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## Senate

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

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our hearts rise up to meet You as the day rises to meet the Sun. Humble our lawmakers in Your presence that they may delight in the power You provide. Help them to remember that before honor comes humility. Give them also the wisdom to know that their sufficiency comes from You.

Lord, teach them Your wisdom as You infuse them with the spirit of reverence for You. May they make the commitment to faithfully serve You and country with their whole hearts.

We pray in Your great 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.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will pro-

ceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Branstad nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

### RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, since last week's all-Senators briefing with Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, some of my friends on the other side of the aisle have alleged that his appointment of a special counsel impedes the congressional investigation into Russian interference in our elections and whether the Trump campaign was involved. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The executive branch investigation under the special counsel looks at criminal wrongdoing. The congressional investigation takes a broader approach. The two can proceed on parallel tracks, as has happened many times in the past. If anything the congressional investigation is doing potentially interferes with the special counsel's activities, the two parties will discuss it. It is a process called deconfliction. They know how to do it. They have done it before. There is no reason whatsoever for the congressional investigation to slow down or stop.

Mr. Mueller's appointment as special counsel in no way diminishes the need for Congress to play an active role in helping to get to the bottom of all the recent events. Let me repeat. This is our solemn constitutional duty, the very bedrock of the separation of powers and coequal branches of government designed by our Founding Fa-

thers to preserve something we all cherish: American liberty and American democracy. Let me outline three things that should happen.

First, Intelligence Committee Chair BURR and Ranking Member WARNER should continue to pursue their committee's investigation into these matters with just as much vigor. That investigation has been proceeding in a bipartisan way, and it absolutely should continue as such. For example, my friends Senators BURR and WARNER have recently requested financial records of key Trump campaign officials from the Treasury Department. They should be given that information and continue to pursue whatever other avenues they view as helpful to the committee's investigation.

Second, Mr. Comey should testify in both the Judiciary and the Intelligence Committees to discuss the events surrounding his dismissal. The committees should be given access to memos he reportedly drafted following interactions with President Trump, and Congress should also be provided any transcripts or tapes the White House might have of Mr. Comey's conversations with President Trump.

Third, the Intelligence Committee must be provided the details of transcripts relating to President Trump's reported disclosure of information to the Russian Foreign Minister and Ambassador. There is a great deal of dispute about what was said at that meeting. The committee should have access to both Mr. Comey's notes and the White House's notes.

Finally, the Senate must demand the next FBI Director be nonpartisan, independent, fearless, and of unimpeachable integrity, just as Mr. Mueller is. A career politician of either party or anyone who suggests a lack of impartiality should not be considered a fit choice for that office. Every one of these, by the way, deals with congressional oversight—some directly, like the appointment of an FBI Director; some a little

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



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more indirectly, such as figuring out what exactly was said in the room with the Russian Foreign Minister and Ambassador, but all of it is clearly within what the Constitution requires and the Founding Fathers wanted Congress to be. So the congressional committees have really an obligation to our democracy to continue their role.

#### HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, on another matter—healthcare. Today, the Trump administration delayed for another 90 days their decision on whether to defend the administration's position in a lawsuit filed by the House Republicans about the cost-sharing payments in the Affordable Care Act. It is a decision that greatly increases the uncertainty in our healthcare system.

The cost-sharing program keeps healthcare costs low for working Americans and helps insurers stay in the marketplace, giving Americans more choices. It keeps the average person's premiums down, keeps their deductibles low. It makes it a lot easier for many working Americans to afford healthcare. That was its purpose, and it is succeeding in its purpose, but by continuing to sow uncertainty about this program, both by refusing to defend the lawsuit and by making outright threats to end it, the Trump administration has already caused insurers to flee the marketplace or propose rate increases for the next year. Let me repeat. Right now, the Trump administration's actions are sowing great uncertainty that causes insurers to pull out of States and increase their costs, making it more likely that working Americans won't be able to afford coverage next year.

A spokesperson for America's Health Insurance Plans, AHIP, the industry's main trade group, said the following, and this is their quote, not mine:

We need swift action and long-term certainty on [the cost-sharing program]. It is the single most destabilizing factor in the individual market, and millions of Americans could soon feel the impact of fewer choices, higher costs and reduced access to care.

The insurance industry itself is saying that the No. 1 thing that could be done to keep costs down, to keep other insurers in the marketplace, is to make permanent cost sharing.

President Trump's attempt to blame what is happening on ObamaCare is totally contradicted by what the health insurance plans say when it comes to cost sharing. So refusing to guarantee the cost-sharing payments is sabotage, plain and simple, and the Trump administration knows it.

The administration made the last cost-sharing payment but refuses to say they will continue to make them permanently. They know they will get blamed for the chaos that would ensue should they end these payments. They are afraid to do that. But they also want to threaten the stability of the healthcare system in order to get Democrats to work with them on their healthcare bill. So what they tried to

do is have their cake and eat it too. They said: We are going to delay the lawsuit, but we are still going to have that uncertainty that hurts Americans out there. That is profoundly irresponsible.

Threatening to defund healthcare in order to win political leverage is hostage-taking at its very worst because it holds hostage millions of innocent Americans who very much need healthcare costs to be lower and affordable. It is already causing massive uncertainty. It will only get worse if the administration continues to kick the can down the road 3 months at a time.

There is one very simple solution: Instead of delaying the decision every 3 months, the White House ought to step up to the plate and say once and for all that they will make those payments permanently—payments which help millions of Americans pay less for their healthcare, payments which the insurance industry itself says would help stabilize markets and help people gain healthcare.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Next, Mr. President, on the budget, the President of the United States will release his budget for 2018 this week. It could come as early as tomorrow. All indications are that it will be similar to his skinny budget from earlier this year. I want to remind everyone here in the Senate what a disaster that budget would be if it were ever implemented by Congress.

The President told the American people he would help create jobs and provide greater economic security for families. This budget does exactly the opposite. It is not a jobs budget. It is not an economic security budget. It is a budget that takes a meat cleaver to the middle class by gutting programs that help them the most, including many that create jobs and power the economy. Transportation is cut. Education is cut. Programs that promote scientific and medical research are cut. Programs that protect clean air and clean water are cut. All of these programs are favored by the American people. They have been favored by a vast majority of my Republican friends across the aisle. But the President's budget is an outlier, way out there. It fits with Mr. Mulvaney's beliefs, but he was an outlier in the Congress when he called for the government to be shut down and when he wanted to have the government play so little a role in helping the middle class. That is harmful to America.

Here is another one that really is worrisome: Recent reports say that the President's budget will target Medicaid for significant cuts—as large or larger than the \$880 billion the House Republicans would cut in their TrumpCare bill. This would pull the rug out from so many Americans who need help—those suffering from opioid and heroin addiction, people in nursing homes and their families who care for them, the elderly, the disabled, and children.

Medicaid has become a middle-class program. Opioid addiction. What about

a 40- or 50-year-old couple who is trying to raise their kids, saving for college, and has a parent who needs to be in a nursing home. Right now, Medicaid pays for it. What are they going to do when that is cut? They have two choices: Shell a huge amount of money out of their own pockets, which they can't afford, or maybe bring mom or dad back home, where there may be no room for them. What a horrible choice. What a horrible choice. Well, that is what the President is proposing to do when he dramatically slashes Medicaid.

I will repeat. Medicaid helps the very poor, but it also helps the middle class, and the majority of its money now seems to go to the middle class. I believe something like 60 percent goes to nursing homes or some high percentage like that.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that a cut to Medicaid of this size would deprive roughly 10 million Americans of Medicaid benefits over the next decade. Medicaid has always benefited the poor, and that is a good thing, but I remind my colleagues that it has increasingly become a middle-class program. Here is where it goes: Medicaid provides benefits for 60 percent of Americans in nursing homes.

Listen to this, Mr. President and my colleagues: Medicaid helps 1.75 million veterans—1 in 10. It provides services for Americans struggling with opioid addiction, which is a problem that affects so many.

If the reporting is accurate, these cuts to Medicaid that are in the President's budget carry a staggering human cost. Once again, Donald Trump is breaking his promise to the working people of America.

We have seen promise after promise broken as if they did not even matter. What he said in the campaign and what he governs as has almost no overlap in so many areas. Here is what Candidate Trump said when he campaigned: "I'm not going to cut Social Security like every other Republican and I'm not going to cut Medicare or Medicaid." He promised he would help take care of those suffering from opioid addiction. If he cuts Medicaid, he is breaking that promise—boom—right in half.

Candidate Trump campaigned as a populist and said he wanted to help the working people, but since he has taken office, he has governed like a hard-right conservative, pushing policies that help the uber-wealthy at the expense of the middle class. TrumpCare and the budget the President will be proposing tomorrow says one thing and does another.

Many of my Republican friends come from States that have significantly expanded their Medicaid Programs over the past few years, insuring hundreds of thousands, sometimes millions of their constituents.

Based on what we know about this budget, the good news—the only good news—is that it is likely to be roundly rejected by Members of both parties

here in the Senate, just as the last budget was. Democrats and Republicans, on the 2017 budget, virtually ignored the President and his proposal. We got together, and we compromised. Not everyone got everything they wanted, but we produced a budget that America can be proud of and one that helps the middle class.

We have shown Democrats and Republicans, the House and Senate, can come together to compromise on appropriations in 2017. We should follow that same blueprint in 2018. We should ignore the President's budget which would devastate the middle class and instead work across the aisle to advance reasonable compromise legislation later this year.

I yield the floor to my good friend from Texas.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Texas.

**Mr. CORNYN.** Mr. President, I came to the floor during the last part of the remarks of the distinguished Democratic leader, and it just reminded me of a headline I saw in this morning's newspaper that just, to me, exemplifies how dishonest, sometimes, the way questions are framed here when it comes to dealing with our financial responsibilities. The headline in the Washington Post talked about President Trump's proposal slashing Medicaid, like the Democrats have criticized the House healthcare replacement bill slashing Medicaid even though, as a factual matter, Medicaid would continue to grow year after year after year.

As the distinguished Presiding Officer and I have previously discussed, one question is, What is a responsible rate of Consumer Price Index or inflation to deal with medical inflation so that when we return Medicaid to the States, spending at let's say 2016 levels, what is a responsible rate of continued growth to deal with medical inflation so that the States are not left with an unsustainable burden?

But the idea that spending at current levels, plus an additional cost-of-living index year after year after year, means that Medicaid spending won't go up every year—next year it will be more than this year. The following year it will be more than next year. So only in the fevered imagination of, apparently, the headline writers at the Washington Post and in some of our Democratic friends could that be considered a cut. In the rest of the country, they would consider that as Medicaid growing, not being cut.

It is true that one of the things the House did that I think is an important reform of one of our principle entitlement provisions was to put some sort of sustainable cap on the growth of spending on entitlements, which perviously had been uncapped.

Some day there is going to be a day of reckoning in this country when it comes to spending. We have \$20 trillion in debt. We know now that the Federal Reserve is loosening its hold on inter-

est rates, that those are creeping up, and one of the estimates is that if interest rates due to improved economic performance were to reach historic norms, we would soon be paying more for interest on the national debt than we would be paying for defense spending. That is simply unsustainable, not to mention the fact that we would then be essentially appropriating 30 percent of what the Federal Government spends and leaving 70 percent untouched.

We can't get the country on a sustainable financial path just dealing with 30 percent of what the Federal Government spends, and we need to have a serious conversation, not a misleading characterization of the problem. We need a serious conversation about the reality facing our country and future generations because right now we are spending their inheritance, so to speak. In other words, I consider it an act of immorality for me to be spending money and forcing my children and future generations to pay it back. That is just not fair to them, and we need to come to grips with that sooner rather than later.

#### NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

**Mr. President,** on another note, last week, the administration sent official notice to Congress of its intent to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA. It was a big part of President Trump's campaign platform that the United States needed smarter, fairer trade deals that benefit more Americans. I certainly agree with that principle.

I do think, in some quarters, NAFTA has been unfairly maligned. But it is true that it is 23 years old, and it needs to be modernized. I think all of us can rally around that, consistent with the principle in President Trump's campaign that America needs smarter, fairer trade deals that benefit more Americans.

Free trade has, after all, been a boon to the American economy—and certainly the Texas economy because we are the No. 1 exporting State in the Nation. Our farmers, ranchers, and small business owners have benefited from trade agreements, particularly NAFTA, that help them send more of the products they raise, grow, and build to more markets around the world, principally to Canada and Mexico; but certainly, other trade agreements allow those manufactured goods, stock raised, and produce grown to go to markets around the world.

We comprise in America about 5 percent of the potential markets in the world, so 95 percent is the rest of the world and a market to buy the things we make and grow and raise here. Why not help create more jobs and a stronger economy here at home by encouraging that kind of free and fair trade?

There has been significant growth in exports since NAFTA was agreed to 23 years ago. Of course, Mexico continues to be an important economic partner, helping my State, Texas, grow and spe-

cifically creating a vibrant ecosystem along the border, but the rest of the country benefits too.

The national Chamber of Commerce estimates that there are 5 million American jobs as a result of binational trade with Mexico. With Canada, it is about 8 million. Why in the world would we want to do anything to jeopardize that? I suggest we don't.

Free trade doesn't just mean more opportunities for our agricultural sector or business owners, but it also helps American families buy more affordable products here at home, too, and that is why we need to make sure that any changes to NAFTA are improvements to the overall agreement.

I was encouraged just this last week when Ambassador Lighthizer, the U.S. Trade Representative, and Secretary of Commerce Ross met with members of the Senate Finance Committee. Essentially, what they said is that their first principle, when it comes to renegotiating NAFTA, is to do no harm. That is a pretty good rule of thumb. In fact, it reminds me of the Hippocratic Oath that doctors take when treating patients: First, do no harm. Well, I believe that is a good place to start.

Over the last two decades under this agreement, the economy in my State of Texas—which has been the engine that has been pulling the national economy in many respects—has grown significantly because of the tremendous access afforded by trade. We have to be careful not to do any harm to that and to look for ways to improve it.

There is no denying that this agreement is an old one created well before the digital and global economy of today. It was written before the energy renaissance in North America occurred, whereby instead of peak energy production—which is what we thought we had reached—we now have so much natural gas and oil that we export it to the world. That is great for jobs here at home. It is great to be able to do that for our allies around the world who need a dependable, alternative supply of energy in many respects, rather than being the victims of energy being used as a weapon against them. So the energy renaissance is another good reason that updating NAFTA makes sense.

I look forward to working with the President and his team to take great care that any efforts to modernize NAFTA don't sacrifice the benefits we have enjoyed for the last two decades. Hopefully, we can modernize it in a way that will allow more Americans to take advantage of it, and our economy will continue to grow and prosper as a result.

#### HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

**Mr. President,** on another matter, as we all know, this Chamber continues to consider the best way forward to repeal and replace ObamaCare. The entire Republican Conference, all 52 of us, have been meeting regularly in small groups and larger groups so we can finally put ObamaCare behind us. I have to say it is a shame that none of our Democratic

colleagues appear willing to lift a finger to help us do that, even though they know that ObamaCare is in meltdown mode.

We have promised multiple times, at least in the last three elections, to do away with this disaster of a healthcare law so that American families can get the healthcare they need at a price they can afford. This isn't just a talking point. This is our goal. This is our objective.

When I said that ObamaCare has been a failure, I am reminded of a letter written to me by one of my constituents from the Dallas-Fort Worth area. This gentleman is a small business owner. Since the implementation of ObamaCare, he has had to change his insurance each year, and every time, his rates have increased. He estimates they had gone up from roughly \$350 a month now to \$800 a month, not to mention his out-of-pocket costs. They have skyrocketed from \$3,500 to \$14,000. That is not affordable healthcare. At that price, I can't imagine it does him much good at all, particularly when you couple those high premiums with higher deductibles, in many instances \$6,000 or more for the deductible alone. So even though you are paying premiums for insurance and those premiums are going up every year, you still have such a high deductible that it effectively makes you self-insured, and you don't benefit from the insurance you actually have.

The first time this gentleman was forced to change his healthcare plan was because his insurance carrier completely pulled out of the marketplace, and that is something we are hearing across the country. It is not just a Texas phenomenon. I imagine there are similar stories in States like Indiana, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Missouri, Michigan, and Montana, just to mention a few. It is simply proof that the ObamaCare experiment is a failure, and the government-mandated, one-size-fits-all approach to healthcare doesn't work very well.

The next year, this same gentleman went with a different insurance company, but they canceled the plan he was already on. Then that insurance company pulled all individual healthcare plans from the State, so he had to find another health insurance plan.

That is not where the bad news ends. The doctor he has had for 20 years didn't accept the new health insurance plan, so instead of finding a new doctor, which he didn't want to do, he is now paying out of pocket so that he can keep the doctor he wants.

Remember what President Obama said countless times: If you like your plan, you can keep it. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. He said that a family of four would find, on average, a savings of \$2,500 a year in their health insurance premiums. None of that has proved to be true. This is an experiment that has ended in failure. It didn't turn out to be the case for this

constituent of mine; each time his plan changed, he saw a price increase and a coverage decrease.

Even if Hillary Clinton had been elected President of the United States, we would still need to revisit the failures of ObamaCare because the situation is simply not sustainable for roughly about 11 million people—about 6 percent of the people who get their insurance in the individual market.

In spite of knowing that many of their constituents are being hurt by the failures of ObamaCare, our Democratic colleagues—even though they know it—refuse to do anything about it. Again, we invite them to work with us, not for our benefit but for the benefit of the people they represent.

This is not making life any easier for my constituents in Texas, and I am confident that is the case for people across the country. That is why our efforts to replace ObamaCare are so important, and that is why we will keep fighting to get it done because families across the country need access to quality healthcare they can afford that is not chosen for them but is what they choose because it suits their needs.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all quorum calls until 5:30 p.m. today be equally divided.

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

Mr. CORNYN. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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 majority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, we confirmed two well-qualified nominees, Jeffrey Rosen as Deputy Secretary of Transportation and Rachel Brand as Associate Attorney General, and today we will have an opportunity to confirm another excellent nominee, Gov. Terry Branstad to be U.S. Ambassador to China.

While I am pleased the Senate is working to fill these important positions, it has been disappointing to see so much pointless obstruction by our friends across the aisle. They have continuously forced procedural hurdles on nominees for no other reason than to stall confirmations, launching more filibusters against this President's Cabinet than any other in history. They have done so not to change the result but simply to eat up floor time that could be used for legislation to help our constituents.

Take the floor vote they forced last week on the Branstad nomination. The Senate voted overwhelmingly, 86 to 12, on that motion, proving once again that our Democratic colleagues' tactics have little to do with the nominees themselves but are just delaying for

delay's sake. It is really past time to stop the games.

Once confirmed as Ambassador to China, Governor Branstad will be tasked with a portfolio that is important not only for our diplomatic relationship with China but also for our trade policies with that country. He has earned the support of Senators on both sides of the aisle and was reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee by a voice vote.

Having served as the Governor of Iowa for more than two decades, Branstad has developed a strong understanding of agriculture, trade, and other key national interests. His experience on these issues will guide him as he works to strengthen our relationship with China and pursue trade policies that can benefit American workers and businesses. I look forward to confirming him as our Nation's next Ambassador to China so he can get started on the important tasks before him.

#### NOMINATION OF JOHN SULLIVAN

Mr. President, after we confirm Governor Branstad, we will vote to advance another well-qualified nominee to serve as our Nation's Deputy Secretary of State, John J. Sullivan. It is both a critical and challenging role, but Mr. Sullivan's extensive background has prepared him for the task ahead. Through the years, he has worked at the Defense Department and the Justice Department. He also served as the Deputy Secretary of Commerce. I am confident that his experience will serve him well as he works as a key adviser to Secretary Tillerson and helps lead our Nation in addressing the range of security issues we face. We look forward to confirming him soon.

Having these key officials in place at the State Department is of great importance as we work with the administration on shaping our foreign policy and strengthening our posture in the international community.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S INTERNATIONAL TRIP

As we know, the President is currently traveling on his first international trip as our Commander in Chief. The trip provides the President with an important opportunity to engage with key allies, discuss our shared interests, and continue conversations on issues where we can work together in the future. So we wish the President and the First Lady both a successful trip and safe travels as they return to the United States later this week.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all quorum calls until 5:30 p.m. today be equally divided.

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

The Senator from Arkansas.

#### NATIONAL DRUG COURT MONTH

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize National Drug Court Month and show my support for the positive impact drug courts have on cutting crime, saving money, and restoring lives.

I have seen firsthand the impact of drug courts in Arkansas. This proven

approach has helped many Arkansans suffering from drug and alcohol abuse who have received the treatment and services they need to turn their lives around. For more than two decades, these courts have offered Arkansas' drug-addicted, nonviolent offenders an alternative to jail while rehabilitating them through a strenuous treatment program.

We have nearly 90 specialty courts in Arkansas that are providing lifesaving treatment to more than 3,000 individuals with substance use disorders, and the results are impressive. Our State saves \$45 million each year by diverting these offenders from prison to drug courts. Ninety percent of Arkansas drug court participants' drug tests come back negative for illegal substances, compared to 64 percent of those on probation and parole.

Drug courts are a critical component of today's criminal justice system. They have proven to be an effective alternative to jail for individuals convicted of nonviolent drug charges. Holding offenders with substance use and mental health disorders accountable through strict supervision and treatment, drug courts and veterans treatment courts have saved taxpayer dollars and the lives of more than 1.5 million people, including a remarkable man I recently met who shared his story.

Blayne was facing 20 years in prison because of crimes he had committed to support a 10-year addiction to prescription opioids. This epidemic currently takes 94 American lives every single day, but Blayne is one of the lucky ones. His community had a drug court. The drug court program gave him the tools he needed to stop using drugs and helped him reconnect with his family, find employment, and get his life back on track.

Instead of sitting in a jail cell on the taxpayers' dime, he is working as a teacher. Instead of breaking into homes, he owns one. Today, Blayne is a dedicated family man. He told me: "Drug court was a chance to become the father and husband that I wanted to be."

His story is similar to hundreds of Arkansans who have drug courts to thank for turning their lives around. An Arkansas drug court gave a woman named Sammy a second chance. She became addicted to painkillers at the age of 22 when she suffered a back injury. Her addiction led her down a very dangerous path, where she also started using meth every day. It also led her into the criminal justice system, and she was facing 20 years in prison. Drug court helped Sammy change her lifestyle. Now she is a positive role model for her children, holding down a full-time job and giving back to her community.

This is the power drug courts and other treatment courts have that change lives, heal families, and save money. The success of drug treatment courts has become a model tailored to

the needs of different groups from veterans to juveniles. The willingness of the judicial system to adopt alternative methods to jail time is a cost-effective approach to changing the habits of drug addicts and saving the lives of people like Blayne and Sammy.

As Washington pursues options for criminal justice reform, drug courts are a great example of a program that works. More than 25 years of research has proven they reduce crime and substance abuse, break the vicious cycle of recidivism, and keep families together.

In Arkansas and every other State in the country, drug courts are making a real difference. I want to recognize and thank the more than 30,000 drug court judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, treatment providers, probation officers, court administrators, and other professionals who are on the frontlines of providing a path to recovery. As we recognize National Drug Court Month, this is a great opportunity to show our commitment for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program and the Veterans Treatment Court Initiative at the Department of Justice. While there are 150,000 Americans being served by drug courts and veterans treatment courts today, there are more than 1 million individuals in our justice system who do not yet have access to these lifesaving programs.

I ask you to join me in supporting resources for these programs to improve public safety, save taxpayer dollars, and, most importantly, save lives.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, the United States' relationship with China is one of our most complicated and consequential in the world. The United States must maintain a constructive partnership with China to address global threats ranging from climate change to North Korea's nuclear program. While our interests are often at odds, our relationship with China must be built on respect, not rebuffs—on tact, not tweets.

On the campaign trail, President Trump's rhetoric about China was as caustic as it was hollow. He claimed that climate change was a "hoax perpetrated by the Chinese." He contended that we could not "continue to allow China to rape our country." He declared China was "our enemy" and that he would direct the Treasury Department to label China a currency manipulator on his first day in office. He said he would not honor the "one China policy" without extracting concessions from the Chinese on trade. None of these threats materialized when Trump assumed office, of course. When rhetoric met reality, Trump retreated.

Even while he railed against China during his campaign, Trump simultaneously extolled his deep financial ties with the country. He credited the Chinese for much of his own personal fortune, saying, "I've made a lot of money with China," and "I do great with China, I sell them condos, I have the

largest bank in the world from China, the largest in the world by far. They're a tenant of mine in a building I own in Manhattan."

Trump is the only President in modern history who has not divested his financial holdings or established a blind trust, and his financial entanglements with China have grown since his inauguration. Earlier this year, China gave the Trump Organization preliminary approval for 38 trademarks, paving the way for the President and his family to develop a host of branded business from hotels, to insurance, to bodyguard and escort services. On the very same night that Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner dined with Chinese President Xi at Mar-a-Lago, China granted Ivanka Trump's company three new trademarks. All of this points to the very real possibility that Trump and his family are using the Presidency to increase their personal profit, in violation of the Constitution, and that the Chinese are accommodating them.

Governor Terry Branstad is far from an ideal choice for the U.S. Ambassador to China. His record on labor rights is deeply troubling, including his decision earlier this year to sign into law a bill that dramatically scales back the rights of workers to bargain collectively for their health insurance, evaluation procedures, and supplemental pay.

However, in an administration that has put forward few qualified candidates for public office, Governor Branstad possesses some of the experience required for this critical diplomatic post. Governor Branstad has worked with the Chinese and with Chinese President Xi specifically for several decades. In his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he alleged he would use this longstanding relationship to press President Xi on the North Korean nuclear threat. He acknowledged the importance of opening Chinese markets to U.S. goods while recognizing the need to hold them accountable for unfair trade practices. He claimed that he would promote American values abroad, including human rights, the importance of a free press, and a rules-based international order.

Governor Branstad's recognition of the importance of these basic American values, values President Trump himself does not acknowledge, is vital in our engagements with China and countries around the world. Governor Branstad's longstanding relationships in China suggest he may be more responsible and disciplined in his statements and behavior than President Trump. Given the vast array of global issues that require China's cooperation, I hope Governor Branstad remains faithful to his testimony and attempts to foster a productive relationship with China. For these reasons, I support his nomination for U.S. Ambassador to China.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

STOP ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I came to the floor last week to talk about our police officers. It was during Police Week. We talked about the bravery and heroism of our officers back home. I talked about tragic stories of police officers who were gunned down in the line of duty and talked about what they do for us every day.

Today I want to talk about an issue that is endangering their lives and the lives of so many in our communities but specifically law enforcement. This happens in every single State represented in this Chamber. This danger is this new epidemic of synthetic heroin, of opioids.

We know more about heroin and prescription drugs. Now we have these synthetic heroins coming in that are even more powerful. Being a police officer has always been a tough job, but it is becoming riskier today because of this. Some people have heard it as carfentanil or fentanyl or U4. Most of this synthetic poison coming into our communities is coming through the mail system. It is coming from overseas, primarily from China, where they have laboratories, where some evil scientist is mixing up this chemical mix and sending it over here into our communities.

Let me tell you about something that happened last Friday in East Liverpool, OH. Some of you may know the name "East Liverpool" because it is the same city where there was a photograph that went viral on the Internet of a couple who had overdosed in the front of a car, with their 3-year-old grandson in a car seat behind them. It showed the grandson, and it showed the two who had overdosed passed out in the front of the car.

In this same town of East Liverpool, OH, an officer by the name of Chris Green pulled over a car in a routine traffic stop. As he came up to the car, he noticed there was white powder sprinkled around the car. He took the appropriate precautions. He put on his gloves, he put on a mask, and he began to deal with the situation at hand. The people in the car apparently had spread the powder to try to avoid it being detected, but it was easily detectable.

At the end of his arrest process, there was a small amount of powder that was left on his jacket, which he did not notice. He went back to the police station. When he got there, he noticed the powder on his shirt and instinctively he went like this to get the powder off of his shirt. This small amount of powder touching his hand caused him to overdose. Officer Green is not a small guy; he is about 6 feet 3 inches, 225

pounds. He is a big, strong police officer who overdosed just by trying to get a few flakes of powder off of his jacket. Why? Because this fentanyl is so powerful. It is so deadly.

Fortunately, his fellow police officers were able to save his life with naloxone. This is a miracle drug which reverses the effects of an overdose and which is being used on our streets every single day to save people from dying from overdoses. In this case, it was used to keep a police officer who was doing his duty and who had simply tried to get a few flakes of powder off of his uniform from dying of an overdose.

East Liverpool police chief John Lane put it this way:

If he had been alone, he'd be dead. That's how dangerous this stuff is.

Chief Lane later made the point that if Officer Green had gone home in that shirt and unknowingly had this powder on his shirt or his jacket, he could have endangered the lives of his family. That is a scary thought. Obviously, that is true. That is how deadly these drugs are.

It only takes a few milligrams, just a few specks, to kill you. This chart will show you how much it takes. Here you see that 10 milligrams of carfentanil is powerful enough to sedate a 15,000-pound elephant. Here is the carfentanil over here, as shown on this chart. You will see why a fatal dose can be a very, very small amount—30 milligrams for heroin, 3 milligrams for fentanyl, even less than 3 milligrams for carfentanil.

By the way, for those of you at home, if you look at a penny, you will see Abraham Lincoln's profile on one side of it. The deadly dose of fentanyl that we are talking about here is enough to only cover up the face of Abraham Lincoln on a penny. That is how little we are talking about and how deadly this stuff is. You can see why our law enforcement officers are so concerned about this.

Officer Green is not the only one to experience this. There was a famous case last year where two officers in Atlantic County, NJ—Detective Dan Kallen and Detective Eric Price—overdosed on fentanyl just by breathing fentanyl in the air at a crime scene. As some of you have heard, fentanyl is so dangerous that they are afraid to use dogs to try to sniff it out because just by trying to sniff these packages to see whether fentanyl is included in them, the dogs could overdose and die. Fentanyl is dangerous stuff.

By the way, it is taking up more and more of the resources of our police officers and other first responders. Earlier this year, I came to the floor and talked about Officer Ben Rhodes of Chillicothe, OH. Last year Officer Rhodes reversed more than 50 drug overdoses. This is one officer in one small town.

Talk to the firefighters in your community and ask them whether they go on more fire runs or more heroin and

fentanyl and carfentanil overdose runs. I almost guarantee you they will say they go on more overdose runs. As a result, in some communities, those firefighters are not there to be able to protect us as you would typically think from the fires that still continue to be a major problem. So this is a real issue. It is taking up more and more of their time and more resources and causing more and more crime.

On Thursday, in Middletown, OH, which is a town in Southern Ohio, a family was getting ready to leave the house. In fact, they had already strapped their 3-month-old baby into a car seat. It is not clear whether they had shot up with heroin before they put the baby in the car seat or after, but they went back into the house and they overdosed in the house. They had the baby in the car seat in the car. They overdosed in the home.

They have another son who is 5 years old. He ran out of the house barefoot. He went to a neighbor's house, to his stepfather's home, which is a few blocks away, and yelled at the door: Mom and dad are dead. Mom and dad are dead.

The grandfather called the police, and they rushed to the scene. They were able to revive the boy's dad with naloxone. They used seven doses of naloxone on the mother, but she still couldn't wake up. From talking to police officers about this, they tell me that there is a very good sign this involved fentanyl, perhaps carfentanil, because after two, three, four, five, six, seven doses of naloxone, she still could not be revived. Fortunately, the police rushed her to the hospital, where they were finally able to bring her back.

Again, this is what police officers are facing every day in my home State of Ohio, in your State, in your community.

After this incident, the Middletown Police said on Facebook:

It has to stop. Please get help before it's too late. Not only to save yourself, but to save your kids. Give these kids a chance by getting help. If you or someone you love has a drug problem, please seek help right now.

This is a cry from our police officers saying that this can't continue.

Talk to the firefighters and police officers who have administered naloxone to the same individual time and time again, overdose after overdose. These brave officers and police officers around the country are feeling overwhelmed.

Drug overdoses are now the No. 1 cause of accidental death in the United States of America. It has now surpassed car accidents. It has way surpassed gun violence. In the last 3 years, more Americans have died of drug overdoses than died in the Vietnam war. More Americans are dying of drug overdoses now than died of AIDS at the peak of the AIDS epidemic in 1995. This year, 2017, more people will die from overdoses from opioids than died from AIDS at the peak in 1995—another tragedy. According to an article in the New



York Times, more than four times as many people are dying every day from this epidemic than were dying of drug overdoses at the peak of the crack cocaine epidemic. When I say it is the worst drug crisis we have faced in this country and that it is an epidemic, that is not overstating it.

The Fraternal Order of Police and the Major County Sheriffs of America are actually focused on this issue, and they want better tools to be able to at least try to stop some of this poison—the fentanyl and the carfentanil—from coming into our communities.

I mentioned earlier the fact that this actually comes by the mail system. Unbelievable. It doesn't come by all mail systems. It comes through the U.S. mail system, as opposed to the private carriers, such as FedEx, UPS, DHL, or others. One reason is because our mail system in the United States does not require the kind of advanced notice of where the package is from, what is in it, and where it is going that the private carriers require. So where do the traffickers go? They go to our mail service, the U.S. Postal Service, and the postal service in the country that interacts with and connects with our postal service.

This is why the Fraternal Order of Police, the Major County Sheriffs of America, and other law enforcement are saying: Help us by passing legislation called the STOP Act. The STOP Act is to help stop traffickers from bringing these deadly poisons into our communities, the kind of stuff that caused Officer Green to overdose.

Fentanyl and these other synthetic drugs are not just coming in from overseas; they are coming in through our mail system. What we are saying in the STOP Act is, let's close the loophole. Let's say that the mail system in the United States has to say the same thing that other private carriers say, which is, if you want to ship something through our system, that is fine, but you have to tell us what is in it. You have to tell us where it is from and where it is going. Otherwise, they can't effectively stop these packages. It is like finding a needle in a haystack.

I talked earlier about the difficulty of detecting it and how poisonous it is, and sniffing dogs can't be used because of the potential of them overdosing and dying. It is also very difficult for our officers to find these packages without some information. Expert testimony, including that from the Secretary of Homeland Security, General Kelly, from Customs and Border Protection, and from the folks at DEA all reach the same conclusion, which is that this policy change would make it easier for law enforcement to detect suspicious packages of fentanyl, carfentanil, and other synthetic drugs and help keep this poison out of our country.

Support for this legislation is bipartisan, and it is growing. We now have 16 cosponsors in the Senate—8 Democrats and 8 Republicans. Completely bipartisan. In the House, Congressman

PAT TIBERI of Ohio and RICHARD NEAL of Massachusetts—a Republican and a Democrat—have introduced bipartisan companion legislation. They now have 128 cosponsors. Support is building. It is an obvious way to help push back. Is it the silver bullet? No. There is not one silver bullet. We need to do more in terms of prevention, treatment, and recovery, and help our law enforcement more to make sure they have naloxone to be able to save lives.

At least, let's stop some of this poison from coming in, and let's at least increase the cost of the fentanyl because one reason you see this big increase in overdoses from fentanyl and carfentanil and traffickers using more of it is because of the cost. At the very least, by helping our law enforcement, giving them the tools they need, we can stop some of it and increase the cost on the street.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the STOP Act. We have a hearing on this legislation on Thursday of this week in the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. We have experts coming in—law enforcement officers who care a lot about their colleagues. They talk about what a danger this is to them, what a danger this is to our communities. It is time for us in the U.S. Senate to stand up and take this important step, not the silver bullet but the important step to be able to help save lives and make our communities safer.

Thank you, Madam President.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, will the Senator from Ohio yield for a question?

Mr. PORTMAN. Absolutely.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Thank you, Madam President.

I say to the Senator, I appreciate what he is doing. I am a supporter and one of the cosponsors of his bill. This fentanyl problem is just devastating communities all over the country, including in my State of Florida.

What was surprising to me to find out was that fentanyl is so much more addictive and so much more lethal than so many others of these drugs that ultimately lead to a person becoming addicted so badly that they just crave fentanyl.

I appreciate very much what he has spoken about and given leadership to. I just want him to know there are a lot of us who are trying to raise the flags of awareness of this situation before it is too late.

Mr. PORTMAN. I thank my colleague from Florida. He has been a stalwart on this issue. We have never made this a partisan issue, have we. We always kept this a bipartisan issue because this is a danger to our country, our communities—all Americans. The Senator is absolutely right. It is 30 to 50 times more powerful than heroin. A few flakes can kill you, as you see here.

It is absolutely necessary we figure out a way together, as Republicans and

Democrats. With the recovery efforts the Senator supported and the Cures Act he already supported, this is the next logical step to deal with the new threat, which is this synthetic heroin coming to our country.

I thank my colleague from Florida.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. In passing, I would say to the Senator from Ohio, what was so surprising to me was, just a few grains of this deadly drug, just by being touched by someone, is absorbed into the system through the skin, and it can be lethal—just that innocent act of touching a few grains. So, indeed, we have to get our arms around this problem.

HAITI

Mr. President, I want to address the Senate on a different subject. If you will recall the devastating earthquake in this little country of Haiti—the poorest nation in the entire Western Hemisphere—you can imagine what that earthquake did. Just as people are beginning to get their lives back together, here comes a hurricane, and it devastates even more. As a result, over the course of those years, a number of Haitians were admitted into the United States under TPS, temporary protected status. That is a special entry into the United States, usually because of a natural catastrophe that has occurred in another nation in the world, but it is with the understanding that, indeed, as the first word of TPS says, it is “temporary.”

So into the United States—allowing some relief on all of the stresses on the local economy and the government because of that devastating earthquake, and then later the hurricane on top of it—are approximately just less than 60,000 Haitians here legally on TPS. So the Government of the United States is making a decision and has just announced earlier today that it will extend TPS. I might say, that is a bipartisan request from many of us from the Florida delegation—to extend TPS until the nation of Haiti can, in fact, absorb 60,000 people back into its little island economy.

These are people who generally want to go back. Their families are there. These are people who have now earned a substantial savings that they send back as remittances to their families. These are people with skills that Haiti, as it continues to rebuild from a poverty-stricken nation, will want to have back because of their skills.

I might say that when I knew the Department of Homeland Security was considering this—whether to revoke the TPS status or to extend it—I felt quite confident that the Secretary of DHS, General Kelly, the former commander of Southcom, the U.S. Southern Command—that in his 3-year stint as commander of Southcom, he in fact would understand all the nuances because he had lived with that problem. He understood it. He understood not

only TPS for the Haitians, but he also understood the TPS that even years before had been given to a number of Central Americans when they came into the country under temporary protected status, which they likewise had been extended, and that status has not been revoked. I felt quite confident that General Kelly, as the Secretary of DHS, would extend TPS from ordering immediate removal to the Nation of Haiti of 60,000 people. Indeed, General Kelly announced that decision earlier today, and he has granted a 6-month extension.

Now, therein lies the problem. I have just spoken to General Kelly, who is really a tremendous, lifelong marine, very decorated, a true hero. He is someone that has comported with his duties, whatever it has been in his service to America, in the most exemplary manner. What I wanted to discuss with General Kelly was that there is just no way in 6 months that the Nation of Haiti can absorb 60,000 of its people back. It would be like trying to swallow a bite of food that is way too big in order to do it.

So what I urged General Kelly after this announcement was made, which has caused alarm in the Haitian-American community—it certainly caused alarm in the nation of Haiti, the Government of Haiti. Indeed, the Ambassador was asking for an extension of at least 18 months. I don't think it is out of the question that General Kelly will consider that. Therefore, I asked him to please confer with the leadership in the Haitian-American community in South Florida, a community he is well aware of since he lived in Miami for 3 years as the commander of U.S. Southern Command. I think he will follow that suggestion and meet in the not-too-distant future with the leaders.

General Kelly also told me he was planning a trip to Haiti to discuss this directly with the Government of Haiti. That is important because how can they reasonably absorb them back into society, utilize their skills—and over what period of time can that be done? Therefore, I commend General Kelly, the Secretary of DHS, on the way he has approached it. I would urge our Haitian-American communities in America to just be patient. Understand that General Kelly is going to do a comprehensive overview and that in 6 months, come January, suddenly 60,000 people are not going to be kicked out of the country.

The truth is, I am not sure the Government of the United States knows exactly where all the 60,000 are. So that is going to be another question of locating them, once the decision is made, which this Senator has certainly urged at least 18 months before that would start. I have spoken to the Haitian Ambassador. He told me it is a newly formed government in Haiti and is working on a plan to further rebuild and develop the country so its people can make their lives there again. They have asked for the extension of TPS up

to 18 months while they continue to rebuild. I think that by Secretary Kelly indicating he is going to Haiti very soon, that he has indicated he is going to reconsider the decision that was made about 6 months, suddenly revoking all of their TPS status. As Haiti continues to rebuild, repatriating 60,000 Haitians here in the United States needs to be pursued according to a plan that will not destabilize the new government's efforts.

Remember, this is a government that had a temporary government because there was a question about chicanery in the election. There was actually a temporary President that governed the country, and then new elections were held with an overwhelming winner who is now the President of Haiti. So in this newly formed government, you don't want to destabilize their efforts, which would divert precious resources to just reintegrating the people who would be sent back from the United States. It could cause a severe overburden on the government. Therefore, what this Senator is asking for—what I think, at the end of the day, will probably be 18 months, given that time, and then start an orderly transition of those TPS Haitians back to their own country.

Thus, the United States can continue to be focused on helping Haiti recover from all of these disasters they have suffered. Therefore, I feel quite confident Secretary Kelly will do that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if the Branstad nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to support Iowa Governor Terry Branstad's nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. The position of U.S. Ambassador to China is one of the most important ambassadorial positions in the world. I am confident that my friend and Governor, Terry Branstad, is the right person for the job.

Having worked alongside the Governor for many years, I know he will exemplify the same leadership, thoughtfulness, and dedication in his role as Ambassador to China on behalf of the United States as he did for the people of Iowa. Importantly, Governor Branstad also knows China and its leaders well. He first met President Xi Jinping while he was visiting Iowa on an agricultural research trip in 1985.

They have kept in touch over the years, and Governor Branstad has visited China a number of times on behalf of the State of Iowa. Iowa's extensive trade relationship with China has given

Governor Branstad a front-seat view of the complexities of our country's broader trade and economic relationship with China and will provide him with the foundation to effectively advocate for U.S. interests, as evidenced by his successful confirmation before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which approved his nomination by voice vote.

Governor Branstad will not only work tirelessly to foster our trade and economic interests with China, but he is also prepared to tackle the many other complex, bilateral issues we have with China, from North Korea to the South China Sea to human rights. It has been an honor to serve the people of Iowa alongside Governor Branstad, the longest serving Governor in U.S. history, and I am thrilled to continue to work with him in his new role serving the American people.

I thank Governor Branstad for his service to Iowa, and I wish him and his family the best as they prepare to depart for Beijing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I join the Senator from Iowa in supporting Governor Branstad as our next Ambassador to China. I have the opportunity of being the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I knew of Governor Branstad's reputation as the Governor of Iowa—that he was well thought of and that his leadership was recognized not only by the people of his State but in our Nation.

So I was, before the nomination was made, impressed by his dedication to public service. I then had a chance to meet with him in my office. I must tell you that I was extremely impressed about how he was prepared to move on to be the Ambassador to China and how he spoke in favor of our strong ideals.

We then had a confirmation hearing in our committee, and that very much confirmed his knowledge of the challenges that he has, his dedication to public service, and that he would be a strong advocate for American values. So I support his nomination and I urge my colleagues to confirm Governor Branstad. As Senator ERNST pointed out, our mission in China is a particularly important international responsibility.

We know that China plays a significant role—maybe even a dominating role—in regard to North Korea and in trying to get North Korea to give up its nuclear arsenal. We also know that China has a very checkered record on protecting the human rights of its own citizens. We have major trade issues between the United States and China, in which our Ambassador needs to be engaged to protect American commercial interests.

We have the continuing saga between Taiwan and China and living up to our commitments to protect the integrity of Taiwan. Then, we have a very dangerous situation in the South China



Sea, where China has done many provocative activities that will require the diplomacy of our Ambassador in Beijing in order to encourage the use of the rule of law in direct negotiations between the parties and not claiming territory by provocative actions.

So, for all of those issues, we need an experienced Ambassador in China to represent our interests. What really impressed me about Governor Branstad is that I do believe he has a passion for American values.

I particularly appreciated his willingness—and would even say he was anxious—to represent American and global interests for China's improving their human rights record and dealing with the right of religious minorities, dealing with the right of dissent, and dealing with the right of free expression and the press. He very much spoke about the need for the rule of law. So while we welcome the emergence of a prosperous China, we want one that follows international institutional laws and norms. That is going to be the challenge for our next Ambassador.

Let me comment on what I believe the Trump administration is doing that is going to make our next Ambassador's responsibilities even more challenging than perhaps they should be; that is, that we have seen already that in the discussions between President Xi and President Trump with respect to North Korea, it seems like the Trump administration is prepared to give up some of our American values in order to make progress with regard to North Korea, such as our interests in our American workers, our interests in the South China Sea, in maritime security, our relationship with Taiwan, and human rights, et cetera.

That would be a bad deal. Yes, we want North Korea to be under control and to give up its nuclear weapons. Yes, we want China to exercise a much stronger role in convincing North Korea that it is in their interests to give up their nuclear weapon program. We want to do that. There are ways we can. It is in China's interests that North Korea give up its nuclear weapon ambition. They want a nonnuclear Korean Peninsula. We should not trade our values in order for that to be able to occur.

The second matter, which I have talked about on the floor before, that is going to make it more difficult for our next Ambassador is the President's continued unwillingness to comply with the emoluments clause of the Constitution.

As I have said on the floor before, every President before President Trump either divested of their conflicted ownership of assets or they set up a blind trust, but Mr. Trump did not. Shortly after his election, the Trump organization received trademarks through the Chinese Government that they had been unsuccessful in obtaining for years, in which they have spent literally hundreds of thousands of dollars if not more in legal fees.

All of a sudden, 1 week after the President is elected, the Chinese Government grants these trademarks. It is hard to believe that the fact that they were dealing with the President of the United States did not weigh into decisions made by the Chinese Government.

But it does not end there. We also know that a member of his family was in China to sell the EB-5 visas. That, again, presented a direct conflict. We actually know that his daughter received three new trademarks in an incredibly speedy turnaround—the same night that the daughter had dinner with President Xi.

These things don't look good. The emoluments clause is where a foreign government tries to influence our President through doing favors. It is going to be very difficult for the American people—in fact, very difficult for the international community—to believe that it was not, in part, due to the position that Mr. Trump holds that these actions took place.

That violates our Constitution. That is wrong.

The bottom line is that our next Ambassador is going to have to deal with those issues. We have a hard enough assignment in dealing with North Korea, trade, the South China Sea, Taiwan, and human rights to throw in these additional hurdles. So I urge my colleagues to support Mr. Branstad's nomination. I believe that he is well-qualified to represent this country. I hope the Trump administration will give him a stronger hand to play.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill 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 think I will be done speaking before the time for the vote arrives, but I ask unanimous consent for permission to finish my remarks.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** Without objection, it is so ordered.

**MR. GRASSLEY.** Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate is finally considering the nomination of Governor Branstad of Iowa to be Ambassador to China. Before I speak about this very well-qualified nominee, I would like to express my great disappointment and great frustration with the seemingly endless obstruction on the part of the minority.

This nominee received unanimous support in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee more than a week ago. Yet the majority leader was required to file cloture on the nominee because there could not be consent given to move forward with it. We could have approved this nomination with just a few minutes of debate time. Yet the minority required that we have

the cloture vote and the 30 hours afterwards, not because they wanted to debate the merits of the nominee but simply to delay the business of the Senate. It is unfortunate that their delay has kept an eminently qualified individual from getting into the job to promote America's interest in China sooner than it now will be.

I am honored to have the opportunity today to speak to my colleagues about my good friend, Governor Terry Branstad.

Governor Branstad is the longest-serving Governor in U.S. history. Let me make that clear. Out of 50 States for 230 years, no person in the United States has served their State as Governor of that State longer than Terry Branstad has now. He is a lifelong Iowan who has devoted his life to public service.

After more than 22 years as my home State's chief executive, I am proud to support Governor Branstad's nomination to serve our country as the next U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

The fact is, Governor Branstad has been an ambassador for Iowa to the Nation and even to the world for his entire career. He has been a champion for Iowa and on behalf of Iowans around the globe. As Governor, he has been vigorous in promoting our State's economy and opening markets for our farm commodities, financial services, and manufacturing to the world marketplace.

His nomination should come as no surprise to the people of Iowa. We have long known and benefited from the relationship Governor Branstad has had with the people of China. A sister state relationship in 1983 has grown into a successful trade partnership that has benefited Iowa farmers and businesses.

Perhaps most notably, Governor Branstad enjoys a 30-year friendship with President Xi. Their first meeting took place in 1985 in Iowa when, then a Provincial official, Xi led an agricultural delegation to Iowa. President Xi visited Iowa again in 2012, when Governor Branstad was back at the helm in his fifth term after a 12-year respite from being Governor. Their relationship reflects genuine goodwill and, more importantly, mutual respect.

Governor Branstad has never stopped working to expand Iowa's trade, investment, and economic partnerships on the world stage, including many trips to China. He will bring midwestern humility and level-headed leadership to the job. He is a workhorse who is unafraid to get into the trenches to get the job done. I have no doubt that he will stand strong for American values, such as freedom of the press and religious liberty, and that he will work to strengthen peace, stability, and prosperity between our two nations.

Once he is confirmed, I am confident that Governor Branstad will bring to bear his tireless commitment to solve problems and always move the ball forward. Although his heart will always

be in Iowa, I know Governor Branstad will throw himself into this job wholeheartedly.

Governor Branstad is uniquely qualified to help strengthen the trade, economic, cultural, and geopolitical relationships between our two countries. I am pleased that he has now been called to serve our entire Nation, not just the State of Iowa, as Ambassador to China. I have every confidence that he will represent the United States well and will excel, just as he has throughout his entire public career.

Without reservation, then, I support this nomination. I also urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this nomination.

Thank you very much.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 82, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 133 Ex.]

YEAS—82

Barrasso	Enzi	Manchin
Bennet	Ernst	McCain
Blunt	Feinstein	McCaskill
Boozman	Fischer	McConnell
Burr	Flake	Menendez
Cantwell	Franken	Merkley
Capito	Gardner	Moran
Cardin	Graham	Murphy
Carper	Grassley	Murray
Casey	Hassan	Nelson
Cassidy	Hatch	Paul
Cochran	Heinrich	Perdue
Collins	Heitkamp	Portman
Coons	Heller	Reed
Corker	Hoeven	Risch
Cornyn	Inhofe	Roberts
Cortez Masto	Johnson	Rounds
Cotton	Kaine	Rubio
Crapo	Kennedy	Sasse
Cruz	King	Schatz
Daines	Klobuchar	Scott
Donnelly	Lankford	Shaheen
Durbin	Leahy	Shelby

Strange	Toomey	Wicker
Sullivan	Udall	Wyden
Tester	Van Hollen	Young
Thune	Warner	
Tillis	Whitehouse	

NAYS—13

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Schumer
Blumenthal	Hirono	Stabenow
Booker	Markey	Warren
Brown	Peters	
Duckworth	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—5

Alexander	Isakson	Murkowski
Harris	Lee	

The nomination was confirmed.

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

The majority leader.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 59, Amul Thapar to be United States circuit judge for the Sixth Circuit.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Amul R. Thapar, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

### 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 nomination of Amul R. Thapar, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, Roger F. Wicker, Jeff Flake, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, John Hoeven, James E. Risch, Mike Rounds, Deb Fischer, Mike Crapo, Jerry Moran, Pat Roberts, Lindsey Graham, John Kennedy, Steve Daines, David Perdue.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

### TRIBUTE TO REVEREND DENNIS H. HOLTSCHNEIDER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to thank Reverend Dennis H. Holschneider for all he has done to bring educational excellence to our State.

After nearly 13 years as president of DePaul University, the largest Catholic university in the country, Father Holschneider will be retiring later this summer. He originally planned on stepping down in 2019 at the end of his contract, but always putting DePaul first, he decided that wouldn't fit with the university's planning cycle. After leading the university through two successful strategic plans, he said, "It's best for DePaul if I step aside in the summer of 2017 so that a new leader can assist the institution to name and ambitiously pursue its next set of strategic objectives." What a class act. It is no surprise, for more than a decade, Reverend Holschneider has put DePaul University first.

During Father Holschneider's tenure, U.S. News and World Report recognized DePaul University as among the country's "Most Innovative Universities." While many colleges and universities shift their missions over the years, Reverend Holschneider has always remained committed to DePaul University's founding principles—a devotion to first generation students. He has raised about \$460 million in philanthropic support for this noble cause, including \$333 million for the "Many Dreams, One Mission" campaign to ensure access to high quality education for future generations of DePaul students.

Born in Detroit, Father Holschneider graduated from Niagara University with a bachelor's degree in mathematics, studied for the priesthood at Mary Immaculate Seminary, and also received a doctorate in higher education administration from Harvard University. Prior to joining DePaul University, Father Holschneider served as executive vice president and chief operating officer of his alma mater, Niagara University. He also was the director and rector of Vincentian College Seminary and has been a faculty member in the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Since 2014, Father Holschneider has chaired the board of Ascension, the Nation's largest Catholic and nonprofit health system, but will be stepping down to become executive vice president and chief operating officer later this summer.

Father Holtschneider has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the ACE Council of Fellows Mentor Award for his work preparing the next generation of academic leaders in higher education. He has been listed on the Diversity MBA Magazine's Top 100 and Under 50 Diverse Executive Leaders. I especially want to thank Father Holtschneider for his leadership on comprehensive immigration reform, which was honored by the Archdiocese of Chicago with its "Strangers No Longer Award."

I congratulate Reverend Holtschneider on his many accomplishments throughout his long and distinguished career. I thank him for always being a trustworthy counselor and personal friend. I thank him for his service and wish him all the best as he begins the next chapter in his life. Those of us who have worked with him over the years know he will bring that same sense of professionalism and dedication to the field of healthcare at Ascension. Thank you.

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

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I was unavoidably absent during today's vote, Executive Calendar No. 55, due to my son's college graduation. Had I been present, I would have voted nay on the confirmation of Governor Terry E. Branstad to be the U.S. Ambassador to China.●

#### ARUS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY  
COOPERATION AGENCY,  
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER.  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended,

we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17-04, concerning the Department of the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$250 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J. W. RIXEY,  
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-04

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment \$0 million.

Other \$250 million.

Total \$250 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.

Non-MDE includes:

Continuation of a naval blanket order training program inside and outside of Saudi Arabia that includes, but is not limited, to English Language training, professional military education, technical training, publications and technical documentation, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy.

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: SR-P-TCY.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: MAY 22, 2017.

\*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

#### POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—Navy Blanket Order Training

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has requested the continuation of a naval blanket order training program inside and outside of Saudi Arabia that includes, but is not limited to English Language training, professional military education, technical training, publications and technical documentation, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated value is \$250 million.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic regional partner that has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will enable Saudi Arabia and the Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF) to maintain military performance levels and provide an increased ability to meet current and future maritime threats. The training will support the RSNF in its role patrolling and providing protection for critical industrial infrastructure and for the sea lines of communications. The RSNF will also use the training to enhance interoperability with the United States and other coalition maritime forces. Saudi Arabia will have no difficulty absorbing these services.

The proposed sale of this training will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Kratos Defense & Security Solutions of San Diego, CA. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of approximately 88 contractor representatives to Saudi Arabia for approximately three years to support personnel training. Implementation of this sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government representatives to Saudi Arabia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, as we end Police Week, I wish to pay tribute to the police officers across the country who serve their communities with steadfast dedication. In particular, I rise to honor three brave New Jersey law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty last year.

In 1962, President Kennedy first proclaimed May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day, and he proclaimed the calendar week in which May 15 falls as National Police Week. These designations pay special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty and includes a number of events that brings together thousands of law enforcement professionals and families to our nations' capital.

On this Police Week, I reflected on the nearly 400 new names inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC. Of these names, at least 139 were killed last year, and roughly 250 were earlier deaths that had slipped through the cracks of history. The total number of names on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial will increase to more than 21,000, dating back to the first known officer fatality in 1791.

It is a deeply upsetting fact that, on average, one law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty somewhere in the United States every 58 hours. We can and should do better than this, and we owe it to these brave men and women to give them the necessary tools and training to protect themselves. Those who protect us deserve to be protected as well.

In honor of National Police Week and in recognition of the supreme sacrifice made by these officers, I will now read the names of the three law enforcement officers from New Jersey who were killed in the line of duty in 2016: Sean Cullen, trooper, New Jersey State police; Nikeelan Semmon, senior corrections officer, New Jersey Department of Corrections; and Frankie Williams, trooper, New Jersey State police.

Today my thoughts and prayers go out to the families of these brave officers. I sincerely hope that we rededicate ourselves to doing everything we can to support all law enforcement officers across the country. We owe them,

along with all those who serve our country, the deepest debt of gratitude.

# WELCOMING OUR HONORABLE VETERANS TO THE NATION'S CAPITOL

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I am incredibly honored to rise and recognize a group of 25 heroic veterans who have traveled from West Virginia to visit our Nation's Capital as part of the eighth Always Free Honor Flight. On behalf of our State and Nation, it is a true privilege to recognize them for their courageous service and unparalleled sacrifice as they tour the memorials that have been built in their honor.

With one of our country's highest per capita rates of military servicemembers and veterans, West Virginia is undoubtedly one of our Nation's most patriotic States. According to the Department of Defense, West Virginia had the highest casualty rate in the Nation during the Vietnam war, and I am so proud that the Honor Flight will allow these West Virginia veterans to pay homage to their brethren at the Vietnam Wall. Throughout our State's history, West Virginians have demonstrated selflessness and courage time and again in making tremendous sacrifices to defend our freedoms and to keep our homeland safe. As these veterans tour the monuments made in their honor, I offer my sincerest thanks to them on behalf of our Nation for their service.

The veterans joining us in Washington range in age from 62 to 94 and hail from the coalfields of West Virginia and Virginia. These patriots come from seven West Virginia coal mining counties and three Virginia counties. Of the Honor Flight veterans attending, two served in World War II, one served in the Korean war, two served in both the Korean and Vietnam wars, 18 served in the Vietnam war, and two Veterans served stateside. They have participated in decisive overseas battles and won a myriad of accolades for their accomplishments in uniform.

I would especially like to recognize our World War II veterans who will be on this Honor Flight for the second time. Ninety-four-year-old former SN William "Ray" Calvin Sexton from Tazewell joined the Navy in Bramwell, WV, in 1943 and was a gunner stationed in Panama and the Galapagos Islands. We will also be joined by Machinist Mate 3rd Class Marion Grey Noel who joined the Navy in the 1940s and bravely fought in the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

These men represent our Nation's Greatest Generation, and their sacrifices and valor embody American patriotism. They fought in such a pivotal war, in an era that threatened our existence as a nation. Unfortunately, as the years go by, we are losing so many of our World War II veterans, and we must show them our utmost gratitude each and every day.

As I mentioned, we will also be joined by veterans of the Korean and Vietnam wars. These men and women served courageously in a variety of ways, working both at home and abroad. They engaged in combat all over the world. They were pilots, helicopter gunners, and radio operators. One of these veterans is MSgt Reese Williamson Moore who joined the Air Force in 1951 in Bluefield, WV. He was first stationed in Iwo Jima as part of the Japan Occupation Forces in 1952. Then he moved to the Royal Thai Air Base Nam Phongin in the Kingdom of Thailand. He served during a pivotal time following World War II and went on to serve in the Vietnam war.

We will also be joined by Jaeger, WV, native Sergeant Marion "Mario" E. Deskins, who joined the Air Force in 1968 in Beckley, WV. He served with the 15th Aerial Port Squadron at Danang, where he maintained records on unit personnel and transported documentation to the headquarters of the 7th Air Force in Saigon via C-130 Hercules airplanes. Sergeant Deskins was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for his service in Vietnam.

Another Vietnam veteran participating in this week's Honor Flight is Sergeant Marshal G. Mann from Princeton, WV. Sergeant Mann served in combat as an aircraft loadmaster, bravely preparing and air lifting urgently needed ammunition to combat troops fighting in the Republic of Vietnam. For his service and extraordinary achievement, Sergeant Mann received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

This week's Honor Flight and the continued support of our veterans would not be possible without the dedication of so many volunteers and caregivers. I would like to thank the five JROTC Cadets from Montcalm, Bluefield, Pikeview, and Princeton High Schools, as well as the military spouses serving as the guardians on this year's Honor Flight. The care and love these Patriots provide for our veterans is invaluable and deeply appreciated.

I also commend those in the Always Free Honor Flight network for their dedication to providing our veterans with such a unique and meaningful experience. Without the diligence and passion of Dreama Denver, president of Always Free Honor Flight network and owner of Princeton, WV, Little Buddy Radio, as well as Pam Coulbourne, the coordinator of these flights, many of our veterans would never have the opportunity to travel to Washington and pay homage to the men and women they fought beside. Dreama and Pam launched the Always Free Honor Flight in 2012, and every year, they continue to make this dream a reality for many of our West Virginia veterans.

I would also like to recognize SFC Paul Dorsey, vice president of Always Free Honor Flight and official photographer Steve Coleman, who have done a tremendous job of ensuring that our veterans receive the recognition they deserve. Dreama, Pam, and Steve have

also dedicated themselves to the Denver Foundation, serving as incredible examples of how individuals can give back to their communities.

This week, as we celebrate these incredible veterans and their answering our Nation's call of duty, we must remember that the men and women who have given so much to ensure America's safety deserve the utmost care and support upon their return home. We must continue to fight for a Department of Veterans Affairs that provides our veterans with the services they very much need and deserve.

I am filled with pride every time I meet the patriots who have served our country, and I am so pleased to welcome West Virginia's most courageous veterans, who are all heroes, to Washington, DC. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in saluting them. They truly inspire us all as we are reminded of their selfless service. It is because of their bravery that all Americans enjoy the greatest liberties and freedoms in the world.

God bless our many servicemembers and veterans, the great State of West Virginia, and the United States of America.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the sacrifice of West Virginia's veterans and to welcome them to Washington DC, as a part of the Always Free Honor Flight. West Virginia has a proud tradition of military service, and I am privileged to be able to recognize these brave men and women who put their lives on the line to preserve our freedoms during our Nation's most critical hours of need.

The Always Free Honor Flight program, run by the Denver Foundation, is dedicated to bringing our veterans to Washington, DC, to thank them for their bravery and selflessness. As a daughter of a World War II veteran, this is something that is very close to my heart, and I am so thankful for the folks at Always Free Honor Flight who have dedicated their time to making sure our veterans feel our immense gratitude and pride. This year, we have the privilege of being joined by 25 veterans, including veterans from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

These courageous individuals embody the very best of our Nation's values and have endeavored, through unimaginable hardship and danger, to ensure that all Americans may continue to live in the freedom and safety that we all cherish. Their courage, through some of the greatest conflicts of the 20th century, will not go unnoticed, and we must strive to show our appreciation every day.

On this Always Free Honor Flight, we will be joined by two World War II veterans: Storekeeper Second Class William "Ray" Calvin Sexton, USN, Tazewell, VA; and Motor Machinist's Mate Third Class Marion Grey Noel, USN, Roanoke, VA.

In addition to our World War II veterans, we will also be joined by Korean

war veteran Gerald Marreese Richmond, North Tazewell, VA; and two veterans who served in both the Korean and Vietnam wars: Johnnie Lewis Gordon, Sr., USA, Princeton, WV; and MSgt Reese Williamson Moore, USAF, Bluefield, WV.

The Vietnam veterans participating are Samuel "Sam" J. Connor, USN, Princeton, WV; CPL William "Bill" Cox, USA, Bluefield, WV; Sergeant Marion "Mario" E. Deskins, USAF, Iaeger, WV; CPL Donald R. Dinger, USMC, Bluefield, WV; SGT James "Jim" W. England, USA, Bluefield, VA; Jackie W. Estep, USMC, Yukon, WV; SPC Carl A. Lane, USA, Pineville, WV; Sergeant Marshal G. Mann, USAF, Princeton, WV; SGT Owen C. Neff, USA, Summersville, WV; PO3 Donald "Donnie" W. Noel, USN, Salem, VA; CPL Raymond C. Palmer, USA, Mabscott, WV; SGT Ronald Pennington, USA, Princeton, WV; PFC Jackson Phillip Thompson, USA, Bluefield, WV; SPC Larry Malone Saunders, USA, Madison, WV; PO1 Alan Brett Sexton, USN, Princeton, WV; SPC James Buck Tunnell, USA, Bandy, VA; CPL Ricky D. Williams, USMC, Beckley, WV; and CPT Jerry Sheffield, USA, Lavelette, WV.

Other veterans include PFC Willis Lee Helmandollar, USA, Rocky Gap, VA; and SrA Grover C. White, Jr., USAF, Princeton, WV.

This year, we are also proud of the ROTC cadets serving as escorts for our veterans, including Jacob Aaron Krabbe, Montcalm High School, Princeton, WV; Miaha Thompson, Montcalm High School, Rock, WV; and Lamont Devon Johnson, Bluefield High School, Bluefield, WV.

These young cadets are proof of West Virginia's continuing tradition of military service and are the next generation of brave men and women that serve our country with bravery and pride.

A great debt of gratitude is also owed to Dreama Denver, president of the Denver Foundation and Little Buddy Radio. These nonprofit organizations, which were founded by Dreama and her husband, Bob Denver, established the Always Free Honor Flight Network in West Virginia.

I am so proud of the service and sense of duty that defines West Virginians and, indeed, all Americans. We all benefit from their selflessness and courage, and one of the most sacred tasks we hold is properly honoring the dedication of our veterans. In bringing them together with the powerful monuments that recognize their sacrifice, we can express our unyielding gratitude while demonstrating our lasting commitment to preserving their memory. One of the greatest honors of serving in the U.S. Senate is representing citizens who have given so much to their country. I take seriously the duty of ensuring that their sacrifice is honored with the same steadfast conviction with which they defended the rights and freedoms of every American. Today I

ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming and thanking these exceptional West Virginia veterans.

#### TRIBUTE TO GENERAL DANIEL B. ALLYN

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I would like to recognize GEN Daniel B. Allyn for his exemplary dedication to duty and service to the U.S. Army and to our Nation. For the last 3 years, he has served as the 35th Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and is planning to retire next month.

General Allyn is a fellow New Englander from Berwick, ME. He was commissioned as an infantry officer from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1981. General Allyn and his family were also fortunate to make a midcareer return to New England while he was a student at the Naval War College in Newport, RI.

General Allyn has commanded troops from the platoon through corps level and served as commander of U.S. Army Forces Command, along with myriad other staff assignments. He served an overseas assignment in Korea and operational deployments for Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada, two peace-keeping deployments to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, Operation Just Cause in Panama, Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia, Operation Desert Spring in Kuwait, two tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Unified Response in Haiti, and one tour in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

During a recent interview, General Allyn reflected on his time in uniform by saying "the only legacy we leave behind is the leaders that we develop on our watch." The U.S. Army is fortunate to have leaders like General Allyn, and those who have served under him have no doubt benefitted immeasurably from the mentorship he has provided. We should all be thankful for the generations of Army leaders who will follow in his footsteps and, in so doing, positively contribute to the security of our nation.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I join my colleagues today in recognizing and commending GEN Daniel B. Allyn for over 36 years of service to our country. We wish Dan and his wife, Debbie, the very best in the years to come.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL H. MICHAEL EDWARDS

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and commend Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, who retired on March 31, 2017, after 43 years of exceptional leadership and service to our country, including 36 years in the Colorado Air National Guard.

For almost a decade in the position of the adjutant general for Colorado, General Edwards was responsible for

the command administration of over 5,300 Army and Air National Guard members.

He had responsibility for the executive director of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and was a member of the Governor's cabinet.

He had responsibility for the Colorado National Guard's primary missions of national defense and State emergency response. In addition, he was responsible for supporting the missions of the Civil Air Patrol's Colorado wing.

General Edwards received his commission in 1973, after graduating from the Air Force Academy, and earned his pilot wings in 1974 at Reese Air Force Base, TX.

He served as an F-4 pilot and AT-38 fighter lead-in instructor pilot at Osan Air Base, Korea, and Holloman Air Force Base, NM, respectively.

General Edwards joined the Colorado Air National Guard in August 1980. He has served in numerous assignments in flying and operations, as well as command positions at squadron, group, and wing levels—culminating as the adjutant general for Colorado.●

#### RECOGNIZING 77TH ANNUAL PIKES PEAK OR BUST RODEO

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the annual Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo, an important part of the Western culture and history of the Pikes Peak Region. This year marks the 77th rodeo, making it one of the oldest and most prestigious in the county.

The Pikes Peak Region plays a significant role in our American history. For centuries, this area was home to Native Americans, pioneers, miners, farmers and ranchers, and other explorers. The Pikes Peak region became a prime location for trade and, eventually, the home of the "Pikes Peak or Bust" gold rush in 1857. Thousands of prospectors scrambled to the area for their piece of the gold fortune. This area became the pinnacle of the American frontier, which spurred development and innovation.

Today community-wide events, including the Pikes Peak or Bust rodeo, celebrate the adventurous spirit of the Pikes Peak region and its Western heritage. In addition, the rodeo donates all proceeds to charities that support military members and their families, such as the Fort Carson Outreach Program and the U.S. Air Force Academy's Operation Warm Heart. Thank you to the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo leadership and entire El Paso County community for keeping these longstanding traditions alive.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

## EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

## MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.m., a message from the House of the Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 115. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide additional aggravating factors for the imposition of the death penalty based on the status of the victim.

H.R. 1039. An act to amend section 3606 of title 18, United States Code, to grant probation officers authority to arrest hostile third parties who obstruct or impede a probation officer in the performance of official duties.

H.R. 1892. An act to amend title 4, United States Code, to provide for the flying of the flag at half-staff in the event of the death of a first responder in the line of duty.

The message also announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4355(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy: Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 4 of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016 (Public Law 114-196), the Minority Leader appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the United States Semiquincentennial Commission: Mr. ROBERT BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. JOSEPH CROWLEY of New York; And from private life: Mr. Richard Trumka of Rockville, Maryland.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 114(b) of the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Training and Development Act (2 U.S.C. 1103), the Minority Leader reappoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Board of Trustees for the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Training and Development for a term of 6 years: Ms. TERRI A. SEWELL of Alabama.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE  
RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

## ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the Secretary of the Senate, on May 18, 2017, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 419. An act to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.

S. 583. An act to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds to hire veterans as career law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the enrolled bills were signed on May 22, 2017, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

## MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 115. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide additional aggravating factors for the imposition of the death penalty based on the status of the victim; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1039. An act to amend section 3606 of title 18, United States Code, to grant probation officers authority to arrest hostile third parties who obstruct or impede a probation officer in the performance of official duties; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1892. An act to amend title 4, United States Code, to provide for the flying of the flag at half-staff in the event of the death of a first responder in the line of duty; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

## ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, May 22, 2017, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 419. An act to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.

S. 583. An act to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds to hire veterans as career law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER  
COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-1610. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fluazinam; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9960-50) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 11, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1611. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Flonicamid; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9959-91) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 11, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1612. A communication from the Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of violations of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of Agriculture's Working Capital Fund, National Finance Center; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-1613. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on

the approved retirement of Vice Admiral James D. Syring, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1614. A communication from the Senior Official performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, an out-of-cycle Advanced Arresting Gear Selected Acquisition Report (SAR); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1615. A communication from the Senior Official performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2017 Annual Report to Congress on the Department of Defense Chemical and Biological Defense Program"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1616. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense (Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities), transmitting, pursuant to law, a correction to the 2017 report on the plan for the nuclear weapons stockpile, complex, delivery systems, and command and control systems (OSS-2017-0501); to the Committees on Armed Services; Foreign Relations; and Appropriations.

EC-1617. A communication from the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's 2016 management reports; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1618. A communication from the Acting Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Imposition of Special Measure against North Korea as a Jurisdiction of Primary Money Laundering Concern" (RIN1506-AB35) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 16, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1619. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to discretionary appropriations legislation; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC-1620. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to Emissions Banking and Trading Programs and Compliance Flexibility" (FRL No. 9960-22-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 11, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1621. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Chemical Substances When Manufactured or Processed as Nanoscale Materials; TSCA Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements" (RIN2070-AK39) (FRL No. 9962-58) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 11, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1622. A communication from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences: Fiscal Year (FY) 2016"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1623. A communication from the Associate Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications; Developing a Unified Inter-carrier



Compensation Regime” ((RIN3060-AF85) (FCC 17-36) (WC Docket No. 10-90) (WC Docket No. 14-58) (CC Docket No. 01-92)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 15, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1624. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2017-0077—2017-0091); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1625. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria—Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Program” ((RIN1810-AB25) (Docket No. ED-2015-OESE-0129)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 16, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1626. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria—Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Program” ((RIN1810-AB25) (Docket No. ED-2015-OESE-0129)) received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1627. A communication from the Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, Potomac Electric Power Company, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Company’s Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1628. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Inspector General’s Semiannual Report for the six-month period from October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1629. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Energy’s Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1630. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1631. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Management Response for the period from October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1632. A communication from the Acting Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department’s fiscal year 2016 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1633. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, trans-

mitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Report on the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1634. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Non-commercial Educational Station Fund-raising for Third-Party Non-Profit Organizations” ((MB Docket No. 12-106) (FCC 17-41)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 11, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1635. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; U.S. Navy Training Activities in the Gulf of Alaska Temporary Maritime Activities Area” (RIN0648-BE67) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 10, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1636. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; U.S. Navy Training Activities in the Gulf of Alaska Temporary Maritime Activities Area” (RIN0648-BE67) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 17, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

#### PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-21. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of West Virginia urging the United States Congress and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to name the NASA IV and V Facility at Fairmont for West Virginia mathematician Katherine Coleman Johnson; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

#### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 26

Whereas, The NASA Independent Verification and Validation Facility was established at Fairmont, West Virginia in 1993 as part of an agency-wide strategy to provide the highest achievable levels of safety and cost effectiveness for mission critical software; and

Whereas, The NASA IV & V Facility was founded under the NASA Office of Safety and Mission Assurance (OSMA) as a direct result of recommendations made by the National Research Council (NRC) and the Report of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident; and

Whereas, NASA IV & V Facility has 270 permanent employees and high school and college interns during the summer months and makes an important contribution to the Fairmont, Marion County and West Virginia economies; and

Whereas, NASA mathematician Katherine Coleman Goble Johnson was born at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia in 1918 and graduated from West Virginia State College summa cum laude in 1937 and was the first African American Woman to attend the graduate school at West Virginia University in 1938; and

Whereas, Katherine Johnson worked as a mathematician at the Langley Flight Re-

search Division from 1953 to 1958 where she was an analyst for such topics as gust alleviation for aircraft; and

Whereas, Katherine Johnson worked as an aerospace technologist at the Spacecraft Controls Branch from 1958 to 1986 and was involved in performing calculations for all the important space missions during this period, including the sub-orbital flight of Alan Shepard, the first orbital flight by John Glenn and the 1969 Apollo 11 moon mission; and

Whereas, Katherine Johnson is the subject of a recently released motion picture “Hidden Figures” that highlights her life and career. Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

That the Legislature urges Congress and NASA to name the NASA IV & V Facility at Fairmont for West Virginia mathematician Katherine Coleman Johnson; and be it further,

*Resolved,* That the Clerk of the House of Delegates forward a copy of this resolution to the President and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives and to the members of West Virginia’s congressional delegation.

POM-22. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of West Virginia requesting the United States Congress to fully support the National Park Service’s recommendations to extend the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to include additional sites along the Expeditions Eastern Legacy; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

#### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 15

Whereas, The Lewis and Clark Expedition (“Expedition”) and the Corps of Discovery are nationally significant for their exploration of the Louisiana Territory and search for an all water route to the Pacific Ocean. Under orders by President Thomas Jefferson, the Expedition was responsible for mapping the territory explored, as well as documenting new species of plants and animals, and engaging with the American Indian tribes they encountered. Although part of the route was unmapped territory, the Lewis and Clark Expedition was able to use maps provided to them by American Indians, European explorers, and fur traders. Ultimately, the Expedition was able to link routes and maps together to find passage from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean, a feat which had never before been accomplished; and

Whereas, In order to recognize the historic significance of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the National Park Service previously designated a trail which runs from Wood River, Illinois to the West Coast in Oregon and Washington; and

Whereas, Public Law 110-229, passed by the United States Congress in 2008, authorized the Secretary of the Interior to study additional sites associated with the preparation and return phases of the Expedition, located in Virginia, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Missouri and Illinois. Those sites were to be considered for inclusion in the “Eastern Legacy” of the Expedition; and

Whereas, The National Park Service evaluated 25 distinct route segments used by the Corps of Discovery for the Expedition to determine if they met the criteria for national significance established by the National Trails System Act; and

Whereas, In August 2016, the National Park Service published its Draft Lewis and Clark National Trail Extension Study, finding that three sections meet the criteria established

for inclusion in the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Those segments include the Ohio River, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Louisville, Kentucky, from Louisville, Kentucky to the confluence with the Mississippi River, and from the Mississippi River's confluence with the Ohio River at Cairo, Illinois, to Wood River, Illinois; and

Whereas, A portion of the proposed extension of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail includes sites along the Ohio River in West Virginia. The inclusion of this segment along the Lewis and Clark National Trail is not only historically significant and appropriate, but may have a positive economic impact on those sites. Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

That the Legislature requests Congress to adopt the National Park Service's recommendations as to the additional segments for inclusion in the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Clerk of the House is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the President and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives and to the members of West Virginia's congressional delegation.

POM-23. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of North Dakota requesting the United States Congress and the President of the United States to enact legislation to expand and extend the current federal tax credit for carbon capture, utilization, and storage under Section 45Q of the Internal Revenue Code; to provide appropriations to the United States Department of Energy Sufficient to achieve and sustain a robust carbon capture research, development, demonstration, and deployment program; to support the inclusion of economically and environmentally beneficial carbon capture projects in any forthcoming federal infrastructure initiative; to support policies to increase the operational efficiency; and to support the preservation of a fuel-diverse electric generation portfolio critical to our domestic economic, energy, and national security; to the Committee on Finance.

#### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3037

Whereas, fossil fuels including coal, natural gas, and oil provide more than three-quarters of global and United States' primary energy demand and, according to the International Energy Agency, will continue to do so for the next quarter-century or more under current energy and environmental policies; and

Whereas, recognition of the value and enduring role of fossil fuels as an essential source of energy around the world and in the United States for decades to come has led environmental advocates to support the accelerated development and broad deployment of carbon capture technologies for fossil fuels as part of a sustainable energy future; and

Whereas, recognition of the role carbon capture can play in creating new opportunities for fossil fuels has led fossil energy advocates to similarly support the development and deployment of carbon capture technologies for fossil fuels; and

Whereas, the United States and North Dakota have abundant supplies of fossil energy, the production and use of which provide important economic, energy, and national security benefits to our nation and our state; and

Whereas, North Dakota is the nation's 6th largest producer of fossil energy, 2nd largest producer of oil, 2nd largest producer of lignite coal, 11th largest producer of natural gas, the largest consumer of coal for industrial use, and the 10th largest consumer of coal for electricity generation; and

Whereas, according to the Department of Energy, "A diverse portfolio of energy resources is critical to U.S. energy and national policy . . . being more robust and resilient in comparison to a system that is heavily dependent on a limited set of energy resources . . . [and] helps insulate the economy from certain risks, including price volatility and risks from supply disruptions"; and

Whereas, reliable and affordable electricity is vital to economic growth and job creation in North Dakota and the overall welfare of our citizens; and

Whereas, 73 percent of the electricity generated in North Dakota is produced from fossil fuels and the average residential price of electricity in North Dakota is the 6th lowest in the nation and is 18 percent below the national average; and

Whereas, continued research and development of carbon reduction strategies for fossil fuels is an essential element of a forward-looking sustainable energy strategy for North Dakota, our nation, and the world which will simultaneously maximize both environmental quality and economic opportunity; and

Whereas, the Energy and Environmental Research Center at the University of North Dakota, the Great Plains Synfuels Plant in Beulah, and the Lignite Energy Council are engaged in efforts to address environmental, health, and economic impacts of energy production and use through collaborations on applied carbon dioxide research, practical applications, workforce development, and public education; and

Whereas, legislation was introduced in the 114th Congress to enhance and extend federal tax incentives, under Section 45Q of the Internal Revenue Code, which serve to sustain and promote such collaborations and to encourage private industry in energy generation, manufacturing, and agriculture to adopt and deploy existing and emerging technologies that increase carbon capture, utilization, and storage; and

Whereas, the coming together of environmental and energy advocates in support of carbon capture is reflected in the groundbreaking coalition of environmental advocacy groups, labor unions, and energy producers from the coal, oil and gas, ethanol, and algae-biomass industries working together in support of federal legislation; and

Whereas, similar legislation is now under consideration in the 115th Congress, and Congress and the President also are considering enactment of a large-scale federal infrastructure initiative to strengthen our nation's transportation, public works, and energy infrastructure that also could serve as a vehicle for advancing "jobs-ready" carbon capture projects; and

Whereas, according to the Department of Energy, "A combination of tax incentives and research, development, demonstration, and deployment will be critical to developing transformational carbon capture technologies and to driving down the costs of capture". Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives of North Dakota, the Senate concurring therein,* That the Sixty-fifth Legislative Assembly requests Congress and the President of the United States to enact legislation to expand and extend the current federal tax credit for carbon capture, utilization, and storage under Section 45Q of the Internal Revenue Code; to provide appropriations to the United States Department of Energy sufficient to achieve and sustain a robust carbon capture research, development, demonstration, and deployment program; to support the inclusion of economically and environmentally beneficial carbon capture projects in any forthcoming federal infrastructure

initiative; to support policies to increase the operational efficiency, and thereby the environmental performance, of existing electric-generating units in the United States; and to support the preservation of a fuel-diverse electric generation portfolio critical to our domestic economic, energy, and national security; and be it further

*Resolved,* that the Secretary of State forward copies of this resolution by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the President of the United States, the President and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United States Department of Energy, and to each member of the North Dakota Congressional Delegation.

POM-24. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of California relative to Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 29

Whereas, Armenians have resided in Asia Minor and the Caucasus for approximately four millennia, and have a long and rich history in the region, including the establishment of many kingdoms, and despite Armenians' historic presence, stewardship, and autonomy in the region, Turkish rulers of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey subjected Armenians to severe and unjust persecution and brutality, including wholesale massacres beginning in the 1890s; and

Whereas, The Armenian nation was subjected to a systematic and premeditated genocide officially beginning on April 24, 1915, at the hands of the Young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire from 1915-1919 and continued at the hands of the Kemalist Movement of Turkey from 1920-1923 whereby over 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children were slaughtered or marched to their deaths in an effort to annihilate the Armenian nation in the first genocide of modern times, while thousands of surviving Armenian women and children were forcibly converted and Islamized, and hundreds of thousands more were subjected to ethnic cleansing during the period of the modern Republic of Turkey from 1924-1937; and

Whereas, During the genocides of the Christians living in the Ottoman Empire and surrounding regions, which occurred during the first one-half of the 20th century, 1.5 million men, women, and children of Armenian descent, and hundreds of thousands of Assyrians, Greeks, and other Christians, lost their lives at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the Republic of Turkey, constituting one of the most atrocious violations of human rights in the history of the world; and

Whereas, These crimes against humanity also had the consequence of permanently removing all traces of the Armenians and other targeted people from their historic homelands of more than four millennia, and enriching the perpetrators with the lands and other property of the victims of these crimes, including the usurpation of several thousand churches; and

Whereas, In response to the genocide and at the behest of President Woodrow Wilson and the United States State Department, the Near East Relief organization was founded, and became the first congressionally sanctioned American philanthropic effort created exclusively to provide humanitarian assistance and rescue to the Armenian nation and other Christian minorities from annihilation, who went on to survive and thrive outside of their ancestral homeland all over the world and specifically in this state; and

Whereas, Near East Relief succeeded, with the active participation of the citizens from this state, in delivering \$117 million in assistance, and saving more than one million refugees, including 132,000 orphans, between 1915 and 1930, by delivering food, clothing, and materials for shelter, setting up refugee camps, clinics, hospitals, and orphanages; and

Whereas, The Armenian nation survived the genocide despite the attempt by the Ottoman Empire to exterminate it; and

Whereas, Adolf Hitler, in persuading his army commanders that the merciless persecution and killing of Jews, Poles, and other people would bring no retribution, declared, "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"; and

Whereas, On November 4, 1918, immediately after the collapse of the Young Turk regime and before the founding of the Republic of Turkey by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923, the Ottoman Parliament considered a motion on the crimes committed by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) stating: "A population of one million people guilty of nothing except belonging to the Armenian nation were massacred and exterminated, including even women and children." The Minister of Interior at the time, Fethi Bey, responded by telling the Parliament: "It is the intention of the government to cure every single injustice done up until now, as far as the means allow, to make possible the return to their homes of those sent into exile, and to compensate for their material loss as far as possible"; and

Whereas, On August 1, 1926, in an interview published in the Los Angeles Examiner, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk admitted: "These left-overs from the former Young Turk Party, who should have been made to account for the lives of millions of our Christian subjects who were ruthlessly driven en masse, from their homes and massacred, have been restive under the Republican rule. They have hitherto lived on plunder, robbery and bribery and become inimical to any idea or suggestion to enlist in useful labor and earn their living by the honest sweat of their brow"; and

Whereas, The Parliamentary Investigative Committee proceeded to collect relevant documents describing the actions of those responsible for the Armenian mass killings and turned them over to the Turkish Military Tribunal. CUP's leading figures were found guilty of massacring Armenians and hanged or given lengthy prison sentences. The Turkish Military Tribunal requested that Germany extradite to Turkey the masterminds of the massacres who had fled the country. After German refusal, they were tried in absentia and sentenced to death; and

Whereas, Unlike other people and governments that have admitted and denounced the abuses and crimes of predecessor regimes, and despite the Turkish government's earlier admissions and the overwhelming proof of genocidal intent, the Republic of Turkey inexplicably and adamantly has denied the occurrence of the crimes against humanity committed by the Ottoman and Young Turk rulers for many years, and continues to do so a full century since the first crimes constituting genocide occurred; and

Whereas, Those denials compound the grief of the few remaining survivors and deprive the surviving Armenian nation of its individual and collective ancestral lands, property, cultural heritage, financial assets, and population growth; and

Whereas, The Republic of Turkey has escalated its international campaign of Armenian Genocide denial, maintained its blockade of Armenia, and increased its pressure on the small but growing movement in Turkey acknowledging the Armenian Genocide and

seeking justice for this systematic campaign of destruction of millions of Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, and other Christians upon their biblical-era homelands; and

Whereas, Those citizens of Turkey, both Armenian and non-Armenian, who continue to speak the truth about the Armenian Genocide, such as human rights activist and journalist Hrant Dink, continue to be silenced by violent means; and

Whereas, There is continued concern about the welfare of Christians in the Republic of Turkey, their right to worship and practice freely, and the legal status and condition of thousands of ancient Armenian churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and other historical and cultural structures, sites, and antiquities in the Republic of Turkey; and

Whereas, The United States is on record as having officially recognized the Armenian Genocide in the United States government's May 28, 1951, written statement to the International Court of Justice regarding the Reservations to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, through President Ronald Reagan's April 22, 1981, Proclamation No. 4838, and by congressional legislation including House Joint Resolution 148 adopted on April 9, 1975, and House Joint Resolution 247 adopted on September 12, 1984; and

Whereas, Prior to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the United States had a record of seeking just and constructive means to address the consequences of the Ottoman Empire's intentional destruction of the Armenian people, including through United States Senate Concurrent Resolution 12 adopted on February 9, 1916, United States Senate Resolution 359 adopted on May 11, 1920, and President Woodrow Wilson's November 22, 1920, decision titled, "The Frontier between Armenia and Turkey," which was issued as a binding arbitral award, yet has not been enforced to this date despite its legally binding status; and

Whereas, President Barack Obama entered office "calling for Turkey's acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide" and on April 24, 2013, and similarly on April 24, 2014, he further stated, "A full, frank, and just acknowledgment of the facts is in all of our interests. Peoples and nations grow stronger, and build a more just and tolerant future, by acknowledging and reckoning with painful elements of the past"; and

Whereas, California is home to the largest Armenian American population in the United States, and Armenians living in California have enriched our state through their leadership and contribution in business, agriculture, academia, government, and the arts, many of whom have family members who experienced firsthand the horror and evil of the Armenian Genocide and its ongoing denial; and

Whereas, Every person should be made aware and educated about the Armenian Genocide and other crimes against humanity; and

Whereas, The State of California has been at the forefront of encouraging and promoting a curriculum relating to human rights and genocide in order to empower future generations to prevent the recurrence of genocide; and

Whereas, April 24, 1915, is globally observed and recognized as the commencement of the Armenian Genocide; and

Whereas, Armenians in the State of California and throughout the world have not been provided with justice for the crimes perpetrated against the Armenian nation despite the fact that over a century has passed since the crimes were first committed; and

Whereas, The Armenian people in the State of California and throughout the world

remain resolved and their spirit continues to thrive more than a century after their near annihilation. Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the State of California*, That the Senate hereby designates the year of 2017 as "State of California Year of Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923" and in doing so, intends, through the enactment of legislation, that the Armenian Genocide is properly commemorated and taught to its citizens and visitors through statewide educational and cultural events; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate hereby designates the month of April 2017 as "State of California Month of Commemoration of the 102nd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923"; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate commends its conscientious educators who teach about human rights and genocide, and intends for them, through the enactment of legislation, to continue to enhance their efforts to educate students at all levels about the experience of the Armenians and other crimes against humanity; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate hereby commends the extraordinary service which was delivered by Near East Relief to the survivors of the Armenian Genocide and the Assyrian Genocide, including thousands of direct beneficiaries of American philanthropy who are the parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents of many Californian Armenians and Assyrians, and pledges its intent, through the enactment of legislation, to working with community groups, non-profit organizations, citizens, state personnel, and the community at large to host statewide educational and cultural events; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate deplores the persistent, ongoing efforts by any person, in this country or abroad, to deny the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate respectfully calls upon the President and the Congress of the United States to formally and consistently reaffirm the historical truth that the atrocities committed against the Armenian people constituted genocide; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate calls on the President of the United States to work toward equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relations; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate calls on the President and the Congress of the United States, in all official contacts with Turkish and other world leaders and officials, to emphasize that Turkey should:

(1) End all forms of religious discrimination and persecution.

(2) Allow the rightful historical church and lay owners of Christian and other church properties, without hindrance or restriction, to organize and administer prayer services, religious education, clerical training, appointments, and succession, religious community gatherings, social services, including ministry to the needs of the poor and infirm, and other religious activities.

(3) Return to their rightful owners all historical Christian and other churches and other places of worship, monasteries, schools, hospitals, monuments, relics, holy sites, and other religious properties, including movable properties, such as artwork, manuscripts, vestments, vessels, and other artifacts.

(4) Allow the rightful Christian and other church and lay owners of church properties, without hindrance or restriction, to preserve, reconstruct, and repair, as they see fit, all churches and other places of worship, monasteries, schools, hospitals, monuments,

relics, holy sites, and other religious properties within Turkey; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Governor of California, to every member of the California State Legislature, and to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

POM-25. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of California urging the President of the United States and the Secretary of Homeland Security to reaffirm the principles and content of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement policy regarding enforcement actions at or focused on sensitive locations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 22

Whereas, Unfettered and secure public access to educational institutions, health care facilities, government buildings, community gatherings, courthouses, and places of worship is integral to the basic rights and well-being of all Californians; and

Whereas, The mere possibility that immigration enforcement activity is taking place at sensitive locations chills the participation in society of immigrants, documented and undocumented alike, as well as their family members, and all who, regardless of their status, may be profiled as immigrants; and

Whereas, Despite repeated statements by President Trump that his immigration enforcement efforts would focus on dangerous criminals, he has directed his administration to vastly expand the scope of those to be detained and deported to include nearly all of the three million undocumented immigrants living in California; and

Whereas, A child cannot feel safe and secure going to daycare, school, or university when immigration enforcement may take place there at any time; and

Whereas, The education of California's youth is of paramount importance and impacts us all; and

Whereas, A patient, individual feeling ill, or person seeking testing or preventative care cannot feel safe and secure accessing a hospital, clinic, dental office, or other place of medical care when immigration enforcement may take place there at any time; and

Whereas, The health of every Californian is vitally important and impacts us all; and

Whereas, An attorney, litigant, or witness cannot feel safe and secure entering a courthouse when immigration enforcement may take place there at any time; and

Whereas, Equal justice for all is of the utmost importance, is constitutionally required, and impacts us all; and

Whereas, A person of faith cannot feel safe and secure entering a church, mosque, synagogue, temple, or other house of worship when immigration enforcement may take place there at any time; and

Whereas, The free exercise of religion is deeply revered and constitutionally required; and

Whereas, An individual cannot feel safe and secure openly protesting, speaking at a news conference, attending a rally, going to a public hearing, or approaching a government building when immigration enforcement may take place there at any time; and

Whereas, Freedom of expression, freedom of association, and the right to petition the government for redress are critically important and constitutionally required for the health of our democracy; and

Whereas, On October 24, 2011, John Morton, then Director of the United States Immigra-

tion and Customs Enforcement (ICE) within the United States Department of Homeland Security, issued a policy memorandum directing ICE agents not to conduct immigration enforcement actions at or focused on sensitive locations, such as schools, hospitals, institutions of worship, funerals, weddings, public demonstrations, marches, rallies, and parades, except as authorized; and

Whereas, Memoranda released on February 20, 2017, by John Kelly, the current Secretary of Homeland Security, do not contradict and therefore, by their own terms, do not repeal the federal policy limiting immigration enforcement at sensitive locations; and

Whereas, Nonetheless, there have been numerous reports since the beginning of President Trump's Administration of ICE agents conducting immigration enforcement arrests in and around those specific sensitive locations; and

Whereas, On February 8, 2017, ICE agents arrested a group of people emerging from a Virginia church basement that was operating as a hypothermia shelter for the homeless; and

Whereas, On February 9, 2017, security cameras captured video of ICE agents entering a Texas family law courthouse and detaining a domestic violence survivor who was there to obtain a restraining order. In a sworn court statement, the ICE agents indicated that they encountered the woman outside the courthouse; and

Whereas, On February 22, 2017, ICE agents entered a Texas hospital and detained for a second time a 26-year-old mother of two who had been diagnosed with a brain tumor just 11 days prior, and tied her at the hands and feet; and

Whereas, On March 1, 2017, ICE agents detained a 22-year-old woman who was previously registered with the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, moments after she had publicly spoken about immigration policy at a press conference outside the city hall located in Jackson, Mississippi; and

Whereas, The Trump administration has justified its vast expansion of those targeted for deportation by falsely portraying the United States as a country under siege by a flood of undocumented immigrants who threaten public safety, giving rise to anti-immigrant fervor and a nativist desire to preserve our nation's historically dominant Euro-Christian culture. Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the State of California*, That the Senate calls upon President Trump and Secretary Kelly to publicly and explicitly reaffirm the principles and content of the ICE policy memorandum dated October 24, 2011, regarding enforcement actions at or focused on sensitive locations; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate calls upon Secretary Kelly to underscore to the public and to all United States Department of Homeland Security personnel that the policy on sensitive locations is not limited to enforcement at the sensitive location, but also to enforcement focused on sensitive locations, and that in other words, waiting across the street from a church or school for people to emerge from the sensitive location violates the policy as much as entering the location itself, as does following someone away from a press conference or other sensitive location so as to detain them; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Senate calls upon Secretary Kelly to take affirmative steps, including public commitment to the sensitive locations policy, staff training, investigation or reports of past and future violations of the policy, including, but not limited to, investigating the incidents detailed in this resolution, and pursuing disciplinary action

against personnel found to have violated the policy; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Minority Leader of the United States Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

POM-26. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana memorializing the United States Congress to create a reliable, predictable stream of resources to address deferred maintenance needs in the National Park System and to designate April 15, 2017, through April 23, 2017, as "National Park Week" in Louisiana; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 30

Whereas, on August 25, 1916, Congress established the National Park Service with the mission to preserve unimpaired natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of current and future generations; and

Whereas, in 2017, the National Park Service began its second century of stewardship of the National Park System after the 2016 National Park Service Centennial, which celebrated one hundred years of the work of the National Park Service to protect and manage majestic landscapes such as Barataria Preserve, hallowed battlefields such as Chalmette Battlefield, and iconic cultural and historical sites of the United States such as Poverty Point and the Cane River National Heritage Area; and

Whereas, the National Park Service's employees, volunteers, and park supporters continue to dedicate themselves to serving the parks' national and international visitors and to maintaining and improving the national parks for all to enjoy; and

Whereas, the national parks of the United States attracted record-breaking visitation during the National Park Service Centennial, with three hundred thirty-one million recreational visits in 2016; and

Whereas, in 2015, National Park Service estimates indicate that park visitors spent more than sixteen billion nine hundred million dollars at the sites and in the states and local communities adjacent to national parks; and

Whereas, in 2015, National Park Service estimates indicate that park visitors spent more than twenty-eight million dollars at the sites in and local communities adjacent to Louisiana's national parks; and

Whereas, in 2016, the National Park Service estimated a deferred maintenance backlog of nearly twelve billion dollars, which includes repairs to aging historical structures, trails, sewers, drainage, thousands of miles of roads, bridges, tunnels, and other vital infrastructure needs; and

Whereas, in 2016, the National Park Service estimated a deferred maintenance backlog of over fifteen million dollars in Louisiana's national parks, which includes repairs to aging historical structures, trails, sewers, drainage, thousands of miles of roads, bridges, tunnels, and other vital infrastructure needs; and

Whereas, it has been found that every public dollar invested in the National Park Service returns ten dollars because of visitor spending that works through local, state, and national economies; and

Whereas, the people of the United States have inherited the remarkable legacy of the

National Park System and are entrusted with its preservation as the United States marks the beginning of the second century of the National Park System. Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved* that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the Congress of the United States to create a reliable, predictable stream of resources to address deferred maintenance needs in America's National Park System; and be it further

*Resolved* that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate April 15, 2017, through April 23, 2017, as "National Park Week" in Louisiana and encourages the people of the United States and the world to visit and experience the treasured national parks of the state of Louisiana; and be it further

*Resolved* that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

POM-27. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Louisiana recognizing Wednesday, April 26, 2017, as the fifth annual Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Day at the state capitol and express support of the Louisiana Energy Export Association, LNG exports, and the streamlining and expedition of permit approval for pending export facilities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 44

Whereas, plentiful natural gas supplies and unprecedented advances in technology have provided a historic opportunity for the United States to achieve energy self-sufficiency while creating jobs and wealth for our economy; and

Whereas, pioneering exploration and extraction methods have opened such vast natural gas resources to development in areas, such as the Haynesville Shale, that demand on United States natural gas markets can grow with little impact on domestic prices; and

Whereas, the Department of Energy estimates domestic natural gas production levels will increase by over 50% by 2050; and

Whereas, global demand for liquefied natural gas is expected to grow significantly over the next two decades, with Louisiana poised to play a major role in meeting such demand; and

Whereas, expanding markets for United States natural gas is consistent with national trade and security policy, because failure to expand liquefied natural gas exports would force our allies to continue to rely on regimes that are hostile to United States interests for their energy needs; and

Whereas, over 100 cargoes of LNG have already departed for international markets from Louisiana facilities; and

Whereas, continued growth in liquefied natural gas exports will create tens of thousands of construction and operations jobs in Louisiana; and

Whereas, the Louisiana Energy Export Association was formed in 2017 as a nonprofit grassroots organization to serve as a unifying voice for Louisiana's LNG exporters with the mission of supporting the exports of natural gas and educating public and policy leaders of the economic benefits LNG exports will bring to the United States; and

Whereas, Louisiana Energy Export Association member companies plan to invest over \$60 billion in Louisiana over the next decade, creating over 20,000 jobs, economic opportunity, and expanding the Louisiana tax base; and

Whereas, liquefied natural gas exports would provide incentives for new infrastructure investments worth billions of dollars

and generate royalties and local tax revenues directly in communities across the state; and

Whereas, a diverse coalition of Louisiana LNG producers, energy and petroleum companies, business groups, service companies, and others have expressed their support for LNG exports. Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize Wednesday, April 26, 2017, as the fifth annual Liquefied Natural Gas Day at the state capitol and express support of the Louisiana Energy Export Association, LNG exports, and the streamlining and expedition of permit approval for pending export facilities so that the economic benefits of LNG exports can be magnified throughout the state of Louisiana, as well as the United States; and be it further

*Resolved* that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

POM-28. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan urging the United States Congress to eliminate the "widows' tax" on the surviving spouses of retired U.S. military service members; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

#### HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 50

Whereas, Retired military service members may participate in the Survivor Benefit Program. The Survivor Benefit Program is an optional annuity designed to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to the surviving spouse of a service member. The annuity payments offset part of the retirement income lost as a result of the service member's death. The annuity's premium is paid by the retired service member through a deduction from their monthly retirement benefit check; and

Whereas, The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides a tax-free monthly benefit to the surviving spouses of eligible military service members who died as a result of service-related injuries or diseases. The Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program's earned benefit expresses a measure of thanks from a grateful nation to a fallen soldier's family. Benefits start with a standard monthly allowance for the surviving spouse and additional benefits are provided under certain circumstances; and

Whereas, Under federal law, a surviving spouse is punished for having both a paid annuity and earned indemnity benefits. When a surviving spouse of a military retiree is eligible to receive a monthly annuity payment through the Survivor Benefit Program and has been awarded a monthly benefit through the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program, the retirement annuity is offset dollar-for-dollar by the amount of benefits received because of their service-related death. This offset is commonly referred to throughout the veterans' community as the "widows' tax" and can cause \$14,580 a year or more in reduced payments to beneficiaries; and

Whereas, The indemnity compensation should be in addition to the retirement annuity rather than in place of it. The rationale and qualifications for these two programs are wholly different. The Survivor Benefit Program is a personal financial decision made by a military retiree to provide some degree of financial security to their surviving spouse while the Veterans Affairs indemnity program is an earned benefit awarded following a service-connected death. The Survivor Benefit Program's mandated premium payments set it apart from the indemnity program's survivor benefits, and the

government should not be taking the annuity benefits bought by service members for their families. Congress should ensure that the families who have given so much in the service of their country receive all of their military survivor benefits and retirement annuities. Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives*, That we urge the Congress of the United States to eliminate the "widows' tax" on the surviving spouses of retired U.S. military service members; and be it further

*Resolved*, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HOEVEN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 39. A bill to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-75).

#### 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. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1190. A bill to extend the waiver of limitations with respect to excluding from gross income amounts received by wrongfully incarcerated individuals; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 1191. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to refine how Medicare pays for orthotics and prosthetics and to improve beneficiary experience and outcomes with orthotic and prosthetic care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1192. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for pro-rated charges to entitlement to educational assistance under Department of Veterans Affairs Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program for certain licensure and certification tests and national tests, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 1193. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for employer-provided job training, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 1194. A bill to provide for the coverage of medically necessary food and vitamins for digestive and inherited metabolic disorders under Federal health programs and private health insurance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 1195. A bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to restrict the distribution of free printed copies of the Federal Register to Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. PETERS, Mr.

COTTON, Mr. MANCHIN, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1196. A bill to expand the capacity and capability of the ballistic missile defense system of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1197. A bill to waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals disabled by Huntington's disease; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 1198. A bill to protect individuals who are eligible for increase pension under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the basis of need of regular aid and attendance from dishonest, predatory, or otherwise unlawful practices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 1199. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to reauthorize the Border Enforcement Security Task Force program within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 1200. A bill to require that certain prevailing wage determinations be made using representative statistical sample techniques; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 1201. A bill to allow individuals living in areas without qualified health plans offered through an Exchange to have similar access to health insurance coverage as members of Congress and congressional staff; to the Committee on Finance.

## SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. Res. 175. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. Con. Res. 17. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should withdraw from the Paris Agreement, adopted in December 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 122

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 122, a bill to prevent homeowners from being forced to pay taxes on forgiven mortgage loan debt.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to provide for nonpreemption of measures by State and local governments to divest from entities that en-

gage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 319

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 319, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a center of excellence in the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of health conditions relating to exposure to burn pits.

S. 339

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 339, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 407, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 428

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 428, a bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to authorize States to provide coordinated care to children with complex medical conditions through enhanced pediatric health homes, and for other purposes.

S. 446

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 446, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 482

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 482, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 516

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 516, a bill to provide grants to assist States in developing and implementing plans to address cybersecurity threats or vulnerabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan

(Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent certain provisions of the Heartland, Habitat, Harvest, and Horticulture Act of 2008 relating to timber.

S. 540

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 540, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 569

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the Land and Water Conservation Fund to maximize the effectiveness of the Fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 597

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 597, a bill to increase Federal Pell Grants for the children of fallen public safety officers, and for other purposes.

S. 622

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 622, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

S. 654

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 654, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 693

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 693, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 712

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 712, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the



Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 722

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 722, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to Iran in relation to Iran's ballistic missile program, support for acts of international terrorism, and violations of human rights, and for other purposes.

S. 766

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 766, a bill to amend titles 10 and 32, United States Code, to improve and enhance authorities relating to the employment, use, status, and benefits of military technicians (dual status), and for other purposes.

S. 782

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 782, a bill to reauthorize the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program, and for other purposes.

S. 808

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 808, a bill to provide protections for certain sports medicine professionals who provide certain medical services in a secondary State.

S. 816

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 816, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow rollovers from 529 programs to ABLE accounts.

S. 817

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 817, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the age requirement with respect to eligibility for qualified ABLE programs.

S. 818

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 818, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals with disabilities to save additional amounts in their ABLE accounts above the current annual maximum contribution if they work and earn income.

S. 829

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 829, a bill to reauthorize the Assistance to Firefighters Grants program, the Fire Prevention and Safety

Grants program, and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 915

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 915, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 916

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 916, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with regard to the provision of emergency medical services.

S. 936

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 936, a bill to designate certain National Forest System land and certain public land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior in the States of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming as wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, wildland recovery areas, and biological connecting corridors, and for other purposes.

S. 937

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 937, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit.

S. 980

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 980, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payments for certain rural health clinic and Federally qualified health center services furnished to hospice patients under the Medicare program.

S. 1094

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1094, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1122

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1122, a bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to clarify when the time period for the issuance of citations under such Act begins and to require a rule to clarify that an employer's duty to make and maintain accurate records of work-related injuries and illnesses is an ongoing obligation.

S. 1132

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from Delaware

(Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 1132, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the removal of the rental cap for durable medical equipment under the Medicare program with respect to speech generating devices.

S. 1134

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1134, a bill to protect law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

S. 1136

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1136, a bill to improve the structure of the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1154

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1154, a bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to provide for the housing treatment of members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents undergoing a permanent change of station in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1155

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1155, a bill to amend title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to increase the amount of financial support available for working students.

S. 1158

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1158, a bill to help prevent acts of genocide and other atrocity crimes, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States Government capacities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to such crises.

S. RES. 70

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 70, a resolution recognizing the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 and expressing the sense of the Senate that policies that discriminate against any individual based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of that individual would be a repetition of the mistakes of Executive Order 9066 and contrary to the values of the United States.

S. RES. 162

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Missouri

(Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 162, a resolution reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promoting religious freedom, and for other purposes.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

S. 1190. A bill to extend the waiver of limitations with respect to excluding from gross income amounts received by wrongfully incarcerated individuals; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 1190

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

#### SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF WAIVER OF LIMITATIONS WITH RESPECT TO EXCLUDING FROM GROSS INCOME AMOUNTS RECEIVED BY WRONGFULLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 304(d) of the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 (26 U.S.C. 139F note) is amended by striking “1-year” and inserting “2-year”.

(b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Section 304(d) of such Act (26 U.S.C. 139F note) is amended by striking “application of this Act” and inserting “application of this section”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in section 304 of the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 175—RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 175

Whereas, on May 22, 1917, the forerunner to the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (referred to in this preamble as the “NOAA Corps”) was created as the commissioned corps of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey in order to provide officers to command coastal survey ships and field survey parties locally and abroad;

Whereas the heritage of the NOAA Corps is closely tied to the oldest scientific and technical agency of the United States, the Survey of the Coast, which was established by President Thomas Jefferson and Congress in 1807;

Whereas, on October 3, 1970, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was established and the officers of that agency became members of the NOAA Corps;

Whereas, for the past 100 years, the central mission of the NOAA Corps and its predecessor has been to collect data at sea or in

the air to enable decisions that have a great impact on the United States;

Whereas, since 1960, officers of the NOAA Corps and their predecessors have flown into 292 tropical cyclones, risking their lives to advance the science needed to save lives and livelihoods along the coastal communities of the United States;

Whereas, whatever the mission, the United States turns to the NOAA Corps for environmental leadership;

Whereas the motto of “Honor, Respect, Commitment” is the creed by which NOAA Corps officers live and serve; and

Whereas, regardless of the cause, location, or magnitude of a future hurricane, the United States can rely on the NOAA Corps to fly into the storm to carry out the missions entrusted to the NOAA Corps: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) expresses the appreciation of the people of the United States to the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (referred to in this resolving clause as the “NOAA Corps”), and the officers who have served in the NOAA Corps, for 100 years of dedicated service;

(2) honors the valor, commitment, and sacrifice that officers of the NOAA Corps have displayed throughout the history of the NOAA Corps; and

(3) respectfully requests that the President issue a proclamation that—

(A) recognizes the 100th anniversary of the NOAA Corps and the dedicated service of the officers who have served in the NOAA Corps; and

(B) calls upon the people of the United States to observe that anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

#### SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 17—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE PARIS AGREEMENT, ADOPTED IN DECEMBER 2015

Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 17

Whereas the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (in this resolution referred to as the “Convention”), adopted in May 1992, entered into force in 1994 and is being implemented;

Whereas the Paris Agreement, adopted in December 2015, is another attempt by the Convention’s “Conference of Parties” to globally address climate change, similar to the Kyoto Protocol, the Durban Platform, the Copenhagen Accord, and the Cancun Agreements, all of which have failed to meaningfully slow global carbon emissions;

Whereas the Paris Agreement fails to consider adequately economies that would be negatively impacted by measures to respond to climate change, including those found within the United States, as addressed in Article 4, Paragraph 10 of the Convention;

Whereas the Paris Agreement has not been submitted to the United States Senate for review and ratification;

Whereas the Paris Agreement could result in serious harm to the United States economy, including significant job loss, increased energy and consumer costs, risks to grid reliability, or any combination thereof;

Whereas, by using the free market, the United States has significantly reduced carbon dioxide emissions to the lowest they have been in 15 years, and the United States energy-related carbon dioxide emissions are projected to remain below 2005 levels through 2040, while such emissions in the developing world are projected to grow to 120 percent above 2005 levels by 2040;

Whereas the People’s Republic of China is the world’s largest emitter of carbon dioxide and, in accordance with the 2014 agreement with the United States entered into during the Barack Obama presidency, intends to increase its coal consumption until 2030;

Whereas the Republic of India announced that, notwithstanding the Paris Agreement, it will continue its reliance on coal and plans to double the nation’s coal output within the next 5 years;

Whereas, according to an October 2015 MIT Technology Review report, increased coal consumption in the Republic of India will negate any global efforts to limit carbon dioxide, regardless of anything that the United States does to decrease its emissions; and

Whereas the emissions reduction goals of the Paris Agreement cannot be met without the global development and deployment of new technologies that are not currently in commercial existence or economically viable: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that the United States should withdraw from the Paris Agreement, adopted in December 2015.

#### APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 107-252, Title II, Section 214, appoints the following individual to the Election Assistance Board of Advisors: Lawrence Norden of New York.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 156.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 156) recognizing National Foster Care Month as an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges of children in the foster-care system, and encouraging Congress to implement policy to improve the lives of children in the foster-care system.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 156) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of May 4, 2017, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 175, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 175) recognizing the 100th anniversary of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 175) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, May 23; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Sullivan nomination, with the time until the cloture vote equally divided in the usual form; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that if cloture is invoked, all time during morning business, leader remarks, recess, and adjournment count postcloture on the Sullivan nomination.

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 BROWN.

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

The Senator from Ohio.

#### CONFIRMATION OF TERRY BRANSTAD

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition, understanding that the vote has been taken but wanting to speak on the record about the nomination of Governor Terry Branstad to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

This is a critical diplomatic post today, perhaps more than at any time in our history. It has certainly been increasingly important through every administration as China's expansionist views of the world grow, as China's economy becomes more and more dominant in East Asia, and as China, by not playing fair on economic issues, has caused, with the acquiescence of many, many American companies, far too many jobs to move there.

We have seen sort of a new business model for American business that has been around now for a quarter of a century—something that economic history never showed us before—where companies shut down in places like Willowick or Toledo or Dayton or Springfield, OH, and move overseas. They are getting tax breaks to do it. They build plants there and sell those products back into Ohio or into Oklahoma or into the United States in the other 48 States. Unfortunately, China has been part of that, while U.S. companies have acted, in many cases, irresponsibly, and China has played into it.

We have serious issues with China, from their currency manipulation to trade cheating that hurts the American steel industry to their dismal, documented record on human rights and religious freedom. On all of these fronts, we need to take a firm position with China. We need an ambassador who will advocate for American workers, for American businesses, and, yes, for American values. I don't believe Governor Branstad will be that ambassador.

When it comes to putting American workers first, Governor Branstad's record, frankly, is appalling. How can he advocate for American workers and for expanding the rights of working people around the world when he fought against it at home in his home State of Iowa? As Governor, Terry Branstad waged war on collective bargaining rights. He recently signed legislation that takes away the right of public employees to bargain for fair wages and for healthcare rights that they have guaranteed for 45 years—rights that were enshrined by a law signed by a former Republican Governor.

When the State Department measures labor rights in countries around the world, they look at whether a country's laws allow workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining. China's results have always

been poor. They have been criticized for deplorable working conditions. How can our country—how can the United States—lead by example when it comes to ensuring that hard work pays off when the man representing us in Beijing, when the man representing us at the negotiating table is taking away workers' rights in our own country? Don't think for a moment that the Chinese will not remind the American Ambassador of what he has done with workers' rights in his home State, as we perhaps argue—it is unclear if we will now, but perhaps we will argue—for expanding workers' rights in China.

I appreciate the questions for the record that Senator CARDIN submitted to Governor Branstad. Unfortunately, his answers were vague and did nothing to address the serious concerns that many of us have.

The President made a lot of campaign promises when it comes to standing up to China. I have been clear since the days after the election, when I called the President-elect's transition team, and in conversations since then with President Trump and with the U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Lighthizer, that I want to work with them on that—with the President and with the U.S. Trade Representative.

After his meeting with Chinese President Xi, I sent a letter to President Trump outlining steps he should take for fighting for American workers, particularly in the steel industry, in his 100-day plan on trade. But the person negotiating that 100-day plan needs to have America's workers first in their mind. Governor Branstad has made it clear that multinational corporations, not ordinary American workers—not people in Youngstown, Warren, Steubenville, and Columbus—will have his ear.

We can see corporate fingerprints on these trade agreements. Rarely do we see workers at the table advocating for workers' rights. We only see trade policy that reflects the interests of large corporations. Those corporations then use these trade policies to outsource jobs around the world.

It is not just workers' rights where China falls woefully short and where we need to take a tough stand. China's record on human rights and religious freedom is unacceptable. Our Ambassador needs to make that clear. When U.S. officials represent us in the world, they must not only be advocates for our business interests—they should be that, to be sure—but they must also be critical advocates on behalf of workers and on behalf of the Nation's values—values like freedom of speech, freedom to organize, and the freedom to challenge powerful special interests. These are values that go to the core of who we are as the American people. But, again, Governor Branstad has not led by example. He has waged war on women's access to healthcare.

Just this week, Planned Parenthood announced that they will be forced to

shut down four Iowa health clinics because of the law signed by Governor Branstad that blocked its funding. These clinics served 15,000 patients over the past 3 years—not providing abortions. The great majority of these 15,000 patients got primary care, preventive care, contraceptive coverage—all the things that women in every community in this country demand.

Many live in rural areas. Many have nowhere else to turn for care. Now, where do all of these women go for cancer screenings, diabetes screenings, and other preventive care? Yet Governor Branstad has signed legislation taking it away, forcing the shutdown of these clinics.

Access to healthcare is a basic right in this country, and it should be in all 50 States. We need to take care of American patients and American workers and set an example for the world. Our diplomats must be that example. But, instead, we now have a man at the negotiating table who again and again and again has proven that he wants to turn back the clock on healthcare and on workers' rights.

We need an ambassador with a record of championing American values. Only then can we be confident that he will stand up to China and put Ohio workers and American workers first. Frankly, I question Governor Branstad's ability to be that ambassador—to represent the people of this great country in the People's Republic of China.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:16 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, May 23, 2017, at 10 a.m.

#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

##### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

KEVIN K. MCALEENAN, OF HAWAII, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE R. GIL KERLIKOWSKIE.

##### IN THE NAVY

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

##### *To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) DANIEL J. MACDONNELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) DANIEL B. HENDRICKSON  
REAR ADM. (LH) THOMAS W. MAROTTA  
REAR ADM. (LH) MATTHEW A. ZIRKLE

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

##### *To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. JACQUELYN MCCLELLAND

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

##### *To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. JAMES M. BUTLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. EUGENE A. BURCHER  
CAPT. RODNEY P. DEWALT  
CAPT. JOEY B. DODGEN  
CAPT. ANDREW J. MUELLER  
CAPT. RICHARD A. RODRIGUEZ

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

##### *To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) KEITH M. JONES

##### IN THE AIR FORCE

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

##### *To be major*

JERED N. FRY

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

##### *To be major*

CHRISTOPHER R. BONEY  
DANIEL D. REYES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

##### *To be major*

JEFFREY A. GARRETT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

##### *To be lieutenant colonel*

ROGER A. LEE

##### *To be major*

JEFFREY R. ROSENBERY

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

##### *To be colonel*

THEADORE L. WILSON

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

##### *To be major*

JASON S. CROSS

##### IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

PAUL D. MELVEY  
ALEXANDER WOLDEMARIAM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

WILLIAM J. BAILEY, JR.  
MARK D. BAKER  
DELNISEA M. BROADNAX  
MATTHEW HAWKINS  
COLIN A. KISOR  
RAGHAV KOTVAL  
ELLEN L. MCCURDY  
CARL S. MCGUIRE  
BRIAN L. MIZER  
MATTHEW J. RINKA  
JENNIFER STRAZZA  
CARMEL T. TOMLINSON  
CHRISTOPHER D. TUCKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

GINA A. BUONO  
DIONNE R. GAY  
DEAN T. GIACOBBE  
LIONEL N. JACOB  
ROBERT C. JACOBY  
BILLY R. LEDBETTER, JR.  
JEFFREY A. LOWELL  
STEVEN T. OLIVE  
TOBIAS A. PAIVA  
WILLIAM D. PEFFLEY  
MARK D. PRICE

WENDY E. SCHOEFER  
MICHAEL J. SEBESTA  
ROY E. SEITZ  
LYNNE M. STERNI  
MARK A. STOWERS  
ROSEMARIE C. TAN  
MICHAEL J. THORNTON  
JOSHUA M. TOBIN  
FRANK J. VILLAMARIA  
SANDRA F. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

DAVID J. ALLEN  
DARRYL L. JONES  
ROBERT T. REEVES  
ERIC F. SCHOENEBECK  
RYAN C. STARKEY  
TRACIE M. ZIELINSKI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

DAVID M. BUZZETTI  
BRIAN D. FOOR  
ERIC G. MONOSTORI  
GABY M. SALIB  
ERIC R. VETTER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

DAVID E. BAILEY  
RUFUS E. CAYETANO  
DENNIS E. COLLINS  
LEO C. CREGER  
MICHAEL S. FLATLEY  
MATTHEW B. HALL  
DONNA M. JENKINS  
ORLANDO R. LORIE  
DARIN E. PERRINE  
MICHAEL D. REINERS  
CHRISTOPHER J. STEWART

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

JOHN R. ADAMS  
CYRIL R. CARANDANG  
STEPHEN C. DAKIN  
KEITH A. GARTNER  
JOHN J. JAROS  
PATRICK B. UPshaw  
DOUGLAS B. WHIMPEY  
MARY C. WISE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

SEAN A. COX  
THOMAS K. FRIZZELL, JR.  
CHRISTOPHER S. FRONK  
RENE P. LAWSON  
PETER K. MUSCHINSKE  
DAVID L. OTTEN  
LUIS A. PEREZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be captain*

ELIZABETH W. BUNDT  
DENISE H. GIVENS  
MONTY D. JENNINGS  
MARCI R. LUCAS  
KELLY A. MATUCZINSKI  
ABBY L. O'DONNELL  
DAGOBERTO PEREZ  
MATTHEW C. RIDDER  
CYNTHIA D. SECREST  
JON SKELTON  
NICOLE M. STRATHEARN  
DANIEL TRIGGS  
MICHAEL G. WATSON

#### CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate May 22, 2017:

##### DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TERRY BRANSTAD, OF IOWA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.