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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we worship You, for Your loving-kindness, truth, and faithfulness sustain us. Though You are high, You respect the lowly. So today infuse our Senators with the spirit of lowliness and humility. Give them the wisdom to know that You give grace to the humble but oppose the proud. May their humility bring them that reverential awe that leads to honor and life. Lord, help them to remember that America's greatness comes not from the swagger of might but from the lowliness of that righteousness which exalts any nation. Guide our lawmakers with Your wisdom and uphold them with Your might.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH FROM CORPORATE INTERFERENCE ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 459, S. 2578, the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 459, S. 2578, a bill to ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2609 AND H.R. 5021

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2609) to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 5021) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings regarding these bills at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the nomination of Ronnie L. White to be a United States district judge for the Eastern District of Missouri. The debate will be until 10:15 a.m. Senators GRASSLEY, CORNYN, and SHAHEEN will control 10 minutes each of that time and Senator MCCASKILL will control any remaining time.

We have moved the time up, and I appreciate very much the cooperation of the Republicans because this is so one of our Senators can attend the funeral of one of his best friends. But we are not going to extend the time past 10:15 a.m. In light of that I am not going to give any statement today. If cloture is invoked, we will have a 12:20 p.m. vote.

Upon disposition of the White nomination, the Senate will resume legislative session and proceed to the motion to proceed to S. 2578, the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act. The time until 2:10 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with each side controlling 5 minutes of the final 10 minutes. At 2:10 p.m. the Senate will proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2578.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time between 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. be under Republican control and the time between 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. be controlled by the majority.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there will be an all-Senators briefing at 5:30 p.m. this afternoon, and it is all related to the emergency supplemental request to

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

address the child and adult migration from Central America to the Southwest border.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

PROTECTING EVERYONE'S RIGHTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, Members of Congress do not always see eye-to-eye on everything. It is fairly obvious. There are often strong and principled disagreements about taxes, the size and scope of government, ObamaCare, foreign policy—you name it. But let's be clear: When it comes to decisions about contraception, both parties believe a woman should be able to make her own decisions.

Now, some on the other side would like to pretend otherwise. They think they can score political points and create divisions where there are not any by distorting the facts. And that is why their increasingly outlandish claims—claims one nonpartisan fact-checker described as ''simply wrong''—just keep getting debunked. Even worse, our friends on the other side are now on record as saying we should protect the freedoms of some while stripping away the freedoms of others.

Republicans continue to insist that we can and should be in the business of protecting everyone's rights. We think that, instead of restricting Americans' religious freedoms, Congress should instead work to preserve a woman's ability to make contraception decisions for herself. And the legislation Senator AYOTTE, FISCHER, and I filed yesterday would do just that.

The Preserving Religious Freedom and a Woman's Access to Contraception Act would clarify that an employer cannot block an employee from legal access to her FDA-approved contraceptives. It is a commonsense proposal. It reaffirms that we can both preserve America's long tradition of tolerance and respect for people of faith while at the same time preserving a woman's ability to make her own decisions about contraception.

Our bill would also ask the FDA to study whether contraceptives could be made available to adults safely without a prescription. And it would allow women to set aside more money in their flexible spending accounts so they can cover out-of-pocket medical expenses, many of which are skyrocketing under ObamaCare.

So if Democrats are serious about doing right by women—if they are not just interested in stoking divisions in an election year—then they should get on board with our legislation. That is a start. And then they can work with us to undo the damage their policies—like ObamaCare—have already caused to millions—millions—of middle-class women.

Research shows that American women make about 80 percent of the health care decisions for their families. Yet, thanks to ObamaCare, millions of women lost the health insurance plans they had and they liked—causing enormous disruptions in their lives and in the lives of their families.

When women first spoke out about the betrayal they felt when they lost their plans, Washington Democrats said their plans were ''junk'' or worse, that they were lying, because Democratic politicians thought they knew better than all of these people we were hearing from. It was insulting to many, including one constituent who wrote to me from Woodford County. She described herself as a ''lifelong self-employed professional'' who ''shopped hard'' for a policy that she liked and wanted to keep. Here is what she said after Washington Democratic policies overruled her own personal choice of a plan:

> The President has referred to my type of policy as ''substandard.'' In fact, it is a good product for people in my situation. It appears that the President does not understand personal finance, and does not trust Americans to choose products that are good for them. He also does not appreciate people like me who are willing to accept personal responsibility for a large part of my own routine medical expenses.

She is not the only one who feels this way, and she is not the only one who has been hurt by ObamaCare.

As a result of ObamaCare, too many women now have fewer choices of doctors and hospitals.

As a result of ObamaCare, millions of Americans—nearly two-thirds of them women—are now at risk of having their hours and their wages reduced.

As a result of ObamaCare, married women can face penalty taxes just for working.

As a result of ObamaCare and other changes by the Obama administration, a woman on Medicare Advantage could see her average benefits reduced by more than $1,500 a year.

And thanks to ObamaCare, millions of women have had their flexible spending accounts limited and can no longer use tax-preferred medical savings to purchase all the medications they use—a wrongheaded policy that the bill we introduced yesterday seeks to address.

But that is just a start. Washington Democrats need to work with us to pass real health reform—actual, patient-centered reform that will not hurt women the way ObamaCare does. Because we have seen the letters from our constituents—letters such as the one I received from a woman in Mount Sterling who says ObamaCare did more than just cause her premiums to nearly double—it might make her medications unaffordable as well: ''I am on three medications, [and] two years ago the copay was $60 for each one,'' she said. ''Now, my medications are costing me a little over $700 a month.''

That is not fair. It is not right. And this is just the kind of challenge both parties should be working together to address.

So let's do away with the false choices. Let's focus on actually helping women instead. Let's work together to boost jobs, wages, and opportunity at a time when women are experiencing so much hardship as a result of this administration's policies.

Republicans have been asking Washington Democrats to do all of this for years now. It is about time they started showing they really care.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF RONNIE L. WHITE TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ronnie L. White, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 10:15 a.m. will be controlled as follows: 10 minutes for the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY; 10 minutes for the Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN; 10 minutes for the Senator from New Hampshire, Mrs. SHAHEEN; and any remaining time under the control of the Senator from Missouri, Mrs. MCCASKILL.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the Senate will vote today to try to end the unjustified filibuster against Judge Ronnie White, who has been nominated to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. Many Senators will remember Judge White from 15 years ago, when the Senate denied his confirmation by a partyline vote after an ugly campaign by Republican Senators to caricature him as a jurist who was soft on crime. Today, the Senate has an opportunity to reject that unjust characterization and confirm a well-qualified and principled man who has demonstrated his ability to be a fair judge and who is faithful to the law.

Throughout his exceptional career, Judge White has been a trail blazer in the legal community. In 1995, he became the first African American to serve on the Missouri Supreme Court and later became the first African American to serve as its Chief Justice. He previously served for 2 years as a judge on the Missouri Court of Appeals. Outside of his distinguished judicial service, Judge White has broad experience in the law, working in private practice as a partner in Missouri-based law firms both before and after his time on the bench, serving as City Counselor and Public Defender for St.

Louis, MO and serving as a State representative in the Missouri General Assembly. He has been honored for his achievements and commitment to public service by organizations such as the Federal Defense Bar of the Eastern District of Missouri and the St. Louis branch of the NAACP.

I supported Judge White when he was first nominated to the U.S. District Court and I support him now. In 1999, by the time the Senate voted on his nomination, Judge White had upheld the implementation of the death penalty 41 times as a state Supreme Court justice. Yet, then-Senator Ashcroft of Missouri claimed Judge White was ''soft on crime'' and was ''the most anti-death penalty judge on the Missouri Supreme Court.'' These claims should have been easily dismissed years ago, and should be easily dismissed today.

Judge White's nomination is supported by law enforcement, legal professionals, and the civil rights community. The elected President of the Missouri Fraternal Order of Police, Kevin Ahlbrand, wrote on behalf of his organization's 5,400 members: ''As front line law enforcement officers, we recognize the important need to have jurists such as Ronnie White, who have shown themselves to be tough on crime, yet fair and impartial. . . . We can think of no finer or more worthy nominee.'' I ask consent that this letter, and others, be made a part of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Unfortunately, rather than admit that they made a mistake in voting against Judge White's nomination before, some Senators are now saying they may oppose his nomination because in 2003 he joined the Missouri Supreme Court's majority opinion in Simmons v. Roper holding that the Eight Amendment prohibits the execution of individuals who commit a capital crime when they are under 18 years of age. In 2005, in Roper v. Simmons, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed. The criticism, I gather, is that Judge White's decision to join the majority opinion was contrary to then-existing U.S. Supreme Court precedent. While I have heard some Members of the Senate criticize a nominee for having asserted a position that is ultimately rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court, this may be the first time I have heard a nominee criticized for actually getting it right.

At his confirmation hearing earlier this year, Senator MCCASKILL introduced Judge White as someone who ''continues to be a shining star to thousands of Missourians because of his career, which has really been emblematic of hard work, courage, dedication and service to public before self. . . . I can think of no one in the State of Missouri who is more deserving of this appointment to the Federal bench than my friend, Ronnie White.'' I thank Senator MCCASKILL for her leadership in recommending that President Obama nominate Judge White for this position.

Today Senators have an opportunity to right a wrong. This chance is long overdue. I am confident Judge White will serve on the Federal bench with distinction, and with fidelity to our Constitution. I thank the Majority Leader for bringing this nomination up for a vote, and I urge my fellow Senators to vote to defeat this filibuster and to confirm this well qualified nominee without further delay.

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

FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE,
MISSOURI STATE LODGE,
Jefferson City, MO, May 13, 2014.

Senator PATRICK LEAHY,
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LEAHY, As the elected representative of over 5,400 law enforcement officers across the State of Missouri, I am urging your committee to vote out the nomination of Ronnie White for the open judicial seat in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

We would then be hopeful that the Senate confirms his nomination.

We do not take such stances lightly. As front line law enforcement officers, we recognize the important need to have jurists such as Ronnie White, who have shown themselves to be tough on crime, yet fair and impartial.

As a former justice on the Missouri Court of Appeals and as the Chief Justice of the Missouri Supreme Court, Ronnie White has proven that he has the experience and requisite attributes to be a quality addition to the U.S. District Court.

We can think of no finer or more worthy nominee.

Sincerely,

KEVIN AHLBRAND,
President, Missouri Fraternal Order of Police.

THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2014.

DEAR SENATOR: On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, we write to express our strong support for the nomination of Ronnie L. White to be a U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri. As one of Missouri's leading legal minds, Mr. White has devoted his life to serving the citizens of Missouri. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to enforcing the rule of law with objectivity, thoughtfulness and impartiality, and he would be an outstanding addition to the federal bench. We urge you to vote yes on cloture and yes on his nomination.

Mr. White is eminently qualified, as evidenced by the ''Unanimously Qualified'' rating he received from the American Bar Association and by his long career in service to the public. After graduating from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Law School in 1983, Mr. White worked as a public defender in St. Louis and served three terms in the Missouri House of Representatives. In 1993, he was appointed as City Counselor for the City of St. Louis; the following year, Governor Mel Carnahan appointed him as a judge for the Eastern District of the Missouri Court of Appeals. In 1995, Mr. White became the first African American to sit on the Supreme Court of Missouri, and he served as chief justice from July 2003 to June 2005. He retired from the bench in 2007.

As a judge, Mr. White served with distinction on the Missouri Court of Appeals and the state Supreme Court, gaining a reputation as a fair, intelligent jurist who commanded the respect of his fellow judges. When President Clinton nominated him in 1997 to a seat on the U.S. District Court for Missouri, Mr. White received support from his colleagues on the Supreme Court and many in law enforcement. However, his nomination was defeated in October 1999 in a disappointing party-line vote engineered by then-Senator John Ashcroft.

Mr. Ashcroft led a vigorous smear campaign against Mr. White based on spurious claims about his record as a judge on death penalty cases. For instance, the senator claimed that White voted against the death penalty more than any other judge on the Missouri Supreme Court. But the facts proved otherwise. Of Mr. Ashcroft's seven appointees to the court, four voted to reverse death penalty decisions more often than Mr. White. In fact, Mr. White upheld the majority of death penalty convictions that came before him as a judge, and in the rare case in which he did vote to reverse, the majority were unanimous decisions.

Further, Mr. Ashcroft used false data and misleading interpretations to solicit opposition from law enforcement and to bolster his assertion that Mr. White was ''soft on crime.'' Even so, two major law enforcement groups—the Missouri State Fraternal Order of Police and the Missouri Police Chiefs Association—endorsed White wholeheartedly and refuted the ''soft on crime'' allegation. Carl Wolf, then president of the Missouri Police Chiefs Association, revealed that Mr. Ashcroft had actively solicited opposition from law enforcement groups and that any such opposition was not spontaneous. It is worth pointing out that Mr. White's current nomination has again garnered the endorsement of the Missouri State Fraternal Order of Police.

In the aftermath of the 1999 vote against Mr. White's confirmation, many saw the vilification of him as unfair and the charges against him unfounded. In ''The Smearing of a Moderate Judge,'' Stuart Taylor of The Legal Times wrote: ''In short, the record shows that Judge White takes seriously his duty both to enforce the death penalty and to ensure that defendants get fair trials. It suggests neither that he's 'pro-criminal' nor that he's a liberal activist. What it does suggest is courage. And while White may be more sensitive to civil liberties than his Ashcroft-appointed colleagues are, his opinions also exude a spirit of moderation, care, and candor.'' Ultimately, many in the media viewed the fight as one of political expediency rather than of judging a candidate on the merits. As the Washington Post wrote, ''This vote was politics of the rawest sort. It was the politics of an upcoming Missouri Senate race, in which Sen. Ashcroft apparently intends to use the death penalty as a campaign issue.''

It is apparent that the opposition to Mr. White's previous nomination was baseless and that he fell victim to political posturing. The Leadership Conference believes Mr. White's record makes him an exceptionally qualified nominee with the ability to make objective decisions on the multifaceted and prominent cases that will surely come before the court. His impeccable credentials and the support he has garnered from people across the political spectrum make him an excellent choice for a federal judgeship on the U.S. District Court in the Eastern District of Missouri. This malicious and unwarranted attack on a unanimously qualified nominee must not happen again.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote in favor of cloture and in favor of his nomination. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to

contact Nancy Zirkin, Executive Vice President, at *Zirkin@civilrights.org* or Sakira Cook, Counsel, at *cook@civilrights.org*.

Sincerely,

WADE HENDERSON,
President and CEO,
NANCY ZIRKIN,
Executive Vice President.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire.

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

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

PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH FROM CORPORATE INTERFERENCE ACT

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am here today to express my concerns with the Supreme Court's recent decision in the Hobby Lobby case and the steps we are taking—hopefully, this week—to protect a woman's right to make her own health care decisions. I want to thank Senators MURRAY and UDALL for their leadership on this issue and for introducing the Not My Boss's Business Act.

I appreciate hearing from the Republican leader about their interest in supporting women's access to contraceptive care, and I hope that is something we can all agree on. But the issue here is not just access to that care, it is the cost of that care. When you charge women more for contraceptive coverage, then you are denying them access to that care.

The legislation that has been introduced by Senators MURRAY and UDALL, and of which I am a cosponsor, will prevent employers from being involved in an employee's health care decisions and it will reverse the Supreme Court's decision.

Throughout my career in office, I have fought to ensure that women have access to important contraceptive services and that women are able to make their own decisions about their health care with their doctors and with their families.

In 1999, when I was Governor of New Hampshire, I signed into law a bipartisan bill that required insurance companies to cover prescription contraceptives—the issue we are debating right now. I signed that law with strong bipartisan support because both Republicans and Democrats knew it was the right thing to do. In fact, that legislation passed in the New Hampshire House with 121 Democratic votes and 120 Republican votes and 2 Independents.

That law, passed in 1999, has now provided thousands of New Hampshire women with the ability to access the medications they and their doctors decide are right for them because they have that insurance coverage to pay for those medications. The Affordable Care Act also established that women would have access to prescription contraceptive services with no copays, just as New Hampshire did in 1999.

Do you know what is interesting? We are having this debate about religious objections. Back in 1999 the legislature appointed a committee to look at whether there were any religious concerns about what we had done. They came back and reported that this was not an issue.

A recent analysis by the Department of Health and Human Services reports that because of the Affordable Care Act, more than 30 million women are now eligible to receive preventive health services, including contraception, with no copays. In fact, since 2013 women have saved nearly $500 million in out-of-pocket costs because of the ACA's requirement to cover contraceptive care.

The Supreme Court's decision has a real financial bearing on women and their families throughout the country because this ruling will have a profound impact on the health and economic security of women throughout this Nation. As noted by Justice Ginsburg in her dissent in the Hobby Lobby case, when high cost is a factor, women are more likely to decide not to pursue certain forms of health care treatments that involve contraceptive care.

There are many reasons why a doctor may decide to prescribe contraceptives for a woman's health care needs. Contraceptives can be used to treat a broad range of medical issues—hair loss, endometriosis, acne, irregular menstrual cycles. Contraceptives have also been shown to reduce the risk of certain cancers. But just a few weeks ago the Supreme Court jeopardized that access to affordable preventive health care for too many women. As a result of the Hobby Lobby case, some employers now have the ability to claim religious objections as a justification for not providing contraceptive health care with no copay.

I understand the host of issues employers face on a daily basis. I appreciate the complexity they face when they decide to offer health insurance coverage to their employees. For example, take Jane Valliere, who owns Hermanos Mexican restaurant in Concord, NH. I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Jane and to discuss the Hobby Lobby case. Jane made it clear that while she has many choices and decisions to make on a daily basis to keep her business running, she never expected to be put in a position where she could be responsible for making a health care decision for her employees at the restaurant.

Like Jane, I do not think it makes sense for employers to make those personal, private health care decisions for their employees. Critical health decisions are simply not an employer's business. Where a woman works should not determine whether she gets insurance coverage that has been guaranteed to her under Federal law.

While we do not yet know the full extent of the impact from this ruling, we do know the Supreme Court's decision turns back progress women across the country have fought for years to achieve.

We must ensure that women have access to the health care services and medications they need. That means making them affordable, that they are able to make their own decisions about their care with their doctors and their families.

Thankfully, we have an opportunity this week to correct the Supreme Court's shortsighted decision. This week the Senate can stand for women and pass the Not My Boss's Business Act. A woman's health care decision should be made with her doctor, with her family, with her faith, not by her employer and with her employer's faith. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, later we will be voting on a judge for the Eastern District of Missouri. I come to the Senate floor today to explain why, regrettably, I am unable to support the nominee.

As my colleagues know, Justice Ronnie White was originally nominated by President Clinton during the 105th Congress. This body voted on and rejected his nomination in 1999. After careful consideration of his record, I voted against Justice White's nomination at that time. Since 1999, Justice White completed a term as chief justice of the Missouri Supreme Court and has returned to private practice. So today I would like to revisit a few aspects of Justice White's legal and judicial career that first led me to vote against his nomination. I will also discuss developments since 1999. Unfortunately, his record since that time has only reinforced my concerns.

First, I begin with some troubling aspects of Justice White's record during his days on the Missouri Supreme Court in the 1990s. I only need to point to a few cases to illustrate my concerns.

In the 1998 Johnson case, Justice White was the sole dissenter on the State's high court. It was a capital appeal case involving a claim of ineffective assistance of counsel. The case was heartbreaking. The defendant shot four people to death—three Missouri sheriffs and one of the sheriffs' wives. The facts were stark and very clear-cut. This was not a close case.

The defendant was convicted based upon the overwhelming evidence of his guilt. Justice White conceded there was more than sufficient evidence to sustain the conviction on appeal, but he went out of his way to create a standard that was not based on Missouri law when he evaluated the conduct of the defense attorney. Unsurprisingly, not a single member of the State court agreed with Justice White's dissenting opinion. That is because it was obvious there was no reasonable probability that anything the defense attorney did would have

changed the outcome of the trial. That is the applicable legal standard. It is straightforward—very straightforward. In that case, every member of the State supreme court applied it correctly, except Justice White.

Unfortunately, Justice White's dissent in that case was not an isolated example. On a number of other occasions throughout his judicial career, Justice White misapplied standards of review or considered issues that were not germane to the law when he was deciding cases. Justice White has even admitted as much. Discussing his judicial philosophy, he said in 2005 that he thinks it is appropriate for judges to let their opinions be ''shaped by their own life experiences.'' I think the personal characteristics of any judge—what this nominee calls his ''own life experiences''—should play absolutely no role whatsoever in the process of judicial decisionmaking. I know my colleagues on our Judiciary Committee share that view as well.

Let me get back to the nominee's judicial track record. Justice White was the sole dissenter in another case that the Missouri Supreme Court decided in 1997. That case raised the question of whether the defendant was entitled to an additional evidentiary hearing. In his dissent, joined by none of his colleagues, Justice White again ignored a straightforward standard of review and wrote that the defendant should have the hearing because Justice White thought it would cause ''little harm.'' Here again we see Justice White's personal preferences creeping into what should be objective, law-based decisionmaking—something pretty elementary to being a judge at any level, Federal or State, in our system of jurisprudence.

Those are just two examples of what led me, after consideration of the nominee's record as a whole, to vote against his nomination in 1999.

Unfortunately, my concerns about Justice White's first nomination have only been reaffirmed by his subsequent record. For instance, I am troubled by Justice White's concurrence in the Eighth Amendment case of Roper v. Simmons. That case was first heard by the Missouri Supreme Court, was appealed to the Supreme Court, and was eventually affirmed. But the affirmance is not what my colleagues should focus on. What should concern my colleagues is the opinion that Justice White concurred in, which ignored binding Supreme Court precedent. That precedent was the Stanford v. Kentucky case. I will explain.

In 2003, when Justice White's court decided Roper, binding Supreme Court precedent at that time permitted applying the death penalty to individuals if they committed their crimes when they were under 18. Nonetheless, Justice White concurred in the State court opinion that simply ignored that precedent. Justice White concurred even though the Supreme Court had reaffirmed the Stanford principle twice in 2002, the year before Justice White's state court decision.

Moreover, in 2003 the Supreme Court rejected an appeal raising legal arguments that were identical to the ones Justice White endorsed. That is the very same year Justice White's court ruled in Roper and ignored Stanford outright.

My colleagues on our Judiciary Committee often ask nominees about their commitment to Supreme Court precedent and their faithfulness to the doctrine of stare decisis. Nominees who appear before us routinely repeat the mantra that they will unfailingly apply precedent and nothing else—in other words, leave out personal views. Justice White did as much at his hearing as well. But—and this is what I find so troubling—when I asked him about the Stanford case, he admitted that Stanford was, in fact, binding on his state court at the time he concurred in Roper. What he did not explain—what he could not explain—was why he ignored that binding precedent as a State supreme court justice. He could not explain why he thought it was appropriate for him to concur in a State court opinion that, in effect, overruled U.S. Supreme Court precedent.

I do not doubt that Justice White has always done what he thought was right and that he ruled the way he thought best to achieve justice for the litigants before him. But in my view that is not an appropriate role for a Federal district judge. Judicial decisionmaking requires a disinterested and objective approach that never takes into account the judge's life experiences or policy preferences. From the careful look I have taken at Justice White's 13-year track record as a judge, I have too many questions about his ability to keep his personal considerations separate from his judicial opinions.

Finally, it is worth noting that there continues to be opposition to this nominee from law enforcement.

Specifically, both the National Sheriffs' Association and the Missouri Sheriffs' Association oppose this nominee.

I always try to give judicial nominees the benefit of doubt when I have questions about their records, but in this nominee's case, I simply can't ignore so many indications that the nominee isn't the right person to occupy a lifetime appointment to the Federal bench.

I sincerely hope I am wrong about Justice White, and I reluctantly vote no on the nominee.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from Missouri Sheriffs' Association Training Academy and National Sheriffs' Association.

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

[From the Missouri Sheriffs' Association and Training Academy, May 10, 2014]

MISSOURI SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION OPPOSES CONFIRMATION OF RONNIE L. WHITE TO THE FEDERAL BENCH

On behalf of the 115 Sheriffs in the State of Missouri, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association vehemently opposes the confirmation of Ronnie L. White to the federal bench.

Victims of crime, families of victims and law enforcement deserve a better federal judge than Ronnie L. White. As we explained to Senators Blunt and McCaskill last year, Ronnie L. White proved himself an activist judge who sought protection for criminals from punishment given to them by a jury even in cases where criminals performed unforgiveable acts of violence against our fellow citizens and law enforcement.

Ronnie L. White's actions and beliefs doomed his confirmation in 1999. In 1999, fifty four Senators knew Ronnie L. White was not the right person for the job based on the merits of his decisions on the bench. Nothing has changed since 1999 warranting Ronnie L. White's confirmation this year.

Senators who want to protect our citizenry from activist judges like Ronnie L. White should vote against confirmation just as was done in 1999.

NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, April 2, 2014.

Hon. CLAIRE MCCASKILL,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROY BLUNT,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCASKILL AND SENATOR BLUNT: I write on behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and the more than 3,000 elected Sheriffs nationwide to express our support for the efforts of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association to prevent the nomination of Ronnie L. White to a federal judgeship in St. Louis. The Missouri Sheriffs' Association was outspoken in its opposition to Judge White's previous nomination by President Bill Clinton and continues to be outspoken against any further consideration to the federal courts. I respectfully request that, as you examine candidates for the federal judgeship in St. Louis, you carefully consider the concerns presented by the Missouri Sheriffs' Association regarding any judicial nomination of Ronnie L. White.

Respectfully yours,

MICHAEL LEIDHOLT,
Sheriff NSA President.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, over the past several weeks, I have spoken about the ongoing crisis on our southern border—the President has acknowledged as a humanitarian crisis—with tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors making a perilous journey from Central America and ending on our doorstep, most often in my State, the State of Texas.

In this year, the numbers are skyrocketing again. Starting in 2011 we saw the numbers, roughly, about 6,000 unaccompanied minors. They doubled from 2011 to 2012, they doubled again from 2012 to 2013, and they look as though they are going to double again from 2013 to 2014. We can only wonder at what might happen thereafter unless we come up with a solution to the problem.

A majority of these children, as I indicated, come from Central America—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Under current law when these children are detained by the Border Patrol, they are processed by the Border Patrol and

then given a notice to appear at a future court hearing and turned over to the Department of Health and Human Services for safekeeping.

Health and Human Services tries to identify a guardian to pick up the child and, not surprisingly, most of them are never heard from again. Certainly they don't show up for this court hearing in response to the notice to appear. Thus, the transnational criminal organizations, the cartels—the people who make money from transporting these children and other migrants across Mexico and the United States—have discovered an effective business model. In other words, they are able to deliver these children to their families—at least the ones who survive—from Central America through Mexico and into Texas.

The majority of them will make it, because they will be placed with a family member or some other relative, and never appear at the court hearing for which they have been notified to appear.

For children detained from bordering nations such as Mexico or Canada, the process is different than it is from noncontiguous countries such as Central America. Border Patrol, under the current law, can determine whether the children are eligible to stay in the United States or give these children the choice to be safely transferred to officials from their home countries.

Our country simply does not have the current capacity to deal with 50,000, much less 90,000 or 100,000, unaccompanied minors appearing on our Nation's doorstep.

As a result, these children are being kept at Border Patrol facilities, such as I witnessed in McAllen, TX, that have capacity for a few hundred people, but they are currently holding well over double, many times triple and beyond, their current capacity.

I and other Members of Congress, unlike the President, have seen these facilities firsthand and talked to some of the children. The conditions they are kept in are unacceptable by any standard: babies in diapers sleeping on cement floors and dozens of children crammed into one cell with a single toilet.

In addition to these overcrowded detention facilities, there is an overburdened judicial system. Minors in custody of the Department of Health and Human Services are released to family members or guardians or sponsors in the United States, but they are given a notice to appear before an immigration judge if they wish to make a claim for relief under our immigration laws.

Those who show up will not see a judge, on average, for more than 1 year—leaving, as I said, plenty of incentive to simply disappear and never return for a court date. As the law is currently written, in 2008, there are few other options available.

For that reason I have, along with my friend and colleague from Texas, HENRY CUELLAR from the House of Representatives, introduced a clear, commonsense change to the 2008 law to address the immediate crisis.

This is, I hasten to add, not a complete fix to our broken immigration system, but it does target this particular crisis and offers a commonsense solution.

We call this the Helping Unaccompanied Minors and Alleviating National Emergency Act, or the HUMANE Act. It would amend the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008. That law had good intentions, because it was focused on the victims of human trafficking, and we preserve those protections for the victims of human trafficking, but it needs to be improved so that thousands of children who now make this perilous journey in the hands of these criminal organizations up these smuggling corridors from Central America to the United States—we must make sure they are deterred from making this life-threatening journey.

Our changes to the law maintain all of the safeguards built into the 2008 law, and so there should be no objection on that basis. But what we would go further to do is the HUMANE Act would treat all unaccompanied minors the same and ensure an orderly legal process.

A majority of these children would be reunited with their parents in their home countries. Those who choose to appear in front of an immigration judge will have every opportunity to do so on an expedited basis. In those cases where they qualify for removal under our current laws, they would be placed in safekeeping with federally screened sponsors while additional hearings are scheduled.

This expedited process would alleviate overburdened Border Patrol and HHS facilities, as well as the local officials who have been disproportionately affected—although I would add that I read newspaper stories about officials in places such as Massachusetts, Arizona, California, and others expressing concern about these large numbers of unaccompanied children who are being warehoused in their States.

Most importantly, this legislation would send a message to people in Central America that the dangerous journey to the United States in the hands of ruthless smugglers and cartel operatives is simply not worth it.

Central American families would hear loudly and clearly that not only will the journey place their children at risk of sexual assault and even death, they will by and large not be permitted to stay in the United States once they arrive under current law.

Some will. If you are a victim of human trafficking, you may be eligible for a T-visa. If you have a colorable claim to asylum, you can make that claim to an immigration judge under our legislation. But if you don't have a claim to relief under our current immigration laws, you will be returned safely to your home country.

Tackling this crisis is a significant challenge that requires Presidential leadership. But, in the meantime, these children are sleeping in overcrowded cells, Texas communities are reeling from the impact, and we need action. With this legislation we try to target a commonsense solution that will take immediate steps to help stem the tide of the growing crisis.

I hope my colleagues will join us in cosponsoring this legislation. It sounds as if the House of Representatives is probably going to be moving next week. I know there is a lot of controversy anytime we talk about circumstances such as this. Some people think it should be tougher, others think it is too tough to enforce current law. But the fact is, the drug cartels, the transnational criminal organizations, have created a business model based on a loophole they found in the 2008 law.

Our bipartisan, bicameral legislation seeks to fix that and to give these children the benefit of the law if they qualify under the law as currently written. But to continue to leave the law as it exists now with this loophole in it, and continue to see it exploited by the Zetas and other cartels that traffic in human beings, is simply an invitation to continue to see these numbers double year after year and our capacity to deal with these children on a humane basis further diminished.

We need to have immigration laws that protect these children and all of us, and it does not mean that anybody and everybody under every circumstance can qualify to come to the United States and stay. That is simply an invitation to chaos.

We can treat these children humanely, we can give them the benefit that the law allows as written, but if they don't qualify, we need to return them home.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, it is not often the Senate has a chance to go back and fix a grievous error that occurred in our history, and that error occurred in 1999 when a good and qualified man was defeated in the Senate for a position on the eastern district court of the Federal bench in Missouri.

At that time there was an attack on Ronnie White for being soft on crime. The record, as it stands today, flies in the face of that assertion.

At the time of his defeat, he had voted to uphold the death penalty almost 70 percent of the time. In fact, in his career on the Missouri Supreme Court, being the first African American appointed to the Supreme Court, he voted with the majority on death penalty cases 90 percent of the time.

This is a mainstream jurist. This is not someone who is outside of the mainstream. That is why the Fraternal Order of Police has endorsed his nomination. That is why he is considered in the State of Missouri as an iconic leader in the legal community. He went back to Missouri, was the chief justice in the Supreme Court after he was defeated on the floor of the Senate, retired from the Supreme Court, and has gone on to be an established and respected lawyer in the St. Louis community—frankly, part of many big cases, especially the appellate work, because he served on both the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

I think Ronnie White handled what happened to him with as much character as could possibly be required of any individual. I look forward to finally righting the wrong and allowing Ronnie White his well-deserved place on the Federal bench.

I ask all my colleagues to support the confirmation of Ronnie White.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Ronnie L. White, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Claire McCaskill, Tim Kaine, Angus S. King, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Bill Nelson, Jon Tester, Patty Murray, Christopher Murphy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark Begich, Sheldon Whitehouse, Elizabeth Warren, Debbie Stabenow, Tom Harkin, Tom Udall.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Ronnie L. White, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 226 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Hagan	Murphy
Begich	Harkin	Murray
Bennet	Heinrich	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Pryor
Booker	Hirono	Reed
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Landrieu	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Warren
Franken	Merkley	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden

NAYS—43

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
Cruz	McCain	
Enzi	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—3

Mikulski	Rockefeller	Schatz

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yes are 54, the nays are 43. The motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, the time until 12:20 p.m. will be divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Who yields time?

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I rise to speak on an issue of vital importance to all who value true liberty in the United States.

Last month the Supreme Court issued its decision in the Hobby Lobby case. In 2010, in the Citizens United case, the Court said corporations have a First Amendment right to participate in elections. In the Hobby Lobby ruling, the Court took it a step further and said that since a corporation can be a person, it can also have religious views and because a corporation is a person, it can impose its religious beliefs on an employee and deny a woman insurance that protects her health by providing contraception. So the folly of the Supreme Court has come full circle, where an actual person will be denied their rights because the views of a corporation have been given priority under the U.S. Constitution as interpreted by this Supreme Court.

Instead of ''we the people,'' it is now ''I the CEO of a corporation'' who has the right to exercise their constitutional privileges as interpreted by this Supreme Court that truncates the right of individual women in America to exercise theirs.

The Supreme Court majorities have continued to extend our basic constitutional rights—the inalienable rights held by individuals—to corporations. Corporations are not people.

Supporters of the Hobby Lobby ruling have accused Democrats of hyperbole. They say we are making the Hobby Lobby case seem more dire than it truly is. The corporate personhood supporters say the ruling doesn't mean women can't use the contraception of their choice, just that the insurance provided by their employer doesn't have to cover it or they say the ruling doesn't mean a boss is imposing his or her religious views on their employees. That is just wrong. It says that the boss doesn't have to subsidize health care that violates the boss's religious views.

What happens when the religious views of a CEO are imposed on the real life of a working woman?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will come to order.

Mr. MARKEY. In real life working women earn their insurance coverage. It is part of their pay, and they depend on insurance to pay for their health care—including contraception—for themselves and their families. If that employer's choice of insurance doesn't pay for a particular type of contraception, a woman will be forced to give up her right to use it.

If one form of contraception is—just as Ginsburg explained in her dissent—$1,000, and insurance won't cover even a penny, a working woman is going to be forced to make medical decisions based on the religion her employer practices, not on what she and her doctor determine is best for her from a medical perspective. The religion of the employer trumps the recommendation of a physician to a woman, and this is just a step that changes the whole relationship between an individual and their country.

If a corporation's insurance doesn't cover any contraception because all contraceptives violate the employer's religious beliefs, then their employee's religious views are especially burdened, and she will have to pay for contraception out of her own pocket. Keep in mind that the average woman makes 77 cents on the dollar to a man, but if you are an African-American woman, then it is 66 cents on the dollar, and Latina women earn 59 cents on the dollar compared to what a white man makes in the United States of America.

In the Hobby Lobby case, the Supreme Court transformed religion from a personal choice into a corporate decision, and the corporate world—in real life—can impose its religious views on its employees. That is why I am an original cosponsor of S. 2578, the Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act, or as supporters call it the Not My Boss's Business Act.

Let's be clear. Corporations are not people, period. For-profit corporations do not have religious views. For-profit corporations should not be able to deny their employees critical health care or force American taxpayers to pay for it

because of the owner's personal religious views.

The Not My Boss's Business Act will fix the Hobby Lobby decision by making it illegal for corporations to deny their employees health care benefits—including contraception—that are required to be covered by Federal law. It will protect employees from having their health care restricted by bosses who want to impose their religious belief on others.

I urge my colleagues to vote to restore true liberty by voting to pass S. 2578. I thank all of my colleagues.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, last month, as my friend from Massachusetts just mentioned, the Supreme Court ruled that the Obama administration's Health and Human Services mandate infringes on the First Amendment guarantee of religious freedom. This is a guarantee that Americans have enjoyed for the entire history of our country. It is the first freedom in the First Amendment to the Constitution. The first sentence has the words ''freedom of religion.''

In the very recent past, the Congress of the United States voted for a bill that protected freedom of religion unless there was some extraordinary reason not to have freedom of religion in our country. It is important to try to maintain some sense of good humor and be willing to work with people on other issues. As it is, people come to the floor and just say the same things over and over that are not true.

Everybody is entitled to their own opinion on religious freedom. Everybody is entitled to their own opinion on the President's health care bill. Everybody is not entitled to their own facts. If we were dealing with the facts as they truly exist right now, this would be a much different debate.

In fact, just a couple of days ago the Washington Post Fact Checker said that what the Senate Democrats are saying in their rhetoric is just wrong. He said: They are simply wrong. He said the court ruling does not outlaw contraceptives. The court ruling does not prevent women from seeking birth control. The court ruling does not take away a person's religious freedom. In fact, all the court ruling does is say that although many people are exempted from this law, we are going to find a way to have people's religious rights upheld.

In America you should not be forced to choose between giving up your business for your faith or giving up your faith for your business. Under the Constitution and under the political heritage of this country and the foundation this country was built on, the government has no right to ask people to make that choice. There are plenty of protections in the Religious Restoration Freedom Act that passed just a few years ago that don't allow this to be taken to some unacceptable extreme.

Religious freedom has historically been a bipartisan issue. In fact, the law the Court based their decision on was introduced in the House by then-Congressman CHUCK SCHUMER—now Senator SCHUMER who sits right over there—and the late Senator Ted Kennedy. They were the people who proposed this legislation. President Clinton signed the bill into law. The Vice President of the United States, JOE BIDEN, voted for the bill. The minority leader of the House of Representatives, NANCY PELOSI, was a cosponsor of the bill, and this was just considered something that was easily done.

It was unanimously passed in the House. It got three no votes—the vote was 97 to 3 in the Senate. This was in 1993, not 1893. This was a dozen years ago when the understanding was clear that there was a principle in our country that if you are going to violate that principle, you better have taken every step possible not to violate the principle of religious freedom. People on the other side would say it was only a handful of years ago when the bill passed and they didn't know that was what it meant.

Of course they knew that was what it meant. One of the reasons they know that is what it meant is because they knew at the time that this principle was a principle the government would adhere to.

In fact, the specific language in the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act that I introduced in the 112th Congress plus the specific language that Senator Kennedy put in the Health Insurance Consumer's Bill of Rights Act in 1997 exempted the protected religious faith. It says that based on the religious or moral convictions of the issuer, the issuer didn't have to do things they thought were wrong.

In the 103rd Congress Senator Moynihan introduced the Clinton health care package—sometimes called Hillary care—which said that nothing in this title should be construed to prevent any employer from contributing to the purchase of a standard benefits package which excludes coverage for abortion or other services if the employer objects to such services on the basis of a religious belief or moral conviction. It can't get much clearer than that.

According to Senator SCHUMER—when the Religious Freedom Restoration Act was introduced it said the government shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability unless it demonstrates such a burden is, one, in the furtherance of a compelling governmental interest or, two, is the least restrictive means of furthering that governmental interest.

This is not a law—the Affordable Care Act—that people are not exempted from. In fact, every woman and man in America who works for an employer that has fewer than 50 people employed is exempted from this act. There are entire religious faith groups exempted from this act if they don't believe in government health care. There are waivers the President has issued over and over that exempt people from this act—many of whom were employees of fast-food restaurants and other places that had minimal packages. The President said we are going to exempt them for a while.

People who work for employers with under 50 employees are exempted forever until the law changes. There are millions more people who work for employers with under 50 employees than work for employers that will have a sincere faith-based interest in not doing the wrong thing.

The majority of people who worship in this country in a given week go to worship in a church where they say this practice is wrong. It doesn't mean it is illegal. It doesn't mean anybody who hears them or appreciates them can't do whatever they want to do. But it does mean you can easily go to church and be told this is the wrong thing to be a part of.

The companies involved in the court case have a great tradition of following their faith. When you get a full-time job at Hobby Lobby, your starting wage is $14 an hour—almost twice the minimum wage. You have to work a couple of hours to have the extra $10 a month that some of these particular medicines, procedures, and birth control pills would cost. They are closed on Sunday. They close earlier at night than their competitors so people who work there can have a family life. In fact, the government conceded these were companies that were clear in their belief.

Now, if you have millions of people who are not covered by the law, why can't you find a way to exempt people from providing a small portion of health coverage that they feel is the wrong thing to do? What did the government say? The government said: Well, you have a way out; you don't have to provide insurance at all. So if you are an employer of faith and you want to do everything you can to provide the best benefit—probably in excess of the government-required benefits in almost all areas you want to provide—your choice is to not provide insurance at all.

In fact, the suggestion was made that they would save money by not providing insurance at all because it would cost $2,000 per employee not to provide insurance at all. That was the penalty in the law, and the government suggested that was probably a lot less than these companies were paying for insurance.

They said: Why not just pay the penalty? You don't have to violate your faith. You can just violate your belief to take special responsibility for your employees. You can pay the $2,000 penalty and save money.

While I'm on the $2,000 penalty, I will say that one of the egregious overreaches of what the government was trying to do here is to say if you don't provide insurance at all, your penalty is $2,000. If you don't provide the exact insurance the government says you have to provide—whether it is based on your faith or otherwise—your penalty is $36,500 per employee.

You can provide better insurance in every other area than what the government says, you can provide insurance in areas that the government didn't even require you to provide insurance, you can do anything you want to do beyond what the government says to do, but if you don't do everything the government says, you have to pay $36,500 per employee per year. And that was in the regulation.

That is the law that Members of the House and Senate voted for. I was not one of them. I was against this law. But the law said you have to pay $2,000 if you don't do anything at all. But the Obama administration said you have to pay $36,500 if you didn't do exactly what they said you have to do. It is the wrong application of religious freedom. The idea that people could not have access to any FDA-approved product is just wrong. Somehow if your employer can keep you from having access to anything you want to have access to that has been approved by the FDA is wrong as the millions of women and men who work for companies who aren't covered under the law prove every day. They prove it every day. If we listen to our friends on the other side, one would think we would be driven backward—we are talking about on behalf of religious freedom, being driven back into the dark ages of December 2013—when everybody who could buy a product in December of 2013 can buy that same FDA-approved product today.

This is about religious freedom. It is not about money. In fact, this bill proposed in the last Congress—I had a provision in that bill that a few Democrats voted for—more Democrats voted for the bill than Republicans voted against it. There was bipartisan support for the bill. I offered an amendment that said if the Department of Health and Human Services wants to, they can promulgate a rule that requires an employer to add a benefit of equal value for any benefit the government requires that they don't want to offer. That is an easy way to say there is no economic motive at all. Maybe the government doesn't require mental health coverage, and if an employer can offer that mental health coverage of equal value to a benefit the employer's faith prohibits being a part of—the bill that most Democrats in the Senate voted against had that provision in there.

This is not about our pocketbooks. This is not about what something costs. This is about whether the government has done everything possible to accommodate people's deeply held religious beliefs. The first freedom in the first sentence in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution mattered when it was put in there, it mattered when 16 or so of the current Members of the Senate voted for the Religious Freedom Act, it mattered when Ted Kennedy and Senator Moynihan put this exact same ability in the health care laws they proposed less than 20 years ago, and it matters today.

I hope we move on to solving problems based on the real facts rather than continuing to talk about facts as my friends would like them to be rather than facts as they really are.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I rise in strong support of the Protect Women's Health Care from Corporate Interference Act.

I thank my colleague Senator MURRAY from Washington and my colleague Senator UDALL from Colorado for introducing this bill and Senator MURRAY for her long championed efforts on women's health. I am very proud to support this bill.

I guess I would say to my colleague, who I know feels passionately about these issues, that the issue is really how important prescription benefits are to women's health and particularly how important contraception is to women and the fact that it is not an add-on to our health care but, rather, an essential part of our health care. So I hope it doesn't really take us getting a majority of women on the Supreme Court to convince people how central this issue is to the health care of women and why we don't want to deal with a boss who decides to say: I don't want to cover that in employee benefit packages.

I hope I and my colleagues will get a chance to vote on this legislation because I think the Supreme Court's ruling in this case 2 weeks ago really set us on a slippery slope. In a 5-to-4 decision they held that corporations can deny contraceptive coverage for women who are their employees if the owner—if the owner—professes a religious objection.

I know my colleagues think, why don't we just make this product more available so that women can pay an out-of-pocket amount for it?

It is an essential part of women's health and should be part of an employee's package and should not have to be a component she has to add on later.

This precedent by the Court is a troubling precedent. The decision threatens access to critical preventive health services for women, and it opens the door for employers to deny other health care services just because of the owner's religious beliefs.

Many of my colleagues have come to the floor and articulated how this is not about the religious exemption part of the Affordable Care Act that can be sought by churches and religious organizations; this is about employers who are corporations. So those exemptions for people who do have religious beliefs and don't want to offer these health care services are still preserved. But what is not preserved is a woman's ability to say to her employer: Why are you discriminating against me and my health care insurance that you are going to provide when you are not providing the full range of benefits for women?

So, as I said, it really is a slippery slope, and the question is, How many other things are going to be thrown into this same area?

I am getting a lot of letters. I have heard from several people from the Northwest. In fact, this one individual wrote to me saying, ''I am terrified that affordable access''—affordable access, not an add-on. Just because I am a woman and I work for an employer, now I have an add-on because you are discriminating against what my health care services are. She said, ''I am terrified that affordable access to my medically indicated preferred method of birth control may be in jeopardy due to the recent Supreme Court decision.''

So, yes, we are hearing from a lot of people that the decision imperils the ability of women to access evidence-based, clinically effective contraceptive methods in their health care plans. These are health care plans they pay for through their hard-earned wages as part of their benefit package when they sign on to work for a company.

We know this is a vital component of health care, and it helps women with everything from family planning to reducing risks of ovarian cancer and other medical conditions. So we want to make sure these recommendations, such as the recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, which says to include reproductive health care methods as preventive services—we want those services to be offered. As a result of those recommendations, about 675,000 women in Washington State now have robust access to a set of 20 FDA-approved contraceptive methods as part of a preventive services package. These services are covered free of coinsurance, free of copays, and free of deductibles.

Now we are basically saying that because a person is a woman and even though this is an essential part of health care, all of a sudden, because of the Supreme Court decision, a woman might work for an employer who is going to ask her to pay for that instead out of her own pocket.

I think this decision threatens real progress for our health care delivery system. We know this well because in Washington State employers denying women basic health coverage is not a new issue. In fact, women in my State have been fighting for decades.

In 1999 Jennifer Erickson was supervising as a pharmacist at Bartell Drugs in Bellevue, WA. Upon starting her job, she learned that her company didn't

cover one prescription that she needed—birth control pills—so she appealed to the company asking them to cover that benefit. She was denied. She went on to file a class action lawsuit on behalf of the company's nonunionized employees. In a landmark ruling, the Federal district court—Judge Robert Lasnik—held that Ms. Erickson had the legal right to access birth control under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. What is more, the decision was based on a Supreme Court precedent.

Unlike the district court, though, the Supreme Court has gotten this wrong, and the ruling is a dangerous precedent to allow employers to deny other health care benefits just because the owner wants to proclaim that his religious beliefs don't want him to offer those coverages.

As Justice Ginsburg said, would the exemption the Court holds that has been used on contraceptives based on religious grounds—would there be other examples, such as blood transfusions because they are a Jehovah's Witness or antidepressants because they are a Scientologist or medications derived from pigs, including anesthesia and other things, because certain other ethnic groups—Muslims, Jews, or Hindus—said they didn't want to provide those services?

Does it set us up for a lot of medical necessities not being covered by corporations simply because the CEO or many owners of that company decide it is in their religious beliefs not to offer those important services?

It is very important that we vote to make sure we speak on behalf of these women who are writing to us now, that we give them the kind of coverage for health care they deserve and that ensures every employer who sponsors a health care plan has these same benefits included in the package.

The good news is that 60 percent of working women in Washington State get their coverage through their employers. But we need to make sure the employers—just because the CEO all of a sudden has now become the judge of whether they want to cover important health care services, we have to make sure we pass this legislation to protect those employees.

I hope my colleagues will support this legislation.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor. I ask that the time during the quorum call be equally divided between both sides.

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

Ms. CANTWELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today to set the record straight. Since the Supreme Court ruled on the Hobby Lobby case, a flood of misinformation has spread, distorting the true meaning of the Court's decision. We have seen a misrepresentation of the case, I think to divide the American people, and I find these scare tactics very disappointing.

It is time to move away from the overheated rhetoric and it is time for us to discuss the facts. The Washington Post Fact Checker has systematically rebutted a series of misleading claims from my friends on the other side of the aisle. The Fact Checker concluded that, ''Simply put, the court ruling does not outlaw contraceptives, does not allow bosses to prevent women from seeking birth control and does not take away a person's religious freedom.''

In other words, under this ruling, no boss has the right to tell an employee that they cannot use birth control. Nothing in the decision, nothing takes away women's access to birth control. All women continue to hold the constitutional right that was first articulated in Griswold v. Connecticut to use contraceptives. The Court's Hobby Lobby opinion reaffirms Griswold and unequivocally states, ''under our cases, women (and men) have a constitutional right to obtain contraceptives.'' Discrimination based on gender continues to be illegal. Employers may not punish, retaliate, or discriminate against women who choose to use contraception.

Moreover, current privacy laws prevent employers from even asking if an employee uses birth control.

The Court went on to state that its decision ''provides no such shield'' against discrimination in hiring. An employer cannot prohibit a woman from purchasing any form of contraception. Moreover, women can continue to have broad access to safe, affordable birth control.

Even before the Affordable Care Act was passed, 28 States already had laws or regulations on the books to provide for contraceptive coverage. Over 85 percent of large businesses provide contraceptive coverage for their employees. For women without such coverage, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services administers five separate programs to ensure affordable access to contraception, including Medicaid.

The bottom line: All women continue to have the ability to purchase or use a wide variety of contraceptives. It is both possible to stand tall for the principle of religious freedom and also to support safe access to birth control. The two are not mutually exclusive. The issue in Hobby Lobby is not whether women can purchase birth control, it is who pays for what. Those of us who believe that life begins at conception have moral objections to devices or procedures that destroy fertilized embryos.

The Green family, the owners of Hobby Lobby, have similar objections. They do not want to use their money to violate their religious beliefs. I think most Americans would believe that is reasonable. In fact, the Greens offered health coverage that pays for 16 out of 20 forms of contraception, including birth control pills.

The Court narrowly ruled that the Green family's decision was protected by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a bill led by Democrats and passed with overwhelming support by both the Senate and the House of Representatives. The bill requires the government to show a high level of proof before it can interfere with the free exercise of religion. The Court ruled that in this case the government failed to meet that burden. Accordingly, it could not abridge the Green family's legitimate religious views.

While not all Americans share these particular views, I do believe all Americans understand the importance of preserving religious liberty. Indeed, our Nation was largely founded by men and women seeking that religious freedom. The Court's decision was a narrow one, applying only to closely held, mostly family-owned companies. Some have suggested the ruling could open the door to objections over blood transfusions or vaccines. We heard similar fears when the Religious Freedom Restoration Act was passed over 20 years ago. None of those fears have been realized.

Finally, I would like to state my strong support for the legislation I introduced with Senator KELLY AYOTTE and Senator MITCH MCCONNELL that reaffirms the dual principles of religious freedom and safe access to contraception for all women.

Rather than seeking to divide Americans, our legislation brings people together around ideas that we all can support. I would especially like to commend Senator AYOTTE for her strong leadership on this issue. I have enjoyed working with her to push back against those misleading claims about the Hobby Lobby ruling and ensuring that women across America know the truth.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the assault on women's health that has come from a majority of our Supreme Court in recent weeks. It is unfortunate and frankly shocking that in the year 2014 we are still debating the issue of access to birth control. But here we are. Millions of Americans are looking to the Senate today and counting on us to stand for women's rights. They are counting on us to put health care back between a woman and her doctor. They are counting on us to stand for millions of Americans' access to affordable, preventive health care of every kind. They are counting on us to say that birth control is not your boss's business.

In short, they are counting on us to right this huge wrong from the Supreme Court. We have that ability to

right this wrong. We have that ability here in this room. The Court, in its decision, lays out a structure in which Congress does have the power to overturn this misguided decision. The Court based its decision on an act of Congress, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Now Congress can respond. Congress can pass a new law that says: That is not what the Religious Freedom Restoration Act was meant to mean. The Court got it wrong. We are going to make it right. We should all remember that the act was set up to protect the religious choices of employees. The Supreme Court has stood that on its head.

But for us to right the wrong we have to be willing to debate. We have to be willing to go to the bill. We have to be willing to consider each other's viewpoints, listen to each other. We have to be willing to vote. But we cannot get to the bill if the majority is thwarted by a minority which uses its filibuster power in a way never envisioned in the past, never utilized until recent history, which has prevented Congress from actually debating bills.

So let's all join together and say: Wherever you stand on this issue, this issue is important enough to debate. Women's health care is important enough to debate. Access to contraceptive care is important enough to have that issue before this body. So let's all say yes to debate this bill. The bill is formally titled The Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act or, as it is commonly known, the Not My Boss's Business Act.

I hope we will all join collectively in saying this is an important issue, because it really is about women's access to fundamental health care. Whether contraceptives are used for family planning or for painful medical conditions such as endometriosis, birth control is essential health care for millions of Americans. While some are trying to say this case has nothing to do with access to birth control, that is simply not true. For most working families, affordability is access. Without insurance, birth control can cost tens of thousands of dollars over a lifetime. One-third of women in America say they have struggled with the cost of birth control at some point in their lives. For working families, getting by month to month, often paycheck to paycheck, these costs, though they might be dismissed by Washington pundits and even politicians here across the aisle, add up. They can put contraception out of reach.

A loss of insurance coverage can certainly make certain types of contraception totally unaffordable. As Justice Ginsburg noted in her dissent, the upfront cost of an IUD is equivalent to nearly a month's wages for a minimum wage worker. In the blue-collar community I live in, in working America, a month's wage is a very big deal.

Not having insurance coverage equals not having access. Although our Republican colleagues would have you believe otherwise, this dangerous precedent could apply to all sorts of basic, essential health care. What is to stop a boss from claiming a religious objection to vaccinations under the theory espoused in this decision or from access to a blood transfusion or to surgery or to HIV and AIDS, because all of those fit the same pattern in that various religions have a strong religious objection to those health care benefits.

I am not sure what is more troubling, the path charted by five Justices that allows a boss to trump essential personal, preventive health care choices or the Court's notion that it is okay to single out women's health care in this decision.

The bottom line is this: The bill before us that we would go to on the vote this afternoon, the Murray-Udall bill, is about putting women back in charge of their own health care. Women do not want politicians interfering in their health care. They certainly do not want their bosses and CEOs interfering in their health care. Bosses belong in the boardroom. They do not belong in employees' bedrooms or their exam rooms. Let's send a message to all Americans who are watching this body, this great deliberative body today, that the Senate is listening, that we hear the concerns of millions of women across this land and that we are ready to put women back in charge of their own health care and get the bosses out of the exam rooms.

I urge my colleagues to join in voting yes to open debate on this bill.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, whenever any Americans' religious liberty is infringed, every American should be concerned. Religious liberty is a part of the American character. Before our Constitution was adopted, religious freedom was a part of the American character. It was the reason the first Europeans settled on our shores. It was a great source of the American Revolution.

My Scotch-Irish Presbyterian ancestors came here to escape religious persecution from two churches, and when they came here they objected to paying taxes to support another church.

So our very foundation as a country has in it the guarantees of religious freedom.

That is why after the States created our Constitution, the people came back and said: Wait a minute. You forgot something. You forgot the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights begins with guarantees of religious liberty. They are emblazoned on the wall at the Newseum at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 6th, the guarantees of liberty. They were spoken by President Roosevelt when he talked about World War II and why we were fighting that great war.

So whenever any American's religious liberty is trampled upon, every American should be concerned.

That is why I am so disappointed that Senate Democrats are proposing to carve a giant hole out of America's religious freedom.

This is very different than what has consistently been the attitude in this body. Twenty-one years ago Congress voted to pass the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, an act which reflects the American character as well as any other act that Congress has passed. It created a very high hurdle for government to burden a person's religious beliefs.

That legislation says that if the government is going to take an action that creates a burden on a person's faith, the government must prove there is a compelling national interest and that burden must be as light as possible.

That bill passed nearly unanimously. It became law nearly unanimously, with support from many in the Senate today, many on the other side of the aisle who are supporting this carve-out for religious freedom.

When he signed the bill into law, President Bill Clinton was eloquent and said:

> We all have a shared desire here to protect perhaps the most precious of all American liberties, religious freedom.

President Clinton continues:

> Usually the signing of legislation by a President is a ministerial act, often a quiet ending to a turbulent legislative process. Today this event assumes a more majestic quality because of our ability together to affirm the historic role that people of faith have played in the history of this country and the constitutional protections those who profess and express their faith have always demanded and cherished.

But here we are debating a Democratic proposal to gut the law President Clinton was describing and require Americans who own businesses to provide insurance coverage for any health care item or service that is required by Federal law or regulation, whether or not it violates the employer's sincere religious beliefs.

So what has changed?

On June 30, the Supreme Court of the United States found that the law meant what Congress and the President said it did when it was enacted.

They held that the Federal Government could not order the owners of a closely held corporation to violate the basic tenets of their faith. The company in question in this case, Hobby Lobby—and having been a law student, I know that over time this will be known in law schools across the country as the great case of Hobby Lobby because of its importance and because of its name—is owned by the Green family, who make their faith central to their business. They close their stores

on Sunday. They refuse to engage in profitable transactions that facilitate or promote alcohol use. They contribute profits to Christian missionaries and ministries.

No one doubts those are sincerely held religious beliefs. The Green family offers health insurance which covers 16 of 20 forms of contraception. It does not cover four forms of contraception that prevent implantation of the embryo but employees are free to purchase those four forms themselves.

The company in no way interferes with its employees' lives. It does not tell them what to do with their bodies. It does not tell them how to live their lives. It simply does not offer in the company's insurance plan, coverage for the four forms of contraception that violate the faith of the owners of the business.

Obamacare regulations tried to mandate 20 forms of contraception, but recognizing this violated the beliefs of those who believe in life at conception, they created a carve-out for several organizations, Catholic hospitals for example. They could have created a similar carve-out for closely held companies, but they did not.

Instead, the Green family and others were forced to defend their freedoms in court, which fortunately ruled that the family was entitled to protection from the government's mandates under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. This ought to have been a victory for everyone if it is true in our country that when any American's religious freedom is upheld, all of us benefit.

In 1993, the passage of the legislation was hailed as a momentous achievement of religious freedom. The New York Times editorialized in support of it. My friend Senator REID from Nevada—now the majority leader—said:

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important legislation. I congratulate the authors and the committee for creating a fine bill.

The distinguished Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER—then a Member of the House and the lead Democratic sponsor—said: ''This is a good moment for those of us who believe in the flower of religious freedom that so adorns America. . . . ''

But here we are debating a bill that would fundamentally undermine that very act spoken of so eloquently by the Democratic leaders of Congress and by the Democratic President of the United States.

What has changed? If they are successful, an American who opens a business in this country will know that he or she will forfeit their right to religious freedom. That is not consistent with the American character. That is not the American way.

Why would Democrats who felt so strongly about this in 1993 feel so differently today? Why would they be willing to do such damage to the cause of religious freedom they so ardently proclaim? Because the Democrats ''believe they have a powerful campaign weapon'' in this issue, according to a report in Politico.

The Democrats charge that under the Supreme Court decision, an employer's personal views can interfere with women's access to essential health care services.

They say that under this decision corporations can limit their employees' health care options and restrict their freedoms. That is not true. It is patently false. It is absurd. It is wrong.

In the words of the Washington Post's nonpartisan Fact Checker Glenn Kessler:

Nothing in the ruling allows a company to stop a woman from getting or filling a prescription for contraceptives . . .

Second, the Fact Checker says:

Democrats need to be more careful in their language about the ruling. All too often, lawmakers leap to conclusions that are not warranted by the facts at hand. Simply put, the court ruling does not outlaw contraceptives, does not allow bosses to prevent women from seeking birth control and does not take away a person's religious freedom.

Today, women have the same rights they did before Obamacare—at least in terms of religious freedom. The Supreme Court decision did nothing to change or alter a woman's ability to access birth control or other contraceptive care.

Hobby Lobby's insurance today already covers 16 of 20 forms of contraception for the company's employees. A Hobby Lobby employee who wishes to use a drug or device not covered by the company's insurance is in no way prohibited from purchasing it. Nothing in the Hobby Lobby decision prevents a woman from making her own decisions about contraception. The only effect of the decision is that certain employers cannot be forced to include it in their insurance coverage against their religious objections.

The Supreme Court decision covered certain closely held, for-profit companies—meaning they are controlled by five or fewer individuals—where the owners have sincere religious beliefs. The Court's decision does not mean all Americans of faith who own businesses and ask for religious exemption from a general law will receive that exemption.

The Court's decision does not mean employers will be able to use the Religious Freedom Restoration Act as a reason to refuse to cover critical health services, such as vaccines, blood transfusions, and HIV treatment. In fact, such fears were raised by opponents of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act before it became law in 1993. The Democrats didn't believe those objections then, and they shouldn't believe them now because 21 years later these doomsday predictions have not come true. Courts are well-equipped to dispel spurious or frivolous claims.

I think the Democrats know all of this. I think they are just trying to win an election.

This Supreme Court decision was about individual freedoms that do not disappear if you decide to open a business. It was not about contraceptive rights.

What is really happening is my friends on the other side of the aisle are trying to change the subject. They want to talk about health care, but they don't want to talk about Obamacare and what it is doing to the women of this country. Let me tell a story that gives an example of what it is that really concerns me.

First, what concerns me is the destruction of anyone's religious freedom.

While we are talking about women and health care, let me talk about Emilie of Lawrenceburg, TN. She is 39 years old. She came to see me. She has lupus. Under Tennessee's laws, she had an insurance policy granted by something called CoverTN. It was created by our then-Democratic Governor and Blue Cross. It gave her the policy she needed at a cost of about $50 a month. When Obamacare arrived, it canceled Emilie's policy. She went on the exchange to try to replace it, according to Washington's wisdom.

This is Emilie. This is a real woman in Tennessee who is really hurt by the Obamacare law. We should be talking about her. This is what she wrote to me:

I cannot keep my current plan because it doesn't meet the standards of coverage. This alone is a travesty. CoverTN has been a lifeline [for me]. . . . With the discontinuation of CoverTN, I am being forced to purchase a plan through the Exchange. . . . My insurance premiums alone will increase a staggering 410 percent. My out-of-pocket expenses will increase by more than $6,000 a year—that includes subsidies. Please help me understand how this is ''affordable.''

Here is an American woman who has been hurt by ObamaCare. She lost her policy—a policy that she could afford, that fit her health care needs and her budget—but all of the wise people in Washington said: This is the policy you need. So she got the policy Obamacare says she should have, and her insurance premiums went up to approximately $400 a month, and she got an insurance policy that does not fit her budget and does not fit her health care needs. She is the one who has been hurt.

Unfortunately, Emilie is not the only one experiencing rate shock. Millions of Americans are losing their insurance plans. They are being forced to buy new plans, many of them with higher premiums, many with higher deductibles, many of them with coinsurance.

Let me talk about a Tennessee woman whose name is Carol, a single mom with a son starting at Austin Peay University in the fall. She is an office administrator in an office that used to have CoverTN insurance that cost less than $100 a month in premiums and covered all of her health care needs. Carol said:

Now, thanks to Obamacare, I must pay over $300 per month [compared to $100 a month] in insurance premiums for a policy that has a $2,500 deductible and a $4,000 out of pocket limit.

If we want to talk about a war on women, let's talk about the war on Emilie and Carol in Tennessee and millions of other women who are hurt by ObamaCare. Carol earns too much to qualify for a subsidy, so now she puts a big chunk of her income toward her premiums—such a big chunk that now she can't afford to help pay for her son's education.

These are the kinds of stories all of us hear from people who are being harmed by Obamacare. These are the kinds of stories our friends on the other side don't want repeated, so they even go so far as to bring up carving big chunks out of America's character by trampling on religious freedom—the freedom that is talked about in the First Amendment.

We have proposals to help Americans like Carol and Americans like Emilie. We have offered them on the Senate floor repeatedly since 2010 when the ObamaCare law was passed. They would move our country in a different direction toward health care as rapidly and as responsibly as we could go—a direction toward more freedom, more choices, and lower costs for Emilie and Carol and for millions of women and millions of men and millions of younger people across this country.

Our bills would allow Americans to keep more of their insurance plans, as the President promised.

Our bills would allow people to buy insurance in another State if it fits their budget and fits their needs. Let's say Emilie, who has lupus, finds a policy regulated in Kentucky that fits her budget and fits her needs. We would allow Emilie to buy that.

We would allow small business employers to combine purchasing power with other employers and offer their employees lower cost insurance. More freedom, more choices, lower costs.

We would allow Americans to buy a major medical plan to insure themselves against a catastrophe—today, some Americans can, but under Obamacare all Americans cannot—buy a major medical plan to insure against catastrophe—that is what a lot Americans would like to do—and then open a health savings account that is expanded to pay for everyday health expenses. More freedom, more choices, lower costs.

We would like to repair the damage Obamacare has done. We would like to prevent future damage. Republicans want to move in a different direction that provides more freedom, more choices, lower costs. We trust Americans to make decisions for themselves. That is the American way. That is what we believe in. Religious freedom and health care freedom—that is the American way.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the article from the Washington Post by the Fact Checker.

In addition, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an excellent editorial today in the Wall Street Journal, an op-ed by two of my colleagues, the Senator from New Hampshire and the Senator from Nebraska, Senators AYOTTE and FISCHER.

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

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

[From The Washington Post—Fact Checker, July 14, 2014]

DEMOCRATS ON HOBBY LOBBY: ''MISSPEAKS'' ''OPINION'' AND OVERHEATED RHETORIC

(By Glenn Kessler)

''Really, we should be afraid of this court. The five guys who start determining what contraceptions are legal. Let's not even go there.''—Houe Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D–Calif.), at her weekly news conference, on July 10

In the wake of the Supreme Court's 5-to-4 ruling that, as a closely held company, Hobby Lobby was not required to pay for all of the birth-control procedures mandated by the Affordable Care Act, Democrats have rushed to condemn the court. But in some cases the rhetoric has gotten way ahead of the facts.

Here's a round-up of some of the more noteworthy claims. In some cases, lawmakers concede that they make a mistake; in others, they are argue that they are offering what amounts to opinion, even though the assertion was stated as fact.

Statements on Supreme Court cases are notoriously difficult to fact check because rulings are open to interpretation—and the full impact is often difficult to judge until lower courts begin to react to the ruling. Both Democrats and Republicans use adverse Supreme Court rulings to rally their respective bases, but lawmakers have a responsibility not to succumb to overheated and inaccurate rhetoric.

Nothing in the ruling allows a company to stop a woman from getting or filling a prescription for contraceptives, but that salient fact is often lost as lawmakers jump to conclusions that the cost will be prohibitive. That may or may not be the case depending on circumstances. Moreover, it is worth remembering that when the Affordable Care Act was passed, 28 states already had laws or regulations that promote insurance coverage for contraception. The law sought to extend that across the country—and even with this ruling, that will remain the case for the vast majority of workers.

''Really, we should be afraid of this court. The five guys who start determining what contraceptions are legal. Let's not even go there.''—Pelosi

This is a very odd statement from the House Democratic leader, given that the majority opinion flatly states that ''under our cases, women (and men) have a constitutional right to obtain contraceptives,'' citing the 1965 ruling in Griswold v. Connecticut, which under the right to privacy nullified a law prohibiting the use of contraceptives.

Drew Hammill, Pelosi's spokesman, acknowledged that she ''misspoke.'' ''Obviously the impact of the court's decision is not to make these four contraceptive methods illegal—i.e. no longer allowed to be sold'', he said. ''But the overriding point here is that the decision does in fact limit access, which is the key point Pelosi made.''

Hammill cited Justice Ruth Ginsburg's dissent that women have a compelling interest in being able to plan their pregnancies and that they need reliable birth control.

Later, in the same news conference, Pelosi decried that ''five men could get down to specifics of whether a woman should use a diaphragm and she should pay for it herself or her boss.''

Hobby Lobby involved the owners' objection to four types of birth control but not diaphragms, but here Pelosi adhered closer to the essence of the case (and a related temporary injunction the court awarded to Wheaton College): the question of who should pay for contraceptives. (The court also vacated a decision by an appeals court that had ruled against a Michigan company that objected to providing any contraceptives under its employee health plan, so that would include diaphragms.)

Ginsburg's dissent pointed out that it costs $1,000 for the office visit and insertion procedure for intrauterine devices (IUDs)—''nearly the equivalent to a month's full-time pay for workers earning the minimum wage.''

Our colleagues at PolitiFact gave Pelosi a rating of ''false'' for her comments, and we certainly agree, though we generally do not award Pinocchios when politicians fess up to a mistake.

Still, we note that despite her office's admission of a mistake, the transcript of the news conference had not yet been corrected three days later. ''It will be,'' Hammill said. ''We're migrating to a new site in the next two weeks, so everything is a little slow.''

''The one thing we are going to do during this work period, sooner rather than later, is to ensure that women's lives are not determined by virtue of five white men. This Hobby Lobby decision is outrageous, and we are going to do something about it.''—Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D–Nev.), remarks to reporters, on July 8

The Hobby Lobby decision was written by Justice Samuel Alito, joined by Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Antonin Scalia, Anthony Kennedy and Clarence Thomas. That's certainly five men, but Thomas is African American.

''That was a mistake, and he knew it right away,'' spokesman Adam Jentleson said. He noted that on other occasions Reid has simply said ''five men.'' (The four dissenters included three women.)

''This is deeply troubling because you have organized religions that oppose health care, period. So if you have an employer who is a member of an organized religion and they decide, you know, I wouldn't provide health care to my own family because I object religiously, I'm not going to allow any kind of health-care treatment.''—Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (Fla.), Democratic National Committee chair, appearing on MSNBC, June 30

While there are some religions that object to certain medical procedures, Wasserman Schultz goes to quite an extreme to suggest that employers could block an employee from seeking any kind of health-care treatment. (Again, the issue was who would pay for contraceptives, not whether someone was barred from getting contraceptives.)

''The Chair was referring to the Justice's ruling which puts employers' religious beliefs ahead of the medical needs of employees,'' spokesman Michael Czin said. ''We fundamentally disagree with the logic behind that ruling.''

''[In Griswold v. Connecticut,] the Supreme Court said that the right of privacy of individuals and families trumped any state right to ban contraceptives. It was a breakthrough. They found privacy, at least the inference of privacy, in the Constitution. I

asked that question repeatedly of Justice Roberts and Justice Alito to make sure that they would honor that same tradition of privacy. The Hobby Lobby decision violates that fundamental premise. [While both justices were careful in their answers before confirmation,] they both said they stood by the Griswold decision.''—Sen. Dick Durbin (D–Ill.), quoted in ABC's ''The Note,'' July 10

Durbin serves on the Judiciary Committee and is the second-ranking Democrat on the Senate. Here, he appears to come close to saying what Pelosi asserted—that the ruling signaled a possible ban on contraceptives. He specifically mentions the Griswold decision, which as we noted was cited by Alito in the majority opinion as settled law.

But a Durbin spokeswoman said he was not trying to say the court was on a path to overturn Griswold. ''He was saying Hobby Lobby was out of line with the general 'tradition of privacy' that permitted women to make their own choices about birth control,'' she said, asking not to be identified. ''He was critiquing this ruling and its impact on women's access to contraceptive coverage, not making a prediction about future cases.''

''The U.S. Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby decision opened the door to unprecedented corporate intrusion into our private lives. Coloradans understand that women should never have to ask their bosses for a permission slip to access common forms of birth control.''—Sen. Mark Udall (D–Colo.), in a news release, July 9

Udall's remarks were contained in a news release he issued with Sen. Patty Murray (D–Wash.) about a bill that seeks to overturn the Hobby Lobby decision. There is a bit of an irony here: Udall voted for the Affordable Care Act, which built upon the employer-based health-care system in the United States and thus led to a ruling by the Supreme Court in the first place. So it's a chicken-or-egg question about how the door was opened in the first place.

Again, the issue is not whether women will have access to birth control, but whether the health plan will cover the cost. Spokesman Mike Saccone argues that this is, in effect, ''a permission slip.''

''Following the court's decision, women will need to effectively ask their employers if they will continue to cover contraception,'' Saccone said. ''They will need to determine if their boss will give permission for their insurance plans to cover birth control.''

He added: ''Without insurance coverage, IUDs (what Hobby Lobby objects to covering) cost up to $1,000, which poses a huge barrier for women, especially if she is making the minimum wage. Without her boss's permission to get coverage for that service in her health plan, it becomes much more—potentially prohibitively—expensive for that woman.''

''Before the Hobby Lobby decision, the fight against corporate influence was mainly about making sure real people and their ideas were in charge of elections. But now it is no longer just about a democracy; it is about keeping corporations out of our private lives, out of our bedrooms, and out of our religious decisions.''—Sen. Jon Tester (D–Mont.), statement in the Congressional Record, July 10

Here again, a lawmaker mixes up the question of paying for contraceptives with a broader prohibition against all contraceptives.

''If an employer doesn't cover contraceptive care, for many women access to birth control is effectively blocked because it becomes cost-prohibitive,'' argued spokesman Dan Malessa. ''If an employer refuses to cover contraceptives based on its religious views, then its religious views trump the religious views of its employees.''

''You know, what I am objecting to is that these bosses should not be able to tell their employees that they cannot use birth control. Motherhood is not a hobby. That is what I am objecting to.''—Rep. Gwen Moore (D–Wisc.), speaking on MSNBC, July 1

Moore also falls into the trap of claiming that corporate bosses can now dictate whether women can have access to birth control. No boss under this ruling has the right to tell an employee that they cannot use birth control. That's simply wrong, but Moore's spokeswoman argued this is open to interpretation.

''Congresswoman Moore was referring to the Supreme Court decision that now allows certain employers to deny contraceptive coverage to their employees through employer-sponsored health care plans. By denying this coverage to their employees, many workers may not have the financial means to access this health care necessity,'' spokeswoman Staci Moore said. ''To your point on the Hobby Lobby decision concerning only certain forms of contraceptive coverage, the congresswoman would argue that the ruling opens the door for employers to challenge other vital health-care coverage, not limited to the four contraceptives you mentioned.''

''What they've done, Chris, is taken away the religious freedom of their employees. They have to comply with the religious freedom of their employers.''—Rep. Louise Slaughter (D–N.Y.), interview on MSNBC, June 30

Is Slaughter really saying that the court has taken away an employee's religious freedom because some contraceptives may not be covered by insurance? Eric Walker, her spokesman, says this is a matter of opinion.

''By forcing an employee to live with the religious choices imposed on them by their employer, the employee's own religious freedom is infringed upon,'' Walker said. ''I think it's fair to say that 'freedom from religion' goes hand in hand with 'religious freedom.' The first amendment protects Americans from having religion thrust upon them by others—a standard the court failed to uphold, in the congresswoman's opinion.''

THE PINOCCHIO TEST

The Fact Checker generally does not award Pinocchios for ''misspeaking'' or for statements of opinion. And we obviously take no position on the Supreme Court opinion. But this collection of rhetoric suggests that Democrats need to be more careful in their language about the ruling. All too often, lawmakers leap to conclusions that are not warranted by the facts at hand. Simply put, the court ruling does not outlaw contraceptives, does not allow bosses to prevent women from seeking birth control and does not take away a person's religious freedom.

Certainly, a case can be made that perhaps this is a slippery slope (as Ginsburg argues in dissent) or that the cost of some contraceptives may be prohibitively high for some women who need them. But the rhetoric needs to be firmly rooted in these objections—and in many cases the Democratic response has been untethered from those basis facts.

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

[From The Wall Street Journal, July 16, 2014]

THE HOBBY LOBBY DECISION AND ITS DISTORTIONS

NOTHING IN THE SUPREME COURT'S RECENT RULING DENIES WOMEN ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL.

(By Kelly Ayotte and Deb Fischer)

In the days since the Supreme Court's June 30 Burwell v. Hobby Lobby decision, we have been troubled by those who seem eager to misrepresent both the facts of the case and the impact of its ruling on women—all to divide Americans and score political points in a tough election year.

The biggest distortion: the #NotMyBossBusiness campaign on which falsely suggests that under the ruling employers can deny their employees access to birth control.

That's flat-out false. Nothing in the Hobby Lobby ruling stops a woman from getting or filling a prescription for any form of contraception. Those who distort the court's decision insist that one cannot support religious liberty and also support access to safe, affordable birth control. But these are principles that we, and millions of others, support. Americans believe strongly that we should be able to practice our religion without undue interference from the government. It's a fundamental conviction that goes to the very core of our character—and dates back to the founding of our nation. The Supreme Court's decision in the Hobby Lobby case, which protects rights of conscience, reaffirmed our centuries-old tradition of religious liberty.

Contrary to the misleading rhetoric, the Hobby Lobby ruling does not take away women's access to birth control. No employee is prohibited from purchasing any Food and Drug Administration approved drug or device, and contraception remains readily available and accessible for all women nationwide. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation poll, prior to ObamaCare over 85% of large businesses already offered contraceptive coverage to their employees. And the ObamaCare mandate under review in the case doesn't even apply to businesses with fewer than 50 employees. For lower-income women, there are five programs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that help ensure access to contraception for women, including Medicaid.

The court's decision applies to businesses whose owners have genuine religious convictions. In the Hobby Lobby case, the company's owners—the Green family—offered health-care plans that provide coverage for 16 of the 20 FDA-approved contraceptive drugs and devices, including birth-control pills, required under the Affordable Care Act.

The Greens only had moral objections to the remaining four methods, which they consider to be abortifacients. The family felt strongly that paying for insurance that includes these methods would compromise their deeply held religious belief that life begins at conception.

In its narrow ruling, the court agreed, basing its decision on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, which was introduced in the Senate by the late Sen. Edward Kennedy (D., Mass.) and in the House by then-Congressman Charles Schumer (D., N.Y.), and supported by over a dozen current Democratic senators, Vice President Joe Biden, and Secretary of State John Kerry.

Kennedy and Mr. Schumer sponsored this bipartisan law in the aftermath of the Supreme Court's 1990 decision in Employment Division v. Smith, which held that ''generally applicable laws'' that have nothing to do with religion could effectively prevent Americans from fully exercising their religious rights.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act passed the Democratic-controlled House by voice vote and was approved by the Democratic-controlled Senate in an overwhelming vote of 97 to 3.

When President Clinton signed the bill, he said: ''What this law basically says is that the government should be held to a very high level of proof before it interferes with someone's free exercise of religion.''

In the Hobby Lobby decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the government failed to make that case.

With misinformation now swirling, it's important to understand what the court's decision doesn't mean.

The court's majority opinion explicitly states that the ruling does not ''provide a shield for employers who might cloak illegal discrimination as a religious practice.'' Additionally, the court said that ''our decision should not be understood to hold that an insurance-coverage mandate must necessarily fall if it conflicts with an employer's religious beliefs''—meaning, you must show a legitimate religious objection.

While some Americans may disagree with the Green family's views, nearly all Americans believe that religious freedom is a fundamental right that must not be abridged. When President Clinton signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, he said: ''Our laws and institutions should not impede or hinder, but rather should protect and preserve fundamental religious liberties.''

Congressional Democrats used to share that view. What's changed? We can preserve access to contraceptives without trampling on Americans' religious freedom.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of the nomination of Ronnie White to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. I was proud to chair Justice White's nomination hearing before the Judiciary Committee in May.

Justice White has the experience, the integrity, and the qualifications to be an outstanding district court judge.

He came from humble beginnings. He was born in St. Louis to teenage parents and grew up poor in a segregated neighborhood. He has worked since age 11 to help make ends meet and to put himself through college at St. Louis University and law school at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Justice White went on to accomplish great things in his legal career—most notably, becoming the first African-American Supreme Court Justice and Chief Justice in Missouri's history. It was a powerful moment when Justice White was sworn in to the Missouri Supreme Court. The ceremony took place at a courthouse where slaves were once sold on the steps.

I am pleased that the Senate is voting today on Justice White's nomination to the Federal bench.

It is not often that the Senate gets the chance to correct a historic mistake, But by confirming Ronnie White to the Federal bench, we will be able to do so.

Justice White's previous nomination to the district court was defeated on the Senate floor in 1999 on a partyline vote. At the time, the claim was made that Justice White was ''pro-criminal.'' This was a grossly inaccurate claim, both then and now.

Over his long career as an attorney and a judge, Justice White has been widely recognized as fair, unbiased, and committed to the rule of law. Just read the letter from the Missouri State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police in support of Justice White's nomination. The Missouri FOP said:

> As front line law enforcement officers, we recognize the important need to have jurists such as Ronnie White, who have shown themselves to be tough on crime, yet fair and impartial. As a former justice on the Missouri Court of Appeals and as the Chief Justice of the Missouri Supreme Court, Ronnie White has proven that he has the experience and requisite attributes to be a quality addition to the U.S. District Court. We can think of no finer or more worthy nominee.

This is a compelling endorsement from the Missouri FOP.

In 2001 I had the opportunity to ask Justice White in a hearing before the Judiciary Committee about the allegation that he was somehow hostile to law enforcement. Here was his response. He said:

> That is not true that I was opposed to law enforcement. Senator Durbin, I have a brother-in-law who is a police officer in St. Louis. I have a cousin who is a police officer in St. Louis. I have served on boards and commissions with police officers in the St. Louis community, and I also, when I was city counselor for the city of St. Louis, was the lawyer for the St. Louis City Police Department and we defended police officers. As a judge, all I have tried to do is to apply the law as best I could and the way I saw it.

Overall, Justice White's track record shows that his judicial decisions were well within the legal mainstream and were supported by precedent and legal authority. His decisions showed respect for the rule of law, even in hard cases that involved difficult or emotional facts.

The bottom line is that Justice White is a man with integrity, a wealth of judicial experience, and a real respect for the law. He is going to be an outstanding Federal judge.

I urge my colleagues to support this nomination and to put this good man on the Federal bench.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of Ronnie White to serve as a United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

In the Senate, as in life, there rarely is a chance for a do-over—to get something right that went wrong a long time ago.

For me, Ronnie White's nomination is a chance to do that. This year should have been his fifteenth as a district court judge—he would be close to senior status today had his nomination by President Clinton been confirmed in 1999.

I was very pleased this year to see him appear once again before the Judiciary Committee, and I believe he will distinguish himself as a Federal district judge.

Let me simply quote from a letter from the Missouri State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police, which wrote a letter on May 13, 2014 in support of Judge White's nomination:

> As a former justice on the Missouri Court of Appeals and as the Chief Justice of the Missouri Supreme Court, Ronnie White has proven that he has the experience and requisite attributes to be a quality addition to the U.S. District Court. We can think of no finer or more worthy nominee.

Ronnie White's confirmation is long past due, and I really am pleased it is likely to come to pass. I just wanted to say that, and to urge my colleagues to support him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the confirmation of the nomination of Ronnie L. White, of Missouri, to be United States District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 227 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Baldwin	Harkin	Nelson
Begich	Heinrich	Pryor
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Landrieu	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Warren
Franken	Merkley	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murphy	Wyden
Hagan	Murray	

NAYS—44

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heller	Roberts
Chambliss	Hoeven	Rubio
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Coburn	Isakson	Sessions
Cochran	Johanns	Shelby
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—3

Cardin	Mikulski	Schatz

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH FROM CORPORATE INTERFERENCE ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2578.

Under the previous order, the time until 2 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

Who yields time? Does any Senator yield time?

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally to both sides.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, the most extraordinary feature of the bill before us today is the incongruity between the bill's title and its content. The title, the ''Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act,'' is clear and straightforward. It suggests the bill is aimed at the important and worthy goal of protecting women's health. But the text of the bill plainly demonstrates that the bill's true objective is to circumscribe Americans' religious freedoms—the religious liberties of individual Americans—within the narrow confines of the Democratic Party's partisan agenda and the whims of politicians and bureaucrats.

While maintaining the appearance of preserving all of the current legal protections of religious freedom in America today, this proposal quietly adds to them a subtle yet deeply problematic and inappropriate qualification. The Federal Government will not prohibit the free exercise of religion until the Federal Government decides that it wants to do so. Under this bill, your religious liberties stop at the doorstep of the Democratic National Committee.

So I rise today in opposition to this bill because it doesn't do anything to protect women's health and it does much to undermine the bulwarks of religious liberty enshrined in our Constitution that have made America the most religiously diverse and tolerant Nation in human history.

Although this proposal is only the latest maneuver attempted by my Democratic colleagues to assert their power and restrict religious freedom in America, it also represents the culmination, at least for now, of their opposition to the Supreme Court's recent ruling in Burwell v. Hobby Lobby.

On June 30 of this year, the Supreme Court ruled that the Federal Government may not force closely held businesses to violate their sincerely held religious beliefs in order to comply with the contraceptive mandate issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. This decision has received a great deal of attention, but it has received this attention for all the wrong reasons.

Contrary to what many critics have suggested, the Hobby Lobby decision did not promulgate national health care policy nor did it render any opinion on the virtues of contraception and religious faith. No, the issue in Hobby Lobby involved not a dispute of competing rights but a straightforward application of plainly written law.

As the Constitution states in Article III, Section 2, the role of the Supreme Court is to adjudicate legal disputes by hearing ''cases and controversies'' that arise when two laws or two parties come into conflict.

In Hobby Lobby, the two laws in dispute were the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, passed by an overwhelming bipartisan majority of Congress and signed into law by President Clinton in 1993, and a Federal mandate issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, acting under the powers delegated to it by the Affordable Care Act.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act, or RFRA as it is sometimes called, reaffirmed Americans' commitment to the fundamental religious liberty already protected by our Constitution.

With RFRA, a Democratic Congress and a Democratic President, in cooperation with Republican minorities in both Houses, declared that when the Federal Government seeks to infringe on Americans' religious liberty, it must clear two thresholds. First, it must show that the law in question serves a compelling State interest. Secondly, if it does, the law must do so by the least restrictive means possible.

Given that the government openly acknowledged that there was a significant number of far less intrusive means to ensure affordable access to the drugs at issue, the Supreme Court rightly ruled that the contraception mandate violated RFRA.

However unwarranted, the overheated response to the Hobby Lobby decision among some ideological extremists on the left has led some of my colleagues to introduce a bill that would not simply overturn that modest and narrow decision but fundamentally rewrite America's social contract as it pertains to matters of personal conscience.

Whereas, the Court's ruling was limited to ''closely held'' for-profit companies such as Hobby Lobby, this bill would empower the Federal Government to coerce employers of all faiths and of no faith into violating their deepest personal convictions. It would deny any employer—devout or secular, individual or corporate, for-profit or nonprofit—conscience protection under RFRA against all present and future government mandates.

Perhaps most troubling is the warped theory of rights underlying the text of this bill. This theory holds that the American people possess constitutional and legal rights only when acting alone but not when acting in a group. These rights, along with any duties one may hold as a person of faith, must be forfeited whenever acting in association with others, on penalty of fines to be paid to the Federal Government.

This view of religious liberty might be summarized as an amendment to Matthew, chapter 18, verse 20: For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there is the IRS in the midst of them.

This view is extreme. It is out of touch with the Constitution, with commonsense, and with America's heroic history of religious tolerance.

From our earliest days as a country, one of the sources of our strength as a people and one of the reasons for our success as a nation has been our robust understanding of religious liberty. The breadth and depth of that conception has allowed and encouraged people of all faiths and all traditions to live here in friendship and in cooperation with one another.

As two members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom put it:

> . . . respect for the flourishing of people requires respect for their freedom—as individuals and together with others in community—to address the deepest questions of human existence and meaning. This allows them to lead lives of authenticity and integrity by fulfilling what they conscientiously believe to be their religious and moral duties. . . . It also includes the right to witness to one's beliefs in public as well as private, and to act—while respecting the equal right of others to do the same—on one's religiously inspired convictions in carrying out the duties of citizenship.

Expanding as wide as possible the space in which all people can witness their faith alongside one another has for two centuries elevated, enriched, and united American society. This robust conception of religious liberty was so essential to American unity that not only did the Founding generation reinforce its protection in a Bill of Rights—which many Framers actually thought was redundant—but it was the first freedom articulated in the First Amendment.

They understood, as most Americans still do, that the proper role of government is not to define people's happiness but to protect all individuals' equal rights, to pursue happiness according to their own hopes and values and conscience.

Yet for all its legal and constitutional protections, America's exceptional tradition of religious toleration rests ultimately on the uniquely American principle of equal dignity and respect for all women and all men, not simply as ''fellow passengers en route to the grave'' but as fellow pilgrims in search of their own promised land.

The authors of this bill know all of this. They know the American people reject their intolerance of diversity and indifference to the First Amendment. We know their bill cannot become law. Indeed, we know this for a fact because if the regulations they support were actually written in the law, ObamaCare itself would never have passed. It was slipped in after the fact by bureaucrats who are not subject to public accountability and never stand for election.

This legislation is more than an insult to the people it would target; it is

an embarrassment to the party leadership that has embraced it.

I still hold fast to that principle and to the freedom it preserves and thus strongly urge my colleagues to vote against this bill.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. 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. MURPHY. Mr. President, we are entering into a new era in which five men in the Supreme Court are going to get to make the decisions about what kind of health care you get as a matter of right, living under the protection of the laws of the United States, and what kind of health care you get as an employee, at the whim of the decisions made by your boss.

These are the kinds of decisions that your boss should be making: decisions about the direction of your company, decisions about the level of your salary, about new products that your business is going to offer.

This should not be your boss's decision. It should not be up to your boss as to whether you as a female employee get access to prescription contraceptives. But that is the world we live in today after the Supreme Court, in a 5-to-4 decision, has given the power to particular employers to deny women access to prescription birth control.

Prescription birth control, contraception, is used by 99 percent of women in this country at one point over their life. A big portion of those prescriptions are actually for purposes related to complicated medical treatments such as cancer therapy. No matter how the Supreme Court tries to explain this, there is no way to effectively differentiate what the Supreme Court has done on birth control with a whole other range of potential discrimination.

As Justice Ginsburg said in her dissent, this exemption the Supreme Court has given for employers' religious beliefs would extend logically with religiously grounded objections to blood transfusions held by Jehovah's Witnesses; to religious objections to antidepressants held by Scientologists; medications derived from pigs, including anesthesia, intravenous fluids, and pills coated with gelatin held by certain religions; and even vaccinations, a belief held by Christian Scientists, amongst others.

The idea that the Supreme Court is now going to get into the business of micromanaging which particular religious beliefs they are going to protect and which ones they are not going to protect is unacceptable to the majority of people I represent, so that is why I am here today to support the Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act. Pretty simple. All we are saying here is that employers should not be allowed to refuse health coverage that is guaranteed to their employees and their dependents under Federal law.

When we decide to pass a law with the majority of the House and the Senate agreeing to it, signed by the President, those protections should be available to all employees. It is not easy to pass a law and get it signed by the President. The Senate has already set up a lot of pretty significant barriers to the passage of any law, never mind a law that guarantees a certain level of health care coverage.

Until the Hobby Lobby decision, the Supreme Court has stayed out of that decision, said that if the Congress decides a minimum level of coverage should be available to employees, then employers should not be able to get in the way. That precedent is now blown up. There is no going back, as Justice Ginsburg has said. I hope we pass it this week.

The reality is it is more important now than ever to protect this coverage, because as a result of the Affordable Care Act, there are millions more women, millions more families all across the country who have access to prescription contraception. Twenty-four million more prescriptions for oral contraceptives were filled without a copay in 2013 than in 2012. That is by virtue of the protections in the Affordable Care Act.

On this particular type of prescription alone, the Affordable Care Act has saved $483 million in out-of-pocket costs for oral contraceptives. That saved a lot of families money, but that has also given access to this important medication for millions of women.

It is just another example, just another piece of evidence amidst a mounting pile, that tells us the Affordable Care Act is working today. I want to spend a few additional minutes going over the latest litany of good news when it comes to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Republicans have kind of gone quiet, silent even, in many parts of the Nation, when it comes to their critique of the Affordable Care Act. That is in large part because on both sides of the aisle, there is a quiet acceptance that the Affordable Care Act is working. It has vanished from most campaigns as a political issue this summer and this fall because it is increasingly impossible, aside from anecdotal evidence, to make the case on an empirical data-driven basis that the Affordable Care Act is not working.

Senator REID did a little bit of this earlier this week, but I want to share again some of the new numbers we have. Here is maybe the most stunning number: The uninsured rate in the United States fell 2.2 percentage points in the second quarter of 2014. We now have the lowest quarterly rate of uninsured in this country since Gallup began tracking this percentage in 2008. There are approximately 20 to 25 percent less people and families in this country without insurance than 6 months ago. That is absolutely stunning, that in 6 months of implementation of this act, we have taken one-quarter off the rolls of the uninsured in this country. Even the biggest optimists about how the implementation of the Affordable Care Act was going to go could not have guessed we were going to take that big a chunk out of the rolls of the uninsured.

But here is more evidence that this is working. Fifty-seven percent of the individuals who purchased coverage through the exchanges were uninsured when they were enrolled. So a lot of Republicans said: Well, you know, the big numbers you are seeing, 8 million people insured through the private health care exchanges, that may be people shifting from one kind of insurance to another.

Well, a Kaiser study says that, in fact, 6 out of 10 of the people who got insurance in the exchanges, through Medicaid, through staying on their parents' insurance, had no insurance beforehand. Frankly, to my mind, it does not necessarily matter, because to the extent they went on these plans coming off of another plan, it was for a reason: They were saving money, by and large. That is a good thing in and of itself.

But you have 4 out of 10 people going onto the new plans to save them money, 6 out of 10 people coming onto the new plans because they had no insurance at all. They are getting care as well. A new Commonwealth Fund survey says that 60 percent of the adults with this new coverage through the marketplace or Medicaid reported that they had visited a hospital or a doctor or filled a prescription. Sixty-two percent of those people said they could not have had access or afforded this care previously.

That was the theory. All of these people who were waiting to get so sick that they had to go to the emergency room, costing us all sorts of money in the long run, now can get preventive care. Of the 60 percent of the people who went out and saw a doctor because of the new coverage they had by virtue of the Affordable Care Act, 60 percent of them said they would have never gotten that care had they not had that coverage. That is millions of people, millions of people all across the country who are going to have an injury or an illness, who were going to sit at home and live with it until it got so bad they had to show up at the emergency room—they are now getting care.

What about the premiums? People said: Well, you know, these presume are going to be unaffordable and people are going to start paying them and then stop paying them. HHS did a survey of the premiums and found, on average, that the monthly premium people are paying is $82 per month, after a tax credit is factored in.

Listen, $82 a month is not pocket change. There are a lot of families out there who have trouble coming up with $82 a month. But for somebody like Susie Clayton, a breast cancer survivor from North Canaan, CT, that is a big deal. She is paying right about that number, $90 per month. But prior to the Affordable Care Act, because she had a preexisting condition, Susie Clayton was spending $1,600 per month. There are hundreds of thousands of Susie Claytons out there. Premiums are pretty affordable.

The critics said: All right, we will concede that more people are getting covered. We will concede they are using the care. We will concede premiums are affordable, in part because you are spending all of this money on premium assistance. But you are going to just start spiraling health care costs. Well, that did not come true either. With April's updated CBO projections, spending on major Federal health care programs—Medicare, Medicaid, and the ACA subsidies—has now been revised downward by $900 billion. That is a half a percent of GDP since the 2011 projections. So in 3 years, CBO has pushed down its projections of 10-year spending by $900 billion.

Here is an even more stunning way to think about this. If you look at what CBO said we were going to spend on a per-Medicare recipient basis in 2010 versus what they now say we are going to spend on that recipient today over the next 10 years, that per-Medicare recipient spending level has been decreased by $1,000. We are spending $1,000 less per Medicare recipient.

That does not have anything to do with the private exchanges. That has to do with all of the other provisions in the bill that start to shift health care spending away from a system that rewards volume: How much medicine you practice to a system that rewards outcomes: How good is the medicine you are practicing. Are you keeping your patients healthy?

The reality is that spending is remarkably low, historically low on health care. Listen, admittedly, some of that is because of an economy that has been slow to recover over the course of the last 6 years. But a lot of that is because of the Affordable Care Act, so much so that I saw an article in the Wall Street Journal the other day that said the President was to blame for the slow economy because he had been so successful in pushing down the rate of health care spending that now it was an economic catastrophe that we were spending so much less than we had initially projected on health care. There is no way for the President to win. If health care expenses spiral and premiums spiral, it is his fault. But if he does something to control health care premiums and health care costs, than it is a drag on the economy.

In the long run, the truth is if we get health care spending down, really just a transfer payment within our economy, then we have room to spend more money on much more necessary investments, in our infrastructure, in our scientific edge over other countries.

I am here today to support the underlying bill, because I think it is the right thing to do for women in this country, but also because it is part of a growing success story of the Affordable Care Act: $500 million saved on prescription contraception alone. But add that to all of the other evidence, and we are living in a world in which it is increasingly hard to argue that the Affordable Care Act is not working: millions more people covered, huge chunks out of the uninsured rolls being eliminated, costs for overall health care expenses decreasing. I will not even get into it this afternoon, but quality is improving as well. That is people having hospital-acquired infections, having to be readmitted to the hospital.

The stories just keep on coming in. I certainly understand that on an anecdotal basis you can find people who have had negative experiences with the health care system under the Affordable Care Act. I could find millions of other people before the Affordable Care Act was passed as well. But there are many more people like Sean and Emilie Hannon, who are two freelancers from Weston, CT, who were looking for coverage previous to the Affordable Care Act being passed. The best they could do was $1,500 per month from Golden Rule. When they heard about the Affordable Care Act, they called the Connecticut exchange and they found a plan through ConnectiCare that was going to cost them $309 a month. This is a fairly young couple, a savings of nearly 80 percent compared to what they used to pay. That is a story that can be replicated millions of times all across this country.

We would be wise this week to restore this protection to women across this country so they have access to affordable prescription birth control. That is just one part of a growing, overwhelming array of both success stories and positive data about the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, proving that the ACA works.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to respond to some of the comments by the Senator from Connecticut and specifically with regard to the health care law. I come with an interest because I did part of my medical training in that State, still have many friends who practice medicine in Connecticut, and feel from the comments I hear from them that they see a very different side of the picture than what we hear from the Senator from Connecticut.

For some time now Republicans have been talking about the terrible side effects of the President's health care law. The Senator from Connecticut made some references to a family who certainly may have been helped by the health care law, but there are clearly people in that State who are being harmed by the health care law.

In the past I have spoken on this floor about a story in the Washington Post about how the health care law is hurting families all across Connecticut. The article said that two insurance carriers in the Senator's home State of Connecticut have proposed increasing their health insurance premiums by an average of about 12 percent. I didn't hear the Senator from Connecticut make reference to that today. So some people will have smaller increases than the average, but many people in Connecticut are going to pay much more. That is an expensive side effect families are going to have to deal with because of the President's health care law for which the Democrats in the Senate have voted.

There was another article a week or so ago in The Hill newspaper with the headline ''Personal data on ObamaCare enrollees may be compromised.'' It says:

> Connecticut's health insurance exchange acknowledged Friday that the personal information of some enrollees may have been compromised.

Someone found a backpack on a street in Hartford, CT, containing personal information of about 400 people, and it looks as if some of the information is connected to the exchange.

It is interesting. There was a story in the Danbury, CT, newspaper. The headline is ''Affordable Care Act could cost schools big bucks.'' So it is not just health care; the Affordable Care Act itself could cost the schools big bucks. I haven't heard the Senator from Connecticut make reference to that. This could cost school districts hundreds of thousands of dollars they didn't expect to pay.

The Senator from New York is here, and I don't know if the Senator has time locked in. If not, I wanted to speak for a few more moments because this continues to be a major impact.

The law includes a special tax on what are called the Cadillac plans. These are generous health insurance plans that some people—such as union workers, police, and school employees—get in some places.

Another big thing is the way the law defines full-time workers, and this is a problem we are seeing in a lot of places. Employees are considered full time under the health care law if they work 30 hours a week. So schools—schools that are being impacted—are having to provide insurance for those people or cut back their hours.

It is hurting a lot of folks in the Senator's home State and specifically in the school districts in Connecticut.

What they are finding is that they are having to pay more money to buy insurance for the people whom they can't cut back. So the school superintendent in Danbury, CT, wrote to the congressional delegation from Connecticut asking for help. According to a newspaper story from Danbury, he wrote:

Unless there is some reasonable modification to the ACA [the President's health care law] there will be a tremendous drain on our limited resources.

So when I see the Senator from Connecticut with a sign that says the health care law works, I would say: Not for many people, and it is harming people, including students in our schools. The law is a drain on resources of schools, towns, and counties across the country—a very costly side effect of the health care law at the local level.

I hear the same from my constituents in Wyoming who are seeing similar decisions having to be made, tough choices. I know the Senator from Connecticut is hearing it from his constituents, such as the superintendent of schools in Danbury.

Middle-class families are getting smaller paychecks because of the law. School districts are getting stretched thin by the health care law. Families are having to pay higher premiums because of the health care law, and on top of that they are being exposed to potential fraud and identity theft in the exchanges created by the health care law, as evidenced by a backpack found on a street in Hartford, CT, containing names, Social Security numbers, home addresses, and birth dates of people who signed up for the exchange.

Republicans are going to keep talking about these devastating, dangerous side effects of the Democrats' health care law. We are going to keep pushing for real health care reform that gives people the care they need from a doctor they choose at a lower cost.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act of 2014, introduced by my friends and colleagues Senator MURRAY and Senator UDALL. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation.

We are at a critical moment when it comes to women's health care rights. We just witnessed a Supreme Court decision that curtailed important access to health care for employees across the country. The Hobby Lobby case has now opened the door for the vast majority of companies and bosses to start denying their employees contraceptive coverage if the owners have a religious objection. We must slam the door shut. To do that this body must set the record straight about the law the Supreme Court used to make their decision, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

As one of the original authors of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, I was the lead sponsor in the House of Representatives. Senator Kennedy was the lead sponsor in the Senate.

I can say with absolute certainty that the law has been unwisely stretched by the Supreme Court to extend religious protections to corporations Congress never intended to be covered under the bill. I am compelled to do so because several of my colleagues on the other side have come to the floor to defend the Hobby Lobby decision using my words. These were arguments I made in 1993 when we first passed the RFRA and we were dealing with the protection of individual—underlining individual—liberties. The quotation they used dealt broadly with the importance of religious freedom of expression in our country. I said the RFRA would help restore the American tradition of allowing maximum religious freedom. That is as true today as it was then. I believe as strongly in RFRA as it was written then as I do now, but it was misinterpreted and wrongly expanded by the Supreme Court.

When my colleagues used this quotation as a point of argument, they completely missed the point of the debate. The debate is not about the conflict between freedom of religious expression and government-mandated health coverage. That is a false choice. The debate is really whether the Supreme Court appropriately interpreted the RFRA in applying it to profit-making corporations.

As the author of the bill, I can say again with absolute certainty that the Supreme Court got the Hobby Lobby case dead wrong.

When we wrote RFRA back in 1993, we did so to protect that which individuals with strong religious beliefs had always enjoyed—the presumption that they should be able to exercise their religious beliefs without interference from the government. But the Court took that protection and misapplied it to for-profit companies that exist for the purpose of benefiting from the open market.

The Hobby Lobby decision marks a sharp departure both from the intent of RFRA and from prior judicial interpretations of RFRA. The Supreme Court got it wrong. That is why this bill, authored by my colleagues from Washington and Colorado, is of paramount importance—to clarify the law and to restore protections for employees that were stripped away by this wrongheaded Supreme Court decision.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle will continue to assert that this is just another assault by Democrats on free exercise of religion or peddle other falsehoods. So I would like to clearly explain what this bill will and won't do.

This bill will ensure that companies cannot deny their workers any health benefits, including birth control, as required to be covered by Federal law.

This bill will make it clear that bosses cannot discriminate against their female workers, ensuring equal treatment under the law for tens of thousands of workers whose coverage hangs in the balance.

This bill is not only about birth control. The Hobby Lobby decision has implications for other health services, and now this bill will ensure that all covered employees have access to all necessary health care—not only contraceptives but also blood transfusions, antidepressants, and vaccines.

The bill does not require churches or nonprofit organizations to provide contraceptive coverage even when they object on religious grounds. The Affordable Care Act exemption process for nonprofit organizations with a religious mission is unchanged by this bill.

This bill will not allow new laws that can target specific religious groups.

The bill only applies to health care.

Most importantly, this bill does not restrict the Constitution's First Amendment right to free exercise of religion. The bill only clarifies the relative weight the Court should give when two Federal statutes—such as the Affordable Care Act and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act—come into conflict.

As I continue to say, RFRA was intended to give individuals who profess strong religious beliefs what they had always enjoyed—the strong presumption that they should be able to exercise their religious beliefs without government interference. RFRA was not intended to extend the same protection to for-profit corporations the very purpose of which is to profit from the open market.

The Supreme Court's cavalier decision to grant religious rights to closely held corporations could curtail the health care freedom of women at as many as 90 percent of American businesses. By putting health care decisions in the hands of a woman's boss instead of a woman and her doctor, the decision creates a slippery slope that could affect tens of millions of Americans—our daughters, our wives—in the future.

We need this bill to clarify the law and firmly protect a woman's right to access essential health care.

I thank my colleagues Senator UDALL and Senator MURRAY for offering this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this effort to protect women's health care and religious freedom.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about one of the saddest developments in the Senate—namely, the all-out assault on the First Amendment being led by Senate Democrats.

It is important to clarify what the issue before this body is not about. The issue before this body is not about access to contraceptives, despite a whole lot of politicking by Senate Democrats who suggest to the contrary.

In this body the number of people who would do anything to restrict access to contraceptives to anybody is

zero. Let me repeat that. There is no one in this body, there is no one I am aware of across the country who is advocating restricting anyone's access to contraceptives.

My wife and I are blessed with two little girls. I am very glad we don't have 17.

Nobody, nobody, nobody is talking about restricting access to contraceptives.

What are we talking about? What we are talking about is the Federal Government using brute force to force people to pay for the abortion-inducing drugs of others against their religious faith. That is extraordinary. It is remarkable and it is dismaying.

I am sorry to show what the current First Amendment looks like in the wake of the Democrats' assault on the First Amendment.

In the Senate Judiciary Committee we have been debating on amendments some 47 Democrats have supported that would repeal the free speech protections of the First Amendment. Sadly, every Senate Democrat in the Judiciary Committee supported it.

Today, this body is considering another provision that would effectively cross out the free exercise rights.

Where have we entered when the Bill of Rights has become a partisan matter? What kind of world is it? It used to be the case that we would find bipartisan agreement that the First Amendment is part of our civil compact—that we will stand together with one voice in support of the free speech rights of individual citizens, in support of the religious liberty rights of individual citizens.

The proposal we are going to vote on in just a few minutes would go directly after the religious liberty rights of Americans.

Let me talk a little bit about one group of people who will be affected by this bill if this bill were to pass. Let me talk about the Little Sisters of the Poor, a group of Catholic nuns.

The Little Sisters of the Poor are an international congregation of Roman Catholic women founded in 1839 by St. Jeanne Jugan. Their mission is to:

> . . . offer the neediest elderly of every race and religion a home where they will be welcomed as Christ, cared for as family and accompanied with dignity until God calls them to himself.

The bill that is being voted on on this floor would shut these nuns down. The bill that is being voted on on this floor, if it were adopted, would fine the Little Sisters of the Poor millions of dollars, unless these Catholic nuns are willing to pay for abortion-producing drugs for others.

When did the Democratic Party declare war on the Catholic Church? And let me note, this is not hypothetical. I am not suggesting in theory this might be applied to the Little Sisters of the Poor. Right now—today—the Obama administration is litigating against the Little Sisters of the Poor, trying to force them to pay for abortion-producing drugs and threatening to shut the Little Sisters of the Poor down.

How far have we come from the basic bipartisan agreement in favor of religious liberty? Faith fines should have no place in American society.

The Little Sisters of Denver, which provides approximately 67 full-time jobs, has said it will incur penalties of roughly $6,700 per day—nearly $2.5 million per year—if it chooses to stay true to its religious beliefs; that is, $2.5 million a year in faith fines—fines to Catholic nuns who are devoting their time to caring and providing health care for the elderly. That is more than one-third of their $6 million budget each year.

What has become of the Democratic Party? When did they become so extreme that they would actually propose fining nuns millions of dollars if they are unwilling to pay for the abortion-producing drugs of others? That is not a mainstream position. That is a radical, extreme position.

I would encourage every one of my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle to ask themselves: How are they going to answer their constituents when they say: Senator, why did you vote in favor of a law that would fine Catholic nuns millions of dollars if they refuse to pay for the abortion-producing drugs of others?

Let me make a basic suggestion. If you are litigating against nuns, you have probably done something wrong. And the Obama administration is doing so right now.

Mr. President, drop your faith fines.

Mr. Majority Leader, drop your faith fines.

To all of my Democratic colleagues, drop your faith fines. Get back to the shared values that stitch all of us together as Americans.

I call upon my Democratic colleagues to stop playing election-year politics. I recognize scaring women by suggesting someone is coming at their birth control may be good politics. It is false. Even the Washington Post has said it is false and a lie.

But election-year politics should not trump religious liberty. Senate Democrats should not wage war on the Catholic Church.

It is not just the nuns who are dismayed. The Catholic bishops have said the proposed bill ''does not befit a nation committed to religious liberty'' and would allow the government to ''override religious freedom rights of Americans regarding health coverage.''

So it is not just the nuns. It is to the Catholic bishops that the Democratic party has said: Your free exercise of religious rights has no place in a Democratic Senate.

The Catholic bishops went on to say:

> If, in the future, the executive branch chose to add the abortion pill RU486, or even elective surgical abortion, including late-term abortion, to the list of ''preventative services,'' those who object to providing or purchasing such coverage would appear to have no recourse.

Think about that for a second. The Catholic bishops just said the bill this body is getting ready to vote on, if passed, would enable the Federal Government to try to force Catholic nuns to pay for and carry out partial-birth abortion. That is staggering.

If we want to talk about mainstream positions, there are mainstream positions, there are far-left positions, and then there is extreme radical fringe, which is the Federal Government forcing Catholic nuns to pay for partial-birth abortions. And that is where virtually every Senate Democrat is today.

Under the legislation before this body, the Catholic University Ave Maria would be forced to make the same choice: Authorize abortion-inducing drugs right now or pay millions of dollars in fines to the U.S. Government.

As Ave Maria President Jim Towey has said:

> Ave Maria University pays 95 percent of the cost of the health plan we offer our employees. Under the federal mandate Ave Maria University would be paying for these drugs if we complied with the law. So we will not.

Every Senate Democrat who votes yes in a few minutes will be voting to fine Ave Maria Catholic University millions of dollars simply for standing true to their faith. That is a vote that should embarrass any Member of this body.

Mr. Towey went on to say:

> We are prepared to discontinue our health plan and pay the $2,000 per employee, per year fine rather than comply with an unjust, immoral mandate in violation of our rights of conscience.

Belmont Abbey College is another proud religious school—founded by Benedictine monks—that the Democrats have put in the same predicament. The Democrats' legislation would force Belmont Abbey College to pay $20,000 a day in faith fines. Faith fines have no place in our democracy.

Let me ask again: Why are Democrats so hostile to the Catholic Church? Why are Democrats trying to use the Federal Government to fine Catholic institutions for holding true to their religious beliefs? It all comes down to a hard-line, extreme, out-of-touch position on abortion.

Just yesterday we had a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee about legislation so broad that it would set aside State laws providing parental notification for abortion, prohibiting late-term abortions, mandating taxpayer-funded abortions. These are extreme radical views held by a tiny percentage of the American people but yet held by a large percentage of Democratic activists.

This position would also rip apart the bipartisan legislation that President Clinton signed into law in 1993. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act passed the Senate 97 to 3. When President Clinton signed that Act, he said:

> What [RFRA] basically says is that the Government should be held to a very high level of proof before it interferes with someone's free exercise of religion. This judgment is shared by the people of the United States

as well as by the Congress. We believe strongly that we can never, we can never be too vigilant in this work.

We should listen to the words of Bill Clinton in 1993, and the Senate should back away from this assault on religious liberty.

I will finally note two simple things.

In 1997, when the Senate considered another assault on the free speech protections of the First Amendment, then-Senator Ted Kennedy, liberal lion of the Senate, stood and said:

We haven't changed the Bill of Rights in over 200 years and now is no time to start.

Senator Ted Kennedy was right in 1997.

Likewise, President John F. Kennedy, in a historic speech to the Nation, said:

I would not look with favor upon a president working to subvert the First Amendment's guarantees of religious liberty.

Where are the Kennedys today? Does any Democrat have the courage to stand and speak for the First Amendment today? Does any Democrat have the courage to stand and speak for the constitutional rights of practicing Catholics? Does any Democrat have the courage to stand and speak for the Little Sisters of the Poor? Does any Democrat have the courage to listen to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and speak for religious liberty?

It saddens me that there are not 100 Senators here unified, regardless of our faith, standing together, protecting the religious liberty rights of everyone.

Faith fines have no business in our democracy. I urge every Member of this body to vote no on this assault on basic religious liberty of every American.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I have come to the floor every day this week to talk about my commonsense bill to keep corporate interference out of women's private health decisions.

On Monday when I was on the floor, I shared the concerns of a Denver-based OB/GYN who said that in light of the Supreme Court's split decision in the Hobby Lobby case, physicians might now have to consider an employer's religious beliefs when making a medical recommendation to ensure their patients are covered for very basic contraceptive treatments.

Yesterday I spoke about a Colorado mother whose college-aged daughter depended on contraception—prescribed by her doctor—to help her manage a debilitating health condition that often kept her from attending class. She told me that without that contraceptive coverage through her family's health plan, her daughter would not have had the coverage for a medically necessary treatment.

Women are sharing these stories with me every day. And Coloradans agree—they should not have to ask for a permission slip to be covered by the method of contraception that is best for them.

Women should be in charge of their health care, not their boss, and certainly not a corporation.

This week my colleague from Washington State and I called on our colleagues to join us in supporting our bill—the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act—or the ''Not My Boss's Business Act.'' Our bill is straightforward. It is common sense. It ensures that no boss can come between a woman and her access to affordable health care.

I thank my colleagues who have come to the Senate floor this week to highlight the importance of passing this bill. In just a few moments, we will be casting our votes as to whether we should bring this bill to the floor. So I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle can at least agree this is a debate worth having. It is a discussion I know women and men in every State are encouraging their representatives to have.

After bringing this legislation to the floor for a proper debate, if my colleagues then believe that this simple bill to keep a boss's religious beliefs from impacting access to essential health care for millions of American women is misguided, then they can vote against it.

Bosses have no business interfering in women's private health decisions. Women have asked us to act. Let's act.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last month five conservative justices on the Supreme Court decided that a corporation's rights can trump a female employee's right to make her own health care decisions. This is just the latest of several rulings from a thin majority of justices that diminish the rights of hardworking Americans and have a direct effect on their economic security. I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act, which the Senate is considering today. It is needed to overturn the Court's most recent expansion of corporate rights.

For far too long, women were priced out of health care simply because of their gender. The very fact of being a woman, in effect, was brandished against women as a pre-existing condition. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, much of the discrimination women faced in the health insurance market was eliminated. It is unthinkable that as recently as last year, a woman's health care premiums could cost 45 to 140 percent more than a man's. No wonder over half of women identified cost as a barrier to health coverage and why so many women went without insurance. Women could be denied coverage for something as simple as having had a C-section, or for being a victim of domestic violence. It is a travesty that in a country as great as ours this inequity survived as long as it did.

Unfortunately, in the Hobby Lobby decision, which this legislation would address, the Supreme Court set back these advances in equality in health coverage by sanctioning the very discrimination in health care access and services that the Affordable Care Act remedied. By ruling that the owners of corporations may impose their religious beliefs on their employees, women are no longer guaranteed the right to make their own health care decisions. Additionally, this ruling could have far reaching consequences beyond access to contraception. Unless Congress acts, we could see employers restricting the right to other health care services, including vaccines or blood transfusions.

This ruling comes on the heels of another decision that also threatens women's access to health care. In McCullen v. Coakley, the Court ruled that a 35-foot buffer zone protecting women from harassment when entering women's health clinics was not justified and was therefore unconstitutional. This was yet another decision where the Roberts Court allowed other's rights—whether an employer or a stranger on the street who holds a different view point—to trump that of a woman seeking health care.

In addition to the Supreme Court narrowing the rights of American women, we have seen many legislative efforts across the country to cut away at the progress we have made in women's health over the last few years. We have seen Federal bills and amendments introduced that would take decisions out of the hands of patients and doctors, and place them with businesses and insurance companies. States have followed suit by passing laws limiting women's access to health care services. I believe our focus should be on improving access to quality and affordable health care for all Americans, not arbitrarily restricting the important treatments needed by millions of women.

The Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act would restore Congress' intent by preventing any company from denying their workers specific health coverage, including birth control, as required to be covered by Federal law. Without this legislation, for-profit corporations that otherwise offer preventative health benefits can choose to deny their employers contraception coverage based on their bosses' religious beliefs. The bill before the Senate would once again prohibit bosses from discriminating against their employees based on their gender and would ensure that women's health care decisions are put back in the hands of those women and their doctors, where they belong.

At the core of the Affordable Care Act is the principle that all Americans, regardless of health history or gender, have the right to access health care services and make their own decisions about their health care. As chairman of the Judiciary Committee—and as a husband, a father, a grandfather, and as a Vermonter—this is a principle I take seriously. I will continue to fight

against efforts to roll back protections for women, minorities, or any group that has faced discrimination.

I hope that instead of focusing on ways to limit health care options for women, we can join together to promote the interests of women across America by supporting this bill. Nothing less than the economic security of our families is at stake.

PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH FROM CORPORATE INTERFERENCE ACT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to allow us to begin debate on the Protect Women's Health From Corporate Interference Act of 2014, of which I am a cosponsor.

One of this Nation's founding principles is respect for religious faith. Most all of us agree that one American should not be able to impose his or her religious convictions upon another. Yet the outcome of the Supreme Court's recent decision in the Hobby Lobby case is that thousands of Americans may lose the ability to make the most personal choices about what health care meets their religious or ethical standards and hand those decisions over to an employer.

The Court's reasoning in the Hobby Lobby decision was deeply flawed. As I and several colleagues argued in a brief to the Court, applying the Religious Freedom Restoration Act as the Court did seriously misconstrues the language of the statute and ignores the intent of Congress in passing it. Giving for-profit corporations the power to impose the religious beliefs of managers or owners upon employees is what violates basic religious freedom.

It is a central feature of our health care system that millions of Americans receive health insurance through employer-sponsored plans and those employers are most often, as was the case with Hobby Lobby, corporations. Business owners choose to incorporate because forming a corporation means access to limited liability and other government-conferred privileges.

But corporations don't have faiths. People do. That includes the women who have now lost their ability to make the most important and personal decisions about their health care.

If we are to say we truly value the freedom to practice any religion or no religion, as we see fit, surely that includes the freedom for American women to make choices about their own health care without the imposition of their employer's religious convictions. The Supreme Court's decision has elevated the religious faith of a business's owners above the values of that business's employees. That is not what the law envisions, and it is not what Americans believe.

I strongly support this legislation to repair the damage the Supreme Court has done. We should proceed to this bill, debate it, vote on it, and hopefully pass it. America's women and their families deserve nothing less.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the Protect Women From Corporate Interference Act, and I praise Senator MURRAY and Senator UDALL (of Colorado) for their work on this bill.

Let me first discuss the Supreme Court's 5–4 decision in Hobby Lobby v. Burwell—a decision that in my view is deeply disappointing. In the Hobby Lobby case, the Supreme Court found that large, closely-held, for-profit corporations have religious-freedom rights under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA). Major corporations can now assert a religious objection to generally applicable federal law.

It is possible such corporations will not get most exemptions they seek. This will be examined on a case-by-case basis. But the point is the Court has opened the door to granting these sorts of exemptions to large, for-profit corporations.

This is a far-reaching result that Congress never intended when it enacted the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

As 18 other senators and I made clear to the Court in an amicus brief in the Hobby Lobby case, Congress's purpose in passing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993 was simple. Congress wanted to strengthen individuals' free-exercise protections, after a Supreme Court decision in Employment Division v. Smith (1990) limited those rights. But Congress never intended to grant new free-exercise protections to artificial, for-profit business corporations.

The Court's decision in Hobby Lobby went far beyond what Congress intended in passing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The Federal law limited by Hobby Lobby was the Affordable Care Act's requirement that preventive health services including contraceptives are covered without cost-sharing in both individual and employer-provided health plans. Preventive health services include contraception because it is basic health care for women. This is an important benefit secured by federal law for all American women, 99 percent of whom have used contraception at some point in their lives. The medical community has almost unanimously recognized contraception as basic and essential health care. As the Guttmacher Institute explained in 2011: Contraceptive use ''help[s] women avoid short intervals between births, thereby reducing the risk of poor birth outcomes.'' ''[S]hort birth intervals have been linked with numerous negative perinatal outcomes,'' including ''low birth weight, pre-term birth and small size for gestational age.'' Contraceptives can also be used to treat common medical conditions including ''menstrual-related migraines, the treatment of pelvic pain that accompanies endometriosis, and of bleeding due to uterine fibroids.''

The Institute of Medicine also recognized the importance of these benefits when it recommended that all FDA-approved contraceptives should be covered without cost-sharing, pursuant to the Women's Health Amendment to the health care law, which I strongly supported.

Yet the Court's decision in Hobby Lobby means a woman's employer can for religious reasons ignore the federal requirement to include this important health benefit in its health plan.

To me, that is wrong. A woman's employer-provided health plan should include basic preventive services required by law, without the owners of the corporation she works for imposing their own personal religious views upon her health care decisions.

I understand some have argued that this decision doesn't impact women's access to contraception because it doesn't allow a corporation to bar a woman from buying contraception. That's ridiculous. Of course health insurance coverage impacts access to care. That is the whole point of insurance. No one would argue that if an employer decided not to cover antibiotics that patients would still have the same access to needed medication on their own. When insurance coverage is limited, access is limited as well, particularly for those of lower financial means.

According to a 2009 study from the Guttmacher Institute, 23 percent of women surveyed reported having a harder time paying for birth control during the economic downturn, and this number rose to one out of three among those who were financially worse off compared to the year before. In fact, my Republican colleagues felt that prescription drug coverage was so important to ensuring patient access to medication that they led the creation of Medicare Part D, which was signed into law by President Bush. I supported that legislation and still believe that health insurance coverage is critical to ensuring patient access.

It is also important to note that contraception is not the only issue here. The Hobby Lobby decision means that other Federal health laws—including other benefits required by law, or even coverage itself—could be the subject of a religious objection by a corporate employer.

In the United States more than half of all individuals get insurance through their employer, and estimates suggest that more than half of Americans work for a closely-held corporation.

In the Affordable Care Act Congress recognized the importance of preventive care. We included coverage without a copay for effective prevention services as determined by independent medical experts. I will just name some: Blood pressure and cholesterol screening, colonoscopies, immunizations, HIV tests, mammograms and cervical cancer screening, diabetes screening, autism screening for children, hearing tests for newborns and screening for sickle-cell anemia.

The point is certain essential, preventive services for adults and children

must be part of employer-provided health care under the law. But the Hobby Lobby decision grants for-profit corporations the ability to seek a religious exemption from providing them. Those exemptions may or may not be granted, but the Supreme Court has now opened the door to those claims.

In my view this is at odds with the fundamental principle that health care decisions should be made by patients in consultation with their doctors.

This bill is simple: it would protect elements of employer-provided health care plans that are already required by law against challenge on the basis of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

It would not infringe any individual's constitutional right to the free exercise of religion, nor would it alter existing exemptions and accommodations for religious organizations and nonprofits.

I urge my colleagues to defend the critical health protections that we have created and join me in supporting this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:10 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to reserve the last 3 minutes of debate for my time, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Washington.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, in a few minutes we are going to vote to proceed to debate on the Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act—or, as we call it, the Not My Boss's Business Act—straightforward, simple legislation that would ensure that no CEO or corporation can come between you and your guaranteed access to health care, period.

Women across the country are watching. Affordability of care equals access to care, and we know that millions of Americans lacked health insurance prior to the Affordable Care Act because they couldn't afford it, not because it wasn't available to them to purchase. Contraceptives should be a part of the options in women's health care because it is an essential part. We don't single out other benefits for employees. Why should we single out benefits that are so important to women in this country?

Now is the time for our colleagues to answer a few basic questions. Who should be in charge of a woman's health care decision? Should it be the woman making those decisions with her partner and her doctor and her faith or should it be her boss making those decisions for her based on his own religious beliefs? To me and to the vast majority of people across the country, the answer to that question is obvious: Women should call the shots when it comes to their health care decisions, not their boss, not the government, not anyone else, period.

But we are here today because five men on the Supreme Court disagreed. Five men on the Supreme Court rolled back the clock on women across America. We are here today because we simply cannot allow that to stand.

In the aftermath of that decision, women across America turned up here in Congress and demanded we fix it. That is why I worked with my partner, the senior Senator from Colorado, to introduce this bill, and we have 46 cosponsors in the Senate and over 120 organizations that have voiced their support now. So I sincerely hope our Republican colleagues will join us in allowing us to proceed to debate on this important bill.

I wish to remind them that women across the country are watching. In fact, we have a number of them here in the Nation's Capitol today, and I believe they will be very interested in seeing who is on their side.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor, and I ask unanimous consent to yield back all remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 459, S. 2578, a bill to ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions.

Harry Reid, Patty Murray, Mark Udall, Richard J. Durbin, Jeff Merkley, Debbie Stabenow, Jack Reed, Carl Levin, Christopher A. Coons, Elizabeth Warren, Jeanne Shaheen, Michael F. Bennet, Jon Tester, Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Maria Cantwell, Christopher Murphy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 459, S. 2578, a bill to ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 228 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Harkin	Murphy
Begich	Heinrich	Murray
Bennet	Heitkamp	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hirono	Pryor
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reed
Boxer	Kaine	Rockefeller
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Kirk	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Landrieu	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Warren
Franken	Merkley	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Wyden
Hagan	Murkowski	

NAYS—43

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Ayotte	Flake	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Reid
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Lee	Vitter
Crapo	McCain	Wicker
Cruz	McConnell	
Enzi	Moran	

NOT VOTING—1

Schatz

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 56 and the nays are 43. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is not agreed to.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the motion to proceed to S. 2578.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

The Senator from Vermont.

IMMIGRATION CRISIS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, over the years I have frequently spoken on the Senate floor about refugees. I have asked my fellow Senators to support our humanitarian refugee efforts in farflung corners of the world. In doing so, I cite America's role as a human rights leader and our long history of providing refuge to those fleeing persecution and violence. I also remind people of a time in the past, around World War II, when this country unwisely closed its borders to people who were fleeing the Holocaust in Germany. They came here, they were turned back, sent back, many of them to certain death in the death camps. That was a sorry part of our history. Usually our history reflects what we see in the Statue of Liberty: a beckoning torch to refuge. But now the refugee crisis has come back again and to our own border.

It is a complicated problem. I hope we will stop trying to react to whatever was in the latest news cycle 12½ seconds ago so we can get to the next sound bite 12½ seconds from now and resist the urge to let politics shape our response. Critics are arguing that the increase in unaccompanied children arriving at the southwest border is driven by recent changes in our immigration policy. This is a sound bite. The facts, of course, are a lot different. They tell a different and more complicated story.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has found over 50 percent of the children ages 12 to 17 arriving from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras have been forcibly displaced and have claims to international protection because of the violence they have encountered. If changes in immigration policy were the primary factor, we would expect to see an across-the-board increase in children arriving from Mexico and Central America.

What Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras have in common is widespread corruption and weak governments that have failed to implement effective social and economic programs or to protect their most vulnerable citizens from record levels of violence. This reality, more than any change in U.S. policy, is responsible for the massive increase in unaccompanied minors arriving on our southwest border.

It is true that many of these children do not have claims to immigration relief and they are going to be returned. For them, the dangers of this trip are not worth it, and we must discourage them from making the arduous journey alone. But others are fleeing murder or being forced into gangs or girls in their early teens are being raped and impregnated. This is what they are escaping.

There is no doubt that simply maintaining the status quo is not an option. We should take up and pass the administration's emergency supplemental request without delay. But instead of supporting the supplemental, Republicans are trying to use the crisis to promote fear and their enforcement-only agenda. It has not worked in the past. It will not work now. These children coming across the border are not trying to flee from enforcement. If they see somebody in uniform, they run to them, thinking that finally they are escaping the gangs and the murderers and the rapists, and now they suddenly feel safe because they see an American in uniform. As we know from the experience of other countries facing far greater refugee crises, increased detention and other messages of deterrence do not persuade desperate people from taking dangerous journeys.

Some Members of Congress are proposing that the way to solve this problem is by amending the Trafficking Victims Protection Act to make it easier to deport these children by rushing them through a superficial hearing—and it would be superficial—without access to counsel or child welfare specialists, in a country strange to them and in a language different than theirs. That is unacceptable. We are talking about young children—6 and 7 and 8 years old—who have experienced horrific violence and now are in a country where they don't even speak the language. It is unconscionable to push them through our complicated legal system terrified and alone, without a lawyer, and with the ultimate idea that they will be summarily deported back to the very danger they fled. I will vote against anything that would allow such a travesty.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act is not a windfall for these children. It hasn't been from the time President George W. Bush signed it into law until today. It simply provides commonsense protections such as requiring the children who arrive alone to be interviewed by a child welfare specialist and have a meaningful opportunity to tell their story to a judge. That is how we identify victims of trafficking or sexual violence or persecution. If improving the efficiency of the process is the goal, the administration already has the discretion to do that. The funding for immigration judges and legal assistance in the supplemental will further help. We can address this humanitarian crisis without watering down our law. We don't have to turn our backs on our own basic values as Americans—the basic values that brought my grandparents to Italy from Vermont and my great-great grandparents from Ireland to Vermont. It is our humanitarian values. Let's not turn our backs on them.

The problem, in fact, we are facing now could be alleviated in part if the Republican-controlled House of Representatives would allow a vote on the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform bill, S. 744. We had hundreds of hours of hearings, of markups, of debate, sometimes going late into the evening, and then days of debate on the floor, and we passed it by a strong bipartisan majority. We passed this bill 1 year ago, and the Republican leadership in the House will not even allow it to come to a vote, even though it would probably pass in the same form as we did. They will not let it come to a vote because whether people vote for or against it, there are some people who will disagree with the vote, so it is easier to vote maybe. No matter what the humanitarian crisis we have, vote maybe. Don't vote yes, don't vote no; vote maybe by not voting, but then blame it on the President, blame it on everybody else.

The Senate stepped up and we passed a bill the President said he would sign. The Senate-passed bill calls for nearly 20,000 new Border Patrol agents, 3,500 additional Customs and Border Protection officers, and 700 miles of fencing. We have heard people stand and say—as though they suddenly found this out—we need tougher laws to fight back against coyotes and cartels that want an opportunity to exploit these vulnerable children. I have heard some of the same people refuse to vote on a bill and say we need this protection. Read the bill. S. 744 does that too. It has tougher provisions to fight against human smuggling and enhanced penalties in situations that result in serious bodily injury, death, bribery or corruption.

We have done it. We have done it in the Senate. Why isn't there a hue and cry? I understand it is very easy, if you are going to do a sound bite for the evening news or something, to stand up and say: Why haven't Obama and the Democrats acted? It takes a little bit more time to say: Why haven't you voted for a bill that does everything you say is needed? Why won't the Republican leadership even allow the House Members—Republicans and Democrats—to vote on a bill that does everything they say they need?

I want to thank Senators HARKIN and FEINSTEIN and DURBIN for their comments at the last week's Appropriations Committee hearing. It is clear to me that they, too, understand our Nation is at a crossroads with this crisis. The world is watching how we are going to respond. How is the greatest Nation on Earth going to respond?

I know one person who spoke out: Pope Francis. He has urged us to protect these children. Well, I think the Pope is right.

We have a choice. We can either make good on the promises we have already written into our law and Republicans and Democrats have voted for, or we can decide: Gosh, we didn't mean it. We voted for it, we gave great press conferences, but we did not mean it. Now, gee whiz, it is complicated—as though life is always easy—so let's just rewrite the law. If we do that, just send these children back. Send these children back to the murderers, the rapists, the gangs. Doesn't that turn our back on the very principles on which this Nation was founded—the principles that brought my grandparents here from Italy, my great-grandparents here from Ireland?

Where are those principles? We forgot them at the beginning of the Holocaust. We look at the people who died, the number of Jews who went to the ovens because we had forgotten our principles.

Well, President George W. Bush was right in signing the bill. The Republicans and Democrats who voted for it were right. Let's not turn our backs. If we want to do something beyond the sound bites, something realistic, pass the supplemental for the people we need to do it for and allow the House of Representatives to vote up or down on the bill that Republicans and Democrats voted for here in the Senate a whole year ago. But do not let the supplemental request be a political football. It should be passed clean, without delay. Do not try to remove all the protections for victims of human trafficking.

Pass the supplemental, and then have the courage to stand up and vote yes or no on S. 744. We did here in the Senate. Republicans and Democrats came together. A large majority of us passed it in the Senate. Why can't the House of Representatives do the same thing? I will tell you why. They are afraid whichever way they vote, it might be unpopular. Well, that is what you expect. I have cast more votes than all but a half dozen Senators in the history of this country. Can anybody go back through all those thousands upon thousands of votes and find some they could attack me on? Of course. I could give them a list myself. Can I find some that I probably on second thought wish I had cast differently? Of course I can. But I had the courage to vote yes or no. I was criticized when I became the first Vermonter—in fact, the only Vermonter—to ever vote against the war in Vietnam. The authorization was cut off by one vote. Today it would be hard to find anybody who supported that war.

My point is not whether as a Senator from Vermont I vote right or wrong or any one of us as a Senator from our State votes right or wrong—but at least vote. That is what we said we would do when we were elected: vote. So I am talking about what is wrong with immigration law when you are afraid to even vote one way or the other. But let's not turn our back on the principles this country stands for. Let's not say to 7- or 8- or 9-year-old children—trying to escape a fate that my children or my grandchildren would never face—sorry, we are too great and big and busy a country to worry about you. Go back and face your fate, whatever it might be, because we don't care. That is not the America I serve. That is not the America I love. That is not the place where the Senate should be if we are going to be the conscience of the Nation.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I want to spend a few minutes discussing the effect and the premise of the legislation on which we just decided not to move forward.

I have spent 25 years of my life caring for women. There is not a complication of pregnancy I have not handled. I have seen every aspect of it. I have delivered babies the size of my little finger and watched them move their little arms, not yet far enough along to survive. I have cared for women in the midst of lost pregnancies and the tragedy and trauma and the heartbreak. I have cared for women who have had abortions and the complications that has completed and exacerbated in their own lives from psychological to real physical problems. I have actually performed abortions to save women's lives who had severe congenital heart defects and would have died had their pregnancy continued.

But the premise under which this bill was brought forward is an absolute false premise. You see, I come from Oklahoma. David Green and his family come from Oklahoma. They are the owners of Hobby Lobby. They are one of the finest groups of people I have ever met in my life. They are responsible corporate citizens. But everything they have done in their life is guided by their faith and their ethics. Therefore, they are not open on Sunday because they feel their employees have a right to a restful weekend. They pay a very livable wage. They have always had health insurance.

The Supreme Court decision was about religious freedom and whether I, as a private businessperson, am still entitled to that as I carry on commerce in this country.

What has been described—maybe not specifically but negatively—is that Hobby Lobby and the Green family do not appreciate women or their contributions or their rights or their freedoms. Nothing could be further from the truth. They had a very personal objection to four abortifacients—not birth control pills—four medicines, devices that actually kill a living human being. See, what we do not think about very often—and I think about all the time—is that when an egg and a sperm unite, there is created something that has never been created before: a unique human being. The genetic material will be no different at conception than it is when you are 85 years old. It is unique. It has never before been here; it will never again be here.

So based on these deeply held beliefs and ethics—and what I would say is morals—they chose to supply their entire employee network with 16 different methods of birth control. But the four that actually kill a baby that has been formed—they thought it was their religious right to be able to say they should not have to take money out of their pocket to pay for something that goes against their strongly held moral, ethical, and faith beliefs.

So we have had a reaction. It is political in nature. It does not have much to do with the facts. It has a lot to do with darkness, of saying something is so that is not true, and saying it often enough so we can tell people that here are those terrible Republicans and they want to hurt women.

I dedicated 25 years of my life to helping women in every type of tragedy, every type of disease, whether it is cancer or diabetes or hypertension or pregnancy or miscarriages or just the common cold. Before the Senate forced me to stop delivering babies, I was delivering babies that I delivered; in other words, it was the third generation. That is how crazy the Senate ethics rules are.

So the very undercurrent of what we heard could not be further from the truth. What we heard—the implications were that the Green family is somehow this negative corporate monster who wants to take women's rights away—is absolutely untrue.

The other falsehood we hear is that if you do not have health care, you do not have available birth control. We spend $400 million a year on title 19, most of which is in birth control pills that are given out to women who do not have access. It costs $7 a month to buy birth control pills, and most physicians, like myself, who had women who could not either access title 19 or who did not have $7 a month, gave the pills themselves out of their stocks, their samples.

So there is a reality other than what has been painted in the Senate, and I could not sit by and let this hang out, this terrible untruth. I do not know of a family business, I do not know of a business in America that cares more about its employees than Hobby Lobby, and it is manifested through the employee loyalty and also the success of their brand because they really have a team. And you do not have a team if you do not feel as if you are being cared for—that you are not one of the group.

There are a lot of problems in front of this country. But the one described in this last piece of legislation is not one of them. The Green family does not keep anybody from buying abortifacients if they want them. They are not all that expensive. The morning-after pill is over the counter. But to force a person of faith to pay for an action against what they believe is morally wrong. It is far away from the religious liberties our Constitution guarantees.

I know we can get hyped up on emotion, but the emotion we ought to get hyped on is preserving the rights our Founders guaranteed when they started this country. They were based on the same set of beliefs the Green family inculcates into everything they do with Hobby Lobby. It is pretty ironic to me that we have become so postmodern, so smart, so ''for'' what the government can do and mandate that we are willing to destroy the very freedoms that created this country in the first place.

This bill was a cynical attack on truth. I am glad it is not proceeding. It is time to quit wasting the Senate's time on political games and start addressing the very real problems this country has, such as the fact that Social Security disability will run out of money next month; the fact that one-third of those on disability who are not truly disabled are threatening the livelihood of those who truly are; the fact that Medicare, 17 years from now or 16 years from now, will be out of money; the fact that Social Security will be out of money in 18 years; the fact that we are having corporations leave this country in a mass flood because we

have a Tax Code that is not competitive with the rest of the world; the fact that we are wasting $250 billion a year on duplicative programs that do not accomplish the goals which the Congress set out for them. Yet we have no leadership that says we are going to address the very real problems in front of the country. It is not a great record to be proud of.

I yield the floor and 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. ISAKSON. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. ISAKSON. I ask to be recognized to speak as if in morning business.

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SECOND LIEUTENANT NOAH HARRIS

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I wish to share an experience I had a couple of weeks ago while riding the mountains of North Georgia to my home. I was in the pickup truck alone, driving my red Silverado from a place in the mountains. I spent a lot of time thinking—which I try to do when I get a few moments to myself—about all the difficult positions we are now in as a country. I thought about our border with Mexico and all the Central American children who are coming through, huddled on the border, and the crisis there. I thought about Syria and the tragedy of that civil war. I thought about the fact that the Israelis and Hamas are firing rockets back and forth from Gaza and into the mainland of Israel. I thought about the fact that we are now negotiating with Iran, our archenemy. I thought about the fact that Vladimir Putin decided to take advantage of the vacuum that has been created in world leadership and moved into Crimea, threatening Kiev and threatening Ukraine. I thought about all the crises we have along the way.

Then I came to Ellijay, GA, a little town known for its apples and its population of 2,000 great Georgia citizens.

I came to Poole's Bar-B-Q, which is a landmark along the highway in Ellijay, GA. I stopped, and all of a sudden all those thoughts I had of the wars going on, the conflicts going on, the strife and the trouble going on all culminated in Gilmer County, because in Gilmer County in 2005 I attended the funeral of Noah Harris. Noah Harris was killed in Iraq in 2005.

I thought about his story, and I thought about our position now, and I thought about some message I want to send to my country and to this body of the Senate.

Let me talk about Noah Harris. Noah Harris was a cheerleader at the University of Georgia. On the Saturday before 9/11 in 2001, he was in Sanford Stadium with 92,000 fans of the Georgia Bulldogs cheering on the team.

Then, like the rest of the world, he saw the terrible attack of 9/11 in 2001—in New York City, in Shanksville, PA, and in Washington, DC.

On the morning of the 12th, he got out of bed in the dormitory and he went straight to the Army ROTC building in Athens, GA, and told them he wanted to sign up for an ROTC commission because he wanted to go fight whoever it was who killed those 3,000 citizens of the world tragically in New York City.

They said: Noah, you can't get a commission in just a year. You only have a year left.

He said: I can double up and do it. I want to go for my country. I want to go for what is right. I want to go fight for America.

He became a second lieutenant in the 3rd Infantry Division, and, sure enough, 3 years after that, he was in Iraq. He became known as the Beanie Baby soldier because he had his pockets stuffed with Beanie Babies. And as he would go through Ghazaliya, where he was stationed near Baghdad, he would hand out Beanie Babies to the Iraqi children. He was like a pied piper. Unfortunately, in the 11th month of his tour, a rocket-propelled grenade his hit humvee and he and two of his buddies were killed instantly in Iraq.

I didn't know Noah Harris, but I went to the funeral that day because, as a Senator from Georgia, I wanted to pay my respects to a soldier who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the war on terror.

So as I was riding through Gilmer County a couple weeks ago, thinking about the crises we have today around the world and then thinking about Noah Harris, I thought to myself, there is a message all of us need to remember: Those soldiers should never have died in vain, and we have to make sure they did not.

In Iraq 4,486 American soldiers were killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom. In Afghanistan, to date, 2,319—a total of 6,805—most of them Americans, some of them immigrants seeking their citizenship in America and fighting for America in our Armed Forces—fought for the rights and freedoms that all our Founding Fathers stood for, fought for all the reasons we serve in this body today, fought for all the reasons that America is the great and noble country it is around the world.

But right now there is an absence of leadership in the world, and because of it we are seeing one crisis come up after another. I worry that Noah Harris, who died in Iraq in 2005, might—and I underscore the word ''might''—have died in vain if we don't recognize our responsibilities and see to it that we try and prevent what has been happening lately from continuing to happen.

There is a decision point coming to the United States of America—it is coming next year. It is one I want to encourage the President to think about deeply and for all of us to think about deeply.

We have lost Iraq to ISIS. ISIS is a renegade group of terrorists who have basically taken over that country and partnered with some of the terrorists in Syria to control Iraq.

One of the reasons they did that is we left a huge vacuum in Iraq when we pulled out. We pulled every American soldier out. I know it was our goal to leave after the surge worked—and that was the right thing to do. But it wasn't the right thing to pull out every single soldier, because we abandoned all the infrastructure that we had built. We abandoned the image of American strength and power. We abandoned the ability for us to be agile in a dangerous part of the world.

In Afghanistan, we are supposed to pull our troops out at the beginning of next year. Some of them should come home but not all of them. We have invested billions of dollars in American hardware and American money to see to it we had the best support in the world for our soldiers in Afghanistan. If we abandon Bagram, if we abandon Kabul—if we abandon Afghanistan, the same thing will happen in Afghanistan as happened in Iraq. And those soldiers, the 2,319 who died in Afghanistan, will have in part died in vain because we abandoned what they built. We abandoned what they protected. We abandoned the investment they made.

We need also to remember what happened on 9/11 of 2001, when we decided to go into Iraq and then later into Afghanistan. We didn't have enough infrastructure in that part of the world to make an invasion. We had to rent the Kyrgyzstan airport near Russia to be able to fly our troops in to begin positioning outside of the Tora Bora area in Afghanistan.

We have built tremendous infrastructure, we have built tremendous bases, and we have tremendous assets for which the taxpayers of the United States have paid. We should maintain a presence there so we are agile; so our SEALs teams, if needed, can be positioned; so that the rest of the world knows that while the war may be over and America has come home, it hasn't left. It hasn't abandoned us. An American presence will remain—just as we have in Germany, just as we have in Japan, just as we have in South Korea. Our best friends today were our enemies 40, 50, and 60 years ago, because America didn't leave when the fight was over. We need to make sure that relationship happens in Afghanistan so we can begin to build our presence in that part of the world and be that somebody who prohibits and inhibits terrorism and people like ISIS from taking over countries.

Make no mistake about it. Vladimir Putin has been encouraged by an absence of leadership, and ISIS took advantage of an absence of leadership. What is going on between Hamas and Israel in the Gaza Strip is an absence of leadership, in part on our part. We can't sit around and be bystanders. We have to recommit ourselves to the effort in that part of the world because

in the end the peace and security of America from terrorism and from those who would bring us down is not our looking the other way and not living up to our responsibility to the Noah Harrises of the world who gave the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq in 2005—all because he watched what we all watched that morning of 9/11 in 2001, and said: This shall not stand. I want to volunteer to fight for my country. And he joined our Army and did so.

God bless Noah Harris. God bless his parents, Rick and Lucy. God bless the United States of America. May we remember our responsibility not to leave what we have built and remain a beacon of peace, liberty, and democracy around the world.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VETERANS HEALTH CARE

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wanted to inform the Members about an important hearing that was held this morning in the Senate Veterans' Committee. I also wish to thank the Members of the Senate who, in the midst of a very partisan environment last month, voted with 93 votes—overwhelming support—to pass a very significant piece of legislation to help the men and women who put their lives on the line to defend our country—legislation that was written by Senator MCCAIN and myself, and I thank him very much for his help in this effort.

One of the important provisions in that legislation was an understanding that the needs of our veterans are a cost of war. They are a cost of war just as much as guns and tanks and planes and missiles are a cost of war. It seems to me to be fairly obvious that if we spend trillions of dollars fighting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is absolutely appropriate to make sure we have money available on an emergency basis to take care of the men and women who use those guns and tanks and missiles and who put their lives on the line and, in some cases, never come home.

So the first point I wish to make is that if we send people to war, we should always understand that a cost of that war is taking care of our veterans.

I recall—and I see the chairperson of the Appropriations Committee and she will recall this as well—that when this country went to war in Iraq and after in Afghanistan—and let me be clear, I voted against the war in Iraq—but when we went to war in Iraq and in Afghanistan, the understanding was that this is emergency funding; that our troops, no matter how one voted on the war, needed the equipment to take care of themselves, to protect themselves, and to win the mission. That is exactly where we are today. We want to win this mission. The mission we are involved in now is making sure the men and women who served this country in the military get quality care in a timely manner. That is the mission we have to win now, and that, in my view, is a cost of war.

I think there is not widespread awareness of what the cost of war is, and I hope, A, we never get into more wars in the future, but that if we ever do, people understand that any budget for war must include the needs of veterans—not 2 years after the war but 70 years after the war. When some veteran is sitting in some room in an apartment without legs, without arms, without eyesight, that is a cost of war and we don't desert those people—not tomorrow, not 50 years from now, not 70 years from now. Our moral commitment is to make certain we provide for those who defend us.

I think there is not sufficient understanding about what the cost of war truly is. I wish to mention just a few facts people should understand. Over 2 million men and women served this country in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Studies are very clear that 20 to 30 percent of those men and women have come home with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury. That is between 400,000 to 500,000 men and women who are coming home with PTSD or TBI. What that translates into is men and women who are struggling every single day. It translates into outrageously high rates of suicide for younger veterans, substance abuse, inability to hold on to a job and earn a living; many of these folks have a difficult time being around people. It translates into divorce. It translates into emotional problems for kids and for other family members.

Since fiscal year 2006, the number of veterans receiving specialized mental health treatment has risen from over 927,000 to more than 1.4 million in fiscal year 2013. Today, and every day, approximately 49,000 veterans are receiving outpatient mental health appointments. Let me repeat that. Today, some 49,000 veterans in 50 States in this country are receiving mental health appointments. That is a staggering number. During the last 4 years, VA outpatient mental health visits have increased from $14 million a year to more than $18 million a year. This is just one of the problems facing the veterans community. How do we provide the psychiatrists, the social workers, the psychologists, the counselors we need? It is a huge issue because PTSD and TBI are very tough illnesses.

In addition, what we are looking at now—and every Member of the Senate is familiar with this—is outrageously high waiting periods for veterans to get into the VA. Time and time again I hear from veterans in Vermont and I hear from veterans all over the country; I hear from veterans organizations and I read independent surveys which tell me that when veterans get into the VA, the quality of the care they get is good. I just met 2 hours ago with a veterans organization—same thing: Once people get into the system, the quality of care is generally good; the problem is accessing the care. The problem is appointments.

I will not read to my colleagues all of the statistics, but trust me the waiting lines all over this country are much too high in many parts of America. There are other people who never even made it to the waiting lines. This has to do with a whole lot of issues that we have discussed.

The bottom line is we must address the waiting time issue and make sure that in the very near future, every veteran who is in need of health care gets that health care in a timely manner.

Sloan Gibson, who is the Acting Secretary of the VA——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is informed that the time is under Republican control, if the Senator would suspend.

Mr. SANDERS. Could I ask my colleague just for 3 more minutes?

Mr. RISCH. The Senator may do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, Senator SANDERS is speaking. Senator RISCH, I believe, is going to speak. The time now is on unaccompanied children; am I correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The unanimous consent agreement was that the Republicans control the time until 4:30.

Ms. MIKULSKI. OK.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. I ask unanimous consent that——

Ms. MIKULSKI. I haven't yielded the floor. I reserved my right to object. I am just clarifying. So Senator SANDERS wishes to speak, and as I understand it, I have time—this is not in any way to interfere with the Senator from Idaho, but at 4:30 I am supposed to have the time under the time controlled by the Democrats; is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We already agreed to the unanimous consent request that the Republicans control the time until 4:30.

Ms. MIKULSKI. How much time is—all I am trying to do is know when I am going to be able to speak.

If I could turn to the Senator from Idaho, how long does he intend to speak?

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I intend to speak for about 4½ minutes.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I withdraw my objection. I think we deserve to hear Senator SANDERS, and I will wait patiently for my turn.

Mr. RISCH. I thank the Senator from Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank very much the Senator from Idaho.

Let me wrap it up by making the point that Acting Secretary Gibson made this morning which was a very simple but important one. What he said is we must address the immediate crisis of ending these outrageously long waiting periods that veterans are now experiencing in order to get into the VA. Right now—and I am proud of what he is doing—they are moving very aggressively to get veterans all over this country into private health care when necessary and any other form of health care, to make sure those waiting periods go down. I think they are doing a pretty good job. They have to continue to do that, but we should be mindful that this is going to be a very expensive process.

The other point he made, which is equally important, is that long term, if the goal is to end these unacceptable waiting periods, we have to give the VA the staffing and the space and the facilities and the infrastructure they need.

He came forward with what I recognize is a very big pricetag. His pricetag was $17.6 billion, so we can get the 10,000 more staff we need, the doctors, the psychiatrists, the primary health care physicians, the mental health counselors we need, get the space we need, because in many facilities around the country the staff can't operate because they don't have adequate space.

So what I would say to my colleagues, if we are serious about addressing this very important problem, we will go forward in two ways. No. 1, immediate crisis, let's end those waiting lists. Let's contract out when necessary to private physicians.

Long term, it is absolutely imperative that the VA have the infrastructure it needs so we don't have this crisis again 2 years from today.

The last point, I reiterate. If we send people off to war—if we make that enormously difficult, painful decision—I hope every Member in this body understands that taking care of veterans is a cost of that war and that we have a moral responsibility to do everything we can with them and for them and their families.

Before I yield the floor, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a memorandum submitted by Acting Secretary Sloan Gibson at our committee hearing earlier today.

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

Washington, DC, July 16, 2014.

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN SANDERS

From: Sloan D. Gibson, Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Regarding: Testimony at July 16, 2014 Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs Hearing.

Per your request, attached for your information is a summary of additional resource needs through FY2017 that I outlined in my testimony today before the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

In developing the resource requirements, the overarching goals were to:

Support the work of the Senate-House conference committee to improve Veterans' access to medical care and services.

Ensure that VA has the resources necessary to deliver timely, high quality care and benefits to Veterans enrolled in the VA system.

Schedule all Veteran appointments within standards of acceptable care.

Enhance and reform infrastructure that enables VA medical care (i.e. facilities construction/IT improvements) to modernize VA's operations and provide access to care when and where Veterans want it.

Further, the resource requirements were shaped by principles that the Administration believes should be key to any discussion of VA resource needs. These principles include:

Leverage contract care where necessary, but focus efforts on incentivizing improvements in the VA system itself—Consider referrals to non-VA care to address burgeoning workload as a temporary stop-gap to immediately address the current problem, but concurrently look to strengthen the VA system by including incentives and resources for VA to deliver care in-house.

Require cost-effective, coordinated care—Make efficient use of taxpayer dollars by ensuring quality care is delivered in a cost-effective way. Require VA to actively coordinate a Veteran's care across all care environments.

Modernize VA infrastructure and processes—Ensure that VA facilities and IT infrastructure are modernized and equipped to meet increasing demand for services; reform VA IT delivery and procurement to make it more effective in delivering services to Veterans.

Support VA system without undercutting other national priorities—Given that VA is required to provide quality care to Veterans—and faces serious resources needs not contemplated when budget caps were negotiated—funding to support the ramp-up of VA medical care contemplated below must be provided outside of current base discretionary resources.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

VA RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FACT SHEET

Investments to Address VA Access to Care and Modernize Infrastructure and Processes

Resource	Cost ($Billions)	Summary of Use of Funds
Increasing Veterans' System-wide Access to Care.	$10.0	• Access: $8.2B for approximately 10,000 primary care and specialty care physicians, and other clinical/medical staff including physicians, nurses, social workers, mental health professionals, and others—and funds other associated expenses such as equipment, supplies, and other overhead costs • Hepatitis-C Drugs: $1.3B for critical new therapies over the next 2 years for higher than expected costs for two new Hepatitis C drug therapies that are significantly more effective and carry fewer side effects • Caregivers Program: $186M is estimated to support higher-than-expected demand for the Caregivers program (over approximately 22,000 Caregivers in total)
IT Enhancements	$1.2	• IT Infrastructure: Additional funding is needed to provide IT support in new space generated by major and minor construction and Non-Recurring Maintenance (NRM). • Project Development: Additional funding is needed for the development of OIT programs. These include Interoperable Purchased Care, Mobile App Scheduling, and additional Veterans Benefits Management System & VBA IT development. • Other IT Support: Additional funding for IT staff to support operational requirements and for hardware, bandwidth, security, etc.
Improve and Invest in VA Physical Infrastructure.	$6.0	Funding for approximately: • 700 Minor and NRM projects to include safer inpatient care to eradicate legionella and other threats • 8 major construction projects that address safety or access issues
Veterans Benefits Administration	$0.4	• Funding for approximately 1700 staff to speed appeals, non-rating benefits workload, and other benefits programs
Total	$17.6	

• These resources are needed to ensure that VA is able to deliver high quality, timely health care to Veterans enrolled in the VA.

With that, I yield the floor, and again I wish to thank my friend Senator RISCH for the courtesy of giving me some extra time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I thank the Senator.

(The remarks of Mr. RISCH pertaining to the introduction of S. 2616 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. RISCH. I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time between now and 5:30 p.m. will be controlled by the majority party.

The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

REFUGEE CRISIS

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, for the next hour a number of us from the Democratic Caucus will be talking about the Central American refugee crisis. We are lucky to be joined by Senator MIKULSKI, the chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, to get us started today. So I look forward very much to hearing what she has to say and you will be hearing from me in a little bit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about an urgent crisis at our border in which over 250 children a week are coming from Central America, fleeing horrific gang violence—horrific gang violence—to seek refuge and asylum in the United States of America.

This is being called a crisis at the border. Well, it is a border crisis, but the crisis actually begins in Central America, where brutal, violent gangs, based on organized crime, are either trying to recruit the boys into organized crime, drug smuggling, human trafficking, or to recruit the girls into human trafficking in other just dangerous and repugnant circumstances.

But when you go to the border the way I have, you will see that the situation is dire. It is dire because, as these children come to the border, crossing the Rio Grande—probably within really almost a 50-mile stretch of the Grande; it is not over the 1,900 miles of the Grande—they come and, actually, they do not try to sneak in, they come right up to where the border control is and they have pieces of paper with their name on it. They are then taken into custody by border control. They are placed into holding cells that are designed for adult males. They were designed to hold drug smugglers, narcotraffickers, and now they hold as many as 20 or 30 or 40 children, while under the law they are to be placed in the hands of the Health and Human Services Agency while their legal and asylum status is being verified.

Well, I am telling you, the entire infrastructure for dealing with these children—from the way the border control is trying to take care of them, the overrunning of the capacity of these holding cells, to the backlog on processing their legal and asylum determination, to really trying to place them in facilities under the care of Health and Human Services—the situation is dire.

The President of the United States has asked for emergency funding to deal with it. I hope we consider this emergency funding. The amount of money the President is seeking is $3.7 billion. This is to care for the humanitarian needs of the children, the enforcement at the border, the identifying of their legal status under a law passed under the administration of President Bush to deal with the trafficking of children, both boys and girls, and also for robust deterrence in the home countries where these children are coming from. But the deterrence comes from breaking down and prosecuting organized crime syndicates of the smugglers and the traffickers.

We are also asking for money to conduct a massive educational campaign advising Central American families against the dangers and false hopes of this journey. The journey is, indeed, dangerous. They come on foot. They come by car. They ride the tops of a train that is referred to as The Beast. There was one little girl who I spoke to with Secretary Johnson. She had stayed awake for 2 days on the rooftop of a train, terrified that she would fall off and be mutilated, just to be able to make it into the United States of America. And why did she make such a perilous, dangerous journey? It was because they were trying to recruit her into these violent and vile ways.

We need to make sure Central America, with our help, goes after the seven organized crime units that we know are sparking this, that are trying to recruit these kids; giving them false promises too, that if they come to this country, they will be able to get a free pass somehow for getting into this country. We need to be able to stop this and be able to deal with it in the most effective way.

The President's program actually does outline the money to be able to do that. When the children do come, as I said, while they are awaiting their legal status to be determined, they are placed in the hands of HHS. Now, HHS does not run group homes. HHS does not run foster care. HHS funds it, and they need to be able to turn to local communities to be able to have these children be able to stay.

I saw fantastic work being done while the children were being placed at Lackland Air Force Base and the social services were being run by—under contract of a faith-based organization—the Baptist church. I know the distinguished Presiding Officer knows a lot about human services. I myself am a social worker, and I will tell you that faith-based organization is really running a good program for these kids.

But we are running out of money. We need money for food and shelter for the children. We need money for the border agents. We need money for transportation to shelters and also transportation, when we can, returning these children home. We need money for immigration judges and legal services for the children to determine their asylum status, and, as I said, we need the muscular deterrence in the home country breaking up the organized gangs that then create the violence that then sets these children on this journey.

The best way to make sure the surge of children is stopped is not by harsher immigration laws. It is by making it hard on the drug dealers and the human traffickers, the smugglers, the coyotes. Because they are the ones who are the reason they are coming.

Looking at the data—looking at data—we see that these children are coming not only where there is high poverty, but that children are coming where there is a high level of crime, particularly homicide, murder, and other recruitment of children. These children are almost being recruited by child soldiers in their own country to engage in violent criminal activity.

So we need to be able to look at this emergency supplemental and be able to meet the human needs while the children are here, make sure we fund the judges, the immigration judges and the legal services, to determine their asylum status, and be able to take care of them.

Already, 60,000 unaccompanied children have come into our country during this last year. In the 2 weeks I toured the border, I saw young children as young as 5 with one instruction: Cross the border, turn yourself in, and try to get as safe as you can. Border agents find these children often dehydrated, malnourished, and usually a victim of some type of trauma. Also, they have heard false promises from the smugglers about what it will be when they come here.

These smugglers—as part of these dangerous gangs and cartels—see women and children as a commodity to be bought, sold, transported, as if they were cargo. Children leave these homes based on lies. They think they are coming to an area where they will never have to go home or that they will be safe. I hope we then pass this appropriations. I hope in passing the appropriations we will be able to protect the safety of the children, we determine their legal and asylum status, and we have this muscular deterrent strategy in the home country.

There are those who want to have a new immigration policy or want to repeal the George Bush law. I would caution that because, remember, our problem is not the children; our problem is what causes the children to come. We have to go after what causes the children to come; and that is the drug dealers, the smugglers, the coyotes, those who are engaging in such violent crime.

The host countries, along with Mexico, need to help deal with this, and we need to marshal our law enforcement resources to be able to help them do this. Now they say: Let's bring in the National Guard at the border. What is our National Guard going to do? When these little kids cross the Rio Grande, they are going to go right up to that soldier, put their arms around his or her leg, and say: I need to be safe. Can you help me? What is the National Guard going to do? It is not a border enforcement problem; it is a criminal gang problem in Central America.

So we need to be able to be sure we are targeting the right areas in order to solve this problem. The children are not the threats. They are coming here because they are threatened themselves. We need to meet these urgent humanitarian needs, and we need to focus on our hemisphere to break up the gangs and crime.

Later on today we are going to have a briefing for every single Senator so they can ask the questions about this situation. Who are the children? Why are they coming? What are their legal rights under the law? But how can we effectively deal with this children's march, where the children are in danger in their host country and on the long journey to this one?

We are also asking that this $3.7 billion be designated as an emergency.

There are those who will want to take from other domestic programs. I would caution that. In fact, I would object to the very idea. The President has said this is an emergency because under the Budget Control Act of 2011 it meets the criteria that it is sudden, urgent, unforeseen, and temporary, deals with the loss of life, property, or our national security interests. I think it meets that test. I do not want to take offsets from existing programs to do this. It is unexpected. It is significant. We can deal with it, but let's not do it at the expense of other programs designed to help the American family and the American middle class.

I know there are others who want to speak on this issue. I will have more to

say later, but for now let's examine the urgent supplemental and let's really solve the problem at the border and what causes it to be a problem for us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, let me start by thanking my colleague from Maryland for her leadership on the Appropriations Committee and her leadership on this difficult issue. She said something in caucus the other day that really struck me. She said: Every Senator has an opinion on this, but not every Senator has the facts. Facts matter. They make for good policy.

Last week I had the opportunity, along with Secretary Johnson, to visit a temporary facility for refugee mothers and their children that is in my home State of New Mexico. The holding area at this facility in Artesia, NM, is one of several ways that DHS is increasing its capacity to process the increasing number of families with children from Central America who are crossing our southwest border.

On Monday, 40 individuals were repatriated back to Honduras. It is reported that more mothers and their children will be sent back to their countries of origin.

While I was at this facility, I saw firsthand the remarkable interagency effort that it took to take a Federal law enforcement training center, a campus, and turn it into a safe and humane place for families to stay while their cases are being processed.

But that is not all I saw while I was there. I watched a young boy play soccer with his little brother, both of them clearly happy to be in the kind of secure environment where they could just be kids. I saw a lot of mothers. I saw mothers whose faces were worried, who reflected the clear concern about what the future would be for them and for their children. What I did not see at that facility—I did not see cartel mules. I did not see drug runners. I did not see criminals or gang members. Those were mothers and little kids. Most of those families come from one of the most violent regions in the world today.

This current crisis is of grave concern to all of us. I know I have heard from a number of my constituents who wanted to know what they can do to help. I have to give great credit to our local chamber of commerce in Artesia, NM, as they worked hard as they received hundreds of donations from compassionate New Mexicans across the State hoping to make a difference in these people's lives. They understand that this is first a humanitarian crisis. They also understand that we are a nation of laws, that our immigration system has been broken for a long time and needs to be fixed.

The Senate worked for months to address this, but the Republican-led House of Representatives refuses to even debate immigration reform, much less allow a vote on it. Instead, Republicans claim that the President's immigration policies, including deferred action for childhood arrivals—or DACA, as it is known—caused a crisis at the border. That could not be further from the truth. The increase in unaccompanied children started before President Obama created the DACA program 2 years ago. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees has documented an increased number of asylum seekers from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala since 2009—a full 5 years ago. What is more, children crossing the border would not be eligible for DACA. In fact, they would not be eligible for the Senate version of immigration reform.

These asylum seekers are not only fleeing to the United States but also to the other neighboring countries in the region. They are fleeing to Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Belize. In fact, those countries saw a 712-percent spike in asylum cases from El Salvador, from Honduras, and Guatemala from 2008 to 2013, further demonstrating that children are not coming to the United States to apply for DACA. They are coming because their lives are at risk back home.

In interviews with over 400 children, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees found that no less than 58 percent of them were forcibly displaced because they suffered or faced harm that indicated a potential or actual need for international protection—an increase of more than 400 percent from 2006.

Less than 1 percent of these kids spoke of immigration reform or some new program or policy as the basis for coming to the United States. In fact, out of the 404 children who were interviewed, there were only 4—4 children who expressed a reason for coming that related to some part of the U.S. immigration system.

The reality is, as we heard from Senator MIKULSKI, what is driving children to our borders is unimaginable violence, corruption, extreme poverty, and instability in their home countries.

This picture was taken in Tegucigalpa in Honduras. This is frankly an all-too-common sight in Honduras today. Not only is the poverty unimaginable, but the violence we have seen is like nothing in recent history. Honduras has now the world's highest murder rate, with over 90 murders per 100,000 persons annually. Last year approximately 1,000 young people under the age of 23 in Honduras were murdered—murdered in a nation of only 8 million, 1,000 young people.

In a report published by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, they found that 93 percent of crimes perpetrated against youth in Honduras go unpunished—completely unpunished.

The National Observatory of Violence reported that violent deaths of women increased by 246 percent between 2005 and 2012.

This is all the more unsettling to me because I know firsthand that Honduras did not always look this way. In the 1990s I traveled to Honduras with my wife Julie. We were on our honeymoon. We flew into San Pedro Sula. The only time I felt any fear was trying to drive in a city that moves a lot faster than I do when I try to drive on country roads in New Mexico. But we never had any fear for violence when we were in Honduras. We traveled around the country. We went to many places off the beaten path.

That is very different today. Today San Pedro Sula is a city synonymous with murder.

To understand just how bad it is, you can look at pictures like this one of literally body bags getting ready to go to mass graves from murders happening in these neighborhoods in San Pedro Sula. You can read a recent article in the New York Times by Frances Robles that tells the chilling story of Cristian, an 11-year-old sixth grader from Honduras who lost his father in March after he was robbed and murdered by gangs while working as a security guard protecting a pastry truck. It is kind of hard to imagine needing a security guard to protect a pastry truck. Three people he knows were murdered this year alone, and four others were gunned down on a nearby corner in the span of 2 weeks at the beginning of the year. A girl his age resisted being robbed of the sum of $5. She was clubbed over the head, dragged off by two men who cut a hole in her throat and stuffed her underwear in it and left her body in a ravine across the street from Cristian's house.

Then there is Anthony, a 13-year-old from Honduras, who disappeared from his gang-ridden neighborhood. His younger brother Kenneth hopped on his green bike to search for him, starting his hunt at a notorious gang hangout in the neighborhood. They were found within days of each other, both dead. Anthony, 13, and a friend had been shot in the head.

Kenneth, age 7, had been tortured and beaten with sticks and rocks. They were among seven children murdered in the La Pradera neighborhood of San Pedro Sula in April alone—in 1 month.

El Salvador and Guatemala are the world's fourth and fifth highest in murders. The Center for Gender and Refugee Studies found that in 2011, El Salvador had the highest rate of gender-motivated killings of women in the entire world. In Guatemala, the Department of State reports widespread human rights problems, including institutional corruption, particularly in the police, in judicial sectors, kidnapping, drug trafficking, execution, and often lethal violence against women.

We have a human crisis at our southern border that requires an immediate but compassionate response. Yet instead of supporting the supplemental which seeks to address the root causes of the crisis and protect these vulnerable children, Republicans are trying to use the crisis to promote fear and their border-enforcement-only agenda.

Recently, a Republican Governor suggested that the President send the National Guard to ''secure the border once and for all'' and that ''the border between the U.S. and Mexico is less secure today than at any time in the recent past.'' As I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, facts are stubborn. This is simply not the case. In fact, the notion that lax border policies are somehow responsible for this latest crisis is not just a myth; it is a, well, full misrepresentation driven by politicians who would rather create a political issue than to solve a very real problem.

The border today is more secure than it has ever been. There are more Border Patrol agents on the ground. There are more resources. There is more technology deployed on the border than at any time in our Nation's history—at any time. In fiscal year 2012, the Federal Government spent almost $18 billion—$17.9 billion—on immigration enforcement. That is $3.5 billion more than the budgets of all the other Federal law enforcement agencies combined—$3.5 billion more than the FBI's budget, plus the DEA's budget, the ATF budget, plus the Secret Service, plus the U.S. Marshals Service. These resources have made a difference. From fiscal year 2009 to 2012, the Department of Homeland Security seized 71 percent more currency, 39 percent more narcotics, 189 percent more weapons along the southwest border as compared to the last 4 years of the Bush administration.

It is important to remember that this crisis from refugees in Central America is not about children and families sneaking across our border like criminals. As we heard from the Senator from Maryland, many of these refugees seek out the first Border Patrol agent they can find in order to turn themselves in. Many of these children have walked across the border or across the Rio Grande with identification literally safety-pinned to their shirts. But that image does not serve the political interests of those who prefer a border crisis to a refugee crisis.

Let's step back and remember that the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration bill more than a year ago now—a bill that included incredibly important provisions to further strengthen our border but that would also protect refugee children and crack down on the smugglers and the transnational criminal organizations that are at the root of the current crisis.

Notably, this bill was widely supported by both Democrats and Republicans in the Senate Chamber.

Public support and good economics have not been enough to convince the House leaders to hold a vote on immigration reform, but they cannot turn a blind eye to the current humanitarian crisis along our Nation's southern border.

Instead of attacking the President, Senate Republicans should work with them to address the issue, and they should demand that their colleagues in the House act to fix our broken immigration system.

Additionally, passing the $3.7 billion supplemental sends a clear signal that we are aggressively stemming the flow of children and families from Central America while continuing to treat these refugee children humanely and as required under the law. This situation is an emergency and we need emergency funding.

Our immigrant communities have helped to write the economic, social, and cultural history of America. I know this firsthand. My own father is an immigrant who came to this country as a boy from Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

As a nation we value the twin promises of both freedom and opportunity. Those ideals are important no matter where you are born.

The fact is, our immigration system is broken. Those of us who represent border communities understand the challenge we face, but there are solutions—solutions before us that are pragmatic, bipartisan, and uphold our American values.

I am familiar with the promise America represents for families. I know how hard immigrants work, how much they believe in this country, and how much they are willing to give back to this country.

A small group of faith leaders from New Mexico penned an op-ed in the Albuquerque Journal over the weekend. In sharing their thoughts on this humanitarian crisis they wrote:

> While the current situation raises the issues in powerful ways, expressing hatred toward, fear of, or anger with women and children serves nothing to resolve national debate. Rather, it engenders a destructive spirit of mistrust. Let us seek to understand the immigrant's reasons for coming and to work collaboratively for just and reasonable immigration reform.

I could not agree more with these faith leaders.

It is time to fix our broken immigration system once and for all. Our short-term solution is to approve the President's emergency supplemental request now, and as part of our long-term solution we need House Republicans to put the Senate's immigration reform bill on the floor for a vote.

Our Nation will be the better for it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. I rise today to speak about the ongoing humanitarian crisis on our southern border. I thank my colleagues, Senator HEINRICH and Senator MIKULSKI, for their eloquent words in speaking to this issue.

As a woman and as an immigrant, my heart breaks for these children. My mother fled Japan, where I was born. She fled out of desperation to escape a terrible marriage. I came with her to this country as a young girl, and I remember how uncertain I was about what was in store for me.

Although we came by boat in steerage, at least we traveled safely and together. We did not face the kind of danger as did these children who are risking everything to be here. Their journeys to our border are lined with smugglers and traffickers. Children are arriving injured and malnourished. Yet they continue to come, not only to the United States but to other nearby countries, fleeing their countries out of desperation.

These children don't care about the DREAM Act or the Senate immigration reform bill. They are terrified of the violence, abuse, and death in their home countries. Young girls, who represent about 40 percent of the children who arrived this year, often face sexual assault and rape.

Let me share some recent stories from young girls who are fleeing. One girl fled an area of El Salvador controlled by gangs. Her brother was killed for refusing to join a gang that tried to forcibly recruit him. She was raped by two men and became pregnant as a result. She fled El Salvador and was attacked on her journey to the United States.

Another girl was kidnapped by a gang in Honduras that attempted to traffic her into prostitution. She escaped and reported the kidnapping to the police. The gang then abducted her again, raped her, and burned her with cigarettes. She fled to the United States and is seeking asylum.

Yet another girl fled El Salvador when she was 8 years old. Gang members had kidnapped her two older sisters. The girl's mother did not want her 8-year-old daughter to suffer the same fate, so she arranged for her daughter to be brought to the United States.

These are horrific stories. It is clear that something needs to be done.

I have worked with my colleague Senator MENENDEZ to introduce a comprehensive plan to address this issue. The plan aims to curtail trafficking and smuggling, contain the violence and discord in Central America, and ensure that these children have access to legal assistance and are in safe and humane conditions when they arrive.

This Friday I will also take some of my colleagues to McAllen and San Antonio, TX, to view facilities housing these children during the processing and removal process. We will see for ourselves the conditions that these children are in and meet with officials and leaders on the ground.

This crisis clearly demonstrates that inaction is not an option with regard to these children.

I urge my colleagues to support the supplemental funding needed for our country to meet their humanitarian needs. We have a responsibility to ensure that those in our custody are treated according to our values as a nation, and the President's request will allow our government to keep these commitments.

I would also urge my colleagues to reject the idea that the solution is to speed up the deportation of these children back to the dangerous conditions

they fled. Stripping away basic legal protections for children in these terrible situations will not solve this problem. As Senator HEINRICH so eloquently showed us, the conditions in their home countries are truly horrific.

To really address this situation, we need to do more work with our partners in the region to reduce violence and improve opportunities in their home countries. We must provide resources so that we can safely, fairly, and timely process these children, including asylum determination, as provided by law.

We should all look to our conscience in seeking a path forward. Surely we can do better than sending these children back to the horrific conditions that they are escaping. Out of sight is not out of mind. That is not what our country stands for.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the President's supplemental request, and I urge my colleagues to work together toward resolving the underlying process of this crisis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am very honored to follow my colleague from Hawaii and her eloquent and powerful remarks, as well as the Presiding Officer from New Mexico, who knows much firsthand about this issue and has really been a leader in this body for me and others. I thank the Presiding Officer for that leadership.

My view of this issue concerning the tens of thousands of young children making the difficult and dangerous journey to the United States from lands where they face violence and oppression is shaped by my meeting with some of them in my home State of Connecticut.

I had the opportunity to do so recently on a number of occasions, and it has deeply affected my own approach because what I have seen in them really inspires me. It inspires me because I understand better the reasons they have come here. The reasons they have come relate to the violence, the threat of torture, and the oppression they see in the lands they are leaving. They are coming here, many of them, for family reunification.

What struck me in speaking with these young children is they are coming here to reunify with relatives: their moms and dads, their aunts and uncles. They have come to be with members of their family and, of course, to seek education. They desperately want to go to school, and they want the opportunity simply for the freedom they see this country as epitomizing and embodying, the beacon of opportunity that drew so many of our forebears to this country, the lamp that is lit above the harbor of New York symbolically for all Americans, and the ideals this country embodies for the world. That is the reason people come and why our relatives, our own families came—one generation ago for me and perhaps more generations ago for others here.

So what we face is, in fact, a humanitarian crisis. It is a refugee crisis of children seeking asylum, family reunification, and escape from oppression, torture, and death in intolerable conditions in their home countries.

There is gang warfare that is a result of drug trading, pushed from Colombia to Central America to service better their customers in the United States. Their markets are here. This country provides the demand that fuels the trade—not only this country, of course, but all around the world.

But these children are the innocent victims of the warfare—gang warfare, market warfare that is fueled by a drug trade they have nothing to do with inciting or spurring. They are truly innocent victims.

The values this country embodies that drew them and drew our ancestors and our forebears to come are the values we must now remain true to serving. Among them is the ideal of due process and fairness to justice.

To say simply that we will deport all of them en masse, ask no questions, and put them on a bus really is a disservice to those values and ideals that this Nation embodies for the world—a source of our power in dealing with the world. Our power is not the result only of our air superiority, our great naval fleet, our brave warriors on the ground. It is truly the ideal that our military service and our military might serves to safeguard around the world.

Speaking of security, safety, and safeguarding our Nation, our border is secure, more secure than ever before—perhaps not perfectly secure—and more has to be done for border security, which immigration reform would help to accomplish.

The President has utilized an unprecedented level of resources in terms of both boots on the ground and advanced technology. There is no evidence to indicate any breakdown in border security.

What we have on our border is not a situation involving huge numbers of immigrants slipping into this country surreptitiously; they are coming here openly, surrendering themselves to authorities or being immediately apprehended by law enforcement.

This situation is entirely consistent with a fully effective border security apparatus.

If the current situation were caused by lack of policies in the United States, we would expect to see a large number of immigrant children only in this country. After all, the United States' policies apply only to the United States' borders but, in fact, that is not what we see. There are children seeking asylum and refugee status in many other Western Hemisphere countries—including some of the poorest in the world—a documented 712 percent increase in asylum seekers from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala since 2009.

We have seen no increase in illegal immigration from Mexico, which also would be happening if it were simply lax border security. Any way you look at the situation, the facts simply do not support the theory that America's border is in crisis. It is Central America that is in crisis—El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras are the sources of this humanitarian crisis.

Rolling back the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act will not solve a border problem and it will not uphold the values and ideals of this Nation. The protections of this law in fact are central to ensuring the United States of America does not send innocent children into situations where they would be harmed and killed.

So I would oppose a wholesale rollback of this law. We have to make sure that we do what is right and get this situation right, because the stakes are so very high. No one in this Chamber wants to be responsible for sending one child to their death because we failed to consider the complexity and provide the humanity this situation demands.

Not only would rolling back the Trafficking Victim Protection Reauthorization Act do harm—and we must first do no harm—but it would also hurt law enforcement. This act helps enforcement and our law enforcement authorities to gain crucial actionable intelligence about trafficking. This law reflects the fact that I learned during my law enforcement career, one of the keys to putting criminals behind bars is working closely with victims. In fact, victims are essential, their cooperation is vital to making the law enforceable and making sure it is enforced.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act encourages victims of trafficking to turn themselves in and cooperate with Border Patrol agents, and provide U.S. law enforcement with the information they need. They are not interested in arresting children. They want to arrest the traffickers, the drug lords, the top of the chain. That is so very important for our colleagues to understand.

The surge in drug trafficking and drug-related violence that has turned so many communities into war zones is driven by those gangs in Central America that are in turn driving also the flood of young children to this country. We have this crisis in common with them. It is a humanitarian crisis and a law enforcement challenge. Let us move toward immigration reform which will help to address that crisis by increasing border security, by enabling millions of people now in the shadows to have a path to earned citizenship, to make sure our values and ideals are upheld by the greatest Nation in the history of the world.

I thank all my colleagues who spoke today, and most especially thank Senator LEAHY and Senator FEINSTEIN for their decades of committed work on this issue. I look forward to working with them, the Presiding Officer, and

the majority leader, who has led this Chamber and this Nation so well on this issue.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 2244

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks tomorrow, Thursday, July 17, 2014, the Senate proceed to consideration of S. 2244, as provided under the previous order; that the debate time with respect to the bill and consideration of amendments in order to the bill be modified as follows: Coburn No. 3549, 30 minutes equally divided; Vitter No. 3550, 20 minutes equally divided; Flake No. 3551, 10 minutes equally divided; and Tester No. 3552, 30 minutes equally divided; further, that any remaining time until 12 noon be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that at noon the Senate proceed to votes in relation to the amendments as provided under the previous order; that upon disposition of the Tester amendment, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended; further, that there be 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote and all after the first vote be 10 minutes, with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JULIE E. CARNES TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed now to executive session to consider Calendar No. 849.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Julie E. Carnes, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk on this nomination.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Julie E. Carnes, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Elizabeth Warren, Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Christopher A. Coons, Dianne Feinstein, Angus S. King, Jr., Benjamin L. Cardin, Mazie K. Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Cory A. Booker, Martin Heinrich.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ANDRE BIROTTE, JR. TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 851.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Andre Birotte, Jr., of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk that I ask to be reported.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Andre Birotte, Jr., of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine, Angus S. King, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Bill Nelson, Jon Tester, Patty Murray, Claire McCaskill, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark Begich, Sheldon Whitehouse, Elizabeth Warren, Debbie Stabenow, Tom Harkin, Tom Udall.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to legislative session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ROBIN L. ROSENBERG TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 852.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Robin L. Rosenberg, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. There is a cloture motion at the desk, Mr. President.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Robin L. Rosenberg, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine, Angus S. King, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Bill Nelson, Jon Tester, Patty Murray, Claire McCaskill, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark Begich, Sheldon Whitehouse, Elizabeth Warren, Debbie Stabenow, Tom Harkin, Tom Udall.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JOHN W. DEGRAVELLES TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

Mr. REID. I now to move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 854.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John W. deGravelles, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Louisiana.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. There is a cloture motion at the desk that I ask the Chair to have reported.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of John W. deGravelles, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Louisiana.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Elizabeth Warren, Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Christopher A. Coons, Dianne Feinstein, Angus S. King, Jr., Benjamin L. Cardin, Mazie K. Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Cory A. Booker, Martin Heinrich.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to legislative session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed to morning business.

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

CONSUMER CHOICE AND WIRELESS COMPETITION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate passed commonsense legislation to help promote consumer choice and competition in the wireless phone marketplace. This legislation was a bipartisan effort to restore consumers' rights to unlock their cell phones so they can take their phones to the wireless network of their choice. Last year, over 110,000 consumers signed a petition calling for cell phone unlocking to be permitted. Their call was heard. I am pleased that the Senate has acted to pass this commonsense, bipartisan legislation that I authored with Senator GRASSLEY to promote consumer choice.

Once every 3 years, the Library of Congress undertakes a rulemaking under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, DMCA, to establish exemptions to the DMCA's prohibition on circumventing technological measures that control access to copyrighted works. From 2006 to 2012, the Library granted an exemption for cell phone unlocking that allowed users to change wireless providers after complying with their contracts. In its 2012 rulemaking, the Library did not recognize an exemption for new cell phones purchased after January 26, 2013. This act reinstates the Librarian's prior determination, ensuring that consumers will be able to use their phones on the network of their choice after satisfying their contracts without running afoul of our copyright laws.

The act takes two further steps to benefit consumers. First, it ensures that consumers who lack the technological savvy to unlock their phones themselves can authorize others to do the unlocking for them, in order for the owner or their family member to connect to a chosen wireless network. Second, in recognition of the growing importance to consumers of other wireless devices, such as tablets, the act directs the Librarian of Congress to determine whether such devices should also be eligible for unlocking. That determination will be part of the Librarian's next triennial rulemaking under the DMCA, which is set to begin later this year.

This legislation addresses the specific question of permitting consumers to unlock their cell phones to use on their chosen network consistent with the terms of their contract. The legislation creates no new obligations for cell phone manufacturers or wireless carriers, such as how a carrier may choose to process unlocking requests or provide unlocking codes. While there are larger ongoing debates about the DMCA, as well as other aspects of phone unlocking, those issues are not addressed by the bill. The bill takes a narrow, targeted approach to protect consumer choice and promote competition in the wireless industry.

I thank the Judiciary Committee ranking member, Senator GRASSLEY, and our other bipartisan cosponsors for working with me on this bill. I also thank the Republican and Democratic leadership of the House Judiciary Committee, who are continuing to work with us on this effort. I look forward to prompt consideration of the bill by the House and to the President signing it into law.

COLOMBIA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on June 15, 2014, President Juan Manuel Santos was elected to a second term as Colombia's President. This is not only a tribute to President Santos, who had staked his presidency on a courageous and risky peace initiative with the FARC who have waged a 30-year guerrilla war against the government, but also to the Colombian people.

There was every reason to believe that if President Santos' opponent, Óscar Iván Zuluaga, had won the election the peace negotiations would have been abandoned. Mr. Zuluaga had the strong backing of former President Uribe, whose aggressive leadership style and emphasis on security contributed to significant battlefield advances against the FARC, but his administration was plagued by scandal and human rights abuses. He has been a vociferous critic of President Santos and the peace negotiations. Instead, the Colombian people wisely recognized that the path to a more prosperous, secure country is through a peace process that addresses the underlying causes of the armed conflict, not an open-ended civil war fueled by cocaine that has already claimed countless innocent lives, uprooted millions of people, and impeded foreign investment.

I know from my own conversations with Members of Congress that President Santos has the support of people here of both parties. Since 2000, the Congress has supported billions of dollars in aid for social and economic development, counternarcotics, military, and humanitarian programs in Colombia. While there have been disagreements in some areas, particularly the slow pace of Colombia's justice system in holding accountable members of the security forces and paramilitaries who have been implicated in massacres of civilians and other human rights crimes, our support for Colombia has remained strong.

Colombia's greatest resource is its remarkable people. It is no wonder that Colombia, despite its many challenges, has remained a vibrant democracy while the governments of neighboring Venezuela and Ecuador have been dominated by messianic leaders who have systematically dismantled the institutions of democracy and a free press.

But another of Colombia's unique features is its biological and cultural diversity. The country is not only home to more species of flora and fauna than practically any other country in the world, it is also inhabited by a multitude of indigenous groups who speak many languages and live in various stages of isolation.

Many of us have visited Cartagena and Bogota, but I suspect few people here are aware that Colombia boasts one of the hemisphere's most extensive systems of national parks. They range from Caribbean islands and coral reefs, to glacier-covered mountain peaks, semi-arid desert, and tropical rainforest with dramatic rock outcroppings and cascading waterfalls. The variety of Colombia's species of birds alone dwarfs that of most countries.

I mention this to pay tribute to President Santos who has been a strong supporter of Colombia's national parks and indigenous reserves,

and Julia Miranda who has ably led the National Park Service with tireless energy and unwavering commitment for a decade.

I also want to commend President Santos for his decision last week to protect the Estrella Fluvial de Infrida under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. This is one of the most important reserves of fresh water in the world, covering an area larger than Florida's Everglades. It is home to 415 of Colombia's bird species and 470 fish species, so this designation will play a crucial role in protecting Colombia's biodiversity for future generations.

Coupled with last year's doubling in size of the extraordinary Chiribiquete National Park, these steps to protect Colombia's natural environment will be even more important if a peace agreement is signed that ushers in a period of greater security. While Colombia's oil and coal reserves are finite and their extraction can cause lasting social and environmental harm, Colombia's national parks offer limitless ecotourism potential that over the long term can bring far greater benefits to the country.

CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE CENTENNIAL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, there is no shortage of questions facing Congress today, and when Members and their staffs need additional information or detailed research on these complex topics, we often turn to the dedicated analysts at the Congressional Research Service, CRS. Today marks the 100th anniversary of CRS, and in the last century it has grown to become one of the most valued resources on Capitol Hill.

Informed decisions are better decisions for the American people and for the Nation. The Congressional Research Service provides research materials, historical snapshots, and confidential memoranda that help Members of Congress and their staffs prepare for debates on vital—and sometimes historic—issues. The office also provides often insightful briefings for Members of Congress and their staffs. Publicly, the office provides summaries of proposed legislation, available through the useful Thomas.gov website. In certain instances, the CRS provides useful research tools which Members are able to make available to the public.

One such example was a report that the Congressional Research Service produced earlier this year at my request. Vermont is wrestling with how to effectively combat opiate abuse in our very rural State. Our State has taken a community-based approach to the issue, involving not only law enforcement and health providers, but also faith leaders, local officials, business owners, and nonprofit advocacy groups. In March, I was pleased to take the Senate Judiciary Committee to Vermont to hear firsthand how these approaches are having an impact in addressing addiction in the State. But equally important to Vermont is knowing how other States are dealing with heroin and opioid abuse. The Congressional Research Service prepared a useful document, ''Prevention and Treatment of Heroin and Other Opioid Abuse in the States,'' which helped illustrate how other States are dealing with addiction.

Analysts for CRS include subject matter experts in such issue areas as American law; domestic social policy; foreign affairs; defense and trade; government and finance and resources; and science and industry. I have in the past supported efforts to make many of the reports produced by the CRS available to the public. It is an effort I continue to support. I believe students, researchers, and our constituents would benefit from access to this useful information.

In the 100 years since Congress established the Legislative Reference Service, the small office has evolved into the Congressional Research Service of today, which encompasses a staff of 600 analysts, lawyers, information professionals, and management and infrastructure support staff. On the occasion of its 100th anniversary, I thank the dedicated staff of the Congressional Research Service—both past and present—for their public service and commitment to fulfilling the office's core value of providing objective and nonpartisan evaluations of policy matters to Congress.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the Congressional Research Service, CRS. The CRS is celebrating its centennial this week.

Established as the Legislative Reference Service in 1914, the CRS has been assisting Members of Congress in their legislative work by providing reference information and nonpartisan policy analysis for 100 years.

I wish to thank the diligent and professional staff of the CRS that provide an invaluable service to Congress.

BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, sections 114(d) and 116(c) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, allow the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to revise the allocations, aggregates, and levels for a number of deficit-neutral reserve funds. These reserve funds were incorporated into the Bipartisan Budget Act by reference to S. Con. Res. 8, the Senate-passed budget resolution for 2014. Among these sections is a reference to section 319 of S. Con. Res. 8, which establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for terrorism risk insurance. The authority to adjust enforceable levels in the Senate for terrorism risk insurance is contingent on that legislation not increasing the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2014 through 2019 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2014 through 2024.

I find that S. 2244, the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2014, as reported on June 23, 2014, fulfills the conditions of the deficit-neutral reserve fund for terrorism risk insurance. Therefore, pursuant to sections 114(d) and 116(c) of H. J. Res. 59, I am adjusting the budgetary aggregates, as well as the allocation to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

I ask unanimous consent that the following tables detailing the revisions be printed in the RECORD.

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

BUDGETARY AGGREGATES—PURSUANT TO SECTION 116 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 AND SECTION 311 OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974

$s in millions	2015	2015–19	2015–24
Current Budgetary Aggregates:*			
Spending:			
Budget Authority	2,940,093	n/a	n/a
Outlays	3,004,206	n/a	n/a
Revenue	2,533,388	13,882,333	31,202,135
Adjustments Made Pursuant to Sections 114(d) and 116(c) of the Bipartisan Budget Act:**Spending:Budget Authority			
Spending:			
Budget Authority	120	n/a	n/a
Outlays	120	n/a	n/a
Revenue	0	1,770	4,000
Revised Budgetary Aggregates:Spending:Budget Authority			
Spending:			
Budget Authority	2,940,213	n/a	n/a
Outlays	3,004,326	n/a	n/a
Revenue	2,533,388	13,884,103	31,206,135

n/a = Not applicable. Appropriations for fiscal years 2016–2024 will be determined by future sessions of Congress and enforced through future Congressional budget resolutions.

*The levels for ''Current Budgetary Aggregates'' include a disaster cap adjustment made on 6/16/2014 for the Committee on Appropriations.

**Adjustments made pursuant to sections 114(d) and 116(c) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, which incorporate by reference section 319 of S. Con. Res. 8, as passed by the Senate. Section 319 establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for terrorism risk insurance.

REVISIONS TO THE BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OUTLAY ALLOCATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS PURSUANT TO SECTION 116 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 AND SECTION 302 OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974

$s in millions	Committee on Banking. Housing, and Urban Affairs		
	Current Allocation	Adjustments*	Revised Allocation
Fiscal Year 2015:			
Budget Authority	24,537	120	24,657
Outlays	5,071	120	5,191
Fiscal Years 2015–2019:			
Budget Authority	114,495	1,690	116,185
Outlays	−4,264	1,690	−2,574
Fiscal Years 2015–2024:			
Budget Authority	206,853	3,540	210,393
Outlays	−56,229	3,540	−52,689

*Adjustments made pursuant to sections 114(d) and 116(c) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, which incorporate by reference section 319 of S. Con. Res. 8, as passed by the Senate. Section 319 establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for terrorism risk insurance.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SECOND LIEUTENANT JERED W. EWY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I wish to remember the life and sacrifice of a remarkable young man, Army 2LT Jered W. Ewy. Along with one other soldier, Jered died July 29, 2011, of injuries he sustained when his unit was attacked with improvised explosive devices in the town of Janak Kheyl, Paktia Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

After graduating from Putnam City North High School, Jered enlisted in the Army Rangers in 1998 and was one of the first on the ground in Afghanistan after the tragic events of September 11, 2001. He served three tours of duty and then joined the Oklahoma National Guard in 2003 and served as an instructor.

While serving in the National Guard, Jered attended the University of Central Oklahoma pursuing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. ''What I wanted him to do was take the degree and get into law enforcement with the Department of Justice,'' his father, John Ewy said. ''He turned it down because he missed the camaraderie.''

While attending school he taught gymnastics in Edmond, OK. Although he was very involved in the community and truly enjoyed coaching the kids, ''Gym was just kind of a side job while he could finish up school,'' added Dena Edwards. ''I think the military was pretty much where his heart lies.''

In January 2011 he graduated from Officer Candidate School and was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oklahoma Army National Guard. He deployed to Afghanistan in June 2011.

''This loss of life has shaken every member of the Oklahoma National Guard to their core,'' said MG Myles L. Deering, Adjutant General for Oklahoma. ''We have lost two very brave men who once raised their hands and took an oath to defend our nation. They courageously gave everything they had to ensure our freedom and safety and their sacrifice will not be forgotten.''

''Jered was a man of integrity, discipline and honor who put everyone else first,'' family members wrote in his obituary. ''He cared deeply about the men he served with but his true passion in his life was his wife Megan and infant daughter Kyla.''

On August 11, 2011, the family held church services at Henderson Hills Baptist Church in Edmond, OK.

He is survived by his wife Megan of Edmond, daughter Kyla, mother Martha Nelson of Edmond, father and stepmother John and Ann Ewy of Moore, grandmother Harriet Ewy, siblings, Penny Clark and her husband Rob of Moore, Michelle Davis and her children Hayden, Colton and Cody, and Chad Nelson of Edmond, and many uncles and cousins.

Today we remember Army 2LT Jered W. Ewy, a young man who loved his family and country and gave his life as a sacrifice for freedom.

SERGEANT ANTHONY DEL MAR PETERSON

Mr. President, it is my honor to also honor the life and sacrifice of Army SGT Anthony Del Mar Peterson, of Chelsea, OK who died on August 4, 2011, serving our nation in Paktya province, Afghanistan. Sergeant Peterson was assigned to B Company, 1st Battalion, 279th Infantry, 45th Brigade Combat Team, OK Army National Guard.

Sergeant Peterson died of wounds suffered during a dismounted patrol when a group of insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire in the Zurmat district of Paktya province, Afghanistan. Anthony had previously been deployed to Afghanistan in 2006–2007.

My heartfelt prayers go out to Dakota Justice Peterson, the young son Sergeant Peterson left behind. I remain confident he will grow to learn of his father's heroism; and pray the honor of his father may be carried with pride and cultivate in him, the character of his father.

Upon hearing of Sergeant Peterson's death, MG Myles Deering, the Adjutant General for Oklahoma stated, ''Oklahoma has lost another brave son. Sergeant Peterson was an exceptional Soldier who worked tirelessly to protect the values that we as Americans hold close to our hearts.''

Sergeant Peterson has also been described as an excellent non-commissioned officer and a committed soldier. Another friend has said that he will remember his zest for life, and his passion to lead others to Christ.

Born December 8, 1986 in Sacramento, CA, Anthony graduated from Chelsea High School in 2005 and Rogers State University in Claremore, OK in 2008. He was active in Campus Crusade for Christ, Baptist Collegiate, Rescue (Outreach Program), and Stop Child Trafficking, OATH.

He enjoyed hiking, camping, canoeing, hunting, and spending time with his family and friends. The most important things in his life were: God, family, and his country. Anthony's favorite quote was, ''Come home with your shield—or on it.''

Anthony is survived by his son, Dakota Justice Peterson of Owasso, parents, Garth and Terra Peterson of Owasso, siblings: Robert Edward Peterson, and Brittany Nicole Louise Peterson both of Owasso, grandparents: Ed and Gail Peterson of Chelsea, Paula and Richard Jones of Post Falls, ID, Les Marubashi of Chelsea, and Toni and Frank Trejo of Coquille, OR, nephew, Carter Myles Thomas of Owasso, and numerous extended family members who loved him.

I extend our deepest gratitude and condolences to Anthony's family. He lived a life of love for his son, family, friends, and our country. He will be remembered for his commitment to and belief in the greatness of our Nation. I am honored to pay tribute to this true American hero who volunteered to go into the fight and made the ultimate sacrifice of his life for our freedom.

ARMY SERGEANT MYCAL L. PRINCE

Mr. President, I am also honored to remember Army SGT Mycal L. Prince. Sergeant Prince was tragically killed in action on September 15, 2011, in Saygal Valley, Laghman Province, Afghanistan when enemy forces attacked his unit with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire.

Mycal was born July 16, 1983, in Chickasha, OK, to Harold and Arnetta—Schoolfield—Prince. After graduating from Ninnekah High School in 2001, he completed cleet training and served as a police officer in Rush Springs for 3 years. On October 25, 2001, he married Surana Smith in Chickasha, and they later moved to Minco in May 2009 where he served as a police officer with the K–9 Unit for 2 years.

Minco Police Chief Phil Blevins said, ''He was one of the most professional and squared away young men I've ever met. He had things together in his family life, in his professional life. It's unbelievable for a man who is 28 how mature he was in all areas of his life.''

Mycal was a member of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry, Oklahoma National Guard. He deployed to Afghanistan for his third tour on July 29, 2011.

''Sgt. Prince served his nation and this great state for more than a decade with honor and distinction,'' MG Myles L. Deering, Oklahoma's Adjutant General, said in a statement. ''He joined the Guard five days after his 17th birthday. I think that says a lot about the kind of man Sgt. Prince was. He deployed to help the people of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and went to Iraq in 2008. He could have gotten out of the service, but he chose to stay and serve his country.''

Mycal was preceded in death by his father, Harold Prince, one child, and his paternal and maternal grandparents. He is survived by his wife Surana of Minco, two daughters, Raelynn and Mycaela of Minco, mother, Arnetta Prince of Stonewall, sister, Leslie Dickenson and husband Wade of Stonewall, sister, Kathy Prince of Stonewall, and Cody Prince as well as many nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

Funeral services with full military honors were held on September 26, 2011, at Bridge Assembly of God Church in Mustang, OK. Mycal was laid to rest in Bradley Cemetery in Bradley, OK.

Today we remember Army SGT Mycal L. Prince, a young man who loved his family and country, and gave his life as a sacrifice for freedom.

RECOGNIZING THE WAYNE FAMILY

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the distinguished Wayne family legacy in Louisiana. On April 29, 2014, Guinness World Records officially recognized the Wayne family as having the most family members to graduate from Grambling State University.

Beginning in the 1940s, a total of 86 descendants of the Wayne family have attended Grambling State University. More than five generations of this Marion, LA family have studied at this storied institution and pursued lasting careers as military administrators and officers, doctors, lawyers, professors, professional athletes, and more. Through their years of service, this family has created enduring changes in a wide breadth of research and direction to impact and improve the lives of all those within their communities.

The Wayne family sets the Guinness World Record for ''Most family members to graduate from the same university'' with 40 approved relatives from the Wayne record. This outstanding accomplishment is a testament to the family's unparalleled devotion to education and to one of Louisiana's Historically Black College and Universities, Grambling State University. The continued commitment of this proud Louisiana family sets a new standard of both professional and educational aspiration and leaves a lasting legacy of achievement for generations to come.

Among this family's graduates of Grambling State University are: Alma McElroy Andrews, descendent of Matilda Wayne McElroy; Gloria Marie Brown, descendent of Ida Wayne Rivers; Claudine Williams, Dossie Roger Williams Jr., Shelia E. Williams, Verjanis Andrews Peoples, Stevie Andrews, Tjuana T. Williams, and Marcus D. Andrews, descendants of King Wayne; Rose Wayne, Ronald Wayne, Patricia Wayne Williams, and Stephanie Williams, descendants of John Wayne Sr; Ellis D. Wayne, LaJeane Holley and Mary Will Johnikin, descendants of Moses Wayne; Shirley Wayne, Ralph Wayne, and Larry Wayne, descendants of William Thomas Wayne, Sr.; Hattie Wayne, Donald Wayne Tatum, Saundra Tatum, Rashia Tatum, Jr., Renee Tatum, Michael Tatum, Christopher Tatum, Dawn Michelle Tatum, Nicholas Tatum, Kevin Parks, Cathy Denise Wasson Conwright, and Veronica Lee, descendants of Sandy Wayne, Sr.; John Earl Ellis, Willie Raymond Ellis, and Marcia N. Ellis, descendants of Sam Wayne; and Leola Wayne Taylor, Willie B. Wayne, Albert Jackson, Debra Jackson Gilliard, Margaret Jackson Riley, and DaRandall D. Riley, descendants of Willie Wayne. This family has promoted a continued dedication to education and accomplishment for all those who are a part of the communities that their exceptional careers have impacted.

This family has been and continues to be an inspiration to all those who have benefitted from the contributions the Wayne descendants have made. It is with my heartfelt and greatest sincerity that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the incredible legacy of the Wayne family at Grambling State University, as well as their lasting impact throughout the State of Louisiana and the world.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FAYETTE COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I wish to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Fayette County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Fayette County worth over $4.7 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than $9 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memory of working together has to be the implementation of a downtown geothermal project through Main Street Iowa dollars, as well as funding to rehabilitate the Bus Barn building in West Union.

Among the highlights: Main Street Iowa: One of the greatest challenges we face—in Iowa and all across America—is preserving the character and vitality of our small towns and rural communities. This is not just about economics. It is also about maintaining our identity as Iowans. Main Street Iowa helps preserve Iowa's heart and soul by providing funds to revitalize downtown business districts. This program has allowed towns like West Union to use that money to leverage other investments to jumpstart change and renewal. I am so pleased that Fayette County has earned $150,000 through this program. These grants build much more than buildings. They build up the spirit and morale of people in our small towns and local communities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than $132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Fayette County has received $2,145,041 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Fayette County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling $216,050.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans

that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Fayette County has received more than $3.2 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to Statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Fayette County's fire departments have received over $1.5 million for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Disability rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in Iowa—not just in curb cuts or closed captioned television, but in the full participation of people with disabilities in our society and economy, folks who at long last have the opportunity to contribute their talents and to be fully included. These changes have increased economic opportunities for all citizens of Fayette County, both those with and without disabilities. And they make us proud to be a part of a community and country that respects the worth and civil rights of all of our citizens.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Fayette County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Fayette County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

JACKSON COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Jackson County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Jackson County worth over $5.5 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than $16 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memories of working together have to include allocating more than $4.9 million to rehabilitate Lock and Dam 12 on the Mississippi River at Bellevue. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, each lock and dam produces $1 billion per year in transportation cost savings to ship goods and raw materials, keeping the economy in Iowa moving.

Among the highlights: School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than $132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Jackson County has received $642,107 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Jackson County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling $82,500.

Disaster mitigation and prevention: In 1993, when historic floods ripped through Iowa, it became clear to me that the national emergency-response infrastructure was woefully inadequate to meet the needs of Iowans in flood-ravaged communities. I went to work dramatically expanding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's hazard mitigation program, which helps communities reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and enables mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery period. Disaster relief means more than helping people and businesses get back on their feet after a disaster, it means doing our best to prevent the same predictable flood or other catastrophe from recurring in the future. The hazard mitigation program that I helped create in 1993 provided critical support to Iowa communities impacted by the devastating floods of 2008. Jackson County has received over $11 million to remediate and prevent widespread destruction from natural disasters.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Jackson County has received more than $1.4 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Jackson County's fire departments have received over $1 million for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Disability rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in Iowa—not just in curb cuts or closed captioned television, but in the full participation of people with disabilities in our society and economy, folks who at long last have the opportunity to

contribute their talents and to be fully included. These changes have increased economic opportunities for all citizens of Jackson County, both those with and without disabilities, and they make us proud to be a part of a community and country that respects the worth and civil rights of all of our citizens.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Jackson County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Jackson County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:01 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 bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 306. An act for the relief of Corina de Chalup Turcinovic.

H.R. 3086. An act to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 4:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 697. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in Clark County, Nevada, for the environmental remediation and reclamation of the Three Kids Mine Project Site, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 306. An act for the relief of Corina de Chalup Turcinovic; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2609. A bill to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5021. An act to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC–6440. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Michael T. Flynn, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6441. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of twenty-nine (29) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general, as indicated, in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6442. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General William L. Shelton, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6443. A communication from the Chief Information Officer, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Department of Defense Next Generation Host-Based CyberSecurity System''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6444. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary, Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6445. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist of the Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Assessment of Fees'' (RIN1557–AD82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6446. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA): Changes to the Section 8 Tenant-Based Voucher and Section 8 Project-Based Voucher Programs'' (RIN2577–AC83) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6447. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's management reports and statements on system of internal controls for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6448. A communication from the Director, National Legislative Commission, The American Legion, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the financial condition of The American Legion as of December 31, 2013 and 2012; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–6449. A communication from the Biologist, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reclassification of the U.S. Breeding Population of the Wood Stork From Endangered to Threatened'' (RIN1018–AX60) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6450. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Policy on Interpretation of the Phrase 'Significant Portion of Its Range' in the Endangered Species Act's Definitions of 'Endangered Species' and 'Threatened Species''' (RIN1018–AX49; 0648–BA78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6451. A communication from the Branch Chief, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Listing the Yellow-Billed Parrot With Special Rule, and Correcting the Salmon-Crested Cockatoo Special Rule'' (RIN1018–AY28) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6452. A communication from the Chief of the Permits and Regulations Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Migratory Bird Permits; Extension of Expiration Dates for Double-Crested Cormorant Depredation Orders'' (RIN1018–AX82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6453. A communication from the Regulations Specialist, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska—2014–2015 and 2015–2016 Subsistence Taking of Wildlife Regulations'' (RIN1018–AY85) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6454. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog and Northern Distinct Population Segment of the Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog, and Threatened Species Status for Yosemite Toad'' (RIN1018–AZ21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6455. A communication from the Acting Chairman, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–6456. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Effective Date for Temporary Pilot Program Setting the Time and Place for a Hearing Before an Administrative Law Judge'' (RIN0960–AH67) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 14, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6457. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidelines for the Streamlined Process of Applying for Recognition of Section 501(c) (3) Status'' ((RIN1545–BM07) (TD 9674)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 14, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6458. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Mid-Session Review Budget of the U.S. Government Fiscal Year 2015''; to the Committees on Appropriations; and the Budget.

EC–6459. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6460. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Priority. National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research—Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers'' (CFDA No. 84.133E–4.) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–6461. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Priority. National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research—Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers'' (CFDA No. 84.133B–8.) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–6462. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at Nuclear Metals, Inc. in West Concord, Massachusetts, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–6463. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General Semiannual Report for the period of October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6464. A communication from the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Management Response for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6465. A communication from the National Chairman, Naval Sea Cadet Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, two reports entitled ''2013 Annual Report of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps'' and ''2013 Financial Statement of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–6466. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A Helicopters (Type certificate currently held by Agusta Westland S.p.A) (Agusta)'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0336)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6467. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France) (Airbus Helicopters) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0984)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6468. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airplanes Originally Manufactured by Lockheed for the Military as Model P–3A and P3A Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–1073)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6469. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0368)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6470. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. (Bell) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0697)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6471. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–1031)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6472. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France) (Airbus Helicopters) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0938)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6473. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0334)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6474. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Costruzioni Aeronautiche Tecnam srl Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0156)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6475. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dornier Luftfahrt GmbH Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–1056)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6476. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0281)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6477. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0141)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6478. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dowty Propellers Propellers'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2008–1088)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6479. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd & Co KG Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0882)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6480. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0340)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6481. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada (Bell) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0574)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6482. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Przedsiebiorstwo Doswiadczalno-Produkcyjne Szybownictwa 'PZL–Bielsko' Model SZD–50–3 'Puchacz' Sailplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0180)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6483. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A (Agusta) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0379)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6484. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of

a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0378)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6485. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. (BHTI) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2012–0415)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6486. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Redmond, OR'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0171)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6487. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Newnan, GA'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0097)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6488. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Elkin, NC'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0046)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6489. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Mineral Point, WI'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0914)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6490. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Conway, AR'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0178)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6491. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Crandon, WI'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0022)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6492. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Bois Blanc Island, MI'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0986)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6493. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class W Airspace; Taylor, TX'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0013)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6494. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Part 95 Instrument Flight Rules; Miscellaneous Amendments No. (514)'' (RIN2120–AA63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6495. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (49); Amdt. No. 3593'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6496. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (126); Amdt. No. 3592'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6497. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (195); Amdt. No. 3594'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6498. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (38); Amdt. No. 3591'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6499. A communication from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Connect America Fund'' ((RIN3060–AF85) (FCC 14–54)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 16, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6500. A communication from the Associate Managing Director-Performance Evaluation and Records Management, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Proposed Amendments to the Service Rules Governing Public Safety Narrowband Operations in the 769–775/799–805 MHz Bands'' ((FCC 13–40) (WT Docket No. 96–86)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6501. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the designation of a group as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the Secretary of State (OSS–2014–0907); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–303. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California calling upon the Congress and the President of the United States to stabilize the federal Highway Trust Fund by developing a long-term plan to promote adequate federal Highway Trust Fund revenues; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 24

Whereas, A safe, efficient, and reliable surface transportation network is vital to California's future economic growth, quality of life, and security; and

Whereas, Inadequate investment in California's highway and bridge infrastructure system is having a dramatic impact on the citizens of California, causing them to spend too much time idling on increasingly congested roads and bridges rather than with their families; and

Whereas, The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP–21), that authorized the federal highway and public transportation programs, will expire September 30, 2014; and

Whereas, The federal Highway Trust Fund and its user fee-based revenue stream supports all federal investment in highway and bridge improvements and the vast majority of the federal public transportation program; and

Whereas, The federal Highway Trust Fund experienced revenue shortfalls in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2012 that created uncertainty about federal surface transportation investment commitments; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Transportation will begin slowing reimbursements to states for already approved federal-aid projects as early as July of this year to preserve a positive balance in the federal Highway Trust Fund; and

Whereas, The Congressional Budget Office reports the federal Highway Trust Fund will be unable to support any new highway or public transportation spending in the 2015 fiscal year absent congressional action to increase trust fund revenues; and

Whereas, Eliminating federal highway and public transportation investment in one year would threaten hundreds of thousands of jobs nationwide and severely disrupt California's long-term transportation improvement plans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature urges timely action by the President and the Congress of the United States to stabilize the federal Highway Trust Fund by developing a long-term plan to promote adequate federal Highway Trust Fund revenues that achieves all of the following:

(a) Continues an appropriate role for the federal government in sustaining a viable national transportation system.

(b) Contributes to deficit reductions and economic growth.

(c) Ensures the integrity of the surface transportation program and resists funding diversions that have been harmful to public support.

(d) Allows the Congress to pass a reauthorization of the federal highway and public

transportation programs before MAP–21 expires; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the Senate, each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

POM–304. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of North Carolina urging the United States Congress to pass legislation to protect the Corolla wild horses so that they can survive as a free-roaming wild herd for future generations to enjoy; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE RESOLUTION 1257

Whereas, the Corolla wild horses living along the Outer Banks of Currituck County, North Carolina, are descendants of horses brought to the Americas by Spanish explorers and colonists beginning in the 16th century; and

Whereas, the Corolla wild horses are known as Colonial Spanish Mustangs; and

Whereas, these Colonial Spanish Mustangs have played a significant role in the history and culture of North Carolina's coastal area for hundreds of years; and

Whereas, in 2009, the General Assembly adopted these Colonial Spanish Mustangs as the official horse of the State of North Carolina; and

Whereas, the Corolla wild horses freely roam 7,500 acres of public and private land in Currituck County; and

Whereas, the Corolla wild horses have been managed through a public-private partnership that includes representatives of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the State of North Carolina, Currituck County, and the Corolla Wild Horse Fund; and

Whereas, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is insisting that no more than 60 horses be allowed in the herd; and

Whereas, world-renowned genetic scientists have determined that a herd of at least 110 horses, with a target population of 120 to 130 horses is necessary to maintain the genetic viability of the Corolla herd; and

Whereas, 110 to 130 horses is well within the carrying capacity of the land the Corolla wild horses roam; and

Whereas, the Corolla wild horses are a critical component of the heritage and economy of Currituck County: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

Section 1. This body urges Congress to pass legislation to protect the Corolla wild horses so that they can survive as a free-roaming wild herd for future generations to enjoy.

Section 2. The Principal Clerk shall transmit certified copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore and the Secretary of the United States Senate, and the members of the North Carolina Congressional delegation.

Section 3. This resolution is effective upon adoption.

POM–305. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts expressing its support for the people of Nigeria, especially the parents and families of the girls abducted by certain individuals, and calling for the immediate and safe return of the girls; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

RESOLUTIONS

Whereas, as many as 234 female students, the majority of whom are between 16 to 18 years of age, were kidnapped by armed men from the government girls secondary school in the Federal Republic of Nigeria on April 14, 2014 and efforts by the United States to aid in their rescue are underway;

Whereas, Militants burned down several buildings, then shot at soldiers and police who were guarding the school; and

Whereas, Public secondary schools in Nigeria have been subjected to many attacks in 2014, resulting in hundreds of students being killed; and

Whereas, the militant group known as Boko Haram has taken responsibility for this mass kidnapping; and

Whereas, United Nations has declared that girls' education is a major challenge in Nigeria and, according to the world economic forum's global gender gap index, Nigeria is ranked 106 out of 136 countries based on women's economic participation, educational attainment and political empowerment; and

Whereas, the United States Senate has affirmed that women and girls must be allowed to go to school without fear of violence and unjust treatment so that they can take their rightful place as equal citizens of and contributors to the world; and

Whereas, the Massachusetts Senate has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to ending discrimination and violence against women and girls, to ensuring the safety, welfare and education of women and girls and to pursuing policies that guarantee the rights of women and girls: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Massachusetts Senate hereby expresses its strong support for the people of Nigeria, especially the parents and families of the girls abducted by Boko Haram and calls for the immediate and safe return of the girls; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted forthwith by the Clerk of the Senate to the President of the United States, the Presiding Officer of each branch of Congress and to the members thereof from the Commonwealth.

POM–306. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan urging the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the Congress of the United States to invoke the participation of the International Joint Commission under Article IX, Article X, or both, of the Boundary Waters Treaty to evaluate the proposed underground nuclear waste repository in Ontario, Canada, and similar facilities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 151

Whereas, Ontario Power Generation is proposing to construct an underground, long-term burial facility for low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste at the Bruce Nuclear Generating Station. This site is less than a mile inland from the shore of Lake Huron; and

Whereas, Placing a permanent nuclear waste burial facility so dose to the Great Lakes shoreline is a matter of serious concern for the inhabitants of the Great Lakes states and provinces. A leak or breach of radioactivity from this waste facility could damage the ecology of the lakes. Tens of millions of United States and Canadian citizens depend on the lakes for drinking water, fisheries, tourism, recreation, and other industrial and economic uses; and

Whereas, Michigan recognizes the duty of the legislative branch of government to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens and the state's natural resources. Article IV, Section 50 of the Michigan Constitution authorizes the Legislature to regulate atomic energy in view of the safety and general welfare of the people. Article IV, Section 51 declares that the public health and general welfare of the people of the state are matters of primary public concern, while Article IV, Section 52 requires the Legislature to provide for the protection of the air, water, and other natural resources of the state from pollution, impairment, and destruction; and

Whereas, The Michigan Legislature has recognized the inherent dangers of siting a radioactive waste storage facility near the shores of the Great Lakes. Under Public Act No. 204 of 1987, the final siting criteria for a radioactive waste facility containing the same types of waste as would be stored at the proposed Ontario repository includes a prohibition on siting it within 10 miles of one of the Great Lakes, the Saint Mary's River, Detroit River, St. Clair River, or Lake St. Clair; and

Whereas, The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) is a binational agreement to address critical environmental health issues in the Great Lakes region, with the overall purpose of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Great Lakes. Article 6 of the GLWQA acknowledges the importance of anticipating, preventing, and responding to threats to the Great Lakes and recognizes that a nuclear waste facility sited close to the Greg Lakes shoreline could lead to a pollution incident or could have a significant cumulative impact on the waters of the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, The 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty recognizes the immense importance of the Great Lakes as a shared resource between the United States and Canada. The wisdom of the Treaty drafters is reflected in the creation of the International Joint Commission (IJC), composed of three members from the United States and three members from Canada, to act as impartial watchdogs over the boundary waters between the countries. Under Article IX of the Treaty, questions or matters of difference between the countries involving their rights, obligations, or interests along their common frontier may be referred to the IJC for examination and report, upon the request of either country. Under Article X, the IJC may be asked to make a binding decision on an issue of difference between the two countries, upon the consent and referral by both the United States and Canada; and

Whereas, The IJC has frequently been asked to weigh in on major topics of concern to the Great Lakes region. In 1912, a few years after the Treaty's ratification, the IJC was asked to examine and report on the extent, causes, and location of pollution in the boundary waters and to recommend remedies and pollution prevention strategies. In 1999, the IJC was asked to study the international export of bulk supplies of Great Lakes water. The IJC provides an objective and international forum to study Great Lakes issues that affect both countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the Congress of the United States to invoke the participation of the International Joint Commission under Article IX, Article X, or both, of the Boundary Waters Treaty to evaluate the proposed underground nuclear waste repository in Ontario, Canada, and similar facilities; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge the other Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces to adopt appropriate regulations to protect the Great Lakes region from radioactive waste and to petition their respective federal governments to engage the IJC under Article IX, Article X, or both, of the Boundary Waters Treaty to evaluate the proposed underground nuclear waste repository in Ontario, Canada, and similar facilities; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge the Prime Minister of Canada and the Canadian Parliament to suspend the Joint Review Panel process convened by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to decide whether to grant Ontario Power Generation a license to construct the underground nuclear waste repository so that it can receive input from the IJC, the Great Lakes Commission, and the state of Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Canada, the United States Secretary of State, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, the Speaker of the Canadian Senate, the Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, and the governors or premiers and the legislative majority leaders in Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Ontario, and Quebec.

POM–307. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of North Carolina urging the United States Congress to enact legislation that will lead to the recognition of World War II Coastwise Merchant Mariners as veterans of the United States Armed Forces; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HOUSE RESOLUTION 1256

Whereas, during World War II, United States Merchant Mariners who served along the coastline of the United States, and were known as Coastwise Merchant Mariners, helped to transport materials, including food, clothing, and weapons, to members of the United States Armed Forces serving on three continents; and

Whereas, the Coastwise Merchant Mariners bravely performed their duties even as they were in danger of attack from German U-boats operating along our nation's coastal waters; and

Whereas, many of the Coastwise Merchant Mariners were elderly, handicapped, women, and underage children who stepped forward in the time of a national crisis to ensure that the members of the United States Armed Forces were sufficiently supplied as they fought enemy forces; and

Whereas, because of administrative rules and decisions made by the United States Navy, many Coastwise Merchant Mariners who served during World War II were not recognized as veterans and thus were not eligible for the veterans benefits they had earned; and

Whereas, in the years following World II, as a result of some changes in federal law and federal rules and regulations, some of the Coastwise Merchant Mariners previously denied veterans benefits were finally recognized as veterans and therefore entitled to the same benefits as other veterans of the United States Armed Forces; and

Whereas, despite the past recognition of some Coastwise Merchant Mariners as veterans, as many as 30,000 Coastwise Merchant Mariners may never get that recognition due to the documentation required to prove their service during World War II; and

Whereas, through no fault of these courageous individuals, much of the documentation proving they served their country during World War II as Coastwise Merchant Mariners has been lost or destroyed or was never recorded; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

SECTION 1. The House of Representatives honors the brave men, women, and children who valiantly served our country as Coastwise Merchant Mariners during World War II.

SECTION 2. The House of Representatives urges Congress to do the following:

(1) Conduct congressional inquiries into (i) the lack of recognition given to the World War II Coastwise Merchant Mariners who were lost in action without having been recognized by our nation as veterans and (ii) the reason World War II Coastwise Merchant Mariners records that are known to exist have not been moved to the National Records Center for use by families and researchers in accordance with agreements between the National Archives and Records Administration and the Department of Defense.

(2) Enact legislation that expands the types of acceptable documentation that Coastwise Merchant Mariners may use to prove their service during World War II, and to thereafter require that those who can provide the documentation be finally recognized as veterans entitled to the accompanying benefits.

SECTION 3. The Principal Clerk shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore and the Secretary of the United States Senate, the members of the North Carolina Congressional delegation, and the news media of North Carolina.

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon adoption.

POM–308. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania expresging support for the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine, and calling on the United States and the European Union to continue to work together to support a peaceful resolution to the crisis; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 284

Whereas, A democratic, prosperous and independent Ukraine is in the national interest of the United States; and

Whereas, Closer relations with the European Union (EU) through the signing of an Association Agreement will promote democratic values, good governance and economic opportunity in Ukraine; and

Whereas, Millions of Ukrainian citizens support closer relations with Europe and the signing of an Association Agreement; and

Whereas, The Government of Ukraine has declared integration with Europe a national priority and has made significant progress toward meeting the requirements for the Association Agreement; and

Whereas, Ukraine has the sovereign right to enter into voluntary partnerships of its choosing, in keeping with its interests; and

Whereas, Ukraine's closer relations with the EU do not threaten any other country and will benefit both Ukraine and its neighbors; and

Whereas, On November 21, 2013, following several months of intense outside pressure, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych abruptly suspended negotiations on the Association Agreement one week before it was due to be signed at the EU's Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania; and

Whereas, This reversal of stated government policy precipitated demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens in Kyiv as well as in cities throughout the country; and

Whereas, The demonstrators were overwhelmingly peaceful and have sought to exercise their constitutional rights to freely assemble and express their oppositions to President Yanukovych's decision, as well as their support for greater government accountability and closer relations with Europe; and

Whereas, On November 30, 2013, police violently dispersed peaceful demonstrators in Kyiv's Independence Square, resulting in many injuries and the arrest of several dozen individuals; and

Whereas, On December 9, 2013, police raided three opposition media outlets and the headquarters of an opposition party; and

Whereas, On December 11, 2013, despite President Yanukovych's statement the previous day that he would engage in talks with the opposition, police attempted to forcibly evict peaceful protesters from central locations in Kyiv; and

Whereas, United States, European and other leaders, as well as three former presidents of Ukraine, urged restraint, warned against the use of violence against peaceful protesters and called for dialogue with the opposition to resolve the current political and economic crisis; and

Whereas, On January 16, 2014, the Ukrainian parliament passed, and President Yanukovych signed, legislation which severely limited the right of peaceful protest, constrained freedom of speech and the independent media and unduly restricted civil society organizations; and

Whereas, The passage of these undemocratic measures and President Yanukovych's refusal to engage in substantive dialogue with opposition leaders precipitated several days of violence and resulted in several deaths and hundreds of injuries, as well as numerous allegations of police brutality; and

Whereas, In the face of spreading demonstrations, Ukrainian Government representatives and opposition leaders entered into negotiations which on January 28, 2014, resulted in the resignation of the Prime Minister and his cabinet and the repeal of most of the antidemocratic laws from January 16, 2014; and

Whereas, On February 20, 2014, Ukrainian security forces, including heavily armed snipers, fired on demonstrators in Kyiv, leaving dozens dead and the people of Ukraine reeling from the most lethal day of violence since the Soviet era, and many of President Yanukovych's political allies, including the major of Kyiv, resigned from his governing Party of Regions to protest the bloodshed; and

Whereas, On February 22, 2014, the Ukrainian parliament found President Yanukovych unable to fulfill his duties, exercised its constitutional powers to remove him from office and set an election for May 25, 2014, to select his replacement; and

Whereas, On March 2, 2014, Russian troops invaded the Ukrainian territory of Crimea, seizing control of the peninsula, border crossings, government and administrative buildings, key infrastructure and surrounding Ukrainian military bases; and

Whereas, The military intervention by the Russian Federation in Crimea is a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity; and

Whereas, On March 16, 2014, Crimea held a referendum on seceding from Ukraine and acceding to the Russian Federation, which violated the Ukrainian constitution, occurred under duress of Russian military intervention and was not recognized by the international community; and

Whereas, On March 20, 2014, the Russian parliament noted to annex Crimea and Russian President Putin signed the treaty of accession annexing Crimea to the Russian Federation; and

Whereas, On April 7, 2014, protesters occupied government buildings in Ukraine's eastern cities of Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv; and

Whereas, On April 18, 2014, the United States, Russia, Ukraine and the European Union agreed at talks in Geneva on steps to de-escalate the crisis in eastern Ukraine; and

Whereas, On April 22, 2014, Ukraine's acting president ordered the relaunch of military operations against pro-Russian militants in the east after two men were found tortured to death in the Donetsk region; and

Whereas, On May 25, 2014, Ukraine held a presidential election, but most polling stations in the east remained closed; and

Whereas, Pedro Poroshenko was elected President and vowed to bring ''peace to a united and free Ukraine''; and

Whereas, The Senate greatly values the warm and close relationship the United States has established with Ukraine since that country regained its independence in 1991: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania express support for the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate call on the United States and the European Union to continue to work together to support a peaceful resolution to the crisis and to continue to support the desire of millions of Ukrainian citizens for closer relations with Europe through finalizing the signing of an Association Agreement, as well as for a democratic future; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate condemn the unprovoked and illegal Russian military seizure and annexation of the Ukrainian Crimea; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate urge the Government of Ukraine, Ukrainian opposition parties and all protesters to exercise the utmost restraint and avoid confrontation and call on the Government of the Ukraine to live up to its international obligations and respect and uphold the democratic rights of its citizens, including the freedom of assembly and expression, as well as the freedom of the press; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate urge all parties to engage in constructive, sustained dialogue in order to find a peaceful solution to Ukraine's current political and economic crisis; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of the resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the presiding officers of each house of Congress and each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM–309. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan urging the Congress of the United States to approve the Presidents budget proposal to provide 35 million dollars to help communities process evidence from untested sexual assault kits; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 382

Whereas, Sexual violence continues to plague our nation and destroy lives. Women and girls are the vast majority of victims, and nearly one in five women, or about 22 million, have been raped during their lifetimes. Men and boys are also at risk and one in 71 men, or about 1.6 million, have been raped during their lifetimes. Nearly one-half of all female rape survivors were raped before I8 years of age, and over one-quarter of male rape survivors were raped before 10 years of age; and

Whereas, Effective collection of forensic evidence is of paramount importance to successfully prosecuting sex offenders, as is performing sexual assault forensic exams in a sensitive, dignified, and victim-centered manner. Sexual assault forensic examinations are intrusive, lengthy, and complex medical examinations that take an average of three to four hours. A victim who agrees to a sexual assault forensic exam reasonably expects evidence collected from that exam, also referred to as a rape kit, to be analyzed; and

Whereas, The federal government has estimated that hundreds of thousands of rape kits sit untested in police and crime storage facilities across the country in what is known as the rape kit backlog. Crime labs have struggled over the past decade to meet the demand for DNA testing for all types of crimes. With demand continuing to outpace capacity—the Joyful Heart Foundation estimates that every two minutes someone is sexually assaulted in the U.S.—the backlog in testing evidence collected from sexual assault forensic exams will likely continue to grow; and

Whereas, Untested sexual assault kits mean lost opportunities to develop DNA profiles, search for matches, link cold cases, and bring justice and resolution to the victim. DNA can help identify unknown offenders and when the offender is known, it can result in ''cold hits'' connecting the known suspect to other crimes. Failure to test evidence collected from a sexual assault kit in a timely manner can be tragic, from expired statutes of limitation that preclude prosecution even if a suspect is later identified, to additional rape and murder victims of serial rapists; and

Whereas, Local jurisdictions that have attempted to alleviate the rape kit backlog have impressive results to show for their efforts. With federal funding, the Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney's Office along with the Detroit Police Department, has begun to address a backlog of more than 10,000 rape kits. Among those first 1,600 kits tested, there were 455 matches in the DNA database, including matches linking to crimes committed in 22 other states and the District of Columbia. The Prosecutor's Office identified 127 potential serial rapists and obtained 14 convictions of potential serial rapists who are lied to rapes reported in 12 other states and the District of Columbia; and

Whereas, Testing sexual assault kits provides essential evidence. But, equally essential is the investigation and prosecution of identified perpetrators, without which survivors arc denied justice, rapists remain free to assault with impunity, and our communities continue to suffer emotionally and economically; and

Whereas, Reducing the rape kit backlog is a national concern requiring a national response. Federal funding is crucial to help communities in Michigan and other states to test and follow up on untested sexual assault kits: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge Congress of the United States to approve President Obama's budget proposal to provide $35 million to help communities process evidence from untested sexual assault kits; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of the resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM–310. A joint resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado designating the month of October as ''Safe Schools Month''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 14–031

Whereas, Colorado is committed to ensuring safe schools for all students, from early learning to higher education; and

Whereas, Safe schools provide an environment where effective teaching and learning can take place so that all education goals can be achieved; and

Whereas, Safe schools interface with the larger community by providing safe havens and distribution centers in the event of greater community crisis; and

Whereas, Each school day, Colorado school personnel are accountable for the safety of over 875,000 students, or about one-sixth of the total population of the state; and

Whereas, Educators and school personnel are the first responders in the schools, on the routes to and from school, on field trips, and at school-related events; and

Whereas, Schools face a broad range of safety-related threats, including human-caused hazards, technological hazards, and natural hazards; and

Whereas, Schools must adopt guiding principles of readiness and all-hazards emergency management, including prevention, mitigation, protection, preparedness, response, and recovery, in addressing these threats; and

Whereas, Educators and school personnel must communicate, coordinate, and collaborate with professional responders and other community partners in applying these guiding principles; and

Whereas, Schools must keep pace with improvements and changes in safe schools design, crime prevention through environmental design, security systems, communications, information management, training programs, and other resources related to school safety; and

Whereas, Schools must continually evaluate and update policies, standard operating procedures, memoranda of understanding, best practices, lessons learned, and fundraising activities related to school safety; and

Whereas, Schools can improve safety by making sure that climates are welcoming and that responses to misbehavior are fair, non-discriminatory and effective through training staff, engaging families and community partners, and deploying resources to help students develop the social, emotional, and conflict resolution skills needed to avoid and de-escalate problems; and

Whereas, The mission of the Colorado School Safety Resource Center is to assist educators, emergency responders, community organizations, school mental health professionals, parents, and students in creating safe, positive, and successful school environments for Colorado students in all K–12 and higher education schools; and

Whereas, In 2013, the Colorado School Safety Resource Center published nearly 800 announcements in its monthly newsletters on school safety-related topics such as training, grant information, prevention and protection resources, current research and statistical resources, and youth-specific information; and

Whereas, The members of the General Assembly believe that a yearly commemorative month devoted to school safety and a safe school climate can encourage activities that provide awareness about school safety topics: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly:

(1) Believe that establishing a commemorative month devoted to school safety and school climate can foster awareness about these important topics affecting our state's children and educators;

(2) Designate October as ''Safe Schools Month'' in Colorado; and

(3) Encourage all educators, community partners, first responders, subject matter experts, members of the private sector, the media, and other stakeholders to coordinate their activities with the Colorado School

Safety Resource Center and to help promote a culture of school safety and positive school climate, and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; Vice President Joe Biden; United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan; United States Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson; United States Attorney General Eric Holder; the office of the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services; United States Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel; United States Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack; United States Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx; Gina McCarthy, Administrator, United States Environmental Protection Agency; the Honorable John Hickenlooper, Governor of Colorado; Executive Director, Colorado Department of Higher Education, Lt. Gov. Joseph A. Garcia; Kristin D. Russell, Colorado Secretary of Technology and State Chief Information Officer, Governor's Office of Information Technology; Robert Hammond, Commissioner of Education, Colorado Department of Education; Scott Newell, Director, Division of Capital Construction, Colorado Department of Education; Sarah Mathew, Director, Office of Health and Wellness, Colorado Department of Education; Richard Kaufman, Chair, Colorado Commission on Higher Education; Nancy McCallin, President, Colorado Community College System; John W. Suthers, Attorney General, Colorado Department of Law; Susan Payne, Director, Safe2Tell; Kathy E. Sasak, Interim Executive Director, Colorado Department of Public Safety; Paul Cooke, Director, Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control; Kevin R. Klein, Director, Division of Homeland Security Emergency Management; Colonel Scott Hernandez, Chief, Colorado State Patrol; Christine R. Harms, Director, Colorado School Safety Resource Center; Reggie Bicha, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Human Services; Dr. Larry Wolk, Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; John Salazar, Commissioner of Agriculture, Colorado Department of Agriculture; Donald E. Hunt, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Transportation; and to each member of Colorado's Congressional delegation.

POM–311. A joint memorial adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado urging the United States Congress to provide statutory relief to grant Colorado research institutions the authority to conduct controlled clinical and objective medical research trials regarding marijuana's medical efficacy; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 14–006

Whereas, Colorado is in a unique situation regarding marijuana use in this country; and

Whereas, Colorado's constitution authorizes the legal use of marijuana for both medical and private adult use, but the use of marijuana is still illegal under federal law; and

Whereas, Because marijuana use has been illegal under federal law since 1937, there is limited modern, scientific-based research regarding the medical use of marijuana; and

Whereas, Without medical research, most information regarding marijuana's medical efficacy is limited in clinical or scientific evidence and is anecdotal or observational; and

Whereas, Several marijuana extracts seem to demonstrate significant benefits for pain control, treatment of childhood epileptic seizures, and other beneficial effects, often with fewer side effects than prescription drugs, and without use dependence; and

Whereas, Colorado has an unprecedented opportunity to provide the United States with scientific-based, peer-reviewed clinical medical research that could lead to a medical consensus regarding marijuana's medical efficacy to treat a number of chronic and debilitating medical conditions; and

Whereas, Colorado is proposing to spend up to $10 million studying marijuana's medical efficacy in Senate Bill 14–155; and

Whereas, Federal law currently significantly restricts state research institutions that receive federal funding from conducting controlled clinical trials regarding marijuana's medical efficacy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

That the United States Congress is hereby memorialized to provide statutory relief to grant Colorado research institutions the authority to conduct controlled clinical and objective medical research trials regarding marijuana's medical efficacy, and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Joint Memorial be sent to each member of the Colorado Congressional delegation, the speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the president of the United States Senate.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 498. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding United States support for the State of Israel as it defends itself against unprovoked rocket attacks from the Hamas terrorist organization.

S. Res. 500. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to enhanced relations with the Republic of Moldova and support for the Republic of Moldova's territorial integrity.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Alfonso E. Lenhardt, of New York, to be Deputy Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

*Marcia Denise Occomy, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the African Development Bank for a term of five years.

*Leslie Ann Bassett, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Paraguay. The Financial Report of Contributions of Leslie Ann Bassett was printed on page S4619 in the July 17, 2014, Congressional Record.

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

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. WARNER (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2612. A bill to simplify and improve the Federal student loan program through income-contingent repayment to provide strong protections for borrowers, encourage responsible borrowing, and save money for taxpayers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. ENZI, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. FLAKE, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2613. A bill to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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

S. 2614. A bill to amend certain provisions of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2615. A bill to establish criminal penalties for failing to inform and warn of serious dangers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2616. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to Idaho County in the State of Idaho, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 2617. A bill to repeal the wage rate requirements commonly known as the Davis-Bacon Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 2618. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit to employers who provide paid family and medical leave; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. COBURN, Mr. ENZI, and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. Res. 503. A resolution designating September 2014 as ''National Child Awareness Month'' to promote awareness of charities benefitting children and youth-serving organizations throughout the United States and recognizing efforts made by those charities and organizations on behalf of children and youth as critical contributions to the future of the United States; considered and agreed to.

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

S. Res. 504. A resolution to direct the Senate Legal Counsel to appear as amicus curiae in the name of the Senate in Menachem Binyamin Zivotofsky, By His Parents and Guardians, Ari Z. and Naomi Siegman Zivotofsky v. John Kerry, Secretary of State (S. Ct.); considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 170

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr.

MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to recognize the heritage of recreational fishing, hunting, and recreational shooting on Federal public land and ensure continued opportunities for those activities.

S. 240

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 240, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to modify the perfiscal year calculation of days of certain active duty or active service used to reduce the minimum age at which a member of a reserve component of the uniformed services may retire for nonregular service.

S. 323

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 323, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for extended months of Medicare coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for kidney transplant patients and other renal dialysis provisions.

S. 1249

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1459

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1459, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit the transportation of horses in interstate transportation in a motor vehicle containing 2 or more levels stacked on top of one another.

S. 1647

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1647, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to repeal distributions for medicine qualified only if for prescribed drug or insulin.

S. 1733

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1733, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 1758

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1758, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase access to Medicare data.

S. 1810

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1810, a bill to provide paid family and medical leave benefits to certain individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1875, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 2092

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2092, a bill to provide certain protections from civil liability with respect to the emergency administration of opioid overdose drugs.

S. 2156

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2156, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to confirm the scope of the authority of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to deny or restrict the use of defined areas as disposal sites.

S. 2182

At the request of Mr. WALSH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2182, a bill to expand and improve care provided to veterans and members of the Armed Forces with mental health disorders or at risk of suicide, to review the terms or characterization of the discharge or separation of certain individuals from the Armed Forces, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2192

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2192, a bill to amend the National Alzheimer's Project Act to require the Director of the National Institutes of Health to prepare and submit, directly to the President for review and transmittal to Congress, an annual budget estimate (including an estimate of the number and type of personnel needs for the Institutes) for the initiatives of the National Institutes of Health pursuant to such an Act.

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2192, supra.

S. 2329

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2329, a bill to prevent Hezbollah from gaining access to international financial and other institutions, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2329, supra.

S. 2496

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to preserve existing rights and responsibilities with respect to waters of the United States.

S. 2547

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2547, a bill to establish the Railroad Emergency Services Preparedness, Operational Needs, and Safety Evaluation (RESPONSE) Subcommittee under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Advisory Council to provide recommendations on emergency responder training and resources relating to hazardous materials incidents involving railroads, and for other purposes.

S. 2578

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2578, a bill to ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions.

S. 2599

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2599, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 2605

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2605, a bill to preserve religious freedom and a woman's access to contraception.

S. 2609

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2609, a bill to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes.

S. 2611

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2611, a bill to facilitate the expedited processing of minors entering the United States across the southern border and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 18

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 18, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the

Constitution of the United States to clarify the authority of Congress and the States to regulate corporations, limited liability companies or other corporate entities established by the laws of any State, the United States, or any foreign state.

S. RES. 498

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 498, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding United States support for the State of Israel as it defends itself against unprovoked rocket attacks from the Hamas terrorist organization.

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 498, supra.

S. RES. 500

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 500, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to enhanced relations with the Republic of Moldova and support for the Republic of Moldova's territorial integrity.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2616. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to Idaho County in the State of Idaho, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise on behalf of Senator CRAPO and myself to introduce the Idaho County Shooting Range Land Conveyance Act.

Idahoans deeply value their Second Amendment rights, and recreational use of firearms for hunting and shooting sports is common. The use of firearms in Idaho is a tradition often passed through the generations, and many use it as an opportunity to teach safe and responsible practices to their children.

We have been working on this matter and on this particular issue since 2010 as it relates to this particular parcel of ground.

Idaho County needs adequate resources to provide this not only for its citizens but also for its law enforcement agencies. The Idaho County Sheriff's Office cannot effectively train their staff in firearms use because they simply do not have the facilities.

Should the Idaho County Shooting Range Land Conveyance Act be enacted, a 31-acre parcel of land in Idaho will be transferred from the U.S. Government to Idaho County for use as a gun range which will be maintained by the county.

It is enthusiastically supported by both the Idaho County Sheriff's Office, the county commissioners, and the citizens of Idaho County.

Passing this legislation will fill the void in Idaho County for firearm training, practice, and shooting sports for citizens and law enforcement by providing quality facilities that will ensure safe and responsible use for years to come.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to pass this bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 503—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2014 AS ''NATIONAL CHILD AWARENESS MONTH'' TO PROMOTE AWARENESS OF CHARITIES BENEFITTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AND RECOGNIZING EFFORTS MADE BY THOSE CHARITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AS CRITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FUTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. COBURN, Mr. ENZI, and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 503

Whereas millions of children and youth in the United States represent the hopes and future of the United States;

Whereas numerous individuals, charities benefitting children, and youth-serving organizations that work with children and youth collaborate to provide invaluable services to enrich and better the lives of children and youth throughout the United States;

Whereas raising awareness of, and increasing support for, organizations that provide access to healthcare, social services, education, the arts, sports, and other services will result in the development of character and the future success of the children and youth of the United States;

Whereas the month of September, as the school year begins, is a time when parents, families, teachers, school administrators, and communities increase their focus on children and youth throughout the United States;

Whereas the month of September is a time for the people of the United States to highlight and be mindful of the needs of children and youth;

Whereas private corporations and businesses have joined with hundreds of national and local charitable organizations throughout the United States in support of a month-long focus on children and youth; and

Whereas designating September 2014 as ''National Child Awareness Month'' would recognize that a long-term commitment to children and youth is in the public interest, and will encourage widespread support for charities and organizations that seek to provide a better future for the children and youth of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates September 2014 as ''National Child Awareness Month''—

(1) to promote awareness of charities benefitting children and youth-serving organizations throughout the United States; and

(2) to recognize efforts made by those charities and organizations on behalf of children and youth as critical contributions to the future of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 504—TO DIRECT THE SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL TO APPEAR AS AMICUS CURIAE IN THE NAME OF THE SENATE IN MENACHEM BINYAMIN ZIVOTOFSKY, BY HIS PARENTS AND GUARDIANS, ARI Z. AND NAOMI SIEGMAN ZIVOTOFSKY V. JOHN KERRY, SECRETARY OF STATE (S. CT.)

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 504

Whereas, in the case of *Menachem Binyamin Zivotofsky, By His Parents and Guardians, Ari Z. and Naomi Siegman Zivotofsky v. John Kerry, Secretary of State*, No. 13–628, pending in the Supreme Court of the United States, the constitutionality of section 214(d) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 2003, Pub. L. No. 107–228, 116 Stat. 1350, 1366 (2002), has been placed in issue;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(c), 706(a), and 713(a) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. 288b(c), 288e(a), and 288*l*(a), the Senate may direct its counsel to appear as amicus curiae in the name of the Senate in any legal action in which the powers and responsibilities of Congress under the Constitution are placed in issue: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate Legal Counsel is directed to appear as amicus curiae on behalf of the Senate in the case of *Menachem Binyamin Zivotofsky, By His Parents and Guardians, Ari Z. and Naomi Siegman Zivotofsky v. John Kerry, Secretary of State*, to defend the constitutionality of section 214(d) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 2003.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3558. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2578, to ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3559. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2578, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3560. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2609, to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3561. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2609, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3562. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2609, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3563. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3558. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2578, to ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR CERTAIN CONGRESSIONAL STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

Section 1312(d)(3)(D) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18032(d)(3)(D)) is amended—

(1) by striking the subparagraph heading and inserting the following:

''(D) MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, CONGRESSIONAL STAFF, AND POLITICAL APPOINTEES IN THE EXCHANGE.—'';

(2) in clause (i), in the matter preceding subclause (I)—

(A) by striking ''and congressional staff with'' and inserting '', congressional staff, the President, the Vice President, and political appointees with''; and

(B) by striking ''or congressional staff shall'' and inserting '', congressional staff, the President, the Vice President, or a political appointee shall'';

(3) in clause (ii)—

(A) in subclause (II), by inserting after ''Congress,'' the following: ''of a committee of Congress, or of a leadership office of Congress,''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(III) POLITICAL APPOINTEE.—In this subparagraph, the term 'political appointee' means any individual who—

''(aa) is employed in a position described under sections 5312 through 5316 of title 5, United States Code, (relating to the Executive Schedule);

''(bb) is a limited term appointee, limited emergency appointee, or noncareer appointee in the Senior Executive Service, as defined under paragraphs (5), (6), and (7), respectively, of section 3132(a) of title 5, United States Code;

''(cc) is employed in a position in the executive branch of the Government of a confidential or policy-determining character under schedule C of subpart C of part 213 of title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations; or

''(dd) is employed in or under the Executive Office of the President in a position that is excluded from the competitive service by reason of its confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character.''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION.—No Government contribution under section 8906 of title 5, United States Code, shall be provided on behalf of an individual who is a Member of Congress, a congressional staff member, the President, the Vice President, or a political appointees for coverage under this paragraph.

''(iv) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF TAX CREDIT OR COST-SHARING.—An individual enrolling in health insurance coverage pursuant to this paragraph shall not be eligible to receive a tax credit under section 36B of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or reduced cost sharing under section 1402 of this Act in an amount that exceeds the total amount for which a similarly situated individual (who is not so enrolled) would be entitled to receive under such sections.

''(v) LIMITATION ON DISCRETION FOR DESIGNATION OF STAFF.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a Member of Congress shall not have discretion in determinations with respect to which employees employed by the office of such Member are eligible to enroll for coverage through an Exchange.''.

SA 3559. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2578, to ensure that employers cannot interfere in their employees' birth control and other health care decisions; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ___—PRENATAL NONDISCIMINATION

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act (PRENDA) of 2014''.

SEC. __02. FINDINGS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Women are a vital part of American society and culture and possess the same fundamental human rights and civil rights as men.

(2) United States law prohibits the dissimilar treatment of males and females who are similarly situated and prohibits sex discrimination in various contexts, including the provision of employment, education, housing, health insurance coverage, and athletics.

(3) Sex is an immutable characteristic ascertainable at the earliest stages of human development through existing medical technology and procedures commonly in use, including maternal-fetal bloodstream DNA sampling, amniocentesis, chorionic villus sampling or ''CVS'', and obstetric ultrasound. In addition to medically assisted sex determination, a growing sex determination niche industry has developed and is marketing low-cost commercial products, widely advertised and available, that aid in the sex determination of an unborn child without the aid of medical professionals. Experts have demonstrated that the sex-selection industry is on the rise and predict that it will continue to be a growing trend in the United States. Sex determination is always a necessary step to the procurement of a sex-selection abortion.

(4) A ''sex-selection abortion'' is an abortion undertaken for purposes of eliminating an unborn child based on the sex or gender of the child. Sex-selection abortion is barbaric, and described by scholars and civil rights advocates as an act of sex-based or gender-based violence, predicated on sex discrimination. Sex-selection abortions are typically late-term abortions performed in the 2nd or 3rd trimester of pregnancy, after the unborn child has developed sufficiently to feel pain. Substantial medical evidence proves that an unborn child can experience pain at 20 weeks after conception, and perhaps substantially earlier. By definition, sex-selection abortions do not implicate the health of the mother of the unborn, but instead are elective procedures motivated by sex or gender bias.

(5) The targeted victims of sex-selection abortions performed in the United States and worldwide are overwhelmingly female. The selective abortion of females is female infanticide, the intentional killing of unborn females, due to the preference for male offspring or ''son preference''. Son preference is reinforced by the low value associated, by some segments of the world community, with female offspring. Those segments tend to regard female offspring as financial burdens to a family over their lifetime due to their perceived inability to earn or provide financially for the family unit as can a male. In addition, due to social and legal convention, female offspring are less likely to carry on the family name. ''Son preference'' is one of the most evident manifestations of sex or gender discrimination in any society, undermining female equality, and fueling the elimination of females' right to exist in instances of sex-selection abortion.

(6) Sex-selection abortions are not expressly prohibited by United States law or the laws of 47 States. Sex-selection abortions are performed in the United States. In a March 2008 report published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Columbia University economists Douglas Almond and Lena Edlund examined the sex ratio of United States-born children and found ''evidence of sex selection, most likely at the prenatal stage''. The data revealed obvious ''son preference'' in the form of unnatural sex-ratio imbalances within certain segments of the United States population, primarily those segments tracing their ethnic or cultural origins to countries where sex-selection abortion is prevalent. The evidence strongly suggests that some Americans are exercising sex-selection abortion practices within the United States consistent with discriminatory practices common to their country of origin, or the country to which they trace their ancestry. While sex-selection abortions are more common outside the United States, the evidence reveals that female feticide is also occurring in the United States.

(7) The American public supports a prohibition of sex-selection abortion. In a March 2006 Zogby International poll, 86 percent of Americans agreed that sex-selection abortion should be illegal, yet only 3 States proscribe sex-selection abortion.

(8) Despite the failure of the United States to proscribe sex-selection abortion, the United States Congress has expressed repeatedly, through Congressional resolution, strong condemnation of policies promoting sex-selection abortion in the ''Communist Government of China''. Likewise, at the 2007 United Nation's Annual Meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women, 51st Session, the United States delegation spearheaded a resolution calling on countries to condemn sex-selective abortion, a policy directly contradictory to the permissiveness of current United States law, which places no restriction on the practice of sex-selection abortion. The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women has urged governments of all nations ''to take necessary measures to prevent . . . prenatal sex selection''.

(9) A 1990 report by Harvard University economist Amartya Sen, estimated that more than 100 million women were ''demographically missing'' from the world as early as 1990 due to sexist practices, including sex-selection abortion. Many experts believe sex-selection abortion is the primary cause. Current estimates of women missing from the world range in the hundreds of millions.

(10) Countries with longstanding experience with sex-selection abortion—such as the Republic of India, the United Kingdom, and the People's Republic of China—have enacted restrictions on sex-selection, and have steadily continued to strengthen prohibitions and penalties. The United States, by contrast, has no law in place to restrict sex-selection abortion, establishing the United States as affording less protection from sex-

based feticide than the Republic of India or the People's Republic of China, whose recent practices of sex-selection abortion were vehemently and repeatedly condemned by United States congressional resolutions and by the United States Ambassador to the Commission on the Status of Women. Public statements from within the medical community reveal that citizens of other countries come to the United States for sex-selection procedures that would be criminal in their country of origin. Because the United States permits abortion on the basis of sex, the United States may effectively function as a ''safe haven'' for those who seek to have American physicians do what would otherwise be criminal in their home countries—a sex-selection abortion, most likely late-term.

(11) The American medical community opposes sex-selection. The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, commonly known as ''ACOG'', stated in its 2007 Ethics Committee Opinion, Number 360, that sex-selection is inappropriate because it ''ultimately supports sexist practices''. The American Society of Reproductive Medicine (commonly known as ''ASRM'') 2004 Ethics Committee Opinion on sex-selection notes that central to the controversy of sex-selection is the potential for ''inherent gender discrimination'', . . . the ''risk of psychological harm to sex-selected offspring (i.e., by placing on them expectations that are too high)'', . . . and ''reinforcement of gender bias in society as a whole''. Embryo sex-selection, ASRM notes, remains ''vulnerable to the judgment that no matter what its basis, [the method] identifies gender as a reason to value one person over another, and it supports socially constructed stereotypes of what gender means''. In doing so, it not only ''reinforces possibilities of unfair discrimination, but may trivialize human reproduction by making it depend on the selection of non-essential features of offspring''. The ASRM ethics opinion continues, ''ongoing problems with the status of women in the United States make it necessary to take account of concerns for the impact of sex-selection on goals of gender equality''. The American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, an organization with hundreds of members—many of whom are former abortionists—makes the following declaration: ''Sex selection abortions are more graphic examples of the damage that abortion inflicts on women. In addition to increasing premature labor in subsequent pregnancies, increasing suicide and major depression, and increasing the risk of breast cancer in teens who abort their first pregnancy and delay childbearing, sex selection abortions are often targeted at fetuses simply because the fetus is female. As physicians who care for both the mother and her unborn child, the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists vigorously opposes aborting fetuses because of their gender.''. The President's Council on Bioethics published a Working Paper stating the council's belief that society's respect for reproductive freedom does not prohibit the regulation or prohibition of ''sex control'', defined as the use of various medical technologies to choose the sex of one's child. The publication expresses concern that ''sex control might lead to . . . dehumanization and a new eugenics''.

(12) Sex-selection abortion results in an unnatural sex-ratio imbalance. An unnatural sex-ratio imbalance is undesirable, due to the inability of the numerically predominant sex to find mates. Experts worldwide document that a significant sex-ratio imbalance in which males numerically predominate can be a cause of increased violence and militancy within a society. Likewise, an unnatural sex-ratio imbalance gives rise to the commoditization of humans in the form of human trafficking, and a consequent increase in kidnapping and other violent crime.

(13) Sex-selection abortions have the effect of diminishing the representation of women in the American population, and therefore, the American electorate.

(14) Sex-selection abortion reinforces sex discrimination and has no place in a civilized society.

(15) The history of the United States includes examples of sex discrimination. The people of the United States ultimately responded in the strongest possible legal terms by enacting a constitutional amendment correcting elements of such discrimination. Women, once subjected to sex discrimination that denied them the right to vote, now have suffrage guaranteed by the 19th amendment. The elimination of discriminatory practices has been and is among the highest priorities and greatest achievements of American history.

(16) Implicitly approving the discriminatory practice of sex-selection abortion by choosing not to prohibit them will reinforce these inherently discriminatory practices, and evidence a failure to protect a segment of certain unborn Americans because those unborn are of a sex that is disfavored. Sex-selection abortions trivialize the value of the unborn on the basis of sex, reinforcing sex discrimination, and coarsening society to the humanity of all vulnerable and innocent human life, making it increasingly difficult to protect such life. Thus, Congress has a compelling interest in acting—indeed it must act—to prohibit sex-selection abortion.

(b) CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY.—In accordance with the above findings, Congress enacts the following pursuant to Congress' power under—

(1) the Commerce Clause;

(2) section 5 of the 14th amendment, including the power to enforce the prohibition on Government action denying equal protection of the laws; and

(3) section 8 of article I to make all laws necessary and proper for the carrying into execution of powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States.

SEC. __03. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE UNBORN ON THE BASIS OF SEX.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 13 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 250. Discrimination against the unborn on the basis of sex

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Whoever knowingly—

''(1) performs an abortion knowing that such abortion is sought based on the sex or gender of the child;

''(2) uses force or the threat of force to intentionally injure or intimidate any person for the purpose of coercing a sex-selection abortion;

''(3) solicits or accepts funds for the performance of a sex-selection abortion; or

''(4) transports a woman into the United States or across a State line for the purpose of obtaining a sex-selection abortion;

or attempts to do so, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

''(b) CIVIL REMEDIES.—

''(1) CIVIL ACTION BY WOMAN ON WHOM ABORTION IS PERFORMED.—A woman upon whom an abortion has been performed pursuant to a violation of subsection (a)(2) may in a civil action against any person who engaged in a violation of subsection (a) obtain appropriate relief.

''(2) CIVIL ACTION BY RELATIVES.—The father of an unborn child who is the subject of an abortion performed or attempted in violation of subsection (a), or a maternal grandparent of the unborn child if the pregnant woman is an unemancipated minor, may in a civil action against any person who engaged in the violation, obtain appropriate relief, unless the pregnancy resulted from the plaintiff's criminal conduct or the plaintiff consented to the abortion.

''(3) APPROPRIATE RELIEF.—Appropriate relief in a civil action under this subsection includes—

''(A) objectively verifiable money damages for all injuries, psychological and physical, including loss of companionship and support, occasioned by the violation of this section; and

''(B) punitive damages.

''(4) INJUNCTIVE RELIEF.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A qualified plaintiff may in a civil action obtain injunctive relief to prevent an abortion provider from performing or attempting further abortions in violation of this section.

''(B) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph the term 'qualified plaintiff' means—

''(i) a woman upon whom an abortion is performed or attempted in violation of this section;

''(ii) any person who is the spouse or parent of a woman upon whom an abortion is performed in violation of this section; or

''(iii) the Attorney General.

''(5) ATTORNEYS FEES FOR PLAINTIFF.—The court shall award a reasonable attorney's fee as part of the costs to a prevailing plaintiff in a civil action under this subsection.

''(c) LOSS OF FEDERAL FUNDING.—A violation of subsection (a) shall be deemed for the purposes of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to be discrimination prohibited by section 601 of that Act.

''(d) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—A physician, physician's assistant, nurse, counselor, or other medical or mental health professional shall report known or suspected violations of any of this section to appropriate law enforcement authorities. Whoever violates this requirement shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both.

''(e) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION.—It shall be the duty of the United States district courts, United States courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court of the United States to advance on the docket and to expedite to the greatest possible extent the disposition of any matter brought under this section.

''(f) EXCEPTION.—A woman upon whom a sex-selection abortion is performed may not be prosecuted or held civilly liable for any violation of this section, or for a conspiracy to violate this section.

''(g) PROTECTION OF PRIVACY IN COURT PROCEEDINGS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except to the extent the Constitution or other similarly compelling reason requires, in every civil or criminal action under this section, the court shall make such orders as are necessary to protect the anonymity of any woman upon whom an abortion has been performed or attempted if she does not give her written consent to such disclosure. Such orders may be made upon motion, but shall be made sua sponte if not otherwise sought by a party.

''(2) ORDERS TO PARTIES, WITNESSES, AND COUNSEL.—The court shall issue appropriate orders under paragraph (1) to the parties, witnesses, and counsel and shall direct the sealing of the record and exclusion of individuals from courtrooms or hearing rooms to the extent necessary to safeguard her identity from public disclosure. Each such order shall be accompanied by specific written findings explaining why the anonymity of the woman must be preserved from public disclosure, why the order is essential to that end, how the order is narrowly tailored to

serve that interest, and why no reasonable less restrictive alternative exists.

''(3) PSEUDONYM REQUIRED.—In the absence of written consent of the woman upon whom an abortion has been performed or attempted, any party, other than a public official, who brings an action under this section shall do so under a pseudonym.

''(4) LIMITATION.—This subsection shall not be construed to conceal the identity of the plaintiff or of witnesses from the defendant or from attorneys for the defendant.

''(h) DEFINITIONS.—

''(1) The term 'abortion' means the act of using or prescribing any instrument, medicine, drug, or any other substance, device, or means with the intent to terminate the clinically diagnosable pregnancy of a woman, with knowledge that the termination by those means will with reasonable likelihood cause the death of the unborn child, unless the act is done with the intent to—

''(A) save the life or preserve the health of the unborn child;

''(B) remove a dead unborn child caused by spontaneous abortion; or

''(C) remove an ectopic pregnancy.

''(2) The term 'sex-selection abortion' is an abortion undertaken for purposes of eliminating an unborn child based on the sex or gender of the child.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 13 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating to section 249 the following new item:

''250. Discrimination against the unborn on the basis of sex.''.

SEC. _04. SEVERABILITY.

If any portion of this title or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the portions or applications of this title which can be given effect without the invalid portion or application.

SEC. _05. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this title shall be construed to require that a healthcare provider has an affirmative duty to inquire as to the motivation for the abortion, absent the healthcare provider having knowledge or information that the abortion is being sought based on the sex or gender of the child.

SA 3560. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2609, to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 101, insert the following:

(d) LIMITATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The authority granted under subsections (a) and (b) shall not apply with respect to any remote seller that is not a qualifying remote seller.

(2) QUALIFYING REMOTE SELLER.—For purposes of this subsection—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''qualifying remote seller'' means—

(i) any remote seller that meets the ownership requirements of subparagraph (B); or

(ii) any remote seller the majority of domestic employees of which are primarily employed at a location in a participating State.

(B) OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS.—A remote seller meets the ownership requirements of this subparagraph if—

(i) in the case of a remote seller that is a publicly traded corporation, more than 50 percent of the covered employees (as defined in section 162(m)(3)) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) of such corporation reside in participating States;

(ii) in the case of a remote seller that is a corporation (other than a publicly traded corporation), more than 50 percent of the stock (by vote or value) of such corporation is held by individuals residing in participating States;

(iii) in the case of a remote seller that is a partnership, more than 50 percent of the profits interests or capital interests in such partnership is held by individuals residing in participating States; and

(iv) in the case of any other remote seller, more than 50 percent of the beneficial interests in the entity is held by individuals residing in participating States.

(C) ATTRIBUTION RULES.—For purposes of subparagraph (B), the rules of section 318(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall apply.

(D) AGGREGATION RULES.—For purposes of this paragraph, all persons treated as a single employer under subsection (a) or (b) of section 52 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or subsection (m) or (o) of section 414 of such Code shall be treated as one person.

(3) PARTICIPATING STATE.—The term ''participating State'' means—

(A) a Member State under the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement which has exercised authority under subsection (a); or

(B) a State that—

(i) is not a Member State under the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement; and

(ii) has met the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b) for exercising the authority granted under such subsection.

SA 3561. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2609, to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 102, insert the following:

(i) TRANSFER OF DATA.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed as requiring any State to transfer data relating to the audit or collection of sales and use taxes.

SA 3562. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2609, to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 101, insert the following:

(d) EXCEPTION FOR REMOTE SELLERS INCORPORATED IN STATES THAT DO NOT HAVE SALES TAX.—A State is not authorized to require a remote seller to collect sales and use taxes under this Act if the remote seller is incorporated in a State that does not collect sales and use taxes with respect to products and services sold in such State.

SA 3563. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

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

SEC. 1087. RELEASE OF REPORT ON ENERGY AND COST SAVINGS IN NONBUILDING APPLICATIONS.

Not later than 15 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate the report on the results of the study of energy and cost savings in nonbuilding applications required under section 518(b) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–140; 121 Stat. 1660).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, ''At a Tipping Point: Consumer Choice, Consolidation and the Future Video Marketplace.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Challenges at the Border: Examining and Addressing the Root Causes Behind the Rise in Apprehensions at the Southern Border.''

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized

to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Improving the Trust System: Continuing Oversight of the Department of the Interior's Land Buy-Back Program.''

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERAN'S AFFAIRS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veteran's Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD–G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''The State of VA Health Care.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''What Makes A Bank Systemically Important?''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 3 p.m., to hold a Near Eastern and South Central Asian Affairs subcommittee hearing entitled, ''Indispensable Partners—Re-energizing US-India Ties.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a joint hearing with the Senate Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. in room SH–216 of the Hart Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Options for Assuring Domestic Space Access.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND WILDLIFE

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014 at 3 p.m. in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 16, 2014, in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building at 1:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Hanging Up on Phone Scams: Progress and Potential Solutions to this Scourge.''

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that fellows in my office: Annie Dreazen and Lemeneh Tefera be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 113th Congress.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern, Haley Wilson, be granted privileges of the floor for today.

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

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a fellow in my office, Lisa Foster, be granted privileges of the floor until the end of September.

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

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that Hannah Van Demark, Julia Sferlazzo, and Zachary Nash, interns on the banking committee staff, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the consideration of S. 2244, the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2014.

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

SEAN AND DAVID GOLDMAN INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION PREVENTION AND RETURN ACT OF 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 450, H.R. 3212.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3212) to ensure compliance with the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction by countries with which the United States enjoys reciprocal obligations, to establish procedures for the prompt return of children abducted to other countries, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS; PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Sean Goldman, a United States citizen and resident of New Jersey, was abducted from the United States in 2004 and separated from his father, David Goldman, who spent nearly 6 years battling for the return of his son from Brazil before Sean was finally returned to Mr. Goldman's custody on December 24, 2009.

(2) The Department of State's Office of Children's Issues, which serves as the Central Authority of the United States for the purposes of the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (referred to in this Act as the ''Hague Abduction Convention''), has received thousands of requests since 2007 for assistance in the return to the United States of children who have been wrongfully abducted by a parent or other legal guardian to another country.

(3) For a variety of reasons reflecting the significant obstacles to the recovery of abducted children, as well as the legal and factual complexity involving such cases, not all cases are reported to the Central Authority of the United States.

(4) More than 1,000 outgoing international child abductions are reported every year to the Central Authority of the United States, which depends solely on proactive reporting of abduction cases.

(5) Only about one-half of the children abducted from the United States to countries with which the United States enjoys reciprocal obligations under the Hague Abduction Convention are returned to the United States.

(6) The United States and other Convention countries have expressed their desire, through the Hague Abduction Convention, ''to protect children internationally from the harmful effects of their wrongful removal or retention and to establish procedures to ensure their prompt return to the State of their habitual residence, as well as to secure protection for rights of access.''

(7) Compliance by the United States and other Convention countries depends on the actions of their designated central authorities, the performance of their judicial systems as reflected in the legal process and decisions rendered to enforce or effectuate the Hague Abduction Convention, and the ability and willingness of their

law enforcement authorities to ensure the swift enforcement of orders rendered pursuant to the Hague Abduction Convention.

(8) According to data from the Department of State, approximately 40 percent of abduction cases involve children taken from the United States to countries with which the United States does not have reciprocal obligations under the Hague Abduction Convention or other arrangements relating to the resolution of abduction cases.

(9) According to the Department of State's April 2010 Report on Compliance with the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, ''parental child abduction jeopardizes the child and has substantial long-term consequences for both the child and the left-behind parent.''

(10) Few left-behind parents have the extraordinary financial resources necessary—

(A) to pursue individual civil or criminal remedies in both the United States and a foreign country, even if such remedies are available; or

(B) to engage in repeated foreign travel to attempt to obtain the return of their children through diplomatic or other channels.

(11) Military parents often face additional complications in resolving abduction cases because of the challenges presented by their military obligations.

(12) In addition to using the Hague Abduction Convention to achieve the return of abducted children, the United States has an array of Federal, State, and local law enforcement, criminal justice, and judicial tools at its disposal to prevent international abductions.

(13) Federal agencies tasked with preventing international abductions have indicated that the most effective way to stop international child abductions is while they are in progress, rather than after the child has been removed to a foreign destination.

(14) Parental awareness of abductions in progress, rapid response by relevant law enforcement, and effective coordination among Federal, State, local, and international stakeholders are critical in preventing such abductions.

(15) A more robust application of domestic tools, in cooperation with international law enforcement entities and appropriate application of the Hague Abduction Convention could—

(A) discourage some parents from attempting abductions;

(B) block attempted abductions at ports of exit; and

(C) help achieve the return of more abducted children.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States should set a strong example for other Convention countries in the timely location and prompt resolution of cases involving children abducted abroad and brought to the United States.

(c) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to protect children whose habitual residence is the United States from wrongful abduction;

(2) to assist left-behind parents in quickly resolving cases and maintaining safe and predictable contact with their child while an abduction case is pending;

(3) to protect the custodial rights of parents, including military parents, by providing the parents, the judicial system, and law enforcement authorities with the information they need to prevent unlawful abduction before it occurs;

(4) to enhance the prompt resolution of abduction and access cases;

(5) to detail an appropriate set of actions to be undertaken by the Secretary of State to address persistent problems in the resolution of abduction cases;

(6) to establish a program to prevent wrongful abductions; and

(7) to increase interagency coordination in preventing international child abduction by convening a working group composed of presidentially appointed and Senate confirmed officials from the Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Justice.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ABDUCTED CHILD.—The term ''abducted child'' means a child who is the victim of international child abduction.

(2) ABDUCTION.—The term ''abduction'' means the alleged wrongful removal of a child from the child's country of habitual residence, or the wrongful retention of a child outside such country, in violation of a left-behind parent's custodial rights, including the rights of a military parent.

(3) ABDUCTION CASE.—The term ''abduction case'' means a case that—

(A) has been reported to the Central Authority of the United States by a left-behind parent for the resolution of an abduction; and

(B) meets the criteria for an international child abduction under the Hague Abduction Convention, regardless of whether the country at issue is a Convention country.

(4) ACCESS CASE.—The term ''access case'' means a case involving an application filed with the Central Authority of the United States by a parent seeking rights of access.

(5) ANNUAL REPORT.—The term ''Annual Report'' means the Annual Report on International Child Abduction required under section 101.

(6) APPLICATION.—The term ''application'' means—

(A) in the case of a Convention country, the application required pursuant to article 8 of the Hague Abduction Convention;

(B) in the case of a bilateral procedures country, the formal document required, pursuant to the provisions of the applicable arrangement, to request the return of an abducted child or to request rights of access, as applicable; and

(C) in the case of a non-Convention country, the formal request by the Central Authority of the United States to the Central Authority of such country requesting the return of an abducted child or for rights of contact with an abducted child.

(7) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(8) BILATERAL PROCEDURES.—The term ''bilateral procedures'' means any procedures established by, or pursuant to, a bilateral arrangement, including a Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and another country, to resolve abduction and access cases, including procedures to address interim contact matters.

(9) BILATERAL PROCEDURES COUNTRY.—The term ''bilateral procedures country'' means a country with which the United States has entered into bilateral procedures, including Memoranda of Understanding, with respect to child abductions.

(10) CENTRAL AUTHORITY.—The term ''Central Authority'' means—

(A) in the case of a Convention country, the meaning given such term in article 6 of the Hague Abduction Convention;

(B) in the case of a bilateral procedures country, the official entity designated by the government of the bilateral procedures country within the applicable memorandum of understanding pursuant to section 103(b)(1) to discharge the duties imposed on the entity; and

(C) in the case of a non-Convention country, the foreign ministry or other appropriate authority of such country.

(11) CHILD.—The term ''child'' means an individual who has not attained 16 years of age.

(12) CONVENTION COUNTRY.—The term ''Convention country'' means a country for which the Hague Abduction Convention has entered into force with respect to the United States.

(13) HAGUE ABDUCTION CONVENTION.—The term ''Hague Abduction Convention'' means the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, done at The Hague October 25, 1980.

(14) INTERIM CONTACT.—The term ''interim contact'' means the ability of a left-behind parent to communicate with or visit an abducted child during the pendency of an abduction case.

(15) LEFT-BEHIND PARENT.—The term ''left-behind parent'' means an individual or legal custodian who alleges that an abduction has occurred that is in breach of rights of custody attributed to such individual.

(16) NON-CONVENTION COUNTRY.—The term ''non-Convention country'' means a country in which the Hague Abduction Convention has not entered into force with respect to the United States.

(17) OVERSEAS MILITARY DEPENDENT CHILD.—The term ''overseas military dependent child'' means a child whose habitual residence is the United States according to United States law even though the child is residing outside the United States with a military parent.

(18) OVERSEAS MILITARY PARENT.—The term ''overseas military parent'' means an individual who—

(A) has custodial rights with respect to a child; and

(B) is serving outside the United States as a member of the United States Armed Forces.

(19) PATTERN OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''pattern of noncompliance'' means the persistent failure—

(i) of a Convention country to implement and abide by provisions of the Hague Abduction Convention;

(ii) of a non-Convention country to abide by bilateral procedures that have been established between the United States and such country; or

(iii) of a non-Convention country to work with the Central Authority of the United States to resolve abduction cases.

(B) PERSISTENT FAILURE.—Persistent failure under subparagraph (A) may be evidenced in a given country by the presence of 1 or more of the following criteria:

(i) Thirty percent or more of the total abduction cases in such country are unresolved abduction cases.

(ii) The Central Authority regularly fails to fulfill its responsibilities pursuant to—

(I) the Hague Abduction Convention; or

(II) any bilateral procedures between the United States and such country.

(iii) The judicial or administrative branch, as applicable, of the national government of a Convention country or a bilateral procedures country fails to regularly implement and comply with the provisions of the Hague Abduction Convention or bilateral procedures, as applicable.

(iv) Law enforcement authorities regularly fail to enforce return orders or determinations of rights of access rendered by the judicial or administrative authorities of the government of the country in abduction cases.

(20) RIGHTS OF ACCESS.—The term ''rights of access'' means the establishment of rights of contact between a child and a parent seeking access in Convention countries—

(A) by operation of law;

(B) through a judicial or administrative determination; or

(C) through a legally enforceable arrangement between the parties.

(21) RIGHTS OF CUSTODY.—The term ''rights of custody'' means rights of care and custody of a child, including the right to determine the place of residence of a child, under the laws of the country in which the child is a habitual resident—

(A) attributed to an individual or legal custodian; and

(B) arising—

(i) by operation of law; or

(ii) through a judicial or administrative decision; or

(iii) through a legally enforceable arrangement between the parties.

(22) RIGHTS OF INTERIM CONTACT.—The term ''rights of interim contact'' means the rights of contact between a child and a left-behind parent, which has been provided as a provisional measure while an abduction case is pending, under the laws of the country in which the child is located—

(A) by operation of law; or

(B) through a judicial or administrative determination; or

(C) through a legally enforceable arrangement between the parties.

(23) UNRESOLVED ABDUCTION CASE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the term ''unresolved abduction case'' means an abduction case that remains unresolved for a period that exceeds 12 months after the date on which the completed application for return of the child is submitted for determination to the judicial or administrative authority, as applicable, in the country in which the child is located.

(B) RESOLUTION OF CASE.—An abduction case shall be considered to be resolved if—

(i) the child is returned to the country of habitual residence, pursuant to the Hague Abduction Convention or other appropriate bilateral procedures, if applicable;

(ii) the judicial or administrative branch, as applicable, of the government of the country in which the child is located has implemented, and is complying with, the provisions of the Hague Abduction Convention or other bilateral procedures, as applicable;

(iii) the left-behind parent reaches a voluntary arrangement with the other parent;

(iv) the left-behind parent submits a written withdrawal of the application or the request for assistance to the Department of State;

(v) the left-behind parent cannot be located for 1 year despite the documented efforts of the Department of State to locate the parent; or

(vi) the child or left-behind parent is deceased.

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF STATE ACTIONS

SEC. 101. ANNUAL REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than April 30 of each year, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an Annual Report on International Child Abduction. The Secretary shall post the Annual Report to the publicly accessible website of the Department of State.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each Annual Report shall include—

(1) a list of all countries in which there were 1 or more abduction cases, during the preceding calendar year, relating to a child whose habitual residence is the United States, including a description of whether each such country—

(A) is a Convention country;

(B) is a bilateral procedures country;

(C) has other procedures for resolving such abductions; or

(D) adheres to no protocols with respect to child abduction;

(2) for each country with respect to which there were 5 or more pending abduction cases, during the preceding year, relating to a child whose habitual residence is the United States—

(A) the number of such new abduction and access cases reported during the preceding year;

(B) for Convention and bilateral procedures countries—

(i) the number of abduction and access cases that the Central Authority of the United States transmitted to the Central Authority of such country; and

(ii) the number of abduction and access cases that were not submitted by the Central Authority to the judicial or administrative authority, as applicable, of such country;

(C) the reason for the delay in submission of each case identified in subparagraph (B)(ii) by the Central Authority of such country to the judicial or administrative authority of that country;

(D) the number of unresolved abduction and access cases, and the length of time each case has been pending;

(E) the number and percentage of unresolved abduction cases in which law enforcement authorities have—

(i) not located the abducted child;

(ii) failed to undertake serious efforts to locate the abducted child; and

(iii) failed to enforce a return order rendered by the judicial or administrative authorities of such country;

(F) the total number and the percentage of the total number of abduction and access cases, respectively, resolved during the preceding year;

(G) recommendations to improve the resolution of abduction and access cases; and

(H) the average time it takes to locate a child;

(3) the number of abducted children whose habitual residence is in the United States and who were returned to the United States from—

(A) Convention countries;

(B) bilateral procedures countries;

(C) countries having other procedures for resolving such abductions; or

(D) countries adhering to no protocols with respect to child abduction;

(4) a list of Convention countries and bilateral procedures countries that have failed to comply with any of their obligations under the Hague Abduction Convention or bilateral procedures, as applicable, with respect to the resolution of abduction and access cases;

(5) a list of countries demonstrating a pattern of noncompliance and a description of the criteria on which the determination of a pattern of noncompliance for each country is based;

(6) information on efforts by the Secretary of State to encourage non-Convention countries—

(A) to ratify or accede to the Hague Abduction Convention;

(B) to enter into or implement other bilateral procedures, including memoranda of understanding, with the United States; and

(C) to address pending abduction and access cases;

(7) the number of cases resolved without abducted children being returned to the United States from Convention countries, bilateral procedures countries, or other non-Convention countries;

(8) a list of countries that became Convention countries with respect to the United States during the preceding year; and

(9) information about efforts to seek resolution of abduction cases of children whose habitual residence is in the United States and whose abduction occurred before the Hague Abduction Convention entered into force with respect to the United States.

(c) EXCEPTIONS.—Unless a left-behind parent provides written permission to the Central Authority of the United States to include personally identifiable information about the parent or the child in the Annual Report, the Annual Report may not include any personally identifiable information about any such parent, child, or party to an abduction or access case involving such parent or child.

(d) ADDITIONAL SECTIONS.—Each Annual Report shall also include—

(1) information on the number of unresolved abduction cases affecting military parents;

(2) a description of the assistance offered to such military parents;

(3) information on the use of airlines in abductions, voluntary airline practices to prevent abductions, and recommendations for best airline practices to prevent abductions;

(4) information on actions taken by the Central Authority of the United States to train domestic judges in the application of the Hague Abduction Convention; and

(5) information on actions taken by the Central Authority of the United States to train United States Armed Forces legal assistance personnel, military chaplains, and military family support center personnel about—

(A) abductions;

(B) the risk of loss of contact with children; and

(C) the legal means available to resolve such cases.

(e) REPEAL OF THE HAGUE ABDUCTION CONVENTION COMPLIANCE REPORT.—Section 2803 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (42 U.S.C. 11611) is repealed.

(f) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS ON COUNTRIES IN NONCOMPLIANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall include, in a separate section of the Annual Report, the Secretary's determination, pursuant to the provisions under section 202(b), of whether each country listed in the report has engaged in a pattern of noncompliance in cases of child abduction during the preceding 12 months.

(2) CONTENTS.—The section described in paragraph (1)—

(A) shall identify any action or actions described in section 202(d) (or commensurate action as provided in section 202(e)) that have been taken by the Secretary with respect to each country;

(B) shall describe the basis for the Secretary's determination of the pattern of noncompliance by each country;

(C) shall indicate whether noneconomic policy options designed to resolve the pattern of noncompliance have reasonably been exhausted, including the consultations required under section 203.

SEC. 102. STANDARDS AND ASSISTANCE.

The Secretary of State shall—

(1) ensure that United States diplomatic and consular missions abroad—

(A) maintain a consistent reporting standard with respect to abduction and access cases;

(B) designate at least 1 senior official in each such mission, at the discretion of the Chief of Mission, to assist left-behind parents from the United States who are visiting such country or otherwise seeking to resolve abduction or access cases; and

(C) monitor developments in abduction and access cases; and

(2) develop and implement written strategic plans for engagement with any Convention or non-Convention country in which there are 5 or more cases of international child abduction.

SEC. 103. BILATERAL PROCEDURES, INCLUDING MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.

(a) DEVELOPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall initiate a process to develop and enter into appropriate bilateral procedures, including memoranda of understanding, as appropriate, with non-Convention countries that are unlikely to become Convention countries in the foreseeable future, or with Convention countries that have unresolved abduction cases that occurred before the Hague Abduction Convention entered into force with respect to the United States or that country.

(2) PRIORITIZATION.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary of State shall give priority to countries with significant abduction cases and related issues.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The bilateral procedures described in subsection (a) should include provisions relating to—

(1) the identification of—

(A) the Central Authority;

(B) the judicial or administrative authority that will promptly adjudicate abduction and access cases;

(C) the law enforcement agencies; and

(D) the implementation of procedures to ensure the immediate enforcement of an order issued by the authority identified pursuant to subparagraph (B) to return an abducted child to a left-behind parent, including by—

(i) conducting an investigation to ascertain the location of the abducted child;

(ii) providing protection to the abducted child after such child is located; and

(iii) retrieving the abducted child and making the appropriate arrangements for such child to be returned to the child's country of habitual residence;

(2) the implementation of a protocol to effectuate the return of an abducted child identified in an abduction case not later than 6 weeks after the application with respect to the abduction case has been submitted to the judicial or administrative authority, as applicable, of the country in which the abducted child is located;

(3) the implementation of a protocol for the establishment and protection of the rights of interim contact during pendency of abduction cases; and

(4) the implementation of a protocol to establish periodic visits between a United States embassy or consular official and an abducted child, in order to allow the official to ascertain the child's location and welfare.

SEC. 104. REPORT TO CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary of State shall submit written notification to the Member of Congress and Senators, or Resident Commissioner or Delegate, as appropriate, representing the legal residence of a left-behind parent if such parent—

(1) reports an abduction to the Central Authority of the United States; and

(2) consents to such notification.

(b) TIMING.—At the request of any person who is a left-behind parent, including a left-behind parent who previously reported an abduction to the Central Authority of the United States before the date of the enactment of this Act, the notification required under subsection (a) shall be provided as soon as is practicable.

TITLE II—ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SEC. 201. RESPONSE TO INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTIONS.

(a) UNITED STATES POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to promote the best interest of children wrongfully abducted from the United States by—

(A) establishing legal rights and procedures for their prompt return; and

(B) ensuring the enforcement of reciprocal international obligations under the Hague Abduction Convention or arrangements under bilateral procedures;

(2) to promote the timely resolution of abduction cases through 1 or more of the actions described in section 202; and

(3) to ensure appropriate coordination within the Federal Government and between Federal, State, and local agencies involved in abduction prevention, investigation, and resolution.

(b) ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN RESPONSE TO UNRESOLVED CASES.—

(1) DETERMINATION OF ACTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.—For each abduction or access case relating to a child whose habitual residence is in the United States that remains pending or is otherwise unresolved on the date that is 12 months after the date on which the Central Authority of the United States submits such case to a foreign country, the Secretary of State shall determine whether the government of such foreign country has failed to take appropriate steps to resolve the case. If the Secretary of State determines that such failure occurred, the Secretary should, as expeditiously as practicable—

(A) take 1 or more of the actions described in subsections (d) and (e) of section 202; and

(B) direct the Chief of Mission in that foreign country to directly address the resolution of the case with senior officials in the foreign government.

(2) AUTHORITY FOR DELAY OF ACTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.—The Secretary of State may delay any action described in paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines that an additional period of time, not to exceed 1 year, will substantially assist in resolving the case.

(3) REPORT.—If the Secretary of State delays any action pursuant to paragraph (2) or decides not to take an action described in subsection (d) or (e) of section 202 after making the determination described in paragraph (1), the Secretary, not later than 15 days after such delay or decision, shall provide a report to the appropriate congressional committees that details the reasons for delaying action or not taking action, as appropriate.

(4) CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS.—At the request of the appropriate congressional committees, the Secretary of State shall provide a detailed briefing, including a written report, if requested, on actions taken to resolve a case or the cause for delay.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out subsection (b), the Secretary of State should—

(A) take 1 or more actions that most appropriately respond to the nature and severity of the governmental failure to resolve the unresolved abduction case; and

(B) seek, to the fullest extent possible—

(i) to initially respond by communicating with the Central Authority of the country; and

(ii) if clause (i) is unsuccessful, to target subsequent actions—

(I) as narrowly as practicable, with respect to the agencies or instrumentalities of the foreign government that are responsible for such failures; and

(II) in ways that respect the separation of powers and independence of the judiciary of the country, as applicable.

(2) GUIDELINES FOR ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.—In addition to the guidelines under paragraph (1), the Secretary of State, in determining whether to take 1 or more actions under paragraphs (5) through (7) of section 202(d) or section 202(e), shall seek to minimize any adverse impact on—

(A) the population of the country whose government is targeted by the action or actions;

(B) the humanitarian activities of United States and nongovernmental organizations in the country; and

(C) the national security interests of the United States.

SEC. 202. ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN RESPONSE TO PATTERNS OF NONCOMPLIANCE IN CASES OF INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTIONS.

(a) RESPONSE TO A PATTERN OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to oppose institutional or other systemic failures of foreign governments to fulfill their obligations pursuant to the Hague Abduction Convention or bilateral procedures, as applicable, to resolve abduction and access cases;

(2) to promote reciprocity pursuant to, and in compliance with, the Hague Abduction Convention or bilateral procedures, as appropriate; and

(3) to directly engage with senior foreign government officials to most effectively address patterns of noncompliance.

(b) DETERMINATION OF COUNTRIES WITH PATTERNS OF NONCOMPLIANCE IN CASES OF INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION.—

(1) ANNUAL REVIEW.—Not later than April 30 of each year, the Secretary of State shall—

(A) review the status of abduction and access cases in each foreign country in order to determine whether the government of such country has engaged in a pattern of noncompliance during the preceding 12 months; and

(B) report such determination pursuant to section 101(f).

(2) DETERMINATIONS OF RESPONSIBLE PARTIES.—The Secretary of State shall seek to determine the agencies or instrumentalities of the government of each country determined to have engaged in a pattern of noncompliance under paragraph (1)(A) that are responsible for such pattern of noncompliance—

(A) to appropriately target actions in response to such noncompliance; and

(B) to engage with senior foreign government officials to effectively address such noncompliance.

(c) ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE WITH RESPECT TO A COUNTRY WITH A PATTERN OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days (or 180 days in case of a delay under paragraph (2)) after a country is determined to have been engaged in a pattern of noncompliance under subsection (b)(1)(A), the Secretary of State shall—

(A) take 1 or more of the actions described in subsection (d);

(B) direct the Chief of Mission in that country to directly address the systemic problems that led to such determination; and

(C) inform senior officials in the foreign government of the potential repercussions related to such designation.

(2) AUTHORITY FOR DELAY OF ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.—The Secretary shall not be required to take action under paragraph (1) until the expiration of a single, additional period of up to 90 days if, on or before the date on which the Secretary of State is required to take such action, the Secretary determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such additional period is necessary—

(A) for a continuation of negotiations that have been commenced with the government of a country described in paragraph (1) in order to bring about a cessation of the pattern of noncompliance by such country;

(B) for a review of corrective action taken by a country after the designation of such country as being engaged in a pattern of noncompliance under subsection (b)(1)(A); or

(C) in anticipation that corrective action will be taken by such country during such 90-day period.

(3) EXCEPTION FOR ADDITIONAL ACTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.—The Secretary of State shall not be required to take additional action under paragraph (1) with respect to a country determined to have been engaged in a persistent pattern of noncompliance if the Secretary—

(A) has taken action pursuant to paragraph (5), (6), or (7) of subsection (d) with respect to such country in the preceding year and such action continues to be in effect;

(B) exercises the waiver under section 204 and briefs the appropriate congressional committees; or

(C) submits a report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(i) indicates that such country is subject to multiple, broad-based sanctions; and

(ii) describes how such sanctions satisfy the requirements under this subsection.

(4) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the submission of the Annual Report, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress on the specific actions taken against countries determined to have been engaged in a pattern of noncompliance under this section.

(d) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN HAGUE ABDUCTION CONVENTION COUNTRIES.—Except as provided in subsection (f), the actions by the Secretary of State referred to in this subsection are—

(1) a demarche;

(2) an official public statement detailing unresolved cases;

(3) a public condemnation;

(4) a delay or cancellation of 1 or more bilateral working, official, or state visits;

(5) the withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of United States development assistance in accordance with section 116 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n);

(6) the withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of United States security assistance in accordance with section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304);

(7) the withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of assistance to the central government of a

country pursuant to chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2346 et seq.; relating to the Economic Support Fund); and

(8) a formal request to the foreign country concerned to extradite an individual who is engaged in abduction and who has been formally accused of, charged with, or convicted of an extraditable offense.

(e) COMMENSURATE ACTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (f), the Secretary of State may substitute any other action authorized by law for any action described in subsection (d) if the Secretary determines that such action—

(A) is commensurate in effect to the action substituted; and

(B) would substantially further the purposes of this Act.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—If commensurate action is taken pursuant to this subsection, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(A) describes such action;

(B) explains the reasons for taking such action; and

(C) specifically describes the basis for the Secretary's determination under paragraph (1) that such action—

(i) is commensurate with the action substituted; and

(ii) substantially furthers the purposes of this Act.

(f) RESOLUTION.—The Secretary of State shall seek to take all appropriate actions authorized by law to resolve the unresolved case or to obtain the cessation of such pattern of noncompliance, as applicable.

(g) HUMANITARIAN EXCEPTION.—Any action taken pursuant to subsection (d) or (e) may not prohibit or restrict the provision of medicine, medical equipment or supplies, food, or other life-saving humanitarian assistance.

SEC. 203. CONSULTATIONS WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

As soon as practicable after the Secretary of State makes a determination under section 201 in response to a failure to resolve unresolved abduction cases or the Secretary takes an action under subsection (d) or (e) of section 202, based on a pattern of noncompliance, the Secretary shall request consultations with the government of such country regarding the situation giving rise to such determination.

SEC. 204. WAIVER BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Secretary of State may waive the application of any of the actions described in subsections (d) and (e) of section 202 with respect to a country if the Secretary determines and notifies the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) the government of such country—

(A) has satisfactorily resolved the abduction cases giving rise to the application of any of such actions; or

(B) has ended such country's pattern of noncompliance; or

(2) the national security interest of the United States requires the exercise of such waiver authority.

(b) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Not later than the date on which the Secretary of State exercises the waiver authority under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) notify the appropriate congressional committees of such waiver; and

(2) provide such committees with a detailed justification for such waiver, including an explanation of the steps the noncompliant government has taken—

(A) to resolve abductions cases; or

(B) to end its pattern of noncompliance.

(c) PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER.—Subject to subsection (d), the Secretary of State shall ensure that each waiver determination under this section—

(1) is published in the Federal Register; or

(2) is posted on the Department of State website.

(d) LIMITED DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary of State may limit the publication of information under subsection (c) in the same manner and to the same extent as the President may limit the publication of findings and determinations described in section 654(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2414(c)), if the Secretary determines that the publication of such information would be harmful to the national security of the United States and would not further the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 205. TERMINATION OF ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Any specific action taken under this Act or any amendment made by this Act with respect to a foreign country shall terminate on the date on which the Secretary of State submits a written certification to Congress that the government of such country—

(1) has resolved any unresolved abduction case that gave rise to such specific action; or

(2) has taken substantial and verifiable steps to correct such country's persistent pattern of noncompliance that gave rise to such specific action, as applicable.

TITLE III—PREVENTION OF INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION

SEC. 301. PREVENTING CHILDREN FROM LEAVING THE UNITED STATES IN VIOLATION OF A COURT ORDER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle C of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 231 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 433. PREVENTION OF INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION.

''(a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—The Secretary, through the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (referred to in this section as 'CBP'), in coordination with the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, shall establish a program that—

''(1) seeks to prevent a child (as defined in section 1204(b)(1) of title 18, United States Code) from departing from the territory of the United States if a parent or legal guardian of such child presents a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction prohibiting the removal of such child from the United States to a CBP Officer in sufficient time to prevent such departure for the duration of such court order; and

''(2) leverages other existing authorities and processes to address the wrongful removal and return of a child.

''(b) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall convene and chair an interagency working group to prevent international parental child abduction. The group shall be composed of presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed officials from—

''(A) the Department of State;

''(B) the Department of Homeland Security, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and

''(C) the Department of Justice, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

''(2) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—The Secretary of Defense shall designate an official within the Department of Defense—

''(A) to coordinate with the Department of State on international child abduction issues; and

''(B) to oversee activities designed to prevent or resolve international child abduction cases relating to active duty military service members.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 note) is amended by adding after the item relating to section 432 the following:

''Sec. 433. Prevention of international child abduction.''.

SEC. 302. AUTHORIZATION FOR JUDICIAL TRAINING ON INTERNATIONAL PARENTAL CHILD ABDUCTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, subject to the availability of appropriations, shall seek to provide training, directly or through another government agency or nongovernmental organizations, on the effective handling of parental abduction cases to the judicial and administrative authorities in countries—

(1) in which a significant number of unresolved abduction cases are pending; or

(2) that have been designated as having a pattern of noncompliance under section 202(b).

(b) STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit a strategy to carry out the activities described in subsection (a) to—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(3) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(4) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State $1,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2015 and 2016 to carry out subsection (a).

(2) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts appropriated for the activities set forth in subsection (a) shall be used pursuant to the authorization and requirements under this section.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute be agreed to.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I don't believe there is further debate on this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on the engrossment of the committee amendment and third reading of the bill.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 3212), as amended, was passed.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

VETERINARY MEDICINE MOBILITY ACT OF 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 458, H.R. 1528.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1528) to amend the Controlled Substances Act to allow a veterinarian to transport and dispense controlled substances

in the usual course of veterinary practice outside of the registered location.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1528) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

NATIONAL CHILD AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to S. Res. 503, submitted earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 503) designating September 2014 as ''National Childhood Awareness Month'' to promote awareness of charities benefiting children and youth-serving organizations throughout the United States and recognizing efforts made by those charities and organizations on behalf of children and youth as critical contributions to the future of the United States.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 503) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

AUTHORIZING SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to S. Res. 504.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 504) to direct the Senate Legal Counsel to appear as amicus curiae in the name of the Senate in Menachem Binyamin Zivotofsky, By His Parents and Guardians, Ari Z. and Naomi Siegman Zivotofsky v. John Kerry, Secretary of State.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, next term the Supreme Court will take up a case presenting the question whether a provision of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003, which affects the official identification documents of some American citizens born abroad, is constitutional. In 2002, Congress enacted a law permitting U.S. citizens who are born in Jerusalem to have the Secretary of State specify ''Israel'' as their birthplace on their passports and other consular documents. Under existing State Department policy, passports and other documents of U.S. citizens born in Jerusalem may only record ''Jerusalem'' as their place of birth, not ''Israel,'' regardless of the wishes of the child or the parents.

Although the President signed the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for fiscal year 2003 into law, in his signing statement he stated that, if the section of the law that included that provision, section 214, were interpreted as mandatory, it would ''interfere with the President's constitutional authority to formulate the position of the United States, speak for the Nation in international affairs, and determine the terms on which recognition is given to foreign states.'' Emphasizing that ''U.S. policy regarding Jerusalem has not changed,'' the Executive has continued to record solely ''Jerusalem'' as the birthplace on passports of all U.S. citizens born in Jerusalem, regardless of their preference and notwithstanding the statute.

In accordance with the Executive's policy, the State Department declined a request to place ''Israel'' on the official documents of a young Jerusalem-born U.S. citizen despite the statutory directive. The boy's parents then sued the Secretary of State on his behalf and sought an order to have ''Israel'' recorded as their son's place of birth. Their suit has been before the D.C. Circuit three times and is now in the Supreme Court for the second time.

Both the district court and the court of appeals initially ordered the suit dismissed. The D.C. Circuit held that the parents' claim under the statute ''presents a nonjusticiable political question because it trenches upon the President's constitutionally committed recognition power,'' which the court said, includes ''a decision made by the President regarding which government is sovereign over a particular place.'' Siding with the Executive, the court explained, ''[E]very president since 1948 has, as a matter of official policy, purposefully avoided taking a position on the issue whether Israel's sovereignty extends to the city of Jerusalem. . . . The State Department's refusal to record 'Israel' in passports and Consular Reports of Birth of U.S. citizens born in Jerusalem implements this longstanding policy of the Executive.''

The parents sought Supreme Court review, and in 2011 the Attorney General advised Congress that the Department of Justice would defend the court of appeals' judgment that the case was nonjusticiable, but that it would also argue that, if the claim was found to be justiciable, section 214(d) of the Act unconstitutionally infringes on the President's exclusive authority to recognize foreign states. A number of Senators and Members of the House appeared as amici curiae, or friends of the court, in support of the statute.

The Supreme Court granted certiorari and vacated the court of appeals' holding that the constitutional issue was a political question. The Court found that the case called for nothing more than performing the ''familiar judicial exercise'' of ''deciding whether the statute impermissibly intrudes upon Presidential powers under the Constitution.''

On remand, Members of both Houses again submitted amicus curiae briefs in defense of section 214(d). One judge on the appellate panel found that the plaintiff's argument was ''powerfully'' buttressed by briefs submitted by Members of Congress, among other amici. However, the panel majority observed, ''While an amicus brief has been submitted on behalf of six senators and fifty-seven representatives, they of course do not speak for the Congress qua the Congress.''

Based on its review of constitutional text and structure, precedent, and history, the D.C. Circuit concluded, this time on the merits, that the President ''exclusively holds the power to determine whether to recognize a foreign sovereign'' and that the statute ''plainly intended to force the State Department to deviate from its decades-long position of neutrality on what nation or government, if any, is sovereign over Jerusalem.'' The court found conclusive the Executive's view that, in so doing, ''section 214(d) would cause adverse foreign policy consequences.'' Accordingly, the court found that the law ''impermissibly intrudes on the President's recognition power and is therefore unconstitutional.''

In April of this year, the Supreme Court again granted review in the case, this time focused on the single question: ''Whether a federal statute that directs the Secretary of State, on request, to record the birthplace of an American citizen born in Jerusalem as born in 'Israel' on a Consular Report of Birth Abroad and on a United States passport is unconstitutional on the ground that the statute 'impermissibly infringes on the President's exercise of the recognition power reposing exclusively in him.'''

This case, accordingly, now presents the Supreme Court with very important questions about the constitutional allocation of power between the branches over foreign affairs. The issues likely to be addressed include the claims of the Executive that the Constitution gives the President exclusive authority over recognition of foreign governments, that this law implicates such authority, and that the statute infringes impermissibly on the President's recognition power.

Contrary to the Executive's claim and the reasoning of the D.C. Circuit,

this statutory provision does not usurp any constitutional power of the President. In particular, it does not infringe on the President's exercise of the power to recognize foreign governments and to voice positions on matters of international sovereignty on behalf of the United States.

In legislating the content of identification documents available to American citizens born abroad, Congress is exercising its plenary powers over immigration and naturalization and its constitutional authority to regulate foreign commerce. The law does not alter the position of the United States on the status of Jerusalem. Rather, it continues Congress's century-and-a-half-old exercise of legislative authority over the contents and design of identification documents, such as passports, held by U.S. citizens. Congress does so in this case to respect the prerogative of American citizens to identify themselves as American citizens with a birth connection to the State of Israel, should they choose to do so.

Mr. President, Title VII of the Ethics in Government Act authorizes the Senate to appear as an amicus curiae in any legal action in which the powers and responsibilities of the Congress under the Constitution are placed in issue. Appearance as an amicus curiae in this case would enable the Senate to respond to the Executive's contention that this law infringes on the President's constitutional power to recognize foreign governments and to present to the Court the basis for the Senate's conviction that the law is consistent with the Constitution.

This resolution would authorize the Senate Legal Counsel to appear in this case in the Senate's name as amicus curiae to support the constitutionality of the statute.

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 504) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, July 17; that following the prayer and the 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 any leader remarks, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 438, S. 2244, as provided under the previous order, and I ask that that be approved.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, at 12 noon tomorrow there will be up to five votes in relation to the TRIA bill. We anticipate three rollcall votes in relation to the Coburn and Flake amendments and then on passage of the bill. There will be two voice votes on the Vitter and Tester amendments. We also expect to lock in an agreement to vote in relation to a circuit judge nomination at 2 p.m. tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:34 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, July 17, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

DISCHARGED NOMINATION

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs was discharged from further consideration of the following nomination under the authority of the order of the Senate of 01/07/2009 and the nomination was placed on the Executive Calendar:

*LAURA S. WERTHEIMER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY.

*Nominee has committed to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate July 16, 2014:

THE JUDICIARY

RONNIE L. WHITE, OF MISSOURI, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI.