIV-positive has decreased by more than half;

Whereas, despite increased efforts by the United States and countries around the world, over 400 children were born HIV-positive each day in 2016;

Whereas 90 percent of children with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa;

Whereas in 2016 only 43 percent of children with HIV received antiretroviral therapy, far below the percentage of adults receiving antiretroviral therapy;

Whereas, without treatment, half of children with HIV will die by their second birthday, and 80 percent by their fifth birthday;

Whereas, in 2016, 120,000 children died of causes related to acquired immune deficiency syndrome (referred to in this preamble as “AIDS”);

Whereas, in 2016, 22 percent of new HIV infections occurred in young women aged 15 to 24;

Whereas, in sub-Saharan Africa, young women account for 75 percent of new annual HIV infections among adolescents;

Whereas AIDS is a leading cause of death among adolescents globally;

Whereas research efforts at the National Institutes of Health have led to extraordinary breakthroughs for children infected with and at risk for HIV;

Whereas in 2002 the United States began investing in PMTCT services by establishing the United States International Mother and Child HIV Prevention Initiative;

Whereas, since 2002, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has supported programs that provided 4,200,000 HIV-positive mothers with antiretroviral drug prophylaxis for PMTCT;

Whereas in fiscal year 2016, the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (referred to in this preamble as “PEPFAR”) supported HIV testing and counseling for more than 11,500,000 pregnant women, and provided antiretroviral drug prophylaxis for PMTCT, allowing nearly 2,000,000 babies to be born free of HIV;

Whereas in 2014 PEPFAR announced the Accelerating Children's Treatment Initiative, a 2-year effort that would double the number of HIV-positive children receiving treatment in 10 high burden countries;

Whereas the PEPFAR DREAMS initiative is working to reduce new HIV infections in girls and young women in 10 sub-Saharan countries;

Whereas every mother should have the opportunity to fight for the life of her child; and

Whereas every child and adolescent should have access to medicine to lead a long and healthy life: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes that the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of human immunodeficiency virus (referred to in this resolving clause as “HIV”) is critical to stopping the spread of HIV worldwide;

(2) applauds the leadership of the United States for efforts to eliminate new pediatric HIV infections and to expand pediatric treatment through programs and research;

(3) recognizes that for more than 13 years, the fight to eliminate pediatric HIV worldwide has been a priority in the response of the United States to global acquired immune

deficiency syndrome (referred to in this resolving clause as “AIDS”), and calls on the leadership of the United States in this area to continue;

(4) supports providing adolescents with the evidence-based approaches necessary to prevent new HIV infections;

(5) supports providing women and children with HIV counseling and testing services where practicable, and scaling up access to services and medicines that prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and ensure HIV-positive mothers survive and thrive;

(6) supports expanding treatment for HIV for children and adolescents, including providing greater access to more efficacious antiretroviral drug regimens, age appropriate services, and support for the caregivers of children and adolescents; and

(7) recommitts the United States—

(A) to lead the world to end AIDS;

(B) to eliminate new pediatric HIV infections worldwide; and

(C) to support women, children, adolescents, and families infected and affected by HIV.

SENATE RESOLUTION 311—HONORING THE PORTLAND THORNS FC AS THE CHAMPION OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE IN 2017

Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 311

Whereas the Portland Thorns FC won the National Women's Soccer League (referred to in this preamble as the “NWSL”) Championship on October 14, 2017;

Whereas the Portland Thorns FC won the NWSL Championship, an event that has been held for 5 years, for the second time by defeating the North Carolina Courage by a score of 1 to 0;

Whereas Portland Thorns FC midfielder Lindsey Horan scored the only goal in the 2017 NWSL Championship and was named the Most Valuable Player of that Championship;

Whereas the head coach, Mark Parsons, and owner, Merritt Paulson, of the Portland Thorns FC won the NWSL Championship for the second time;

Whereas the Rose City Riveters and the fans of the Portland Thorns FC, who provide the Providence Park venue with spirit and pride, are the best fans in the NWSL;

Whereas the Portland Thorns FC holds the record for highest average game attendance in the NWSL in 2017 and has held that record in each year since the establishment of the NWSL in 2013;

Whereas the goalkeeper of the Portland Thorns FC, Adrianna Franch, was named the NWSL Goalkeeper of the Year for 2017;

Whereas the Portland Thorns FC adopted the official State motto of Oregon, “Alis Volat Propriis”, meaning “She Flies with Her Own Wings”, to capture the independent spirit of Oregon;

Whereas the Portland Thorns FC holds community service events to inspire and involve young women and men in the Portland community through science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and environmental education; and

Whereas the success of the Portland Thorns FC soccer team will broaden an appreciation of athletics in young people and encourage Oregonians to engage in their communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the Portland Thorns FC as the 2017 champion of the National Women's Soccer League;

(2) recognizes the outstanding achievement of the players, ownership, and staff of the Portland Thorns FC; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the Portland Thorns FC.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 28—PROVIDING FOR A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 782

Mr. CORNYN submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. CON. RES. 28

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That in the enrollment of the bill S. 782, the Secretary of the Senate shall make the following corrections:

(1) In section 2, strike “42 U.S.C. 17601 et seq.” and insert “34 U.S.C. 21101 et seq.”.

(2) In section 2, strike “42 U.S.C. 17617(a)(10)” and insert “34 U.S.C. 21117(a)(10)”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have 9 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in closed session to conduct a briefing on Niger.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Brian D. Montgomery, of Texas, Robert Hunter Kurtz, of Virginia, and Suzanne Israel Tufts, of New York, each to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 9:45 a.m., in room SD-366 to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. to hold a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430, to conduct a hearing entitled "Exploring Free Speech on College Campuses".

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 to conduct a hearing on S.807 and the following nominations: Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, Liles Clifton Burke, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama, Walter David Counts III, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas, Michael Joseph Juneau, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, Karen Gren Scholer, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, Tilman Eugene Self III, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Georgia, and John F. Bash, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas, Erin Angela Nealy Cox, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas, and R. Andrew Murray, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina, all of the Department of Justice.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 11 a.m., in SR-428A to conduct a hearing entitled "Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Women".

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 2 p.m., in room SH-219 to conduct a closed hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND
FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

The Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Improving Oversight of the Regulatory Process: Lessons from State Legislatures".

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my health policy fellow, Laura Knudtson, be granted

floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 386.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Gregory Ibach, of Nebraska, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Ibach nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 413.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kritenbrink nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREE-
MENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 247, the nomination of John Gibson to be Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense. I further ask that there be 60 minutes of debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on confirmation with no intervening action or debate, and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

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

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN ACT OF
2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany S. 782.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 782) entitled "An Act to reauthorize the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program, and for other purposes," do pass with an amendment.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to concur in the House amendment, and I ask unanimous consent that the motion be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

PROVIDING FOR A CORRECTION IN
THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 782

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 28.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 28) providing for a correction in the enrollment of S. 782.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 28) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

SUPPORTING LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 297 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 297) supporting Lights On Afterschool, a national celebration of

afterschool programs held on October 26, 2017.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 297) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of October 19, 2017, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2107

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, October 30; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to

executive session and resume consideration of the McFadden nomination under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2017, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:33 p.m., adjourned until Monday, October 30, 2017, at 3 p.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate October 26, 2017:

THE JUDICIARY

SCOTT L. PALK, OF OKLAHOMA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

GREGORY IBACH, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR MARKETING AND REGULATORY PROGRAMS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.