



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2019

No. 148

Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Holy God, who loves all and forgets none, thank You for the guidance of Your sacred words, a light for dark times.

Lord, we are grateful You provide wisdom for those who revere You. Send help and strength to our lawmakers, that they may strive to honor You in every endeavor. Inspire them to mount up on wings like eagles, running without weariness and walking without fainting. Lord, give them the wisdom to have a conscience void of offense toward You and humanity.

Eternal God, hear our intercessions, answer them according to Your will, and make us all channels of Your mercy and love.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAWLEY). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 1 minute.

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

IOWA V. IOWA STATE FOOTBALL GAME

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this weekend I attended what some call Iowa's own Super Bowl, the Iowa v. Iowa State football game. I talked with

Iowans while tailgating, and tailgating most of the time goes on before the game for me. We talked about issues such as ethanol, biodiesel, and trade.

This year, the game was in Ames, and Iowa State hosted ESPN's football "College GameDay," and this was the first time ever for Iowans to do that. It was an opportunity to show off Iowa State's campus and to celebrate the tradition of the annual Cy-Hawk game.

Congratulations to the Iowa Hawkeyes for winning this year's match-up, but both teams put up a strong fight, as you can tell from the final score of Iowa's winning 18 to 17.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this weekend saw a brazen attack by Iran

on a critical oil facility in Saudi Arabia. This is not just an isolated drone strike with the prospect of regional escalation but an attack with significant repercussions for the entire global energy market.

We are fortunate that advances in U.S. oil and gas production have made the United States more energy independent and have added capacity to global markets, but the impact of this attack could still be substantial. For this reason, I welcome the administration's preparations to potentially release oil from our Strategic Petroleum Reserve, if needed, to stabilize global markets. I hope our international partners will join us in imposing consequences on Tehran for this reckless, destabilizing attack.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on another matter, when the Senate returned last week, we anticipated our top priority would be conducting the appropriations process and avoiding a lapse in government funding. We had a clear roadmap, a bipartisan, bicameral agreement negotiated by the President's team and the Speaker of the House. It set top-line funding targets for both defense and nondefense, and it laid out ground rules to protect the process from partisan politics.

There has actually been reason for optimism. This week, we hope to move to the House-passed bills for Defense, Energy and Water, Labor-HHS, and State and Foreign Ops. This would be our first procedural step to getting the process moving for all of our priorities on both sides.

There is nothing controversial about this particular grouping of bills. In fact, it was Speaker PELOSI who combined this grouping of bills to move first. Furthermore, if any of the funding measures were going to be handled earnestly across party lines, surely it

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S5485

ought to be the bill funding the Department of Defense. Our fundamental obligation is to provide for the common defense of our country, and all Members feel our responsibility to keep the Nation safe.

Fortunately, the caps agreement specifically allows us to increase defense funding to meet the growing threats our Nation faces. Yet here is where we are: One week in, our Democratic colleagues tried to stonewall the defense funding bill in committee and are now indicating they may even filibuster a motion to begin considering the House-passed defense funding bill later this week.

There is only one way to read this. Some of our Democratic colleagues have determined they would rather stage a political fight with President Trump than secure the resources that our uniformed commanders urgently need to do their jobs. National security is taking a back seat to partisan politics.

Let's be absolutely clear about the concerns and the priorities that our Democratic friends are de-prioritizing. The defense spending measure would bolster efforts to modernize our forces and build the U.S. military of the future. Russia is actively modernizing its own forces, just as we have seen the Putin regime step up its brazen steps to exert its destabilizing influence well beyond its borders. In China, the last decade has seen military spending nearly double. Our regional partners continue to feel the tightening grip of the Chinese Communist Party on trade and strategic activity throughout the Indo-Pacific region while the technological ripples of Chinese cyber meddling are felt right here at home.

In the face of surging great-power adversaries, simple upkeep is not enough to keep America and our allies safe from aggression. Comprehensive funding for research, development, and readiness programs is what is needed. In Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, and beyond, we continue to face sustained threats from terrorist organizations. In the Middle East, we have seen how Iran's bid for regional hegemony and its investment in terror, missiles, and cyber activities threaten the United States, our allies and partners, key shipping lanes, and global energy markets.

This bipartisan Defense bill would help us to adapt to meet these new threats while ensuring our commanders can prosecute existing operations without being consumed by the instability of short-term continuing resolutions. Yet our Democratic colleagues would rather provoke a partisan feud with the President. They would rather have a fight with the President than stick to the agreement we all made. At least that is where we are as of the moment.

I remain hopeful that my friends on the Democratic side will join us in honoring the terms of the agreement that has been struck by the President and

the Speaker and help us to reboot a bipartisan funding process. The readiness and modernization of America's military and the safety of the American people should not play second fiddle to our Democratic colleagues' political strategy.

BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on a completely different matter, for anybody who has been reading the news over the past few days, it has probably felt a little like Groundhog Day because over the last couple of days, leading Democrats have tried to grab on to yet another poorly sourced, thinly reported, unsubstantiated allegation against Justice Brett Kavanaugh. There they go again. Call it a 1-year anniversary reenactment with Senate Democrats reopening the sad and embarrassing chapter they wrote last September.

The latest allegation was blasted out by a major newspaper despite the apparent lack of any corroborating evidence whatsoever. The reporting was so thin that the story ran not in the news section but on the opinion page. In fact, they have already had to issue an enormous correction. The writers conveniently failed to note that the supposed victim herself declined to be interviewed, and several of her friends say she has no memory of any such thing happening.

We all remember this pattern from the last time around: Shoot first, and correct the facts later. Here is another familiar pattern: Just like last September, little things like facts and evidence didn't stop the Democrats from rushing to exploit this. Even as the media was trying to backpedal, a number of the Democratic Presidential candidates were hysterically calling for Justice Kavanaugh to be impeached on the basis of this flimsy, uncorroborated story. They were calling for Justice Kavanaugh to be impeached. That includes several of our own Senate colleagues. Even after the massive correction, no one in that group has backed off his ridiculous threat.

This laughable suggestion is already earning scorn throughout the country and across the political spectrum. A majority of Senators and the American people rightly rejected the politics of unsubstantiated personal destruction just last year. It is just as transparent and self-serving today, 1 year later.

Yet it would be a mistake to dismiss this as a bad case of sour grapes. This is not just a leftwing obsession with one man; it is part of a deliberate effort to attack judicial independence. Six of the Democratic Presidential candidates—plus one who has now quit to run for the Senate—have publicly flirted with packing the Supreme Court—Court packing. Today's bold, new Democratic idea is a failed power grab from back in the 1930s.

Just a few weeks ago, some Senate Democrats nakedly threatened the Su-

preme Court Justices in writing. Our colleagues sent the Court an outlandish brief, gravely intoning that the "Supreme Court is not well," they said. "The Supreme Court is not well." Here was the punch line: Either issue rulings we like or we will pack the Court.

This is not normal political behavior. These are the actions of a political party whose agenda is so alien to the Constitution that it feels threatened by fair and faithful judges.

This is what I would say: When the simple notion that judges should be faithful to the Constitution looks like an attack on your agenda, maybe it is your agenda that needs a makeover, not our independent judiciary. When you are this willing to launch unhinged personal attacks, you reveal a whole lot more about your own radicalism than about the men and women you target.

This is my commitment and the commitment of all of my Republican colleagues: As long as we remain in the Senate, we will fight to preserve our fair and independent judiciary.

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION, DEFENSE, STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020—Motion to Proceed

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 140, H.R. 2740.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 140, H.R. 2740, making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2740, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, John Cornyn, Richard C. Shelby, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Mike Rounds, Jerry Moran, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch, John Boozman, Roy Blunt, John Thune, David Perdue, John Hoeven.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, before I begin, I just want to comment on the Republican leader's remarks.

I listened to Leader MCCONNELL's remarks about the appropriations process. He accused Democrats of wanting to provoke a partisan fight with the President rather than fund our military.

It was a bold accusation considering that it was the President and the Republican majority on the Appropriations Committee who proposed taking funding from the military to spend on the President's wall. That is what Democrats oppose. That is what Leader MCCONNELL called staging a political fight.

Across the country we see communities, military bases, and people in the military saying: Taking away this money hurts us. All Democrats are asking for is to protect the troops from having their resources robbed for a border wall—resources that Congress said should go to the military. By the way, the President promised Mexico would pay for the wall. Let's not forget that.

In March, 12 Republicans voted with us to reject the President's proposal. That is a lot in a place where people fear the President and don't like to buck him. The real question is, Will the rest join us now? That is the issue.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Mr. President, on guns and the tragedies that have occurred in the last 6 weeks, it has been over 6 weeks since President Trump, in the aftermath of two tragic mass shootings, signaled that he would be supportive of expanding background checks. It has been over 200 days—201, I believe—since the House of Representatives passed a bipartisan bill that would strengthen background checks in the most comprehensive way. Yet, despite those two facts, we still have no idea what policy President Trump might support.

Yesterday, at the request of Speaker PELOSI and me, we held a phone call with the President to urge him to support the bipartisan, House-passed universal background checks bill and to make that position public. We are certainly willing to discuss the finer points of legislation with our Republican colleagues, but we have made one thing clear to the President: The effectiveness of gun safety measures will be severely compromised if we allow the loopholes in our background check system to remain intact.

For example, it has been widely reported that the President is consid-

ering legislation dealing with Extreme Risk Protection Orders, ERPOs, as part of the response to last month's horrific shootings. I support ERPOs and believe they can be an important piece of a broader effort to prevent gun violence. But even if we pass a strong bill on ERPOs, someone prohibited from possessing a gun under an Extreme Risk Protection Order could still obtain a firearm by exploiting the gun show loophole and the online loophole.

Let's say a family member of John X. Smith says that he doesn't deserve to have a gun. They go through the proper procedure, and they say he can't have a gun or they take a gun that he has away from him. In the next minute, the same John X. Smith can go online and get a gun. There will be no check on him, so he will get it, or he can go to a gun show and do that.

Without background checks, these other things virtually become get-aroundable: A bad guy who shouldn't have a gun finds a way to get around them, taking advantage of the loopholes that now exist in the law.

We have to do background checks. That is at the base of all of this—background checks that close all of the loopholes. Allowing law-abiding Americans to have guns, that is the Second Amendment. But saying that felons, those adjudicated mentally ill, and spousal abusers can't, everyone—90 percent of America—agrees with that.

In the wake of the torrent of mass shootings, in the wake of alarming rates of gun violence on a daily basis, our goal should not be to pass something just to pass something. We have a responsibility, bestowed upon us by the American people, to do something meaningful to address the epidemic of gun violence in our country, to save American lives, and to save as many lives as possible, the Senate must consider the bipartisan universal background checks bill.

This is a critical moment for President Trump and for the Nation. The President can provide the kind of leadership on this issue that his party has lacked for decades. He can break the vice grip the NRA has held by congressional Republicans by supporting a policy that well over 90 percent of all Americans already support. Such a commitment would undeniably be popular; it would be historic; and, most important, it would save countless lives.

Speaker PELOSI and I told the President that if he endorsed this legislation and got Leader MCCONNELL to act on it, we would be happy to join him in the Rose Garden for the signing ceremony.

On the other hand, the President could cave to the NRA yet again this week and announce he is supporting only the kinds of policies that will not offend them—policies that will not make a real dent in the problem.

The American people have waited long enough for Congress to do something about the decades-long night-

mare of gun violence that seems to get worse and worse. The President can choose, this week, to help break the deadlock—the courageous and correct move—or he can slink away and perpetuate the status quo.

CHINA TELECOM

Mr. President, on another issue, China telecom, I have spent a lot of time on the Senate floor talking about the Chinese telecom giant Huawei and the threat it poses to our national and economic security. This afternoon, I want to inform my colleagues about similar concerns I have about two other major Chinese companies: China Telecom and China Unicom. Alongside China Mobile, these three companies are the big three of China's government-owned and government-controlled telecommunications network.

Earlier this year, the FCC rejected an application by China Mobile to operate in the United States on national security grounds. The Commission issued a 200-page opinion outlining the various security risks of a state-owned Chinese company operating on U.S. networks. That made sense. But at the same time, it turns out that both China Telecom and China Unicom, the other two major Chinese telecom giants, were granted authorization to operate in the United States in the early 2000s. So today, Senator COTTON, a Republican from Arkansas, and I, a Democrat from New York, are sending a letter to the FCC, urging them to review and, if warranted, revoke those authorizations on national security grounds. If China Mobile shouldn't operate here, it seems that neither should China Telecom and China Unicom.

These approvals were issued well over 15 years ago, before the Department of Homeland Security even existed. In that same time, the national security environment has changed dramatically. The Chinese Government has conducted a vicious and predatory campaign of cyber hostilities all over the world, including intrusions and hacks of prominent American companies and American institutions. The facts that these two telecom companies are controlled by the Chinese Communist Party and have access to our networks seem to be very serious problems. At the very least, the FCC should open a proceeding to review these companies and, if necessary, revoke their access.

Senator COTTON and I, as everyone in this Chamber knows, don't see eye to eye on many issues, but on this one we are in complete agreement. We must be really careful about the national security risks posed by China's key telecom companies.

I think Senator COTTON would also agree with the larger point I have been making for months about U.S. access to China's markets. If China doesn't let American businesses compete fairly in its markets, why should we let Chinese companies compete in ours?

Reciprocity is the real answer to the dilemma of China not being fair to us.

They don't let our top-notch companies in or let them in under such restraints that many of them don't want to come in or can't operate effectively or have to surrender their family jewels, their intellectual property, to Chinese companies.

If that is the case, and it is, why do we just let any Chinese company come in here, particularly when they might be a real national security risk? China's telecom companies have 10 "points of presence" in North American networks. Do you know how many American companies have the same in China? Zero. China Telecom gets access to our networks, but T-Mobile or any other American telecom company can't operate in China. Enough of that. Enough of that. Enough of China trying to take advantage of us. We sort of sit there and do not do anything to protect our workers, our wealth, and the great kinds of ideas Americans come up with in terms of intellectual property.

This isn't just a question of fairness. It is a question of which nation will lead the world in these industries in the coming decades, creating jobs and wealth. I want America to lead. Our businesses need to be able to compete equally and fairly. I am confident, if there were a level playing field, America would prevail, and we would stay the leading economy in the world. If we continue to let China take advantage of us while we sit there with our hands folded, woe is us—and particularly for our children and our grandchildren.

I conclude by reminding the Trump administration that in the ongoing trade negotiations with Beijing, where the President has been tougher on China than either of the previous two administrations—and that is a good thing—the topic of reciprocity and fair market access should be front and center, and we shouldn't give in until we are treated fairly.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last year, we on the Judiciary Committee conducted an incredibly thorough review of a nominee to the Supreme Court of the United States. We dug into Justice Kavanaugh's personal and professional life and discussed concerns openly in front of the public.

Allegations were raised against the Justice, but none could be corroborated or verified. I know about this because I

had a team of dozens of lawyers and investigators chasing down each allegation we received. My team spoke to 45 individuals and took 25 written statements.

Anyone can review the 415-page investigation summary report that I released last November. We laid out the information we received, including some of the ugliest of claims. In the end, there was no credible evidence to support any of the allegations. Brett Kavanaugh then was duly confirmed to the Supreme Court by this body, as prescribed in the Constitution.

Now, fast forward to this past weekend, and the issues that I and a lot of other Members of the Senate are being asked about this very day, just as if there is nothing else going on in this town, but you dig up something that happened a year ago.

The New York Times published a book excerpt about Justice Kavanaugh's younger days that has fueled a very fresh rumor from someone whose friends claim contacted Senators on the committee. That person, Mr. Stier, didn't reach out or provide information to the committee's majority. Apparently, he also didn't provide any information to these writers. It is only on the word of two anonymous sources that his name and accusation come up in this story in the New York Times.

Again, my office never received anything from Mr. Stier or his unnamed friends, and we never received an allegation against Kavanaugh like the one referenced in the report over this weekend. After interviewing eight people related to the Ramirez allegations, not once was Mr. Stier's name mentioned. Had my staff received substantive allegations or had he approached me or my staff, we would have attempted to take a statement and interview him. But the alleged victim, who also didn't speak to these writers, apparently, does not recall the incident. That is a point that the New York Times failed to include in its initial coverage.

Now, it happens that accountability is a cornerstone of democracy. I welcome scrutiny of my work. I frequently refer to reporters and journalists as the police of our democratic system, but today I am reminded of a very old adage: Who will watch the watchmen? This weekend's report included some embarrassing and irresponsible missteps. They are mistakes that warrant serious self-reflection.

A year ago, after the interviews with dozens of people, the New York Times couldn't even corroborate the allegations laid out by Ms. Ramirez and declined to report on them. With nothing but a year of time and another interview with Ramirez herself, the paper thought those unverified claims were suddenly worth printing—no more corroboration and no more verification. Coming only days before the release of the author's book, I can't help but wonder if the timing had something to do with the decision to run the story. Maybe it was to sell more books.

They also laid out what commentators are now calling a new allegation. Let me be clear. This is not an allegation. It is barely a third-hand rumor. These writers—can you believe this?—didn't even speak to the man who they claim originally recounted this rumor. What is left are only layers and layers of decades-old hearsay—no more corroboration, no more verification, and not even anything from the accuser himself, and, most importantly, nothing from the person who was allegedly involved.

Now, the most shameful piece of this episode is that it took more than a full day, after publication, for the editors to intervene and to provide critical context. An editor's note added to the story last night reads: "The book reports that the female student declined to be interviewed and friends say that she does not recall the incident."

Let me quote again: "... she does not recall the incident." That is the alleged victim. That is the opposite of corroboration and verification. In the legal world, this sort of thing is called exculpatory information. When it is not laid bare to provide greater context, it creates a serious credibility problem.

In this case, the New York Times withheld crucial facts that undercut its own reporting. We now have an uncorroborated accusation, rooted only in unnamed sources, with no direct knowledge of the event and that the alleged victim doesn't even remember.

Now, you know about the New York Times. Their slogan is that they only print what is "fit to print." I just described this situation of no corroboration rooted in an unnamed source without direct knowledge of this event and that the alleged victim doesn't even remember.

Now, to get back to the slogan of the newspaper, when did this stuff I described become something "fit to print" by the supposed American paper of record?

The sad consequences of this article are a misinformed public, a greater divide in our own discourse, and a deeper lack of faith in our news media.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John Rakolta, Jr., of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Arab Emirates.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

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

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

UNITED AUTO WORKERS STRIKE

Mr. BROWN. Today I hope my colleagues will join me in standing in solidarity with thousands of UAW workers in Ohio and around the country. Workers are going without their paychecks today because they are demanding General Motors respect the work they do which has made this company so successful.

All workers have the right to stand up for fair pay and benefits, for better working conditions, and for a voice in their company. Let's be clear. The autoworkers, shall we say, are the engine behind GM's success. GM wouldn't be making a dime of profit without the workers who actually make their cars and trucks. Autoworkers stood up and made sacrifices to help GM when times were tough.

The Presiding Officer was a Member of the House then, and I was a Member of the Senate. We saw what happened during the rescue of the auto industry and how much those workers gave up to save this industry. We remember the depths of the recession. We remember when President Obama took office as 800,000 were losing their jobs the first month and 700,000 the second month until, with the auto rescue, House Democrats, with President Obama, turned this economy around. We have seen, literally, economic growth each quarter over the last 10 years. This was, in large part, because so many workers, like the UAW workers, were willing to give up something at the bargaining table.

In some cases, clearly, some people in this town wanted to abandon that company. Now that times are better, all the workers are asking for is their fair share. So far, GM has not treated these workers as the critical partners they are in our auto industry.

Look at what GM has done in my State. Look at what they did in Lordstown, OH. The company shut down its most productive plant in North America, by GM's own measurements. The Lordstown plant near Youngstown, OH, as recently as 2½ years ago—back during the Obama administration—had 4,500 workers working there. Even though President Trump said: Don't sell your homes; these jobs are coming back, they have been laid off—hundreds of workers, 4,500 over the last couple years. At the same time, GM announced they were going to build the Chevy Blazer in Mexico.

GM could retool that Lordstown plant, and they could build the Blazer

in Ohio. They could put some of their electric vehicles in the Lordstown plant in Ohio. We know they have plenty of money to work with. They earned higher than expected profits in the first quarter of this year. President Trump's tax cuts for the rich gave huge amounts of tax breaks to General Motors. Much of the money went to General Motors' executives. All these workers are asking for is to share in those profits, have a voice in their company.

GM made the decision to close Lordstown and other plants around the country with no input from the workers who earned those profits for that company. Now workers are standing up and fighting for increased investments in their local communities.

I spoke this week with Gary Jones, the international president of the United Auto Workers, about Lordstown and bringing these jobs back. That is what they are trying to win at the bargaining table.

We know strikes are always a last resort for workers. My wife grew up in Ashtabula, OH. Her dad carried a union card, Utility Workers of America. He did maintenance for that plant for more than 30 years. Twice when she was growing up they went on strike. She knows, as workers know, they never get back what they lose in a strike. So when they strike, it is when their backs are against the wall. The wife of one GM worker posted online this week: "I can only pray this strike is short."

These workers want to do their jobs. They want to work. They don't want to be on the picket line. They want to reach a solution that honors their work.

GM needs to agree to a contract that honors the dignity of work and recognizes autoworkers, the communities, and the families who are affected by this and who helped drive the success of the auto industry in Ohio and across the country.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, once again, the Trump administration is trying to take healthcare away from people.

I will never forget. I was sitting at this desk on the Senate floor the night when Senators MURKOWSKI, COLLINS, and McCain voted against repealing the Affordable Care Act. I watched my colleagues—all of whom have good health insurance—all of us have good health insurance because of taxpayers. I watched my colleagues, one after another after another, vote to take health insurance away from millions of people. There are 900,000 people in my State alone who have insurance now because of the Affordable Care Act.

This time, the Trump administration is trying to pull funding from health facilities that tell the truth to their patients—facilities like Planned Parenthood—that nearly 100,000 Ohioans rely on. They are blocking title X funding for any healthcare organization that actually gives patients medically

relevant information and the full range of healthcare options. We know who makes these decisions. I hate to say it this way, but it is mostly White men in Washington, and they have very serious consequences for Ohio women.

This month, two Planned Parenthood clinics in Cincinnati announced they will have to close their doors. This will be devastating for so many Southwest Ohio women. It will mean they have fewer options for healthcare services they need, including preventive care like cancer screenings and STI testing and birth control. It will mean many women won't be able to see the doctors they rely on and trust.

A student in Cincinnati named Caroline—who said we can use her first name—talked to a local reporter about what this decision means for her. She said:

I have a very close relationship with my provider. There's a lot of trust there that's been built over the years.

But now, because of this President, she is not going to be able to see that doctor anymore—to what purpose other than playing politics?

I got a letter from another woman in Cincinnati, who wrote:

As someone who lost her grandmother to uterine cancer in March, I know how important it is for women to have access to the healthcare services that Planned Parenthood provides. Women have the right to make informed decisions about their own bodies and to have access to examinations that can help save their lives.

That came from a woman in Cincinnati.

We know Planned Parenthood provides these exams and tests. These clinics are often the only places that many women and some men have to turn. They either can't afford somewhere else, or they live too far away from other healthcare providers to have any other real option. Last year, the West Side clinic that is closing in Cincinnati performed more than 6,900 STI tests. The Springdale clinic that is closing performed more than 6,300 tests.

Another woman from Cincinnati wrote to say that her 30-year-old daughter has an advanced degree, but her income is "below poverty level," and she relies on Planned Parenthood for her care. Does this mean she won't get care? It probably does. It means she can't afford to go anywhere else. She will just go without care, and we know what can then happen to someone. The mother of the 30-year-old daughter said: "Now she will be hard-pressed to find a provider that will take her for checkups, to receive birth control and more."

The assault on women's healthcare isn't just coming from the Trump administration; they are encouraging rightwing State legislatures all over the country. Over the past few years, we have seen State legislatures notably—including my State, unfortunately, Ohio—making it harder and harder for clinics to operate and provide those preventive services. They

cut funding, they increase redtape, they rail against bureaucrats and bureaucracy, but they make it harder with more redtape. They come up with rule after unnecessary rule to dissuade young women from coming to these clinics.

These rules aren't really about patient health; they are about closing health clinics. Again, who made these laws? It is always the same. It is men who don't listen, men who don't understand how women's bodies' work. It is men who don't understand how preventive care, like birth control, works. It is time for old White men in Washington and in courtrooms to stop trying to take away women's healthcare.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of John Rakolta, Jr., of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Arab Emirates.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Mike Crapo, John Thune, Tim Scott, John Hoeven, Shelley Moore Capito, Kevin Cramer, John Boozman, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, James E. Risch, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Martha McSally.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of John Rakolta, Jr., of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Arab Emirates, 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from

California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBACHER), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 282 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Barrasso	Graham	Perdue
Blackburn	Grassley	Peters
Blunt	Hassan	Portman
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Isakson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Jones	Shaheen
Coons	King	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sinema
Cotton	Lee	Stabenow
Cramer	Manchin	Sullivan
Crapo	McConnell	Tester
Daines	McSally	Thune
Enzi	Moran	Tillis
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Murphy	
Gardner	Paul	

NAYS—27

Baldwin	Durbin	Reed
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Rosen
Brown	Heinrich	Schumer
Cantwell	Hirono	Smith
Cardin	Kaine	Udall
Carper	Leahy	Van Hollen
Casey	Markey	Warner
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Merkley	Wyden

NOT VOTING—18

Alexander	Hyde-Smith	Romney
Bennet	Kennedy	Sanders
Booker	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cruz	Murray	Toomey
Gillibrand	Risch	Warren
Harris	Roberts	Wicker

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 27.

The motion is agreed to.

The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the postcloture time on the Rakolta nomination expire at noon on Tuesday, September 17; further, that if cloture is invoked on the Howerly nomination, the postcloture time expire at 3:30 p.m., and if either of the nominations are confirmed the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; finally, that notwithstanding rule XXII, following disposition of the Howerly nomination, the Senate vote on the cloture motions for the Destro, McIntosh, and Callanan nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sen-

ate proceed to legislative session to be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO JAMES MIDDLETON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, Dr. James Middleton has spent nearly every day of his adult life caring for others. As a family physician in Hart County, KY, he has dedicated himself to promoting the health and well-being of his community. When he inherited the family farm and its 150-year-old history, James also made a pledge to conserve that land for all those who might enjoy it.

Recently, my friend was recognized for the exceptional care he has provided to his community with the Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award. I would like to take a moment to congratulate him on this prestigious recognition and to thank him for his years of conservation to protect our environment and benefit Kentucky communities.

Our Commonwealth is blessed with a rich ecosystem and picturesque landscapes. James' home, including the years-old tobacco farm, is near two of our most remarkable natural treasures: the Mammoth Cave system and the Green River. In an effort to help protect these magnificent features, James chose to participate in the Tobacco Buyout, which was created by legislation I introduced to free Kentucky farmers from a Depression-era tobacco quota system. He set out on a new agricultural path and focused on crops that would protect his region and one of the most bio-diverse rivers in the world.

James designed a new style of land management specifically to benefit the natural environment of his community and our country. He began growing hay, raising pasture-fed cattle, and harvesting hardwoods. By his estimation, he has planted more than a million trees, and the majority of his farm is now forestland. As a result, his 600 acres of vegetation have formed a natural barrier to protect the Green River from runoff and other threats.

I would like to congratulate my friend for his remarkable leadership in Hart County and his important conservation work that has benefited Kentucky and our environment. He is certainly deserving of this distinguished award, and I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. James Middleton for his passionate protection of our heritage.

TRIBUTE TO PATSY SMULLIN

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I want to recognize and honor a quintessential Oregonian and legendary figure in our State's media circles, Patsy Smullin.

On September 12, Patsy earned well-deserved honors from the National Association of Broadcasters for her long-time leadership as president and owner of California Oregon Broadcasting, Inc., COBI.

As association president and our former Senate colleague Gordon Smith put it in presenting Patsy with its Chuck Sherman Television Leadership Award for local TV in medium and smaller markets, “Patsy’s passion for excellence in small market local television is unmatched. She exemplifies the best of broadcasting by running the longest continuously-owned and operated, independent broadcast organization in the West.”

Like former Senator Smith and countless elected officials throughout our State, I have come to know Patsy from regular visits to southern Oregon for townhalls, community meetings, and more.

When I visit TV station KOB1 in Medford, I can always count on a wide-ranging and thought-provoking set of questions from her station’s journalists, and of course, that steadfast commitment to serious and fair journalism starts at the top with Patsy.

As the son of a journalist, I very much appreciate her unshakable dedication to independent journalism that continues in the very best tradition of both her profession and in the legacy established back in 1933 by California Oregon Broadcasting, Inc.

As a Senator, I appreciate in equal measure her rock-solid devotion to local journalism that serves viewers so well in all of southern Oregon.

In Patsy’s remarks accepting her award, she noted that “Television in medium and smaller markets is a business where the hours are often long, the pressure to get it right is heavy, and the monetary compensation is not equal to the responsibilities.”

Then with classic Patsy modesty, she added, “I have been very fortunate throughout my career to be surrounded by individuals who might not make a lot of money, but who make a positive difference in their community each and every day and love their work.”

I will conclude my remarks by saying all of southern Oregon is incredibly fortunate that Patsy has set the bar high both for working long hours and love of her profession to make a positive difference in her community each and every day.

TRIBUTE TO PETER B. EDELMAN

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I want to recognize the work that Professor Peter B. Edelman, faculty director of the Center on Poverty and Inequality at Georgetown University, has done and for his decades-long career fighting for working families. Along with his equally if not more impressive wife, Marian Wright Edelman, it is not an exaggeration to say the two have improved the lives of millions of Americans.

A key figure in planning Senator Robert F. Kennedy’s memorable tour of the Mississippi Delta, Professor Edelman continues to help expose the crippling poverty that still permeates through our country. His books “So Rich, So Poor: Why It’s so Hard to End Poverty in America” and “Not a Crime to Be Poor. The Criminalization of Poverty in America” have been important in shaping my view on the lack of economic mobility in America. A dedicated public servant who has worked in various administrations and organizations, Professor Edelman has been on the forefront of promoting and implementing social justice policies.

While I recognize we live in a time where politicians and special interests groups have tipped the scales in favor of corporations and the wealthy, I am encouraged to know that Professor Edelman is educating the next generation of anti-poverty advocates.

As the Coalition on Human Needs honors Professor Edelman as a recipient of its 2019 Human Needs Hero award, I want to express my thanks for his work as an advocate of working families. He has improved countless lives, and his pragmatic yet principled approach serves as a model for those pursuing social change now and for years to come. For these reasons, it is my honor and privilege today to recognize the achievements of Professor Peter B. Edelman.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF JOURNEY HOUSE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Journey House in Milwaukee, WI, on its 50th anniversary. For five decades, Journey House has been a beacon of hope in the city’s Clarke Square neighborhood. Since its founding in the summer of 1969, Journey House has made tremendous strides in helping families move out of poverty on Milwaukee’s near Southside. I am delighted to honor this remarkable community organization and commemorate this significant milestone.

Through its four core programs, Journey House has helped low-income community members achieve their greatest potential. Its adult education program provides basic skills and GED education in both English and Spanish to lay the foundation for a successful career path. Its youth development programs focus on keeping children and young adults away from drugs and violence. Its emphasis on workforce readiness builds the skills and motivation employers seek. Its family engagement events offer the simple but important gift of spending time together in a safe and welcoming environment. Programming also includes community learning centers, housing for homeless youth aging out of foster care, and affordable family housing.

Journey House began with a staff of two local teenagers, Zlan Kleczewski and Rudy Rosas, working as codirec-

tors. With funding from VISTA—Volunteers in Service to America—they organized programs for youth engagement and development. As Journey House started to grow and as Zlan and Rudy returned to school, the organization sought permanent leadership.

After receiving its first VISTA grant in 1969, Journey House hired its first full-time director in 1971. Today, Journey House is led by Dr. Michele Bria who, since her start in 1998, has been the inspiration behind the agency’s success. Under her leadership, the agency has grown from a small operation with two sites and a \$200,000 budget to a multimillion dollar organization that serves thousands daily. Her hard work and commitment are reflected in the achievements of countless youth and families who have broken the cycle of poverty.

From its humble beginnings five decades ago, Journey House has played a transformative role in one of Milwaukee’s most ethnically diverse and economically challenged neighborhoods. I am proud to recognize the contributions made by Journey House over the past 50 years, and I am grateful for the work the staff do every day to change lives for the better.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING HIGH STREET CHURCH

• Mr. JONES. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of High Street Church of Christ in Tuscumbia, AL. For over a century, this church has been a source of hope and inspiration to the city of Tuscumbia and the State of Alabama. Through their ministry and outreach, they have transformed the lives of so many Alabamians.

Last year, on September 28-30, High Street Church of Christ hosted their centennial celebration with 2 days of events commemorating 100 years of tireless work and dedication. The speakers for the event included Brothers Michael S. Robert, Mansel Long, and Stanley Hubbard, many of whom who have been longstanding members of the church. I am proud to be able to honor the High Street Church here on the U.S. Senate floor and to let the congregants of this church know that they have my support and good wishes.

In is written, “Upon this rock I will build my church.” High Street Church of Christ has proven to be a rock—a pillar of the local community in Northwest Alabama—since its inception in 1918. High Street Church has been a trailblazer as one of the first minority congregations in north Alabama. Under the current leadership of Brothers Eddie Goodloe, William Long, Roderick Metcalf, and Thomas Sledge, the church’s good work continues.

As they approach their 101st celebration, I congratulate the church on its first 100 years, and I look forward its continued growth and watching its

positive impact on Tuscumbia and Alabama for years to come.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTENT TO ENTER INTO A TRADE AGREEMENT REGARDING TARIFF BARRIERS WITH JAPAN—PM 29

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

To the Congress of the United States:

On October 16, 2018, my Administration notified the Congress that I intended to initiate trade negotiations with Japan on a United States-Japan Trade Agreement. As stated in that notification and subsequent consultations with the Congress, my Administration proposed pursuing negotiations with Japan in stages. I am pleased to report that my Administration has reached an initial trade agreement regarding tariff barriers (the “agreement”) with Japan and I intend to enter into the agreement in the coming weeks.

Accordingly, pursuant to section 103(a)(2) of the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-26, Title I) (the “Act”), I hereby notify the Congress that I intend to enter into a trade agreement regarding tariff barriers with Japan under section 103(a) of the Act.

In addition, I also will be entering into an Executive Agreement with Japan regarding digital trade.

My Administration looks forward to continued collaboration with the Congress on further negotiations with Japan to achieve a comprehensive trade agreement that results in more fair and reciprocal trade between the United States and Japan.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 16, 2019.

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-2558. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Review Group, Commodity Credit Corporation, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs” (RIN0560-AI45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2559. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule en-

titled “Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Increased Assessment Rate” ((7 CFR Part 985) (Docket No. AMS-SC-19-0026)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2560. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Reorganization and Transfer of Regulations” ((7 CFR Part 735) (Docket No. AMS-FGIS-18-0073 FR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2561. A communication from the Chief of the Army Privacy Office, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “The Army Privacy Program” ((RIN0702-AB03) (32 CFR Part 505)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2019; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2562. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program” (RIN0790-AJ40) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2019; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2563. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Venezuela that was declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2564. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Ukraine that was originally declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2565. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2566. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Fiscal Year 2018 Methane Hydrate Program”; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2567. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; California; South Coast Air Quality Management District; Stationary Source Permits” (FRL No. 9997-16-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2568. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Revisions to Nox SIP Call and CAIR Rules” (FRL No. 9999-47-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2569. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Findings of Failure to Submit State

Implementation Plans Required for Attainment of the 2010 1-Hour Primary Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS)” (FRL No. 9999-85-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2570. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Relaxation of the Federal Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) Gasoline Volatility Standard for the Atlanta RVP Area” (FRL No. 9999-87-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2571. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Standards of Performance for Stationary Compression Ignition Integral Combustion Engines; Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule” (FRL No. 9999-86-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2572. 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 “Revenue Procedure Providing Guidance for Making Late Elections or Revoking an Election under Certain Provisions of Section 168(k) of the Internal Revenue Code” (Rev. Proc. 2019-33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2573. 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 “Method Change Procedures Accompanying the Section 451 NPRMs” (Rev. Proc. 2019-37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2574. 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 “Examination of Returns and Claims for Refund, Credit, or Abatement; Determination of Tax Liability” (Rev. Proc. 2019-36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2575. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms parts and components abroad controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions Lists of M16A4 upgrade kits to Thailand in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-008); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2576. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “National Health Service Corps Report to Congress for the Year 2018”; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2577. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Prevailing Rate Systems; Redefinition of Certain Appropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Areas” (RIN3206-AN87) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2578. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-113, "Close Relative Caregiver Subsidy Pilot Program Establishment Temporary Amendment Act of 2019"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2579. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-114, "Medical Marijuana Program Patient Employment Protection Temporary Amendment Act of 2019"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2580. A communication from the Senior Policy Analyst, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Army Cemeteries" (RIN0702-AA80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-2581. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2582. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XG884) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2583. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Gulf of Maine Cod and Witch Flounder Trip Limit Increases for the Common Pool Fishery" (RIN0648-XG836) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2584. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Common Pool Measures for Fishing Year 2019; Correction" (RIN0648-XG900) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2585. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 in the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XG885) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2586. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries Off West Coast States; Modifications of the West Coast Recreational and

Commercial Salmon Fisheries; Inseason Actions #1 through #5" (RIN0648-XG904) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2587. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Resources of the South Atlantic; 2019 Vermillion Snapper Commercial Trip Limit Reduction" (RIN0648-XH011) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2588. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish; 2019 River Herring and Shad Catch Cap Reached for the Directed Atlantic Mackerel Commercial Fishery" (RIN0648-XG866) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2589. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2018 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Golden Tilefish Hook-and-Line Component" (RIN0648-XG409) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2590. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Commercial Aggregated Large Coastal Shark and Hammerhead Shark Management Group Retention Limit Adjustment" (RIN0648-XG582) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2591. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Less Than 60 Feet (18.3 Meters) Length Overall Using Jig or Hook-and-Line Gear in the Bogoslof Pacific Cod Exemption Area in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-AKR-A001) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2592. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; 2018-2019 Commercial Run-Around Gillnet Closure for King Mackerel" (RIN0648-XG769) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2593. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Depart-

ment of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; General Category Fishery" (RIN0648-XG787) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BRAUN, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 2479. A bill to provide clarification regarding the common or usual name for bison and compliance with section 403 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. RISCH, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 2480. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to reauthorize the payment in lieu of taxes program through fiscal year 2029; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CASIDY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HARRIS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. JONES, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. REED, Mr. Kaine, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CARPER, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. Con. Res. 25. A concurrent resolution recognizing September 11, 2019, as a "National Day of Service and Remembrance"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 229

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 229, a bill to provide advance appropriations authority for certain accounts of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education of the Department of the Interior and the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

S. 286

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 286, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family

therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 427

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) were added as cosponsors of S. 427, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance activities of the National Institutes of Health with respect to research on autism spectrum disorder and enhance programs relating to autism, and for other purposes.

S. 433

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 433, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve home health payment reforms under the Medicare program.

S. 521

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 521, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 554

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 554, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to take actions necessary to ensure that certain individuals may update the burn pit registry with the cause of death of a registered individual, and for other purposes.

S. 638

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 638, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to designate per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, Liability Act of 1980, and for other purposes.

S. 807

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 807, a bill to require recipients of Federal funds to disclose information relating to programs, projects, or activities carried out using the Federal funds.

S. 879

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 879, a bill to provide a process for granting lawful permanent resident status to aliens from certain countries who meet specified eligibility requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 887

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana

(Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 887, a bill to revise counseling requirements for certain borrowers of student loans, and for other purposes.

S. 888

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 888, a bill to require a standard financial aid offer form, and for other purposes.

S. 948

At the request of Mr. COONS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 948, a bill to provide incentives to physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved communities, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 948, *supra*.

S. 1007

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1007, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1200

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1200, a bill to create protections for depository institutions that provide financial services to cannabis-related legitimate businesses and service providers for such businesses, and for other purposes.

S. 1399

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1399, a bill to amend title VIII of the Public Health Services Act to revise and extend nursing workforce development programs.

S. 1727

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1727, a bill to establish the Partnership Fund for Peace to promote joint economic development and finance ventures between Palestinian entrepreneurs and companies and those in the United States and Israel to improve economic cooperation and people-to-people peacebuilding programs, and to further shared community building, peaceful coexistence, dialogue, and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

S. 1788

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1788, a bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to enhance penalties for theft of a firearm from a Federal firearms licensee.

S. 1817

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

KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1817, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve nutritional and other program requirements relating to purchases of locally produced food.

S. 1838

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1838, a bill to amend the Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, and for other purposes.

S. 1918

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 1918, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require alternative options for summer food service program delivery.

S. 2022

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2022, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for improvements to the specially adapted housing program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2024

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2024, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve the American History for Freedom grant program.

S. 2054

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) were added as cosponsors of S. 2054, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Glen Doherty, Tyrone Woods, J. Christopher Stevens, and Sean Smith, in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 2118

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2118, a bill to prohibit United States persons from dealing in certain information and communications technology or services from foreign adversaries and to require the approval of Congress to terminate certain export controls in effect with respect to Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd., and for other purposes.

S. 2258

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2258, a bill to provide anti-retaliation protections for anti-trust whistleblowers.

S. 2281

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2281, a bill to amend chapter 11 of title 35, United States Code, to require the voluntary collection of demographic information for patent applications, and for other purposes.

S. 2412

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2412, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of addiction counselor services under part B of the Medicare program.

S. 2434

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 2434, a bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission.

S. 2469

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2469, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require the use of advanced leak detection technology for pipelines, and for other purposes.

S. 2478

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2478, a bill to designate the Bahamas under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide temporary protected status under such section to eligible nationals of the Bahamas.

S. CON. RES. 21

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 21, a concurrent resolution strongly condemning human rights violations, violence against civilians, and cooperation with Iran by the Houthi movement and its allies in Yemen.

S. RES. 274

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 274, a resolution expressing solidarity with Falun Gong practitioners who have lost lives, freedoms, and other rights for adhering to their beliefs and practices, and condemning the practice of non-consenting organ harvesting, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 25—RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 11, 2019, AS A “NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE”

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HARRIS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. JONES, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. REED, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CARPER, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. ROBERTS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 25

Whereas, on September 11, 2001, the United States endured a violent terrorist attack leading to the tragic deaths and injuries of thousands of innocent United States citizens and other citizens from more than 90 different nations and territories;

Whereas, in response to the attacks in New York City, Washington, DC, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, firefighters, uniformed officers, emergency medical technicians, physicians, nurses, military personnel, and other first responders immediately rose to service in the heroic attempt to save the lives of the people in danger;

Whereas, in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, thousands of recovery workers, including trades personnel, iron workers, equipment operators, and many others, joined with uniformed officers and military personnel to help search for and recover victims lost in the attacks;

Whereas, in the days, weeks, and months following the attacks, thousands of people in the United States and others spontaneously volunteered to help support the rescue and recovery efforts, braving both physical and emotional hardship;

Whereas many first responders, rescue and recovery workers, volunteers, and survivors of the attacks continue to suffer from serious medical illnesses and emotional distress related to the physical and mental trauma of the tragedy;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of brave men and women continue to serve every day, having answered the call to duty as members of the Armed Forces, with some having given their lives or suffered injury to defend the security of the United States and prevent further terrorist attacks;

Whereas all people of the United States witnessed and endured the tragedy of September 11, 2001, and, in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, became unified under a remarkable spirit of service and compassion that inspired the people of the United States;

Whereas, in the years immediately following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the Bureau of Labor Statistics documented a marked increase in volunteerism among the people of the United States;

Whereas, in 2009, Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed the bipartisan Serve America Act (Public Law 111-13; 123 Stat. 1460), which established, at the request of the 9/11 community, Federal recognition of September 11 as a “National Day of Service and Remembrance” and charged

the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this annual day of service; and

Whereas, since Congress and the President provided for Federal recognition of September 11 as a “National Day of Service and Remembrance” (commonly referred to as “9/11 Day”), millions of people in the United States observe the anniversary by engaging in a wide range of service activities and private forms of prayer and remembrance: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes, commends, and honors the selfless dedication to fellow citizens displayed through the heroic actions of first responders and other citizens in New York, Washington, DC, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania;

(2) calls upon the Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives and all people of the United States to observe September 11, 2019, as a “National Day of Service and Remembrance”, with appropriate and personal expressions of service and reflection, which can include performing good deeds, displaying the United States flag, attending memorial and remembrance services, and engaging in community service or other charitable activities—

(A) in honor of the people who lost their lives or were injured in the attacks of September 11, 2001; and

(B) in tribute to the people who rose to service—

(i) to come to the aid of the people in need; and

(ii) in defense of the United States; and

(3) urges all people of the United States to continue to live their lives throughout the year with the same spirit of unity, service, and compassion that was exhibited throughout the United States following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 11, 2019, AS A “NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE”

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 25, submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 25) recognizing September 11, 2019, as a “National Day of Service and Remembrance.”

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I further ask that the concurrent 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 concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 25) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, September 17; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Rakolta nomination under the previous order; finally, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess following the cloture vote on the Howery nomination until 2:15 p.m. to allow for weekly conference meetings.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator WHITEHOUSE.

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

The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here today on the Senate floor for "Time to Wake Up" speech No. 253.

If you felt like the heat this summer was particularly brutal, you were not imagining things. July was the hottest month ever recorded, according to NOAA. The Secretary General of the World Meteorological Organization noted, "July has rewritten climate history, with dozens of new temperature records at [the] local, national and global level."

NOAA says 2019 is on track to tie for the second hottest year on record. Overall, the past 5 years are expected to take the title of the hottest 5-year period in recorded human history.

This rapid heating of our Earth is wreaking havoc on our environment and public health. Here is a list from NOAA that you can find on their website. Selected Significant Climate Anomalies and Events, July 2019, all around the globe.

In 1 day—1 day—the Greenland ice sheet lost 12½ billion tons of ice, melted into the sea. Throughout the world, from France to India, to the Arctic Circle, temperature records shattered. On July 4, the people of Anchorage, AK, experienced their first ever 90-degree day. At one point in July, excessive heat warnings asked nearly 170 million Americans to avoid the outdoors and take shelter in air conditioning, where available.

According to Deke Arndt, head of climate monitoring for NOAA, these

record heat waves are, and I quote him, "almost entirely due to climate change." Jack Williams, a professor with the Center for Climatic Research at the University of Wisconsin, told NBC news the "[h]eat waves of today are going to be the normal events of tomorrow."

Where there is heat, there is apt to be fire. In the United States, wildfires rage on a remarkable scale. According to a new report by the major data analytics company CoreLogic, over 8.7 million acres burned in the United States in 2018. That is about the land area of the 75 largest cities in the United States combined.

This summer, the Arctic experienced a record-setting wildfire season. Places that have not traditionally burned in parts of northern Canada, Alaska, Greenland, and Siberia were engulfed in flames visible from space.

In this map, the North Pole is about here. This looks down at Alaska here and Russia here, the Siberian Arctic. As you can see, fires were everywhere. Guillermo Rein of Imperial College London told Wired:

Arctic fires are rare, but they're not unprecedented. What is unprecedented is the number of fires that are happening. Never before have satellites around the planet seen this level of activity.

As of August 28, fires cut across more than 6 million acres of Siberian forest and 2.5 million acres of Alaskan tundra and forested land.

These forests aren't just scarring the Arctic landscape; they are also releasing tons more of carbon dioxide, causing more climate change. Researchers estimate the Arctic fires have released more than 180 million tons of CO₂. For comparison, my home State of Rhode Island was responsible for around 9.75 million tons of carbon dioxide through our fossil fuel combustion in 2016—roughly 20 times as much, just from these fires.

NASA scientists are also tracing soot from these fires. The soot absorbs sunlight and warms the atmosphere; and when the soot settles and covers Arctic ice, it absorbs more sunlight and speeds up the melting and the warming. Once these forces are set in motion, the vicious cycle of warmer temperatures, wildfires, ice melt, and then ever warmer temperature is hard to break.

Far from the Arctic, fires rage in another iconic ecosystem: the Amazon. So far this year, the Amazon region has seen over 40,000 fires. Unlike the Arctic, our changing climate is less to blame for the devastation than humans.

Again, natural forest fires in the Amazon are rare, but warmer and dryer conditions under climate change do make the fires larger and longer lasting than in the past. The true culprit in Brazil is manmade deforestation, accelerating under the new Brazilian President. Enforcement against illegal logging and clearing has declined. In the first 6 months of this year, over

1,300 square miles of Amazon forest were destroyed in Brazil, sometimes at a rate of more than three football fields' worth of forest per minute.

The journal *Science Advances* warns that deforestation in the Amazon is close to a threshold beyond which the rainforest will undergo irreversible changes. Without the healthy forests of the Amazon, the world will lose one of its most important terrestrial carbon sinks—areas that naturally absorb carbon from our atmosphere. The Amazon captures about 5 percent of annual global carbon dioxide emissions. A 2015 study published in *Nature* shows that the amount of carbon dioxide the Amazon absorbs is already falling, has fallen since the 1990s by nearly one-third.

In Brazil, the air has gotten so thick with smoke that in Porto Velho, a city in the upper Amazon basin, over 400 children landed in a local hospital with respiratory problems in the first 3 weeks of August. Public health officials and resources are overwhelmed. A pediatrician in Porto Velho said: "Every year we have some fires and issues with smoke, but this was the worst year of them all."

The tragedy in Brazil is reminiscent of forests burned in Southeast Asia to make way for palm oil plantations. Sumatra, Borneo, and parts of Malaysia saw over 70 percent of their peat forest lost to manmade deforestation. In Indonesia, nearly 106,000 acres burned in just the first 5 months of this year.

I am from the Ocean State. Wildfires, of course, don't burn in the ocean, but unprecedented heat waves are surging through our seas, laying waste to coral reefs in much the way wildfires ravage forests. The harm to the Amazon rainforests and to the Arctic steppes from wildfire finds an aquatic echo in the death of the Great Barrier Reef and reefs all over the world from climate-driven, unprecedented ocean heat waves.

Our willful blindness to these obvious calamities playing out on God's Earth, which are largely due to malign influence from the fossil fuel industry and its great armada of front groups it uses to do its dirty business, needs to stop. The willful blindness has to come to an end. From the Equator to the Arctic, an Earth aflame will have life-or-death consequences for generations to come.

Even our news media are turning their collective backs. In late August, as these fires raged, *Media Matters* chronicled that not one—not one—of the five influential Sunday news shows covered them. They are basically political gossip shows. Indeed, *Media Matters* showed cable news devoted to wildfires in the Amazon only 7 percent of the time they devoted to the Notre Dame Cathedral fire. In other speeches, I pointed out how the royal baby has swamped climate coverage in our pathetic media.

Whether in Indonesia or Brazilian rain forests or Arctic tundra, the costs of the corporate greed and paid-for political ignorance that are stopping us

from acting are on full display. Our planet suffers as a consequence. We avert our eyes in the pursuit of cheap fossil fuel. But nothing comes without a cost, and our debt is coming due. Pope Francis drove home this point in a recent Sunday address, saying: “We have caused a climate emergency that

gravely threatens nature and life itself, including our own.”

Our world is on fire. I am sorry to quarrel with Billy Joel, but this time, we did start the fire. If that can’t get the attention of my colleagues in Congress, I do not know what can.

We must wake up.
I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is adjourned until 10 a.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:22 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, September 17, 2019, at 10 a.m.