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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, we acknowledge that in spite of the turbulence in our world, You are still God. Thank You for Your goodness, for Your mercies, and for Your steadfast love that endures forever.

Bless our lawmakers. May they bring their fragmentary lives into the wholeness of Your presence. Calm their restless spirits with the soothing strength of Your everlasting security. Make them victors and not victims on life's great battlefield. May they find in You grace, peace, power, and adequacy to be more than conquerors.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

AUTHORIZING RETURN OF PAPERS REQUEST

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Secretary of the Senate be authorized to request the return of the papers with respect to PN742; further, that when the Senate receives the papers, the

Senate's action with respect to the nomination on November 19, 2015, be vitiated.

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

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2329

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2329) to prevent the entry of extremists into the United States under the refugee program, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

POWER PLAN REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, when President Obama tried to push a regressive anti-middle-class energy tax through a Democratic-controlled Congress, his own party said no. Undeterred, the President simply went around Congress to impose similarly regressive—and likely illegal—power plan regulations anyway. He is currently trying to sell that power plan to world leaders in Paris, as proof of the American Government's commitment to his energy priorities. But with all due respect to the President as our Commander in Chief, governments currently engaged in this round of climate talks will want to know that there is more than just an executive branch in our system of government.

More than half of the States have filed suit against the President's power plan. A bipartisan majority in both Chambers of Congress have approved

legislation that rejects the President's plan. The courts appear likely to strike it down, and the next President could simply tear it up. This is the easily foreseeable result of intentionally sidestepping Congress to impose this anti-middle-class power plan.

If left in place, the power plan threatens to punish the poor and could result in the elimination of as many as a quarter of a million U.S. jobs. For what? The power plan won't even meaningfully affect global climate emissions, and it could actually increase emissions by offshoring American manufacturing to countries that lack our environmental standards.

That is pain for the middle class, a climate rounding error for negotiators in Paris. That is not a good policy for America's working families. It certainly would not be responsible to attempt to negotiate commitments based upon an illegal power plan, one that may not even survive much longer, in any event.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE NEW CONGRESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Madam President, on another matter, in the last election the American people chose a new direction with a new Republican majority in Congress. We have been working hard ever since to get Congress back on their side and back to work. Over the past year, Americans have seen committees up and running again. Americans have seen bills passed again. Americans have seen meaningful bipartisan bills being signed into law again. Americans have also seen Members of opposing parties working together to make progress on important issues, from trade to Medicare to cyber security. We have seen examples of it this year on some of Washington's stickiest issues.

We saw the Senate pass a bipartisan multiyear highway bill this summer, 65 to 34. The Republican chairman and

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



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the Democratic ranking member worked closely to bring this about. We also saw the Senate pass a bipartisan replacement for the broken No Child Left Behind law last summer, 81 to 17. I would like to thank Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY for working closely across the aisle on that achievement. These represent significant accomplishments for the new Congress and significant wins for the American people. After all, some pundits said Washington could never take these issues on at all. But we did, and we now expect to finish Congress's work on all of those matters in the coming days.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

WORK OF THE CONGRESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I appreciate the Republican leader cheering for all of the great things that have happened here in the Senate, but the facts are that—look at any political scientist, anyone who watches what goes on here in Washington and add up the number of bills passed and the nominations confirmed in this Congress—this Congress is well, well beyond anything in recent history.

In addition to that, we have had more revotes—that is, voting on the same thing over and over with the same result—in the history of Congress ever. So I appreciate his trying to make things look good. I hope it gets better in the next couple of weeks because we have a lot to do. We have a lot to do. I will talk about that in a minute. We have so much to do. We can accomplish a great deal if we finish the highway bill and elementary and secondary education, if we do the tax extenders, and if we do the omnibus spending bill. That would be terrific if we could get those done, but we only have a few days to get them done.

TRAGEDY AT PLANNED PARENTHOOD CLINIC

Mr. REID. Madam President, our Nation is stunned following last week's wanton murders at the Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, CO. That heinous attack left three dead: a police officer, a mother of two children, and an Iraq war veteran. Nine others were wounded. It is sickening that these innocent victims were gunned down in cold blood in a medical clinic in the holiday season.

More casualties were avoided by the quick and heroic action taken by responding law enforcement as well as by a courageous bystander named Ke'Arre Stewart, the Iraq war veteran I just mentioned, who heroically reentered the building to provide help. While he was doing that, he was killed—mur-

dered. I can only imagine the heart-breaking anguish that the victims and their families are experiencing. I know it is of little comfort, but the Senate mourns with them. Our thoughts are with them, their families, and the first responders who brought an end to this brutal attack.

But we in the Senate should not fail to see the context in which this vile assault took place. Last summer, a right-wing group began unleashing a series of heavily edited videos with unsubstantiated allegations. Since that time, Republicans in Congress have made it their mission to push these unsubstantiated allegations every chance they get. They are actually baseless.

They also have made it their mission to defund Planned Parenthood, which would irreparably damage this health care provider's future. Republicans have insisted on votes to strip Planned Parenthood from its Federal funding on two different occasions. Neither was successful. But they are still trying.

Republicans want to stop Medicaid reimbursement to Planned Parenthood, among other things. Republicans also believe in politically motivated investigations of Planned Parenthood. The Republican chairman of the House oversight committee, Congressman JASON CHAFFETZ, has admitted that he has uncovered no wrongdoing in his investigation of Planned Parenthood to this point.

But always willing to play a bad hand, that has not stopped House Republicans from allocating \$300,000 of taxpayer money to fund a new politically motivated special subcommittee dedicated to investigating Planned Parenthood. Republicans should not waste their time. I would hope that they give up before they match the millions of dollars—at last count it is more than \$5 million—that they have wasted on the so-called Benghazi "let's get Secretary Clinton" committee, another politically motivated and untimely fruitless attack.

We should never forget that one in five American women will get care from a Planned Parenthood clinic at some point in their life. Cutting off access to important health care services such as breast and cervical screenings and contraception is bad for women and bad for the country.

In the wake of this act of domestic terrorism, I commend Planned Parenthood for refusing to allow threats and violence to stand in the way of its work to ensure women have access to care. I hope everybody understands that I stand with Planned Parenthood. But we as leaders must be mindful of our words and actions. Whipping people into a frenzy of hate and anger while providing them with easy access to firearms has proven disastrous to our country.

We have a responsibility as leaders to think very hard about what we say and do in this context and what the consequences are. We have a responsibility to fund ways to stop this violence.

Democrats are working on reasonable gun safety proposals that will help ensure that firearms are kept out of the hands of people intent on committing violence. It is appalling how many times I have had to make this plea. This terrible event that took place in Colorado just a few days ago is already off the news. Why? Because it happens so often in America. It is appalling how many times I have had to make this plea, but I say to my Republican colleagues yet again: Join with us in passing sensible gun safety reforms. Help us keep guns away from people intent on using them to slaughter innocent people.

First, we must do something to close to loopholes that allow FBI terror suspects and other unhinged individuals to legally buy AK-47s and other weapons. Right now a terror suspect, someone who is listed on the watch list, can walk into a gun store or a gun show and purchase sophisticated assault weapons. To leave that loophole unaddressed is sheer recklessness by congressional Republicans. Someone on the terrorist watch list can walk in and buy a gun, any gun they want. That is not good.

We must also strengthen our Nation's background check system. We are failing to flag and prevent people who are mentally ill or who have violent motives from legally purchasing weapons. Improved background checks are essential in keeping guns out of the wrong hands. What we are saying is if someone is a felon, a criminal or crazy, they shouldn't be able to purchase a gun without a background check, and they should never be able to purchase a gun—period.

Finally, we have to close loopholes that allow people to illegally traffic in firearms. What does this mean? Right now we have no laws in place to adequately prevent individuals from purchasing weapons—buy huge numbers of weapons. Then what do they do with them? Sell them at a great profit and transfer them to criminals.

For example, a person with a clean background can purchase an unlimited number of guns and then turn around and sell them to a cartel, a gang or a terrorist organization with no threat of prosecution. Unfortunately, as in the past, Republicans are nowhere to be found when it comes to implementing these commonsense changes to our gun laws. For example, as to the Colorado Springs murders, did we hear a single Republican running for President of the United States stand and say: We have too many guns; can't we stop this?

I haven't heard a single Republican Senator come to the floor and say something about this terrible event that took place. Instead, they are busy fear-mongering against Syrian refugees, those fleeing Assad and ISIS. We have a rigorous screening process for when we accept refugees. The refugees we are accepting are women, children, and older men with families. Less than

2 percent of the men who come as refugees from Syria or Iraq are of military age. The Department of Homeland Security has verified that not one of the 1,800 Syrian refugees already admitted to the United States has a single confirmed tie to terrorism, but in spite of all the facts, Republicans would focus their attention on refugees and ignore the problem we have with gun violence in America.

Republicans would have Americans believe Syrian refugees are the pre-eminent threat to our national security, and meanwhile the Republican Congress is doing nothing to curb our Nation's gun violence. It is a sad commentary on Republicans that they are more concerned about keeping Syrian refugees out of America than they are about keeping guns out of the hands of terrorists, those who are mentally ill, and those who are criminals.

PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Mr. REID. Madam President, as we speak, in faraway Paris, France, 194 countries are gathering to negotiate an international agreement to address climate change. Fortunately for the world, President Obama is committed to doing something about that climate change.

I send all my appreciation, my accolades to the French people for going ahead with this extremely important conference and not letting those terrible acts that occurred stop them from doing so. Because of President Obama's leadership, the United States is taking on a more prominent role in rolling back dangerous carbon emissions, not only from our country but from China, India, Brazil, and other major sources of climate-changing pollution.

Before the conference in Paris even started, more than 170 countries representing over 90 percent of global carbon emissions made concrete pledges to reduce carbon pollution. Climate change is among the most serious problems we face today. What does the Pentagon say? What do all the security agencies say is the most serious problem facing America today? Climate change. We are beginning to endure the devastating consequences of rising sea levels, extreme weather, and drought across America and all over the world.

No country acting alone can halt climate change, but through American leadership and international cooperation, we can protect our air and climate for our children and their children. I commend President Obama for his work domestically and internationally to address this issue.

FINISHING THE SENATE'S WORK

Mr. REID. Madam President, this year is quickly drawing to a close, as I mentioned earlier. That means the Senate has precious few days left to finish vitally important legislative matters, and it is not a small list. Be-

fore we leave this year, we need to address funding to prevent a government shutdown, a surface transportation bill, the elementary and secondary education conference report, important expiring tax provisions, including those for the middle class, not just for the big corporations, and a growing backlog of nominations, particularly those involving national security positions.

Each of these matters I just mentioned is essential. We have to get them done, and we don't have a lot of time to do it. There is certainly no time for demagoguery and political distractions such as repealing Obama Care or defunding Planned Parenthood that have been the hallmarks of the Republican Congress. Instead, I hope my Republican colleagues will work with Democrats to accomplish all of the Senate's work in a timely fashion.

Madam President, Senator MCCONNELL and I have finished our remarks. What now is the business of the day?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to finish my remarks.

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

PUERTO RICO

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise to speak on Puerto Rico's financial and economic challenges.

The Government of Puerto Rico tells us the territory has more than \$73 billion in debt that is, to use their words, "not payable." On top of that, Puerto Rico has tens of billions of dollars in unfunded pension liabilities and very few assets to back up its pension promises. The economy in Puerto Rico has persistently registered double-digit unemployment rates, staggeringly low labor force participation rates and a bloated public sector and there are growing strains on Puerto Rico's health care system, some of which reflected the way the so-called Affordable Care Act was written to treat Puerto Rico and other territories, some of which reflects differing treatment between Puerto Rico, where residents do not pay Federal personal income taxes, and States where residents are included in the Federal personal income tax system. In short, there is very little good economic news coming from Puerto Rico these days. As a result, we are seeing an ongoing debate

about what the Federal Government can or should do in order to help the American citizens residing in Puerto Rico.

To me, this debate boils down to four relatively simple questions: Question No. 1, should the Federal Government allow Puerto Rico access to chapter 9 of the Bankruptcy Code or to even broader debt resolution tools; question No. 2, will providing fresh tax incentives to Puerto Rico help boost the island's economy by creating jobs and stimulating growth; question No. 3, should Congress increase Federal resources to help ease Puerto Rico's strained health care system; and question No. 4, should we take steps to exempt Puerto Rico from burdensome Federal regulations—including labor, transportation, and energy regulations—that may be contributing to the territory's ongoing economic struggles?

Today we have seen a number of proposals that attempt to address these and other questions, although, in my opinion, many of them do so in very awkward ways. I want to take time today to address each of these four major questions in turn and hopefully shed some light on what we have to consider as we try to address the growing crisis in Puerto Rico.

So far, the majority of these discussions among policymakers with regard to Puerto Rico have focused on question No. 1, allowing access to chapter 9 bankruptcy relief. As we all know, chapter 9 applies specifically to financially distressed municipalities that are seeking protection from creditors as they develop and negotiate plans to adjust their debts. Puerto Rico is not currently eligible for chapter 9 bankruptcy, meaning that granting them access to this type of relief will require a legislative change to the Bankruptcy Code, which may come with its own set of problems. Some proponents of the bankruptcy solutions for Puerto Rico have argued that the clear language preventing the island from accessing chapter 9 reflects some sort of drafting error. They argue further that once Puerto Rico is eligible for chapter 9 protections, it should apply to debts already incurred.

Now, whether the exclusion for Puerto Rico from chapter 9 was intentional—and I don't believe it was—we should keep in mind that there are potential rule-of-law issues at stake when we talk about legislative action to retroactively alter the terms of debt contracts. Puerto Rico's creditors entered into their contracts with the various existing risks priced into the agreements in the form of interest rates and other terms. If the island had been eligible for chapter 9 bankruptcy prior to entering into those agreements, creditors would have formed different expectations, likely leading to different terms, including differing interest rates that could have reshaped the demand for Puerto Rico bonds. This is not rocket science. This is finance 101.

We should be cautious about any legislative action that would alter the terms of existing contracts. At the very least, we should consider what impact extending chapter 9 to existing Puerto Rico obligations would have on credit transactions moving forward, given that parties set credit agreements based upon the laws they expect to apply. If parties believe there is a real possibility that Congress might retroactively change those laws in the future, they are likely to seek different terms or reevaluate a contract's potential worth. Even so, it is not at all clear that our amending chapter 9 to allow access for Puerto Rico will solve the debt problems of Puerto Rico.

Officials from the Obama administration have argued that chapter 9 would only cover about 30 percent of Puerto Rico's outstanding obligations and, as a result, even broader debt restructuring authority is necessary. Therefore, those in Congress with proposed solutions that center only on chapter 9 bankruptcy are apparently not aware of the administration's position. However, the other nonbankruptcy proposals we have seen—which would allow Puerto Rico to handle its debt on its own—are also lacking. For example, we have seen proposals to allow the Federal Reserve to purchase debt issued by Puerto Rico and to authorize the Treasury to guarantee bonds issued by the Government of Puerto Rico or any of its instrumentalities. Of course, this approach would run the risk of setting very bad precedents for future insolvent entities and is fraught with moral hazard.

Ultimately, those pushing to restructure Puerto Rico's debt as the sole solution tend to want to simply blame the problems on the creditors, using loose terms like "hedge funds" or "vulture funds." For these people, punishing the creditors is their desired focus, not because it is a viable solution but because, at the end of the day, an opportunity for populist rhetoric is itself a valuable commodity heading into a contentious election cycle.

While that approach may help some around here appeal to their political base, it does precious little to help the people of Puerto Rico and ignores the fact that a number of the creditors are middle-class investors and retirees from virtually every U.S. State and territory—from Utah to New York, to Puerto Rico itself.

Ultimately, whatever case can be made for restructuring authority for Puerto Rico's debt, there may not be an urgent need for that authority to be granted right away. This is evidenced by the fact that despite several months of debate surrounding the issues, Puerto Rico has only recently begun negotiating with some of its creditors. I would hope that if the need for relief is in fact dire, the Government of Puerto Rico will waste no time in negotiating and working toward private solutions. If there is no urgency on that front, it would be hard to argue that there is an

urgent need for Congress to consider proposals relating to chapter 9 bankruptcy or broader restructuring authority. That is question No. 1.

Let's talk about question No. 2, which deals with tax incentives to boost Puerto Rico's economy. On the tax front we have seen proposals in Congress to allow residents in Puerto Rico to claim the earned-income tax credit and the refundable portion of the child tax credit on the same basis as other U.S. taxpayers. Likewise, the Obama administration has indicated support for a similar approach, although they have not provided any real details as to what their proposal would look like.

Proposals such as these are problematic for a number of reasons. As I mentioned, the residents of Puerto Rico are exempt from the Federal personal income tax system, meaning that they do not pay any personal Federal income tax. Therefore, offering these refundable tax credits would not reduce their tax burden because you can't reduce a tax burden that is already zero. In other words, these tax credits would ultimately be cash payments offered directly to lower income residents of Puerto Rico. On top of that, the earned-income tax credit and the child tax credit are already rife with fraud and overpayments when they are offered to taxpayers who are required to file a return and can at least theoretically incur a tax burden at some future date if their income goes up. Extending these same credits to Puerto Rico could very well introduce a number of threats to the integrity and administration of our tax system.

Those who issue these types of proposals rarely have a solution to these inherent concerns. Moreover, we haven't seen any public information from congressional scorekeepers as to how much these proposals would cost. I also haven't heard any proponents of this approach offer so much as a hint about how they would plan to offset the costs or if they intend to offer any offset at all.

Long story short, most of the tax-related proposals to the Puerto Rico situation leave much to be desired. That is not to say we should not do anything in this area. There are quite likely tax incentives we could offer to better incentivize growth and labor force participation and perhaps investment in the Puerto Rican economy. I think it would be safe to say Republicans would be open to such a discussion. But to date, I haven't seen anything that resembles a serious solution that focuses on the Tax Code.

This brings us to question No. 3, dealing with health care policy, which has been the primary focus of a number of our colleagues when it comes to these issues. Here in Congress, we have seen some poorly constructed proposals that, when boiled down to their essence, would allocate more than \$30 billion from the general fund directly to Puerto Rico. Of course, that is not how

the proponents describe their ideas. Typically, these proposals are couched as changes to the way Puerto Rico's share of Federal health dollars is determined under existing programs. However, while the issues are admittedly complex, the result is fairly simple: Fiscal irresponsibility would be rewarded to the tune of tens of billions of dollars.

Now, don't get me wrong—we will very likely have to consider these ideas to alter the means by which we allocate Federal health funds to Puerto Rico. However, if we decide to go that route, it is essential that we move forward in a fiscally appropriate and responsible manner. To date, I have yet to hear any concrete thoughts from proponents in Congress or from our Federal health agencies about how this can be done. I have heard, however, that the so-called Affordable Care Act is the source of some of the health care-related problems faced by Puerto Rico. I will leave it to those who wrote that law and forced it through Congress on a partisan basis to explain why that is the case.

We now come to question No. 4, the possibility of providing Puerto Rico with relief from various Federal regulations. We have heard a number of ideas in this area, including reforms or exemptions from regulations governing labor markets, shipping, energy costs, and others. While I am inherently sympathetic to proposals to scale back Federal regulations, the issues here are very complex and would become very political in a hurry.

For example, while I haven't taken any straw polls, I think it is safe to say that many of my friends on the other side of the aisle would reflexively oppose any attempt to mitigate the application of Federal minimum wage regulations to Puerto Rico. This would be puzzling given that Congress has offered similar relief to other ailing U.S. territories in the relatively recent past. On top of that, the Krueger Report, which was commissioned by the Government of Puerto Rico along with a host of economic analysts across the political spectrum, argued that allowing Puerto Rico the flexibility to set minimum wages that differ from the Federal levels would have a positive economic impact and that the current minimum wage levels do not fit productivity conditions on the island. Still, even in the face of all this evidence and precedent, my guess is that many of my colleagues would take issue with this idea.

I would expect they would similarly reject out of hand any proposals to scale back environmental regulations and rules governing transportation even if it could be shown that their regulations were having a negative impact and contributing directly to Puerto Rico's fiscal and economic predicament. Unfortunately, Madam President, for a number of our colleagues here in Congress, commitment to ideology too often does not allow room to

admit when your policies are not working. While the situation in Puerto Rico isn't the first time we have seen that come up, I expect we will see that happening a lot if we get a chance to consider regulatory relief as a potential solution.

Those are the four main questions we face with regard to Puerto Rico. While they each come with their own sets of difficulties, those are the basic categories of solutions we have seen come to light so far. Of those four categories, two of them—the tax and the health care categories—are interrelated inasmuch as Members of Congress and administration officials have made them the focus of various ideas to help Puerto Rico improve its fiscal situation and perhaps its economy. While those putting the tax and health proposals forward have largely been silent about what our official scorekeepers—the CBO and the Joint Committee on Taxation—will say about the costs of their CTC ideas, I have done some of my colleagues' homework for them.

Adding up the refundable tax credits, including the EITC and the CTC, and health-related resource flows, including changes to Medicaid allocations, the overall cost looks to be well north of \$30 billion and likely around \$40 billion over the next 10 years. Those are hardly insignificant figures.

Questions of funding and resource allocation are always difficult, and they implicate a number of issues. It isn't as simple as just deciding to give more health funds to Puerto Rico or access to refundable tax credits because doing so would necessarily mean reduced funding for other Federal priorities or increased taxes or yet more Federal debt.

True enough, Puerto Rico's problems are multidimensional and complex, and I don't know anyone in Congress who is indifferent to the plight of these American citizens. Sadly, these facts don't make our unpleasant budget arithmetic any easier. If anything, they make it all the more complicated. In short, there are no easy answers.

That said, regardless of how we move forward, we need to have a clearer picture of what is going on in Puerto Rico. We need to have the fiscal facts regarding the island's indebtedness, funding levels, and needs. Yet, to date, we have not seen any recent audited financial statements from Puerto Rico, although we have asked for them. Instead, we are being asked to rely on statements and cash flow analysis commissioned by the Government of Puerto Rico. As of right now, finances in Puerto Rico remain extremely opaque and difficult to monitor. Congress should demand independent verification of the territory's finances before moving forward on any kind of relief package.

Moreover, while we are hearing horror stories of inadequate cash flow and a liquidity freeze in Puerto Rico, it is difficult to ascribe much urgency to the situation when we are still seeing

and reading about relatively large outlays for questionable expenses. Indeed, it is hard to believe an entity is in danger of running out of cash when it is paying for a broad public relations and lobbying campaign and when officials are talking about protecting hundreds of millions of dollars in year-end bonuses for government employees.

This brings us to yet another difficult question. I suppose you could call this question No. 5. What can we do to ensure that Puerto Rico changes its clearly unsustainable fiscal course? No matter what we do with regard to debt restructuring, tax policy, health care policy, or regulatory relief, the solution will ultimately be meaningless if we don't take steps to ensure that Puerto Rico doesn't simply continue on the fiscally irresponsible path that brought them to this mess in the first place. Even if every creditor gets a massive haircut and all the requested resources are channeled directly to the island, steps need to be taken to avoid getting into this situation again in the future.

For some time Puerto Rico has spent more than it takes in from revenues and receipts and has covered the difference with debt. The debt that has been issued has tapped out virtually every possible future receipt of the government, and basic budget arithmetic has caught up with this unsustainable fiscal recipe and has effectively shut Puerto Rico out of funding markets.

In short, Puerto Rico must move to policies that are fiscally sustainable. Madam President, that is not me trying to impose on Puerto Rico's sovereignty. That is not an agenda of "austerity" at work. It is just the simple budget arithmetic of the situation. Before we undertake any efforts to provide relief or assistance to Puerto Rico, we need to give this simple math its proper consideration and demand a workable plan for the future. I would like to see Puerto Rico submit such a plan, and that plan is going to have to include how they resolve the overwhelming burden of government down there when they have allowed it to grow out of control and become the employer of last resort.

For its part, the Obama administration has chosen to remain relatively vague on this somehow. In October, we saw a joint statement from Treasury, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Economic Council outlining a general plan which they called a "Roadmap for Congressional Action." This roadmap contained many of the same general proposals I have discussed today with regard to bankruptcy relief, tax credits, and health spending. Conspicuously absent were any proposals for regulatory relief for Puerto Rico. Also absent were any real cost estimates or proposed offsets, just some lipservice to the need to undertake these changes in a "fiscally responsible" way.

I have made inquiries to various agencies, including Treasury and HHS,

with little in the way of detailed response to many of these issues at stake here. It remains puzzling to me that in the midst of what some in the administration are calling a "humanitarian crisis," we are seeing very little engagement from our health agencies, particularly when so many have been arguing that the crisis stems in large part from the lack of health care funding in Puerto Rico.

It also seems that provisions of taxpayer-funded technical assistance—which I would think would be considered in any package aimed at Puerto Rico—may be rendered moot given that, as I understand it, Treasury officials are working to wedge such a system on the sidelines into appropriations vehicles. Needless to say, before Congress can even begin to consider a significant legislative package to address the situation in Puerto Rico, we need more information from the administration about what it is now doing and what it plans to do in the near future. Put simply, it would not be productive for Congress to move forward on a legislative vehicle costing billions of dollars, if not tens of billions of dollars, without knowing beforehand if that legislation contradicts or conforms to the plans of Federal agencies.

Long story short, Madam President, this will likely be a significant undertaking. There are a lot of ideas floating around. Some may work; others clearly will not. As the chairman of the Senate committee with jurisdiction over our Tax Code and most of the relevant health programs, I am more than willing to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find a bipartisan path forward. To accomplish that goal, we need everyone involved to be upfront and willing to work together. That goes for Members of Congress, the administration, and the Government of Puerto Rico. Everyone needs to come clean about the current state of affairs, the specific needs and amounts requested, the actual costs of any legislative or administrative proposal, and whether they want to offset costs or simply incur more Federal debt. Right now, too many people are willing to throw out demands and vague proposals—with the price tag as high as \$30 billion to \$40 billion—accompanied by a lot of political rhetoric. That is precisely what we do not need.

It would be very easy to play politics with this issue. My hope is that enough of us will be able to set that aside to allow Congress to do right by our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico. There are some who believe that crass politics may be playing a role here and that some would throw Puerto Rico to the dogs so that more and more people will immigrate to Florida for political purposes.

I hope that is not true. I can't believe that is true, but it has been stated. I hope we can come together as Democrats and Republicans to solve this problem. Puerto Rico is going to have

to help us to know what to do. I suspect the creditors are going to have to help us, too, or we are going to have to help them as well. I stand ready, willing, and able as chairman of the Finance Committee to solve these problems. But so far we haven't even received the right financial statements from Puerto Rico, and we can't move ahead without having clear-cut information that shows us what is going on, what the problems are, what we have to do, and how to do it.

I want to do whatever it takes to help Puerto Rico resolve these problems, and I would like to see Puerto Rico itself resolve them. It may take some help from us; it may take some help from creditors. I would like to see them sit down with creditors before we come up with some colossal Federal program that is going to basically hurt everybody. But I am open, and I sure as heck want to get this problem solved.

I like the people of Puerto Rico. I think they deserve better treatment than this. But they also got themselves into this problem by requiring too much of the central government and spending more and more all the time, with more and more central government employees that they don't need. That is a large part of this problem.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, this Senator from Florida doesn't think it is true that Puerto Rico is having such economic chaos that the net result is that Puerto Ricans—who are American citizens—move to Florida. The fact is that some are moving to Florida, I would say to the distinguished Senator from Utah, because of the economic deprivation of the island.

It would seem to me, as someone who has looked at this issue and has been to the island and spoken to the leaders, that there is an essential element of fairness here. If the bankruptcy laws are allowed to apply to all States and municipalities, why would those bankruptcy laws not apply to Puerto Rico and its need to reorganize its finances as well?

Mr. HATCH. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. NELSON. I will. Let me make this statement.

There is another part of unfairness, and that is that Puerto Ricans are not being treated the same way under the Medicare and Medicaid laws as well. To this Senator from Florida, who is close to the Puerto Rican people, it does not seem to be the fair thing.

Regardless of what the issue is with regard to how they got into economic trouble, the fact is they are in economic trouble. The question is, How are we going to get them out of economic trouble?

Of course, for purposes of a question, I yield to the distinguished Senator, my chairman of the Finance Committee.

Mr. HATCH. I appreciate my friend and colleague from Florida. I too un-

derstand that he understands a lot about this.

Look, bankruptcy laws do not apply. That doesn't mean we can't change that. I am not sure that is the way to do it. We are going to have to have some real information before we can move in that direction—which may be dangerous.

I do think it is incumbent upon the Puerto Rican leadership to provide us with audited financial statements, so we really know what the problems are, so we can then approach this in an intelligent, reasonable, healthy, loving way. I am for getting this problem solved, but I am not for just throwing money at it when we know their central government is completely bloated and that is what is causing some, if not most, of the problems. At least that is what we have been told.

I am happy to look at financials. I am happy to look at whatever suggestions are made. Not that I am that important, but we can move if we know what we are talking about. I am not about to move on the backs of the rest of the American taxpayers until they clean up the mess that is there, and they sit down with their creditors and see what they can work out. We ought to be encouraging them. I think their creditors want us to encourage them because they think it can be worked out—at least the one that I have spoken with.

So I commit to the distinguished Senator. He knows I don't make commitments unless I mean them. I am going to try to solve this problem. When I say "I," I mean our committee and our Congress is going to try to solve this problem. But let's do it in an intelligent way. Let's get all the facts, let's get some cooperation from Puerto Rico, and let's get the right financials so we know exactly what we can work with. If we can get all that, hopefully we can find some solutions here that will bring these folks into balance and give them a shot for the future.

Last, but not least, I agree with the distinguished Senator that they have not been treated fairly, and it is time for us to start treating them fairly.

I disagree with him that there are not people in Congress who would love to see more and more coming to Florida as Democrats. I am pretty sure that is the case, but that shouldn't be the case. We should be working on these problems and solving them.

I commit to the distinguished Senator from Florida who is a great Member of our committee that I will work with him, and we will see what we can do to solve these problems. But let's get some financials we can rely on before we go off on some deep end and miss the boat here.

Mr. NELSON. The Senator is certainly entitled to the information in order to make a reasonable judgment. This Senator is advocating fairness in the system.

There was a time that Puerto Rico was, in fact, included under the bank-

ruptcy laws. For whatever reason, a couple of decades ago the law was changed and they were treated differently; the same was true with Medicare and Medicaid payments. I think, regardless of what their financials show, Congress is going to have to take action. So when the Senator gets the information he wants, then I hope we can act forthwith because this is a problem that is with us at the moment. They are about to the point that they cannot make the payments on their debt obligations. So the day of reckoning is basically here.

BULK TELEPHONE METADATA COLLECTION PROGRAM

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I came to the floor for a different reason. I want to speak about the National Security Agency and the bulk telephone metadata collection program that basically the new law took over, that there was reform of. Now, let me explain the old law and the new law that just took effect yesterday.

The old law had been in effect for—I don't know the exact number of years but something in excess of 5 and less than 8. The old law said that by going to the approved court that handles classified information—called the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Court, known by its acronym FISA—that the government could ask for these records to come into the possession of the government by showing good cause as to why those records would be held. So it was pursuant to a court order.

What were the records to be held? These are business records of the telephone company. This is not the content of the telephone call; this is the business record that says that on such and such a day, at such a time, that telephone number such and such called telephone such and such. That is called metadata. That is it; there is no content.

For almost a decade, ever since we had the 9/11 attacks and we passed the PATRIOT Act to try to make it much more efficient for our National Security Agencies to protect us—those records, if the telephone company complied with the order, would be in the data-base. But it is not the content. It is only the business records stating what I just said: Number such and such called such and such.

Why was that important? Because when we suddenly got an indication that we had a terrorist that was going to strike either here or abroad and if that terrorist had a link to a number, we could see what calls that potential terrorist had made to what number and what numbers that number then called, and we could go down several different calls. It was through this that we were able to track down and prevent a number of terrorist acts, including in this country.

Earlier this year, along came the reform. The choice this Senator—who

supports the old law—was given was that either the old law is going to expire and there is not going to be any law that governs the collection of these business records—nothing—or go with the reform. The so-called reform was that you had to go to the FISA Court to get an order as to a specific number and a specific reason why that number was something that you wanted. That sounds harmless enough, except when you are dealing in some cases with seconds, minutes, a few hours; you might be looking for this person about whom we suddenly got a tip—maybe from a human source—that they are about to try to do us damage. So how long is it going to take to go into court? Is it going to take months? Is it going to take weeks? Days? All the time, the potential terrorist is well ahead of us. I know our intelligence agencies are trying to be prepared so they can do it in the shortest possible time, but a judge has to be there to hear the facts and the probable cause in order to then render an order to allow the intelligence agencies—domestically, it would be the FBI—to go get those business records.

If they get the business record and see that it goes one hop to another number, but maybe that goes another hop to another number and that goes another hop to several other numbers, under the so-called reform of the USA FREEDOM Act, there is a limitation on the number of hops. This Senator feels we shouldn't limit those hops if we are trying to find out who the bad guy is and what he is about to do.

Once we had that determined, then we go to the court again. If it is an American citizen or a person who is legally in the United States, they have to obtain another court order in order to be able to get the content—either listening to those calls or in the case of email records, the content of the email.

We always said there ought to be this continuous tension between our right to privacy, protecting our country, and ourselves. We want that tension to be there because our right to privacy is what makes us different in this country. Therefore, that is why we have the protections of having to go into court in order to get an order to get the content of the communications.

All you have to do is look to Paris and you can see that these guys are out to really do some mayhem. If in any way we are slowed down, then I think it is a considerable hindrance to us. I bring this to the attention of the Senate simply because the new act superseded the old act this past weekend. Naturally, when these records were spread about publicly 2 years ago by Edward Snowden, intentionally, recklessly, and I might say illegally, there was a fear. It made it seem like Big Brother was gathering up all of our information. That is why in the initial PATRIOT Act we were so careful to keep this right of privacy protected by court order for the business records

and then of course for content by a court order.

I believe that program was lawful, I believe it was court-approved, and I believe it has helped protect us from terrorist attacks in the past. I think the confusion in the land is because of what the bulk record was. It wasn't content. It was business record—the dates, times, length, and the numbers dialed but not their content.

We have this new law. It is in place. The National Intelligence Director, Jim Clapper, and the NSA Director, ADM Mike Rogers, assured us that the new law preserved a critical counterterrorism capability, but these Paris attacks remind us how brutal ISIS really is and that the terrorist threat persists.

As we look at who the terrorists in Paris were, there were four of them whom we knew of, whom we had on our no-fly list, and who were citizens of European countries. What does that mean? That means they didn't have to go into the Embassy to get a visa so their background could be checked. They are one of the visa waiver countries. But there was another one of their citizens who was one of those terrorists who was not on our no-fly list. I think the fact that the administration has already started clamping down, doing the extra checks, we certainly want to keep the Visa Waiver Program going, but it is a considerable potential threat if we are not checking and rechecking. I think from what we learned out of Paris, if the European countries will be more forthcoming to share their intelligence information with us about the potential terrorists, that will build our no-fly list for their citizens and that will be very helpful.

We ought to permanently extend section 702 of the FISA Amendments Act, which is going to expire in another 2 years. This crucial tool provides access to electronic communications of suspected terrorists and other foreign persons located outside of the United States. As we redouble our counterterrorism efforts, we must maintain what works and make the necessary changes as the threat evolves. That means remaining vigilant and using all the tools in our toolbox—including intelligence collection, Homeland Security protections, and the fight against ISIS on the battlefield.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

HOLDS ON AMBASSADORIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, in September, we learned shocking news that the U.S. Secret Service—armed agents of the Executive—violated the law to intimidate a congressman from doing his constitutional duty. Forty-five Secret Service employees accessed the personal records of Congressman JASON CHAFFETZ in violation of the Privacy Act. They shared with hun-

dreds of personnel the fact that Congressman CHAFFETZ had unsuccessfully applied to join the Service, leading to a leak of the information to the news media.

This activity was not limited to low-level employees. The Service's Assistant Director and head of training, Ed Lowery, encouraged the sharing of information, writing in an email:

Some information that he might find embarrassing needs to get out. Just to be fair.

The Director of the Service, Joe Clancy, failed to act to rein in the behavior when the information was raised to him. He had no reaction when he heard what he deemed to be a speculative rumor about the information. He apparently forgot that he had been informed of Congressman CHAFFETZ's personal records, incorrectly telling the Homeland Security Department's inspector general that he didn't learn of the matter until it was about to be published in the Washington Post.

The White House's reaction to this criminal violation was equally muted. The White House implied that an apology to Congressman CHAFFETZ would suffice in the absence of formal discipline and a criminal investigation. This was unacceptable. To ensure that proper remedial action took place, I placed a hold on three ambassadorial nominees to send a clear message to the White House.

I intended to lift these holds once two actions took place: First, I asked that the Department of Homeland Security take appropriate disciplinary action against all Secret Service personnel involved, including Secret Service leadership; second, I requested that a criminal investigation be initiated by the Department of Justice into violations of the Privacy Act.

Since I placed the holds, the White House reached out to my office and made clear that the President understood the gravity of the violations that occurred. In the past month, the Obama administration has finally begun to take action. The Department of Homeland Security issued disciplinary proposals for the suspension of 42 lower level personnel involved in the misconduct. For senior-level personnel—including Assistant Director Lowery—discipline proposals are being prepared, with the maximum penalty ranging up to the removal from their positions.

This discipline may or may not be proper in each case, but my intent isn't to be an HR officer for the Department of Homeland Security. Instead, when I instituted the holds on the three ambassadorial nominees, I made it clear my aim was not to keep these nominees in limbo indefinitely. My sole aim was to force action from the Obama administration, which too often ignores this separation of powers and proper enforcement of our laws.

Because the Obama administration has taken partial steps to hold those who violated the law to account, I will in turn honor my word and lift two of

the three holds I have on ambassadorial nominations: Mr. Samuel Heins, who is nominated to be the U.S. Ambassador to Norway, and Ms. Azita Raji, who is nominated to be the U.S. Ambassador to Sweden. I believe both are qualified to represent our Nation abroad, and we have significant interests in Scandinavia. My hope is that both nominees receive a vote and are confirmed in the Senate sooner rather than later.

I will retain, however, the hold on President Obama's Ambassador to the Bahamas. This is because the Department of Justice has yet to initiate an investigation into the unauthorized access and dissemination of Congressman CHAFFETZ's personal records.

The DHS inspector general has testified to Congress that he believes criminal violations of the Privacy Act occurred. Secret Service Director Clancy, in his own testimony to Congress, agreed with the inspector general, acknowledging that the violations constituted, in his words, "a criminal offense." With such agreement between the Department of Homeland Security IG and the Secret Service Director, I retain the hope and fully expect that a criminal investigation of these offenses by the Department of Justice will be forthcoming.

That investigation and the discipline currently being meted out by the Department of Homeland Security are important to send the message that politically motivated crimes will not be tolerated. Consequences are needed to make clear that the separation of powers will be respected and that Members of Congress acting on behalf of the people will not be intimidated.

I also reserve the right to place new holds on future administration nominees. What we cannot have is impunity for criminal offenses. If the discipline for the Secret Service leadership is too weak or if a criminal investigation is not initiated, I may place additional holds in order to again remind the White House of the seriousness of this matter, but in the meantime I look forward to continuing to work with the administration to ensure that discipline is appropriate and a criminal investigation on this matter is initiated.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

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

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

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, having just finished the Thanksgiving holiday season, many of us had a chance

to be with our families and give thanks for all of the great goodness we have had showered on us as individuals and those lucky enough to live in this great Nation, but for many families this was a painful holiday weekend. It is sobering to realize how many American families have their lives impacted by gun violence in America every single day. Sadly, the past holiday weekend was no exception.

In my home State of Illinois, in the city of Chicago, gun violence has taken a devastating toll. There have been 436 homicides in Chicago this year—most of them by gunfire. In Chicago, the news this morning was that 8 people were killed and at least 20 others were wounded in shootings over the holiday weekend. Today the University of Chicago has closed its campus in Hyde Park because of a shooting threat that was made against the campus community. Classes and activities are canceled. Extra security has been provided. At a high school in Barrington, IL, in the suburbs of Chicago, students saw a lockdown after a student came to school with a gun and was arrested.

The fact is, there is too much gun violence in America. All across the country we have seen such terrible stories.

On Friday, in Biloxi, MS, a patron at a Waffle House restaurant shot and killed Julia Brightwell, a waitress, after she asked him not to smoke in the restaurant.

In Atlanta, on Saturday, 6-year-old Ja'Mecca Smith found a loaded handgun in the cushions of a sofa and fatally shot herself—6 years old.

In Rome, NY, a 7-month-old infant was shot and killed on Saturday when a nearby 18-year-old was cleaning and loading a shotgun that was discharged.

In Colorado Springs, CO, a gunman burst into a Planned Parenthood building and killed three people, including police officer Garrett Swasey, and wounded nine others. The Governor of Colorado called this domestic terrorism, and I agree.

An average of 297 Americans are shot every day, 89 of them fatally. They are shot in homicides, assaults, suicides, accidental shootings, mass shootings, and even domestic terrorism attacks like the one we just witnessed at the Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs. By one count, there have been at least 351 mass shootings in America so far this year—that is more than one every single day—and there have been more than 50 shootings in American schools so far this year. There are some people who think that the Founding Fathers, when they envisioned the future of America, envisioned an armed America with absolute, inviolate gun rights. I don't believe it. I don't believe for a minute they had any vision of this level of wanton violence which is taking place.

Several weeks ago, I joined with my Senate Democratic colleagues. We went to the steps of the Capitol and called on the Republican majority in the Senate to do something. We urged

Republicans to consider calling on the floor of the Senate—in light of all of this gun violence—commonsense reforms that would keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people.

Whether or not you own a gun, whether or not you hunt, whatever your view is of the Constitution, can't we all basically agree that people who have been convicted of a felony and those who are mentally unstable should not be allowed to buy a gun? That, to me, is just common sense. There are many people in my own family who are sportsmen and hunters and enjoy the firearms they bought as kids and went hunting with their dads and really appreciate it. It is part of the Midwestern culture. I have yet to meet a single person who owns a gun and uses it responsibly who doesn't agree with the statement that we should keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons and also out of the hands of those who are mentally unstable.

It is also hard to imagine why there is opposition to this issue. Did you know that even if you are on the government's terrorist watch list—a person who is suspected of terrorism—you can legally buy a gun in America? I am not talking about gun show loopholes, where there are no questions asked; I am talking about the law in America which allows suspected terrorists to buy firearms. In light of what happened in Paris, France, does it make sense that someone on the terrorist watch list can buy an assault weapon? God only knows where they would take it or what they would do with it and ultimately how many innocent people would be killed. We can't even have a conversation about that on the floor of the U.S. Senate. No way. The National Rifle Association would not approve. The gun lobby does not want us discussing these issues. We are talking about a Second Amendment absolute, inviolate right, in their eyes, and I think we are talking about something that is impossible to explain and defend, from my point of view.

I will stand up for Second Amendment rights—the rights of people to own and use guns responsibly and store them safely away from children. I will stand up for their rights, but we also have to come together and acknowledge that those who would misuse firearms because they have a criminal intent, with a criminal record, are mentally unstable, or are on a suspected terrorist watch list—for goodness' sake, we ought to be able to draw that line in the United States of America.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, it was just a few weeks ago that—I guess 10 days ago, actually—the Republican Presidential candidates went to the Presiding Officer's State to meet with religious leaders, Christian leaders, and were seeking their support. Of course they all want the support of everyone living in Iowa because the Iowa

caucus is coming up pretty soon. I thought about that as they went to meet these Christian leaders in Iowa, just across the river from my home State of Illinois. I thought about how they had just left their discussions here in Washington, talking about Syrian refugees.

The most humbling humanitarian crisis in the world today is occurring in Syria. They have had a civil war which has gone on for years. Millions of people have been displaced and thousands have been killed. I met some of them just a few months ago when I went to Greece and saw these refugees streaming away from the camps in Syria trying to find a safe place. I can't imagine what it must be like for a husband to turn to his wife and say: We have to move. Pick up the kids. Whatever you can carry is all that we are taking. We are going to try to find a safe place to live.

I saw hundreds and thousands of them—families streaming out of this war-torn area. Very few of them have ever made it to the United States—about 2,000. Part of the reason is we have an elaborate, lengthy background check before anyone can be admitted as a refugee. In fact, it takes anywhere from 18 to 24 months of waiting to see if you might legally become a refugee in the United States of America.

Well, these Republican Presidential candidates and 25 Governors have said: We don't want any Syrian refugees. We are not going to allow them to come to the United States during a period of a "pause"—as some say. Others have taken more extreme positions. It is hard to imagine. If our goal is to keep Americans safe, why are these Republican candidates focusing on Syrian refugees? You see, since we have allowed about 2,000 refugees into the United States over the last 4 years, not one single Syrian refugee has been arrested and accused of terrorist activity—not one. After a lengthy background check, we believe we have done everything humanly possible to keep those away who would be any danger to our country.

I met some of those Syrian refugees who have made it here, in the city of Chicago. If you think they are terrorist threats to the United States, for goodness' sake, take a few minutes and sit down and talk to them and hear their stories of how their families went through extreme hardships—some of them with children who were being killed in Syria during the war—and as they fled with the clothes on their backs, they appealed to the United States to be allowed to come here as refugees and then waited up to 2 years to go through every one of the possible background checks before they finally made it.

What happens when they get here? Well, initially they need some help. Many of them don't speak English very well. Some of them are not financially ready to take care of themselves. But do you know what happens after a few

months? They find a place, go to work, and join a long parade of those who have come to the United States as refugees and called it home. That includes 400,000 Vietnamese refugees who came to the United States and are now a great part of our country. It includes 650,000 Cuban refugees who came to the United States, escaping Castro. Included in those 650,000 refugees were the fathers of two U.S. Senators, one of whom is running for President of the United States. They came to the United States and made an important contribution to the Senate and our Nation—refugees. I heard one of them say: Well, it was different then. We are dealing with terrorism today.

Really? What were we dealing with when we accepted Cuban refugees? We were dealing with a Communist regime in Cuba that was friendly with the Soviet Union, which had nuclear weapons pointed at the United States, and we were accepting refugees from that country. I am glad we did. We were living in a very dangerous time when they were accepted, and on balance we found that history has proven that those refugees from Cuba have become an important part of the United States.

We accepted over 200,000 Soviet Jews who were being persecuted in that country and wanted to come to the United States so that they could practice their religion freely. In my hometown of Springfield, IL, the synagogues opened their doors and said: We will sponsor these families as they come to our Midwestern community. We brought refugees from the Soviet Union in, and they became part of the United States.

The story is told over and over again. Yet Republican Presidential nominees and Governors describe refugees as just terrorists on the run. They say they are not carefully screened and are still allowed in the United States. That is the way they describe it. It is not true. We know it is not true.

When I consider those Republican Presidential nominees going to Iowa to pose for holy pictures with religious leaders after they said we would exclude these poor people who are simply trying to find a safe place for their families, it is hard to imagine.

This morning's New York Times tells a totally different story. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that this article in the New York Times be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, Nov. 17, 2015]

A MANHATTAN HARDWARE STORE WELCOMES REFUGEES AS GOVERNORS VOW TO SHUT THEM OUT

(By Jim Dwyer)

Chris Christie of New Jersey and at least 25 other governors have said they do not want Syrian refugees to come to their states.

Then again, there is Wankel's, a family-owned hardware store that opened on the Upper East Side of Manhattan in the 19th century. For decades, it has hired people who

came to the United States fleeing violence and persecution.

"People coming from really bad situations, trying to make a better life in America," said Sean Wankel, 32, vice president of Wankel's. "Or a life."

The refugees come to Wankel's through resettlement agencies like Catholic Charities or the International Rescue Committee and stay for a few months or years as they get their bearings in a new world. On a wall map, colored pins mark the three dozen countries from which the Wankel workers have come.

Felix Royce, 39, started in the store two months ago. Like many before him, he is new to retail work; in Nigeria, he had been a pastor and an author. He said the picture on his book jacket made him a target of the Boko Haram, a murderous sect of anti-Western Islamists who rose in a swamp of official corruption and violence. Among Boko Haram's infamous atrocities was the kidnapping of scores of schoolgirls in 2014.

"They organize mock street fights and send little kids with suicide bombs," Mr. Royce said. "ISIS is more sensible than Boko Haram. You would have insiders, police officers and politicians who collaborate with the Boko Haram. You didn't know who to trust."

In fear of his life, he said, he made his way to Houston and applied for asylum, appearing without a lawyer three times in front of immigration judges before being formally admitted to the United States. He, his wife and their two children now live in the Bronx, aided by the International Rescue Committee.

"I am sitting here," he said, "trying to put my life together. We are just trying to find our feet."

Mr. Royce said he had been closely following the news of the attacks in Paris on Friday evening by bombers and gunmen connected to the Islamic State, also called ISIS or ISIL.

A tiny fraction of the refugees leaving Syria have been permitted into the United States—fewer than nine a week between Oct. 1, 2011, and Sept. 30 of this year, a total of 1,854—as an estimated four million people fled the deteriorating nation. President Obama said the United States would accept 10,000 refugees from Syria in the coming fiscal year. Republicans in Congress and in statehouses are objecting, saying that terrorists like those involved in the Paris attacks could camouflage themselves in the stream of legitimate refugees.

Representative Paul D. Ryan, Republican of Wisconsin, the newly inaugurated House speaker, called for a "pause" in the refugee resettlement program. Mr. Christie, seeking the Republican presidential nomination, released a letter he sent to the president.

"I write to inform you that I will not accept any refugees from Syria in the wake of the deadly terrorist attack in Paris," he wrote, saying federal screening procedures were inadequate. "Neither you nor any federal official can guarantee that Syrian refugees will not be part of any terrorist activity."

New Yorkers might imagine police barricades being set up around the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, to prevent people from fleeing the collapsing towers because no one could guarantee they would not be part of any future terroristic activity.

It is not clear whether Mr. Christie or any other governor can refuse to "accept" refugees. As a practical matter, New Jersey does not have border controls, and probably could not set up traffic lanes for citizenship papers at places like the Lincoln Tunnel.

Other Republican candidates, including Ted Cruz and Jeb Bush, said they would permit Christian refugees from Syria, but not Muslims.

At the hardware store where he has found work, in a city where he and his family have taken refuge, Mr. Royce was polite in assessing the proposed restrictions.

"Some people are saying, let them be, let them stay there," he said. "I wouldn't subscribe to that. There are innocent ones out there. This would mean there is no hope for them. If you screen, there are good ones among the bad. Everyone from Syria is not from ISIS. If you leave everybody, ISIS will take advantage of them."

Mr. Wankel was asked if his business had room for Syrian refugees.

"Certainly," he said. "If they are coming through the International Rescue Committee or Catholic Charities, I'd do it. They have a tough life. If I was in Syria, I'd want to get the heck out."

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, it is a story about a man named Sean Wankel. His family has owned a hardware store on the Upper East Side of Manhattan since the 19th century. For decades, the Wankel family has been hiring people who came to the United States to escape violence and persecution—asylees and refugees. The owner of the store, Sean Wankel, said: "People coming from really bad situations, trying to make a better life in America." Wankel, of course, takes these refugees in to work in their store. They are referred to him by Catholic charities and the International Rescue Committee. They stay for a few months or years as they get their bearings in the new world. He has a wall map in the hardware store with colored pens marking three dozen countries from which these workers have come.

The article goes on to tell the story of Felix Royce, who came to the United States a few months ago, from persecution by terrorists in Nigeria, and got a job in this hardware store.

It is interesting that for decades this man and his family have intentionally brought in these refugees and asylees and made them part of their business and life, while nearby, the Governor of New Jersey is quaking in his boots at the thought of a refugee coming into the State of New Jersey. What a contrast.

The gentleman at the hardware store said that it is not clear if the Republican Governor of New Jersey even understands who these people are.

I will quote Mr. Royce from Nigeria again:

Some people are saying, let them be, let them stay there. I wouldn't subscribe to that. There are innocent ones out there. This would mean there is no hope for them. If you screen, there are good ones among the bad. Everyone from Syria is not from ISIS. If you leave everybody, ISIS will take advantage of them.

It is hard for me to imagine some of the things that have been said recently by some of the Presidential candidates on the other side. It isn't just a matter of turning away Syrian refugees even with the clearance practices we have, but some have gone to even more extreme statements, saying that we should never allow people of the Muslim religion to come to the United States or that they should somehow be

identified in this country. If you are a student of history, you will know that kind of paranoia and that kind of prejudice has exhibited itself many times in our history. We look back on it now not with pride but with sadness to think that we reached the point where we treated people that way.

In May of 1939, when a shipload of Jews were trying to escape the Nazis in Germany—900 of them on the SS *St. Louis*—and came to Miami, they were turned away. They went back to Europe. Two-hundred of those Jews perished in the Holocaust because they were turned away from the United States of America. And when Senator Robert Wagner of New York suggested that we allow 10,000 Jewish children to come to the United States to escape the Nazis, that was defeated in this Congress. There were Japanese internment camps and other situations just like that—sad, fearful things that were done that we look back on now and say: We can't repeat those mistakes. But the language that is coming out of many today is an echo of the past decisions—decisions we look back on now and say never again. Sadly, they are being suggested even today.

Our first obligation is to keep America safe, and if we are going to do that, let's look to things that truly do keep us safe. Let's say that if you are on the terrorist watch list in the United States of America, you cannot legally purchase guns or explosives. That is not a radical idea; that is something we need to do to change the law. Instead of focusing on 70,000 refugees who go through 2 years of background checks before they come here, let's focus on the 20 million who visit the United States without visas each year from Europe and 38 countries around the world and make sure they have been carefully checked before they come to the United States.

There are things we can do to keep America safe, but denying access to refugees who are suffering now with their children in the hopes of finding a safe place is not American. It is not who we are. It is not who we should be. I yield the floor.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MACKENZIE BAKER

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Mackenzie Baker, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Mackenzie is a graduate of Augusta Preparatory Day School in Augusta, GA. Currently, Mackenzie is attending American University, where she is a business and entertainment major. Mackenzie is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Mackenzie Baker for all of the fine work she has done and wish

her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO CAROLINE CRINION

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Caroline Crinion, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Caroline is a graduate of Brookings High School in Brookings, SD. Currently, Caroline is attending Georgetown University, where she is majoring in international political economy. Caroline is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Caroline Crinion for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SETH GERBERDING

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Seth Gerberding, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Seth is a graduate of Sturgis Brown High School in Sturgis, SD. Seth is planning on attending college next fall and majoring in math or political science. Seth is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Seth Gerberding for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MARY WRIGHT

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Mary Wright, an intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Mary is a graduate of Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda, MD. Currently, Mary is attending the University of Maryland, where she is majoring in communications. Mary is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Mary Wright for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United

States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN FOR PAY INCREASES FOR CIVILIAN FEDERAL EMPLOYEES COVERED BY THE GENERAL SCHEDULE AND CERTAIN OTHER PAY SYSTEMS IN JANUARY 2016—PM 33

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting an alternative plan for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2016.

Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of “national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare,” I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Civilian Federal employees have already made significant sacrifices as a result of 3-year pay freeze that ended in January 2014. In January 2014 and again in January 2015, increases for civilian Federal employees were limited to a 1.0 percent overall pay increase, an amount lower than the private sector pay increases and statutory formula for adjustments to the base General Schedule for 2014 and 2015. However, as the country’s economic recovery continues, we must maintain efforts to keep our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course. This is an effort that continues to require tough choices.

Under current law, locality pay increases averaging 28.74 percent and costing \$26 billion would go into effect in January 2016. Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases. Accordingly, I have determined that under the authority of section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, locality-based comparability payments for the locality pay areas established by the President’s Pay Agent, in the amounts set forth in the attached table, shall become effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2016. These rates are based on an allocation of 0.3 percent of payroll as indicated in my August 28, 2015, alternative pay plan for adjustments to the base General Schedule. These decisions will not materially

affect our ability to attract and retain a well-qualified Federal workforce.

The adjustments described above shall take effect on the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2016.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, November 30, 2015.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on November 23, 2015, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER) had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 599. An act to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3189. An act to amend the Federal Reserve Act to establish requirements for policy rules and blackout periods of the Federal Open Market Committee, to establish requirements for certain activities of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and to amend title 31, United States Code, to reform the manner in which the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System is audited, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) reported that he had signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER) of the House:

S. 599. An act to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2329. A bill to prevent the entry of extremists into the United States under the refugee program, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1611. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-168).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 1115. A bill to close out expired, empty grant accounts (Rept. No. 114-169).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 2093. A bill to provide that the Secretary of Transportation shall have sole authority to appoint Federal Directors to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Rept. No. 114-170).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment:

S. 2128. A bill to require the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency to submit to Congress a report on Inspector General mandates (Rept. No. 114-171).

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. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2332. A bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a permanent background check system; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 2333. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide taxpayer protection and assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 2334. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to adopt and implement a standard identification protocol for use in the tracking and procurement of biological implants by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KAINE, Mr. REID, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. SASSE):

S. Res. 322. A resolution recognizing the 60th anniversary of the refusal of Rosa Louise Parks to give up her seat on a bus on December 1, 1955; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 235

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 235, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 466

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 466, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to improve the quality, health outcomes, and value of maternity care under the

Medicaid and CHIP programs by developing maternity care quality measures and supporting maternity care quality collaboratives.

S. 542

At the request of Mr. COATS, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 542, a bill to enhance the homeland security of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 551

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 551, a bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms or the issuance of firearms and explosives licenses to known or suspected dangerous terrorists.

S. 574

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 574, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers a credit against income tax for employees who participate in qualified apprenticeship programs.

S. 950

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 950, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit.

S. 1512

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1512, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 1714

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1714, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan and the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 1796

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1796, a bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to increase the age of eligibility for children to receive benefits under the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children and to allow States to certify infants for participation in that program for a period of 2 years, and for other purposes.

S. 1817

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs.

ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1817, a bill to improve the effectiveness of major rules in accomplishing their regulatory objectives by promoting retrospective review, and for other purposes.

S. 1818

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1818, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to reform the rule making process of agencies.

S. 1820

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1820, a bill to require agencies to publish an advance notice of proposed rule making for major rules.

S. 1831

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1831, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 1865

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1865, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to eating disorders, and for other purposes.

S. 1919

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1919, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1945

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1945, a bill to make available needed psychiatric, psychological, and supportive services for individuals with mental illness and families in mental health crisis, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2031

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2031, a bill to reduce temporarily the royalty required to be paid for sodium produced on Federal lands, and for other purposes.

S. 2075

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2075, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage and to express the sense of the Senate that the resulting revenue loss should be offset.

S. 2267

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2267, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve the financial aid process for homeless children and youths and foster care children and youth.

S. 2295

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2295, a bill to extend the termination date for the authority to collect certain records and make permanent the authority for roving surveillance and to treat individual terrorists as agents of foreign powers under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, and for other purposes.

S. 2311

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2323

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2323, a bill to clarify the definition of nonimmigrant for purposes of chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code.

S. RES. 148

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 148, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 322—RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFUSAL OF ROSA LOUISE PARKS TO GIVE UP HER SEAT ON A BUS ON DECEMBER 1, 1955

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KAINE, Mr. REID, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. SASSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 322

Whereas many historians date the beginning of the modern civil rights movement in the United States as December 1, 1955;

Whereas Rosa Louise McCauley Parks was born on February 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama, the first child of James and Leona (Edwards) McCauley;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a Caucasian man, and her stand for equal rights became legendary;

Whereas news of the arrest of Rosa Louise Parks resulted in approximately 42,000 African-Americans boycotting Montgomery buses for 381 days, beginning on December 5, 1955, until the bus segregation law was changed on December 21, 1956;

Whereas the United States Supreme Court ruled on November 13, 1956, that the Montgomery segregation law was unconstitutional, and on December 20, 1956, Montgomery officials were ordered to desegregate buses;

Whereas the civil rights movement led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which broke down the barrier of legal discrimination against African-Americans;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks has been honored as the “first lady of civil rights” and the “mother of the freedom movement”, and her quiet dignity ignited the most significant social movement in the history of the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was the recipient of many awards and accolades for her efforts on behalf of racial harmony, including—

- (1) the Congressional Gold Medal;
- (2) the Spingarn Award, which is the highest honor of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for civil rights contributions; and
- (3) the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the highest civilian honor in the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks was named 1 of the 20 most influential and iconic figures of the 20th century;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks sparked 1 of the largest movements in the United States against racial segregation, and by her quiet courage symbolizes all that is vital about nonviolent protest because of the way she endured threats of death and persisted as an advocate for the basic lessons she taught the people of the United States;

Whereas Rosa Louise Parks and her husband Raymond Parks relocated to Michigan in 1957, and remained in Michigan until the death of Rosa Louise Parks on October 24, 2005;

Whereas, in November 2005, Congress authorized the Joint Committee on the Library to procure a statue of Rosa Louise Parks to be placed in the Capitol; and

Whereas the bus on which Rosa Louise Parks sparked a new era in the quest for

freedom and equality in the United States is—

(1) 1 of the most significant artifacts of the civil rights movement in the United States; and

(2) on permanent display in the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and celebrates the 60th anniversary of the refusal of Rosa Louise Parks to give up her seat on a bus on December 1, 1955;

(2) commemorates the legacy of Rosa Louise Parks to inspire all people of the United States to stand up for freedom and the principles of the Constitution; and

(3) endeavors to work with the same courage, dignity, and determination exemplified by a civil rights pioneer, Rosa Louise Parks, to address modern inequalities and injustices.

Mr. DURBIN. 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.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Gayle Smith, of Ohio, to be Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 30 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, 2 months ago I came to the Senate floor to urge the majority leader to schedule a vote on the nomination of Gayle Smith to serve as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, also known as USAID. Here we are, 7 months after the President nominated her to fill this position. The Senate will have a chance in a few minutes to vote on Gayle Smith's nomination to head USAID.

I fully expect that today's vote will lead to her confirmation. We are witnessing a humanitarian crisis in Syria and across the Middle East that grows worse by the day, posing a risk to European stability and cohesion. Having someone at the head of USAID is absolutely critical. The United States, with

our unparalleled capacity to mobilize international support for humanitarian relief, should continue to play a leading role in assisting both Syrian refugees and the neighboring countries that are hosting them.

Having an effective leader such as Gayle Smith at USAID is a critical part of that effort. Last month I had the opportunity to lead a delegation of three other Senators to Greece and Germany. Senator DURBIN, Senator WARREN, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and I all went to see firsthand the plight of refugees from the war in Syria and the incredible burden that both Greece and Germany are under as a result of these unprecedented refugee flows.

Many of us—and we heard this when we were in Greece—believed that the rate of refugee arrivals would slow with the coming of cold weather. In fact, the exact opposite has happened, and the humanitarian situation has only become worse.

Of course, USAID's work is not only limited to the situation in Syria; it extends to the 60 countries and regional USAID missions around the world, including in Afghanistan, where USAID development work is critical to the long-term success and security of that country.

I am relieved that we are finally going to get to vote on Gayle Smith and that the majority has overcome the objections of the one Member who, for the last 7 months, has been holding up her nomination. That Member was willing to put at risk the massive investment of resources the United States has made in Afghanistan and other parts of the world just to score political points on an issue that was completely outside of Gayle Smith's portfolio at USAID.

As things have moved on Gayle Smith, I am hoping this type of obstruction is going to end, and we will soon vote not only on Ms. Smith's nomination but also to confirm other critical national security nominees, especially the pending Foreign Service nominations that have been approved by the Foreign Relations Committee and that could be voted on by the full Senate today.

For example, in May the President nominated Tom Melia to be Assistant Administrator for USAID for Europe and Eurasia. This is a critical position not only because of the development work but because these are two regions that are under extreme pressure from Vladimir Putin. These regions would both benefit from USAID programs that would bolster their ability to act independently of Russian influence. Tom Melia is still unconfirmed, despite the fact that the Foreign Relations Committee approved his nomination in July. In addition, the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Sweden has been pending for over a year. Sweden has become a much more critical ally in terms of the refugee issue that Europe is facing. The nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Norway—again another critical ally—has been pending

since May. The nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, a critical post for the United States, one of our neighbors and main allies in this hemisphere—these have all been pending since June.

At a time when the world is facing national security challenges on a number of fronts and nations are looking to the United States for leadership, we cannot afford to sideline ourselves by failing to confirm nominees for these diplomatic posts.

I recognize Senator CORKER, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as well as his Democratic counterpart, Senator CARDIN, who have worked very hard to secure the confirmation vote for Gayle Smith to serve as Administrator for USAID. I know we are working hard to get these other nominees to the floor, but at a time when our leadership is so important, when there are so many challenges facing us around the world, to fail to have those key spokespeople for the United States in positions of so many critical situations is unacceptable. We need to move these nominees. We need to continue the work of U.S. foreign policy.

I am sure we will have a very broad bipartisan vote in support of Gayle Smith. What is unfortunate is that we couldn't have done it 7 months ago when she passed through the committee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first I thank Senator SHAHEEN for her leadership on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and for her leadership with regard to the nomination of Gayle Smith to be the Administrator of USAID.

This is the U.S. Agency for International Development. I mention that because we are talking about a national security position. Our national security depends on having a strong military, but it also depends upon having a strong position in international development assistance in dealing with our diplomacy. The director of USAID is a critical member of our national security team.

We couldn't have a stronger person for that position than Gayle Smith. I wholeheartedly support her confirmation.

I thank Senator CORKER, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for the manner in which this nomination has been brought forward. He has been a strong proponent of Gayle Smith, and I thank him very much for his help in getting this nomination to the floor.

I said that I couldn't find a stronger person to fill this position. She is currently a Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director at the National Security Council, where she is responsible for global development, democracy, and humanitarian assistance issues. She was previously a senior fel-

low at the Center for American Progress, cochair of the Enough Project, and the cofounder of the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network. During the Clinton administration, Gayle Smith served as the Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs at the NSC, so she has broad experience over a long career in Foreign Service and in serving in regard to development assistance issues.

For over 37 years of her professional career she has served in Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. She has worked as a journalist and as a consultant to aid groups. She has worked as a senior adviser to the Administrator and Chief of Staff for USAID/East Africa. She has served twice on the National Security Council as Special Assistant to the President. She has been hailed as a strong and effective advocate on global development issues. She was voted out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on which I serve as a ranking member, by a unanimous vote. I am very pleased that we are now able to vote tonight for her confirmation to be the Administrator of the USAID.

I have already pointed out that this is a position critically important to our national security, but let me also point out that the world is facing a host of humanitarian crises—including food insecurity and displacement in Syria, the Europe migration crisis, the Rohingya refugee crisis of Southeast Asia, and the millions of people who are displaced and starving in South Sudan, which require American leadership and assistance.

Growing humanitarian needs worldwide are outstripping available resources. The Administrator of USAID is a key leadership post in the effort of the United States to shape the world's reaction to crisis and instability.

I would go into a bit of detail on just one of the crises that the Administrator of USAID faces so that everyone can truly understand the scale we are talking about. As a result of the war in South Sudan, 1.5 million people are internally displaced. More than 730,000 have crossed borders into Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda as refugees. The number of people facing severe food insecurity has almost doubled since the start of the year, from 2.5 million to an estimated 4.6 million people, including approximately 874,000 children under the age of 5. This is just one example and I could give you many more examples why it is critically important that we have a confirmed Administrator for USAID.

Gayle Smith is the right person for the right time to serve our country. I encourage my colleagues to support her nomination. This is a person who will serve our country, continue to serve our country well, and I am proud to support her.

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, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar Nos. 387, 388, 390, 391, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

COAST GUARD

The following named officers for appointment in the grade indicated to the United States Coast Guard under title 14, U.S.C., section 271(d):

To be rear admiral

Peter J. Brown
Scott A. Buschman
Michael F. McAllister
June E. Ryan
Joseph M. Vojvodich

AIR FORCE

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. Robert J. Becklund

ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Arlen R. Royalty

NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Michelle C. Skubic

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

AIR FORCE

PN807 AIR FORCE nominations (4) beginning DONNETTE A. BOYD, and ending PAUL D. SUTTER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 9, 2015.

PN810 AIR FORCE nominations (37) beginning MARIA J. BELMONTE, and ending DEVERIL A. WINT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 9, 2015.

PN923 AIR FORCE nomination of Alan D. Murdock, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

ARMY

PN856 ARMY nomination of David M. Jackson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 16, 2015.

PN905 ARMY nomination of Tarnjit S. Saini, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 8, 2015.

PN924 ARMY nominations (16) beginning OLGA M. ANDERSON, and ending ERIC W. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

PN925 ARMY nominations (17) beginning JIMMY C. DAVIS, JR., and ending ROBERT E. WICHMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

PN926 ARMY nomination of Spencer T. Price, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

NAVY

PN907 NAVY nomination of Jessica L. Morera, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 8, 2015.

PN908 NAVY nomination of Kari J. Tereick, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 8, 2015.

PN928 NAVY nominations (52) beginning JOSHUA C. ANDRES, and ending BETHANY R. ZMITROVICH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

PN929 NAVY nomination of Calvin M. Foster, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

PN930 NAVY nomination of Tara A. Feher, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PAYMENTS IN EUGENICS COMPENSATION ACT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 139, S. 1698.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1698) to exclude payments from State eugenics compensation programs from consideration in determining eligibility for, or the amount of, Federal public benefits.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 1698) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:
S. 1698

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Treatment of Certain Payments in Eugenics Compensation Act".

SEC. 2. EXCLUSION OF PAYMENTS FROM STATE EUGENICS COMPENSATION PROGRAMS FROM CONSIDERATION IN DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR, OR THE AMOUNT OF, FEDERAL PUBLIC BENEFITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, payments made under

a State eugenics compensation program shall not be considered as income or resources in determining eligibility for, or the amount of, any Federal public benefit.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

(1) FEDERAL PUBLIC BENEFIT.—The term "Federal public benefit" means—

(A) any grant, contract, loan, professional license, or commercial license provided by an agency of the United States or by appropriated funds of the United States; and

(B) any retirement, welfare, health, disability, public or assisted housing, postsecondary education, food assistance, unemployment benefit, or any other similar benefit for which payments or assistance are provided to an individual, household, or family eligibility unit by an agency of the United States or by appropriated funds of the United States.

(2) STATE EUGENICS COMPENSATION PROGRAM.—The term "State eugenics compensation program" means a program established by State law that is intended to compensate individuals who were sterilized under the authority of the State.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFUSAL OF ROSA LOUISE PARKS TO GIVE UP HER SEAT ON A BUS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 322, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 322) recognizing the 60th anniversary of the refusal of Rosa Louise Parks to give up her seat on a bus on December 1, 1955.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 322) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, December 1; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to

allow for the weekly conference meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned immediately following the resumption of legislative session upon disposition of the Smith nomination.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

VOTE ON SMITH NOMINATION

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I yield back.

Mr. CARDIN. I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

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

Mr. INHOFE. 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 Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLS), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 79, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 310 Ex.]

YEAS—79

Alexander	Carper	Durbin
Baldwin	Casey	Enzi
Barrasso	Cassidy	Ernst
Bennet	Coats	Feinstein
Blumenthal	Cochran	Fischer
Booker	Collins	Franken
Boozman	Coons	Gardner
Boxer	Corker	Gillibrand
Brown	Cornyn	Grassley
Cantwell	Cotton	Hatch
Capito	Daines	Heinrich
Cardin	Donnelly	Heitkamp

Hirono	Mikulski	Sessions
Hoeven	Moran	Shaheen
Inhofe	Murkowski	Stabenow
Isakson	Murphy	Sullivan
Kaine	Murray	Tester
King	Nelson	Thune
Klobuchar	Perdue	Toomey
Lankford	Peters	Udall
Leahy	Reed	Warner
Manchin	Reid	Warren
Markey	Roberts	Whitehouse
McCaskill	Rounds	Wicker
McConnell	Schatz	Wyden
Menendez	Schumer	
Merkley	Scott	

NAYS—7

Blunt	Lee	Sasse
Crapo	Paul	
Heller	Risch	

NOT VOTING—14

Ayotte	Johnson	Sanders
Burr	Kirk	Shelby
Cruz	McCain	Tillis
Flake	Portman	Vitter
Graham	Rubio	

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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:14 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, December 1, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

STEVEN NATHAN BERK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR

COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE HAROLD L. CUSHENBERRY, JR., RETIRING.

ELIZABETH CARROLL WINGO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE ANN O'REGAN KEARY, RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. KENNETH T. BIBB, JR.
COL. ANGELA M. CADWELL
COL. MARTIN A. CHAPIN
COL. JAMES R. CLUFF
COL. CHARLES S. CORCORAN
COL. SEAN M. FARRELL
COL. CHAD P. FRANKS
COL. ALEXUS G. GRYNKEWICH
COL. TIMOTHY D. HAUGH
COL. CHRISTOPHER D. HILL
COL. ERIC T. HILL
COL. SAMUEL C. HINOTE
COL. WILLIAM G. HOLT II
COL. LINDA S. HURRY
COL. MATTHEW C. ISLER
COL. KYLE J. KREMER
COL. JOHN C. KUBINEC
COL. DOUGLAS K. LAMBERTH
COL. LANCE K. LANDRUM
COL. JEANNIE M. LEAVITT
COL. WILLIAM J. LIQUORI, JR.
COL. MICHAEL J. LUTTON
COL. COREY J. MARTIN
COL. TOM D. MILLER
COL. RICHARD G. MOORE, JR.
COL. JAMES D. PECCIA III
COL. HEATHER L. PRINGLE
COL. MICHAEL J. SCHMIDT
COL. JAMES R. SEARS, JR.
COL. DANIEL L. SIMPSON
COL. MARK H. SLOCUM
COL. ROBERT S. SPALDING III
COL. WILLIAM A. SPANGENTHAL
COL. EDWARD W. THOMAS, JR.
COL. JOHN T. WILCOX II
COL. MICHAEL P. WINKLER

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 30, 2015:

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

GAYLE SMITH, OF OHIO, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED TO THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(D):

To be rear admiral

PETER J. BROWN
SCOTT A. BUSCHMAN
MICHAEL F. MCALLISTER
JUNE E. RYAN

JOSEPH M. VOJVODICH

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. ROBERT J. BECKLUND

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ARLEN R. ROYALTY

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. MICHELLE C. SKUBIC

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DONNETTE A. BOYD AND ENDING WITH PAUL D. SUTTER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARIA J. BELMONTE AND ENDING WITH DEVERIL A. WINT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2015.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF ALAN D. MURDOCK, TO BE COLONEL.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF DAVID M. JACKSON, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF TARNJIT S. SAINI, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH OLGA M. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH ERIC W. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 28, 2015.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JIMMY C. DAVIS, JR. AND ENDING WITH ROBERT E. WICHMAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 28, 2015.

ARMY NOMINATION OF SPENCER T. PRICE, TO BE COLONEL.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATION OF JESSICA L. MORERA, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF KARI J. TEREICK, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSHUA C. ANDRES AND ENDING WITH BETHANY R. ZMITROVICH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 28, 2015.

NAVY NOMINATION OF CALVIN M. FOSTER, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF TARA A. FEHER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.