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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.
Wondrous God, angels bow before You, heaven and Earth adore You.
As the days pass swiftly, we pause to thank You for surrounding us with the shield of Your favor. Your anger is only for a moment, but Your favor is for a lifetime.

Today, lead our lawmakers to greater maturity and wholeness in You. May they grow in grace and in a deeper knowledge of You, becoming better prepared to be Your ambassadors, reconciling the world to You. May they continue to be controlled by Your Spirit, always walking on the road that leads to life. Give them, O God, a common commitment to the crucial cause of keeping America strong.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MAKING EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 488, S. 2648, the emergency appropriations supplemental act.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 488, S. 2648, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, there will be 1 hour for debate equally divided prior to a cloture vote on S. 2569, the Bring Jobs Home Act. If cloture is not invoked, there will be an immediate cloture vote on the motion to proceed on S. 2648, the emergency supplemental appropriations act.

Following those votes, there will be voice votes on confirmation of the Auketteh, Moritsugu, and Kennedy nominations.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that the time from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. be under the control of the Republicans and the time from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. be controlled by the majority.

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

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2685

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 2685 is due for a second reading.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2685) to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I would object to any further proceedings with respect to the bill.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

BRING JOBS HOME ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wisely noted: "It takes less time to do a thing right than it does to explain why you did it wrong."

In about 1 hour, Senators will be on the floor and have an opportunity to follow what Longfellow said; that is, to do the right thing. We have a bill that protects American jobs. The Bring Jobs Home Act tackles the growing problem of American jobs being shipped overseas. It is called outsourcing, shipping jobs overseas.

We Democrats are lined up against outsourcing. The Bring Jobs Home Act would protect about 21 million jobs in our country.

Today in the United States, anytime an American company closes a factory or a plant in America and moves operations to another country, American taxpayers pick up part of that moving bill. It is hard to believe, but it is true. A company moves from America, and American taxpayers help them with the move. If they want to move, American taxpayers shouldn't help them at all.

The Bring Jobs Home Act ends senseless tax breaks for these outsourcers. It ends the ridiculous practice of American funding outsourcing of their own jobs.

The Bring Jobs Home Act doesn't just fight to keep jobs here in America, it also brings jobs back.

This bill provides a 20-percent tax credit to help American companies with the costs of moving operations back to the United States. The Bring Jobs Home Act will protect 150,000 jobs in Nevada. It could potentially save as many as 325,000 at-risk jobs in Kentucky and jobs all over the country.

Economically speaking, what else could be more important than ensuring our working Americans' jobs are protected. Regardless of what Republican leaders said and what the Republican

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



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leader has opined, helping our constituents stay employed is our duty as a Senator.

Frankly, a vote against this bill is a vote against American jobs. There is absolutely no excuse, no justification, for any Member of this body to vote against this legislation. But as of late, Senate Republicans have repeatedly blocked legislation, such as the Bring Jobs Home Act, which is good for the American people.

Remember, the Longfellow quote that I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks: "It takes less time to do a thing right than it does to explain why you did it wrong."

The wisdom of Longfellow's quote is there, and each time another good bill is blocked by the Senate Republicans we must think of Longfellow and what he said: "It takes less time to do a thing right than it does to explain why you did it wrong."

Each time after Republicans have voted against legislation that is good for working families, an odd scene has developed on the Senate floor. A procession of Republicans makes it way to the floor and individually Senators begin to explain why they voted against a good bill, trying to explain why Americans don't deserve a fair shot. For example, after voting against an increase in the minimum wage, after voting against equal pay for women, after voting against cost-cutting energy efficiency, and after voting against student loan refinancing, after all of these votes, the same spectacle unfolds immediately after. The Republicans come through that door and try to make their case.

All the American public wants is a fair shot at a good life. Instead of voting for a good piece of legislation that would benefit folks back home, they spend time explaining why they did the opposite.

Maybe our vote today will be different. Maybe Senate Republicans will finally focus on the many families depending on the jobs we are trying to protect. If they do, they will vote to bring jobs home. This legislation is important and necessary. If they do, they will vote to keep American jobs from going overseas.

Those of us who do the right thing and vote for this will not need to explain because we have done the right thing; and that is because our constituents know we work to give them a fair shot at good, secure jobs.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The minority leader is recognized.

EPA REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. The Obama White House likes to pretend that its war on coal is about protecting the planet. Yet his newest regulations would hardly do a thing to impact global carbon emissions.

The President's own EPA Administrator basically admitted it when she said a few years back that U.S. action

alone won't meaningfully impact global CO₂ levels.

They don't seem to care that their regulations would devastate the lives of whole families in my State, working-class Kentuckians who just want to put food on the table and give their children a better life.

They don't seem to care that their regulations threaten to undermine Kentucky's traditionally low utility rates, splinter our manufacturing base, and shift well-paying jobs overseas. They don't seem to care that the people who stand to be hurt most by their regressive policies are those who can afford it the least.

As a candidate President Obama wasn't just open about his plan to make American energy bills skyrocket, he was pretty cavalier about it too. For him it was a necessary sacrifice to achieve an ideological aim.

But for a working mom in Ashland, KY, a skyrocketing utility bill can mean the difference between an annual trip to Lake Cumberland and a tearful apology to her kids. It can mean choosing which bills to pay this month and which to put off just a little longer. It can mean birthday disappointments and missed credit card payments.

These types of consequences may not be a big deal to the President, but for many people in the country and many in Kentucky, they are a very big deal. Families have had to put up with enough in nearly 6 years that this administration has been in power: higher medical costs, stubborn unemployment, and the feeling of less opportunity.

What I am saying is middle-class families deserve a break. They deserve to have Washington battling in their corner instead of against them. That is why I keep fighting this war on coal.

Later this morning I will take my message to one of the administration's so-called listening sessions on these extreme energy regulations. The Obama administration may have been too afraid to hold a hearing anywhere near coal country, but that doesn't mean they will be able to ignore the voice of my constituents. I will be joined by Kentuckians who have had to travel hundreds of miles just to get here.

One of them is Jimmy Rose, the former coal miner from Pineville who rose to national attention with his song: "Coal Keeps the Lights On." As Jimmy puts it: "Coal keeps the bills paid, clothes on the backs, and shoes on the feet." And that is true for so many in our State.

I will note the irony that the administration's so-called listening session in Atlanta had to switch locations due to a significant power outage.

As one person put it, the power outage is either cruel irony or a glimpse of coming cruel reality; that is, of course, if the Obama administration and the EPA are successful in their quest to end the use of affordable, reliable coal. It is hard to disagree.

The point is the President's extreme energy regulations are little more than

a political turnout strategy masquerading as a serious environmental policy. Not only could they end up making the environment worse rather than better but they threaten to hurt countless middle-class families in the process while shipping American jobs overseas.

So they need to be stopped. The administration needs to be stopped. Kentuckians aren't going to take this lying down. We are going to keep fighting back.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

BRING JOBS HOME ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2569, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2569) to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America.

Pending:

Reid amendment No. 3693, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3694 (to amendment No. 3693), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 3695, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3696 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 3695), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3697 (to amendment No. 3696), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. I am going to be joined shortly on the floor by Senator JOHN WALSH of Montana and Senator DEBBIE STABENOW of Michigan, who are going to speak to the bill that is pending before us.

Until they arrive I wish to set the context here. We are trying to create incentives in the Tax Code to bring good-paying manufacturing jobs back to the United States, to incentivize companies that will bring jobs from their overseas facilities back into our country and put Americans to work. How we pay for it is we reduce the current subsidies which we give to American companies to ship jobs overseas. Pretty simple.

So the vote really comes down to the question of whether Democrats and Republicans in the Senate want to create an incentive in the Tax Code to keep jobs—good-paying jobs—in America, to build the workforce in America so that they have a future, and to discourage shipping American jobs overseas. I don't know what the debate is about. I don't know what Republican can go to a town meeting in any State in the Union and argue that this is not a good

idea. It is a very important idea, and it is one that we want to use to repopulate the United States with good-paying jobs and hard-working families getting the kind of money they deserve.

We are in the midst of a debate now—a national debate that has touched the State of Illinois—about something called inversion. Most people are not familiar with that term. It is a situation where, at least on paper, an American company moves its headquarters and operations to a foreign country to avoid paying American taxes. We have major companies that are doing that. Some are considering making that move. The President spoke to it last week, and I think the President hit the nail on the head. It isn't a question of whether it is legal; it is a question of whether it is right.

Is it right for a pharmaceutical company that is dependent on the Federal Government to build their company, build their products, and build their profitability, to walk away from their tax responsibilities in America? You don't put a successful drug on the market unless it starts with research, and most research begins with our government. The National Institutes of Health, for about \$30 billion a year, does basic research that leads to new discoveries, new drugs. Those efforts of basic research are converted into pharmaceuticals and drugs that are then developed by these private companies.

When the private companies think they have finally found the right combination, they have to submit their drug to the Food and Drug Administration, which is a regulatory agency in Washington that tests their drug to make sure that it doesn't harm people and that it performs as promised. It takes some time. It takes a lot of taxpayer money. But when the Food and Drug Administration then hands down its decision that your drug is safe to go on the market, you have just received the most amazing endorsement possible in the world for a drug—that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved it for sale in the United States of America. That is a ticket to success and profitability, but that isn't the end. You have to protect your right in that drug, and to protect it you go to the U.S. Patent Office and make sure there is a registration that protects your legal right to make a profit on that drug and keep others from duplicating it at your expense.

Look at the process that led to the profitability of these blockbuster drugs—National Institutes of Health research, taxpayer funded; Food and Drug Administration approval, taxpayer funded; Patent Office protection, taxpayer funded.

Now major pharmaceuticals are saying: Well, it sure would be nice to stay in America, but what we are going to do is move our corporate headquarters to a European country or perhaps to the island of Jersey—which I am not sure I could find on the map—and in doing so, we won't have to pay as much in Federal taxes to America.

Is that ingratitude? It certainly is. You have used all these Federal agencies to become profitable, and now you walk away from your Federal tax responsibility.

There is another side to this coin. When these companies invert and move overseas, the tax they don't pay is a burden shifted to other American companies and other American taxpayers. They are getting off the hook for American taxes, but they are pushing the burden on to others.

We have to come to grips with the reality that many major companies are using global commerce and global opportunities at the expense of America. We have to encourage good-paying jobs in this country and companies that stay in this country. In our Tax Code we need to reward American-based companies headquartered in America, with their jobs in America, paying a good wage, good benefits, and veteran preferences. Give them a break in the Tax Code. Don't subsidize companies that want to move their jobs overseas.

The bill before us gets to that basic question: Should our Tax Code incentivize bringing jobs back from overseas or should it incentivize and encourage shipping jobs overseas? It is a simple vote, and I hope it is overwhelmingly positive and bipartisan when it comes before us.

We know our country can grow with the right encouragement because we are lucky. For those of us who were born here, we were born into one of the strongest democracies in history. We were born into an economic system that creates opportunity for those who are educated and trained and strive to improve themselves. We also know we have a responsibility here in the Senate, in the House, and in the White House to create a tax climate and an economic climate for that kind of growth. That is what we are trying to do with this bill—give a fair shot for American companies so they can bring jobs home and be incentivized and rewarded to do it and discourage the companies that do just the opposite.

I think this is a front-and-center issue. Good-paying jobs are the key to restoring the middle class in America—something I think is long overdue to create an incentive for people who are struggling to see at the end of that rainbow the chance to raise a family in a good neighborhood and a good church and parish and a good State that really helps America.

I will be supporting this measure before the Senate this morning.

I yield the floor and suggest that during the quorum call the time be equally divided between Democrats and Republicans.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

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

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

RETURNING AUSTIN TICE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wish to make some remarks about the ongoing humanitarian crisis that is occurring on our southern border in Texas. I have spoken on this subject a number of times. Before I do that, I would like to say a word about a decorated U.S. Marine Corps veteran, an award-winning journalist, and a courageous seventh-generation Texan by the name of Austin Tice.

In 2012 Austin went to Syria as a civilian. He went to report on the brutal civil war that has now claimed the lives of more than 170,000 Syrians, caused a huge refugee crisis in Turkey, Lebanon, and in other countries in that region and has destabilized that entire region. Austin was a strong believer in the freedom of the press and the importance of letting his fellow countrymen know what was happening in the Syrian civil war.

During his time in Syria his works were published in The Washington Post and the McClatchy News, among other news outlets.

On August 14, 2012, he was kidnapped and no one has heard from him since. His family is understandably concerned about his well-being and his whereabouts. It has been nearly 2 years and his family and friends still have no idea where he is, who is holding him or what they might want in exchange for his freedom.

I once again call on the Obama administration to do whatever they can, through the resources the Federal Government has, to locate and safely return Austin Tice to his family.

I say once again to Austin's family: We have not given up. We will never give up until we find your son and bring him safely home.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, 1 month ago President Obama gave an interview with ABC News in which he was asked about the massive influx of unaccompanied minors—mainly from Central America—who are crossing the southwestern American border, most notably into Texas where we have seen 57,000 unaccompanied children since October.

Unless any of my colleagues think this problem will just go away, let me remind everyone some of the projections are that if we don't do anything to deal with the causes or deal with the remedy to this growing humanitarian problem, it will get worse. Indeed, some estimates are that as many as 90,000 unaccompanied minors will come this year alone, and the number could well rise to 145,000 next year. That would tend to track the historical trend we have seen—both the combination of the impression that the Obama administration is less than serious about enforcing our immigration laws, as well as this loophole in the 2008 human trafficking law that is being exploited by the cartels which is helping

them make money. This is part of their business model because they charge by the head, by the child, by the person, and then they bring them through these smuggling corridors from Central America, through Mexico, into South Texas. It is a great business model for them.

The problem is it is a horrific experience for the immigrants who subject themselves to the tender mercies of the cartels that care nothing about them as human beings. They rape the women, kidnap the migrants, and then hold them for ransom. We know—because of the perils of that journey on the top of that train called *The Beast*—that many immigrants are severely injured, some losing limbs, and others are killed or die from exposure as a result of the process from Central America.

I say to my colleagues who think doing nothing is an option that people are losing their lives, people are being injured, and women are being assaulted. These migrants are being held for ransom and kidnapped. It is not compassionate to allow this to continue, but that is what illegal immigration looks like in 2014.

For those people who come into the country legally, they obviously don't have to turn themselves over to the cartels—these transnational criminal organizations that traffic in drugs and people. These drug cartels are despicable and they will prey on these migrants and those who want to come to the United States. As long as it happens outside of the legal system, they are going to continue to be victimized.

About 1 month ago the President said: "The problem is that under current law, once these kids come across the border, there's a system in which we're supposed to process them, take care of them, until we can send them back."

That is what the President of the United States said 1 month ago. Of course he was referring to a 2008 law that I referenced earlier and has been talked about a number of times. This was a law that was passed by essentially unanimous consent and acclimation. It was a human trafficking law, but unfortunately what we didn't know at the time is that the creative minds of the cartels would learn to exploit a loophole in the law, which treats migrants, particularly unaccompanied children, from contiguous countries differently than we treat migrant children coming from Mexico.

Specifically what happens is they are released after being processed by the Border Patrol, and they are given a notice to appear at a future court date. They are then released into the custody of a family member, many of whom are not legally present in the United States themselves. What we have seen from experience is that many of them don't show up for their court hearings. We don't have sufficient resources committed to make sure people do appear, so they melt into the great

American landscape and have essentially succeeded in coming to the United States—outside of our legal immigration system—and staying here. As long as this loophole continues to exist, they will keep coming.

The President was referring to this human trafficking statute that has become an effective magnet for illegal immigration, and it is not just children who are taking advantage of it. I talked to the Secretary of Homeland Security yesterday morning. We have seen a huge surge in parents with young children as well. They are exploiting the same loophole because we don't have adequate detention facilities to keep them safe pending any court hearing and pending repatriation back to their country of origin unless they have a valid claim for asylum or some other claim for immigration relief.

The loophole that is in the 2008 law is effectively part of the cartel business model. We have colleagues who believe the compassionate response is to do nothing to close that loophole, and I hope they will come to understand it is the opposite of compassion to allow this loophole to exist and allow the cartels to continue to use these children and other migrants as a commodity by smuggling them into the United States.

This situation has also overloaded the capacity of many of our local communities that have big hearts and want to treat these migrants, particularly the children, with compassion, but they have become overwhelmed. We have seen, as these children have been warehoused in other parts of the country, many communities are starting to feel the backlash. While people have big hearts and believe we ought to try to help people in need, particularly children, they realize that ultimately they are the ones who will have to pick up the tab for health care, education, and the like.

They are also concerned about whether they will actually be able to assimilate these immigrants, which has always been the American way, and the way we have done that is through legal immigration and an orderly immigration process which complies with the rule of law.

We are a nation of immigrants and we should be proud of that, but we should not be proud of this uncontrolled flow of people coming into the country, exploiting this gap in the 2008 law, making money for the cartels, and exposing these migrants to horrific treatment, some of whom don't even make it here. We should not consider that compassion; it is not. It is the opposite of compassion. We ought to try to do something to fix it, and we have it within our capacity to do so.

Earlier this week the White House Domestic Policy Council Director Cecilia Munoz said the administration was "absolutely interested" in reforming this law to create an efficient repatriation process for the unaccompanied

minors. Good for them. I hope that is the case, but unfortunately I get the sense that the people who understand this gap in this 2008 law—this flaw or this loophole—have not been able to win the argument with the political folks at the White House who don't want to be seen repatriating these children back to their home country because they are worried about the upcoming election.

Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson has repeatedly emphasized to me in private as well as publicly the need to change this law and to establish a more efficient system of removal to one's home country.

To be sure, there are going to be valid claims for asylum. If someone is a victim of human trafficking, they can get a T visa, they call it, so they can cooperate with law enforcement in the United States. If you are like the young boy whom I saw in McAllen, TX, 2 weeks ago—I asked him where his parents were. He said they were dead. That young boy could qualify for a special immigrant visa as a minor child having been abandoned or who is an orphan. So there are ways valid claims for relief can be processed, but right now these claims are not being made because people are just melting into the great American landscape, and they keep coming.

So Jeh Johnson understands this, Cecilia Munoz said she understands this, and the President has said he understands it, and it has also had bipartisan support. The senior Senator from Missouri Mrs. MCCASKILL has acknowledged this issue, the senior Senator from Delaware, who happens to be chairman of the Homeland Security Committee Senator CARPER, and the junior Senator from West Virginia Mr. MANCHIN have all publicly acknowledged it, as well as Democratic representatives in the border district in Arizona, and the No. 3 Member of the House Democratic leadership. All of them have acknowledged what the problem is and what we need to do to fix it.

Let's review: President Obama described the border situation as a crisis, and I agree with that; it is. He described the 2008 law, which I have talked about, as a problem, which it is. Some leading Republicans and leading Democrats and senior members of the administration believe that reforming this 2008 law is part of the solution and would help resolve the crisis, which it would. They called upon Congress to make the necessary changes, which we should.

At a time of intense political gridlock in Washington, we actually do have some bipartisan agreement on what we need to do to help address the problem. Yet none of these critical reforms can happen in the Senate unless the majority leader allows a vote on the bill I anticipate will come over from the House which will contain a solution to this problem. We have seen a bipartisan group of political leaders

contend it is necessary, if we are actually going to address it, but so far my impression is the majority leader is not going to allow us to have that vote.

Indeed, the majority leader, the majority whip, and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee have all said they reject the need for changing this 2008 law that I have described. The majority leader has gone so far as to say the border is secure. It may look secure from Nevada, where he is from, but it is not secure in Texas, where I live, and it just defies reality.

I wish the majority leader and the President would actually come visit the border. I wish they would visit these processing centers, meet these children, and congratulate the Border Patrol for doing a great job under very difficult circumstances, but so far they have declined. I hope they will reconsider.

Ms. COLLINS, the Senator from Maine, is getting a bipartisan codel to go down to McAllen on Friday, and I look forward to accompanying her on that trip. But if people can make that one trip—at least one trip—they would learn for themselves that the border is not secure.

This isn't a trick. Sometimes I get the feeling that some of my friends in the Senate think we are going to always claim the border is insecure, so we are never going to do the other parts of immigration reform that they want to do or that need to be done. As a matter of fact, in 2011 the President notably said: Well, people won't be satisfied until we create a moat and fill it full of alligators. He ridiculed those who said the border is not secure. Yet last year alone 414,000 people were detained on the southwestern border, 414,000 from 100 different countries—100 different countries—most of them admittedly from Mexico and Central America and South America.

But people should come visit in Falfurrias, TX. They have a Border Patrol stop there where many migrants are let out of the vehicle by their coyote, which is a human smuggler, and forced to walk around this checkpoint in 100-degree-plus weather. Colleagues will find that some of them die from exposure. People can imagine coming from Central America or South America and coming in that hot weather under those conditions. Some of them literally die. So the Border Patrol has established rescue beacons, they call them, where if the immigrant says "I have to get some help," they can actually hit the button on this rescue beacon, and the Border Patrol will come and find them and make sure they get some medical care. Those rescue beacons are in English, they are in Spanish, and they are in Chinese. I assure my colleagues there are not many native Chinese speakers in Brooks County, TX.

The point is, to anybody who will listen, the border is not secure. It is a national security challenge in addition to our other issues.

I ask people to talk to GEN John Kelly, who is head of Southern Command, who says right now 75 percent of the illegal drug traffic coming from Central and South America into the United States—they have to sit and watch because they don't have the adequate resources to stop it. It is the same cartels that are smuggling those drugs that are the criminal organizations that are smuggling the people. They are trafficking in human beings, and they will transport any commodity, any weapon, any person, anything into the United States as long as they can make money off of it. It is just the way they do business.

It is enormously frustrating to hear the majority leader declare the border is secure in spite of the facts and in spite of the bipartisan acknowledgment that we need to fix this 2008 loophole in order to help solve this problem. But there are people who have shown some courage, people such as Secretary Johnson and others, other Democrats who have said, despite the majority leader's pronouncement that we should actually do something, we should actually solve the problem, and we have it within our ability to do that.

I wish to particularly acknowledge the courage of my friend and colleague HENRY CUELLAR from Texas. He is a proud blue dog Democrat, as he reminds me almost every time I see him, and he has partnered with me in bipartisan bicameral legislation that would actually fix this flaw in the 2008 law. If we could just get a vote on it here in the Senate, maybe we would have a chance to fix the problem and do what the President acknowledged was the problem in the first place.

I am hopeful we can achieve a breakthrough, but we have about 2 more days that we will be in session before the August recess. My constituents back home don't understand why in the world we would leave without fixing this problem, without addressing this humanitarian crisis, because they see the numbers as we see the numbers. They are going to continue to grow and the crisis will get worse unless we act in a sensible way.

The only way we are going to get that breakthrough is if we get some leadership here in the Senate and the majority leader allows a vote on either what the House is going to send us on Thursday or allow an amendment, which I am proud to offer, which has broad support here in the Senate.

But leadership requires more than just giving a speech or an interview and then heading off to the next fundraiser. It requires thoughtful, persistent engagement and a willingness to spend political capital.

We know all of this is controversial. We get that. But it strikes me that when you are getting attacked from the right and the left, that means you are probably doing something that could at least have the potential for being a bipartisan consensus, which, as we know, is the only way anything gets

done here because none of us get everything we want. I would love it if I could get everything I want, but that is not democracy. That is not our system. That is not our constitutional form of government.

I hope the President would tell the majority leader that he believes this 2008 law is a problem, as he said a month ago on ABC News, and I hope he will offer support for his own Secretary of Homeland Security, who I know understands the nature of the problem, but unfortunately I fear he is being outvoted by the political advisers at the White House, not the people making public policy.

The folks in my State and particularly in the region of South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley are watching and waiting and hoping that Washington will act to resolve this ongoing crisis. But we can't act unless the majority leader allows us to act. That is the nature of this institution. He won't allow a vote unless President Obama steps up and leads in order to do what he has acknowledged is the right thing to do and what we must do in order to address this problem.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

MEDICARE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I wish to speak very briefly about Medicare.

Before 1965, as the Presiding Officer and many others in the Chamber know, nearly half of America's seniors had no health insurance at all. Medicare made certain that seniors had access to affordable health care, and it has lifted millions out of poverty in this country.

Seniors earn their Medicare benefits; they are not given to them. Seniors earn their Medicare benefits through a lifetime of hard work because, as we know, for all of our working lives a portion of every single paycheck is deposited and is guaranteed for benefits for when we turn 65. This is a bedrock commitment. We pay into it and it should be there for all of us when we reach the age of 65.

Today we celebrate the 49th anniversary of Medicare, but I encourage my colleagues to hold the balloons and cake because over the past few years what we have seen down the hall in the House of Representatives is a group of House Members who try to continually chip away at the promise of Medicare. They want to turn Medicare into a voucher system. They even tried to raise the eligibility age.

These proposals in effect shift the cost on to those who can least afford to pay it. They will increase out-of-pocket expenses for our seniors on benefits such as wellness visits, cancer screenings, and lifesaving drugs. These plans will allow insurance companies to cherry pick who they want to cover, setting off a premium spiral that would leave sicker seniors with higher premiums and higher costs, leaving many American seniors without the care they need and the protection they have earned.

These proposals we see coming out of the House of Representatives undermine the integrity of the program. I think it is important for us in the Senate to not allow them to put the health and financial security of our seniors in jeopardy. That is why I have introduced the Medicare Protection Act. It is a responsible commonsense solution. It prevents budget schemes that would reduce Medicare benefits and restrict eligibility, and it sends a strong message that Medicare should not be dismantled, privatized, or turned into a voucher system.

The promise of Medicare is one we must keep. The Senate should pass the Medicare Protection Act. I ask that we keep Medicare strong and affordable for today's seniors and for future generations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I applaud and commend my friend the Senator from Arkansas. This is very visionary legislation. I support what he is doing, and we are going to do everything we can to move forward on this legislation. We would do it more quickly except we have a few problems with people over here. So we are going to do our best.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JILL A. PRYOR TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 840.

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 bill clerk read the nomination of Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. There is a cloture motion at the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar, Maria Cantwell, Jack Reed, Bill Nelson, Elizabeth Warren, Tom Udall, Mazie Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Barbara Boxer, Tom Harkin, Benjamin L. Cardin, Charles E. Schumer.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

BRING JOBS HOME ACT—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, Senators COONS, SESSIONS, STABENOW, and WALSH be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each prior to the cloture vote on S. 2569, with Senator COONS being the first to be recognized.

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

The Senator from Delaware.

PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I have never been more optimistic about Africa and about the potential for a U.S. partnership with Africa than I am today.

Every year I host a conference in my home State of Delaware called "Opportunity: Africa" that brings together Delawareans and Africans, leaders from across our country and from the continent interested in building and strengthening new ties. Every year it has grown in participation, in the scope of issues we have looked at, and in the number of Delaware businesses interested in the opportunities in this continent of 54 countries. At this past March's conference, President Clinton delivered the keynote.

The hunger to build new relationships between business, government, the faith community, and those in the African diaspora is undeniable. What is required of us is to think anew and dedicate ourselves to building partnerships of mutuality and that last. In this Chamber that will mean passing a reauthorized African Growth and Opportunity Act that does more to encourage and facilitate real two-way trade than the current law and to take up and pass the bipartisan Power Africa law that will strengthen investment in infrastructure and in electricity across the continent.

Next week it means coming together with Africa's government and business leaders to forge new relationships built on mutual respect and the opportunities we share.

I urge my colleagues and my friends throughout the business community to seize this opportunity and focus on the bright future it could create. An Africa that trades with us, that can defend itself, that can secure itself, and that empowers its citizens is the Africa we see, and that is an Africa which we in the United States are uniquely suited

to help its people build. We have already built a powerful foundation for partnership through our investments in public health and education, clean water, democracy, and good governance.

After 50 years in the Peace Corp and more than a decade of PEPFAR—President Bush's groundbreaking commitment to combating HIV and AIDS—we are better regarded in Africa than in anywhere else in the world. From our universities, to our businesses, to our military training and partnerships, to the vibrant Africa diaspora community spread throughout this land, we have tools no other Nation has. The opportunity for progress is extraordinary. By helping to build a broad and sustainable middle class across this continent, American workers and businesses will have more people to sell their products to and more markets in which to invest. The more we partner with African businesses, the stronger they will become.

Genuine partnerships such as this must be the foundation for our relationships with Africa going forward, and we have a lot to gain as well.

As many have commented, in the last decade 6 out of 10 of the fastest growing economies in the world have been in Africa, and that number will only rise. Other countries have noticed the opportunity. China's exports to Africa, for instance, have outgrown ours 3 to 1 since 2000, and 5 years ago China eclipsed us as Africa's largest trading partner. So it is no surprise that since 2000, China has hosted five summits with African heads of state. Let's be clear, the Chinese, in seeking opportunities for this century, will not miss the "next China." So we have a lot of ground to make up.

It is also critical we recognize that we should not just mimic the ways in which the Chinese are seeking opportunity in Africa. They bring a policy of nonintervention in domestic affairs. We bring American values—a focus on democracy, on governance, on human rights, as well as the attractiveness of our technology, our resources, and the relationship with our diaspora community.

This week we have had remarkable opportunities for our President, our Secretary of State, and several of us from this Chamber to meet with young African leaders as part of a program that brought 500 inspiring young African leaders to Washington.

Next week we will welcome more than 40 heads of state from across the continent—a summit that I hope signals the next big step in building strong and sustainable partnerships throughout the continent.

President Obama, leaders from this Chamber, leaders from the Cabinet, and from across America's corporate community will join for 3 days to allow us to refocus our efforts on the continent, to seize this moment, and to move forward. It is my hope that this Chamber, this Congress, will take advantage of

the opportunity to enact the African Growth and Opportunity Act on a longer reauthorization and to open it to truly balanced trade, and pass the bipartisan Power Africa Act to significantly improve our investment in infrastructure.

The opportunities are limitless. It is my hope that we will but seize them.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today's Wall Street Journal has an article that should send shivers through every Member of this body. The article reports on what the President is planning to do with regard to executive amnesty, using Executive orders to do that which Congress has refused to do.

The article says this:

For months, President Barack Obama said there were limits to his power to protect people living illegally in the U.S. from deportation. Now, he is considering broad action to scale back deportations that could include work permits for millions of people, according to lawmakers and immigration advocates who have consulted with the White House.

The President has been meeting regularly with immigration activists and he has been promising them things that he has no power to promise. He has promised them things that constitutionally he is not able to do, and this Congress needs to say no to that. We can do that by simply barring the expenditure of money in the future to execute such a scheme.

Congressman BLACKBURN in the House has offered legislation, and Senator CRUZ in the Senate has offered legislation, which would do just that. But it is not in the bill we are being asked to provide cloture on that will come up in a few minutes.

The article goes on to say—just to stress the stark nature of what is being considered—

The shift in White House thinking came after House Republicans said they wouldn't take up immigration legislation. . . .

So the President is saying: I have legislation and the House will not pass it, therefore, I am going to do it myself. It is one of the most pathetic excuses for abuse of power by a court or a President that you can imagine. Congress considered his legislation. He promoted it strongly. Members of both parties have advocated for it. But the House considered it and rejected it. That is an action. That is a decision by the House of Representatives. The President has no power to go beyond that, and I think this Congress—this Senate—has a responsibility to speak to that question and to avoid an issue. The Wall Street Journal goes on to say:

An announcement is expected soon after Labor Day, an administration official said.

They are going to announce this within weeks. The article goes on to say that it could involve 5 million people or more, and the President said

himself he would “fix as much of our immigration system as I can on my own, without Congress”—without Congress. I will just use my pen. I will just order my officers, who work for me, you know. The Border Patrol, the ICE officers, they work for me. I will just tell them to do A, B, and C. We will just not pay any attention to the fact that plain law, section 274 of the INA, says that a person in the country unlawfully is not entitled to work.

Mr. President, how much time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. He will just do that on his own.

So we are now being asked to move forward on legislation that provides no opportunity to even get a vote on this issue. Certainly its text does not fix this problem.

Let me be plain, colleagues. There are times when we have to rise above politics. Maybe somebody believes in amnesty, and they would like to see this happen, but we cannot acquiesce in having the President unilaterally do so in an unlawful fashion.

The truth is that the people who are refusing to bring language up of this kind and fix it—what they want is to see the President do this. They are for it, they are supporting it, and they have rejected any action, so far at least, to defend the rule of law, defend the Senate, defend the entire Congress's legitimate powers. It is just breathtaking to me.

So let me again say, colleagues, we need to take action. This Congress needs to speak. We cannot allow Executive orders to be issued by a President who eradicates plain law. To do so is wrong. The American people are watching this. They are not going to be happy that the Congress did not take action. Expressions of concern among Senators are not enough. We need to bring this up.

But Senator REID, I predict, is not going to allow that to happen, and he is going to be supported by every Member of his Democratic Conference. And every Member of the Democratic Conference, every Member who supports him in this plan, will be, in fact, involved and supportive of the President's plan.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first I would ask the Presiding Officer if he could notify me after I have spoken for 4 of my 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Ms. STABENOW. I thank the Presiding Officer.

In a few moments we are going to be voting on a very fundamental principle and a very important bill that is literally about bringing jobs home to America. The question before us is, Are we going to begin to change the incentives in the Tax Code where instead of

incentivizing jobs being shipped overseas, we are going to support our companies that are bringing jobs home?

This is a no-brainer. I think anybody listening to this debate, anyone across America who is focused in, would say: Why were you not even just having a voice vote and everybody voting yes and then go on to the next tax policy, like inversion, that we need to be dealing with that will keep jobs in America?

Unfortunately, we have had to go through a lot of procedures, motions to proceed. We are now having to go through a supermajority vote here to get to the final bill. I hope colleagues will join us in a bipartisan way to vote to get to the final vote on this bill so we can make it very clear we are on the side of American workers and American businesses.

Here is what we have seen in the last few years, as shown on this chart. In the last decade we have lost 2.4 million jobs being shipped overseas. Now that, by the way, does not count the ones that are leaving on paper right now, which is a whole other story. That is something we need to be deeply concerned about and speaking out about and calling people out on it. But these are the jobs where they are packing up shop and moving overseas.

To add insult to injury, not only does a worker lose their job, the community loses the factory or the business, but we as American taxpayers foot the bill for the move.

Now, that is shocking. When you explain to people that is in the Tax Code—yes, when you pack up shop, you do all the moving, you ship your jobs overseas, you can write that off on your taxes and we all pay for it—they probably look at us like we are crazy. And they are right. We have been trying to close this now for the last few years. This is the opportunity in just a few moments to have that vote to get it done.

What are we going to be voting on specifically? It is very simple: end the taxpayer subsidies that pay for moving costs of corporations to ship jobs overseas. On the other hand, if you want to bring your jobs home, we will gladly allow you to write off the costs of bringing jobs home. On top of that, we will give an additional 20-percent tax credit for the costs of moving production back to the United States.

The good news is we actually have companies, for a variety of reasons, that are moving jobs home. We want to applaud them. There are a lot of reasons for that in a global economy: shipping costs, low natural gas costs that we want to keep low so we have affordable energy and we continue to bring manufacturing back. We have the most productive, skilled workforce in the world. There are a lot of reasons why companies now are bringing jobs home.

But a lot of companies are right on the edge. They look at the Tax Code, and they are making decisions about whether they are going to move overseas or stay, whether they are going to

bring jobs home. The bill we are voting on—and I want to thank Senator WALSH for his leadership. He has been a passionate advocate in talking about it from a Montana perspective. And the two great M States are involved here—Montana and Michigan. We both understand deeply about the fact that you are not going to have a middle class unless you make things in America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has now consumed approximately 4 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, thank you very much.

We have to make things and grow things, and this is about making sure it is in America when we make things and grow things so we have a middle class. But the reality is we have to start in the Tax Code by making it clear we are not going to incentivize moving your jobs overseas. We are not going to incentivize somebody packing up—and, by the way, oftentimes those workers end up having to train their replacement. We have many stories in Michigan where the replacement workers in another country are flown into our country and trained by our people, to take their jobs; and then, to add insult to injury, they pay for the move through the Tax Code. So it is very simple.

I am going to turn to Senator WALSH to close off this debate. But we have a very simple message. If you want to bring your jobs home, we are all in. You can write off the cost of that move and we will give you an extra 20-percent tax cut. But if you want to ship your jobs overseas, you are on your own.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Montana.

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, I rise today to thank my Senate colleagues for joining with American workers and voting overwhelmingly to consider the Bring Jobs Home Act. I want to particularly thank my colleague from Michigan, Senator STABENOW, for her tremendous leadership and work on behalf of America's working families.

The vote last week was a procedural vote, but it was an important signal that job creation here at home can be a bipartisan issue. I am a strong believer in reaching across the aisle to promote good ideas. We are not here to represent our parties, we are here to represent our constituents. I made a promise to Montanans that I will support good ideas from anyone and any party as long as they grow our economy and create jobs.

Unfortunately, since I joined the Senate 5 months ago, what I have mostly seen in Washington is the opposite. What I have seen in Washington are people playing games. Washington is not broken because there are not good ideas out there; Washington is broken because not enough people reach across the aisle to find common ground. I have insisted from the start that the Bring Jobs Home Act is a bill

that both Republicans and Democrats can get behind. We must not let partisan politics and gamesmanship jam up the process.

The American economy is recovering from the long and deep recession. Many Americans are still out of work and are desperately seeking the stability and security that comes with a job and a reliable paycheck. I am committed to leveling the playing field for American workers.

It is time for us to come together and show American workers we are fighting for them, for their jobs, for their families, and for a better economy.

I have heard from some of my colleagues who have commented on the floor that we should only consider the Bring Jobs Home Act in the context of comprehensive tax reform. That is not good enough. The answer to disagreements is not to do nothing, the answer is to start with manageable, common-sense reforms that everyone can get behind.

Montanans understand this. They know it is wrong that American workers subsidize corporations' decisions to pack up businesses in the United States and send our jobs packing. Imagine an American worker whose final task before being laid off is to help shut down operations so his job or her job can be sent overseas. That is baloney. If Congress cannot come together to end that subsidy, then we deserve the low approval ratings we are receiving.

Millions of American jobs have been sent overseas in recent decades. Too many large corporations have opened factories in countries such as China or Mexico while closing factories right here in the United States. We need to do what we can to stem the tide and reward companies that bring jobs back to America.

The Bring Jobs Home Act will help do that. My bill closes the loophole that some multinational corporations use to claim a tax deduction for the cost of moving jobs overseas. It also creates a new 20-percent tax credit for companies that bring jobs back to the United States. These two parts complement each other. The first ends the incentive for shipping jobs overseas. The second encourages the return of jobs we have already lost.

Our Tax Code should not reward outsourcing. What we need is more insourcing. Many companies are considering bringing jobs back home today. This is especially true in the manufacturing sector. The Bring Jobs Home Act could make a difference for some of those companies to reinvest in America and American workers. So today I urge my colleagues to stand with America's workers and pass this bill. Now is the time for leadership to embrace good ideas that help create jobs in Montana and all across America.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the

Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 2569, a bill to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America.

Harry Reid, John E. Walsh, Debbie Stabenow, Benjamin L. Cardin, Barbara Boxer, Patrick J. Leahy, Kay R. Hagan, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Christopher A. Coons, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Bill Nelson, John D. Rockefeller IV, Barbara A. Mikulski, Jeff Merkley, Mazie Hirono, Tom Harkin.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 2569, a bill to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 42 as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 249 Leg.]

YEAS—54

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

NAYS—42

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

NOT VOTING—4

Cochran	Roberts
McCain	Schatz

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 54, the nays are 42.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 488, S. 2648, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Barbara A. Mikulski, Benjamin L. Cardin, Barbara Boxer, Patrick J. Leahy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Christopher A. Coons, Jeff Merkley, Debbie Stabenow, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Bill Nelson, John D. Rockefeller IV, Mazie Hirono, Tom Harkin, Bernard Sanders, Richard Blumenthal.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 2648, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rules.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 63, nays 33, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 250 Leg.]

YEAS—63

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

NAYS—33

Alexander	Flake	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Hagan	Portman
Boozman	Hoeben	Risch
Burr	Inhofe	Scott
Coats	Johanns	Sessions
Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Crapo	Kirk	Thune
Cruz	Landrieu	Toomey
Enzi	Lee	Vitter
Fischer	McConnell	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Cochran	Roberts
McCain	Schatz

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 63 and the nays are 33. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CYNTHIA H. AKUETTEH, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE GABONESE REPUBLIC, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

NOMINATION OF ERIKA LIZABETH MORITSUGU TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

NOMINATION OF RICHARD A. KENNEDY TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

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

The assistant bill clerk read the nominations of Cynthia H. Akuetteh, of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Gabonese Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United State of America to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe; Erika Lizabeth Moritsugu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and Richard A. Kennedy, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring May 30, 2016.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that all available debate time with respect to the nominations in this series be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AKUETTEH NOMINATION

Hearing no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Cynthia H. Akuetteh, of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Gabonese Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON MORITSUGU NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Erika Lizabeth Moritsugu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON KENNEDY NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Richard A. Kennedy, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring May 30, 2016?

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Maryland.

MAKING EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to speak on the pending business before the Senate.

The Senate just achieved cloture on the motion to proceed to the emergency supplemental funding bill. Let me explain to the people who are watching this either in the gallery or on C-SPAN.

The Senate has creaky rules, and these creaky rules are to make sure we can cool the passions that may be raging in the Nation at any given time so we can duly give consideration, that

debate can be diligent and we won't be gripped by the fire of the moment or the passion of the motion. I appreciate that. However, now these rules require us to take a lot of time to get to the meat of the matter.

We are now debating a motion to proceed to legislation related to supplementing existing funding to meet new emerging crises. The Senate votes on a motion to proceed not to the bill itself but on whether we should even go to the bill. So what we are debating now is whether we should proceed to the emergency supplemental funding bill. I want to say yes. Yes, vote on the motion to proceed. Let's get on with it. Let's have a real debate on real issues. Thirty hours has been set aside to debate whether we should proceed. I am here to say let's proceed, let's yield back our time, and let's get on the bill. We have a lot of things we need to get done in the next 48 hours. I want to see this emergency supplemental funding bill debated and voted on.

We have three elements in this bill that meet compelling needs—need for our neighbors in our country; need for our treasured ally, the State of Israel; as well as need for a crisis at the border where children literally are marching across Central America in search of refugee status. We need to deal with all three of these issues.

This emergency funding bill is about neighbor helping neighbor.

First of all, it is about our own country. Wildfires are raging in the West. Over the last year 39 States have faced wildfires. Right this very minute eight Western States are coping with unbelievable wildfires, some of the largest fires in their history. What happens? Vast amounts of territory are going up in smoke. We are losing towns, businesses, homes. Our firefighters are worn out, as well as our first responders, and they need help. This legislation will provide \$615 million to the States facing this horrific Armageddon-like emergency.

In addition, this legislation includes \$225 million to replenish the rockets that are being used by Israel, deploying technology called the Iron Dome. The Iron Dome is a missile defense system that is destroying the rockets being sent into Israel by Hamas. The technology is working, but they are using up the rockets and they need to be replenished.

Then there is the humanitarian crisis at our border. We have \$2.7 billion to meet the needs of children seeking refuge, in order to be able to deal with placing them while we determine their legal status but also being able to fight the crime of the narcotraffickers and the human traffickers who are creating this surge of children.

This is a total emergency funding level of \$3.57 billion. Why do we call it an emergency? Well, because under the law we can't just say this is an emergency. In order to get emergency funding, we have to meet the criteria of the

Budget Control Act of 2011. The need has to be urgent. It has to be temporary. It has to be unforeseen. It is either to prevent the loss of life or in the interests of our national security. All three of these areas of funding meet this need.

Under emergency funding, there are no offsets. That means we don't take from another important program being funded by the U.S. Government to meet that need. So in order to meet the needs of Iron Dome, we don't take from other national defense money. It will replenish that. When we help with wildfires, we don't take from other important areas, such as agriculture or interior or from other bills. This will help to not only meet the need but also not place an additional burden on other communities.

Now I wish to speak about the urgency. This firefighting help is really needed now. We listened to the Senators from Western States. We see the photographs literally showing parts of our country going up in smoke. The Forest Service—the agency that actually is in charge of dealing with this—will run out of money in August. As I said, last year these wildfires burned in 39 States.

Then we look at Iron Dome. Hamas—this violent terrorist organization that actually rejects Israel's right to even exist—from its tunnels is showering Israel with rockets. Iron Dome, Arrow Head, and David's Sling are missile defense systems designed to help them. The up-close missile defense system is Iron Dome. This bill will make sure we replace the interceptor rockets that are being used to protect them against this showering of rockets. The Israeli Embassy spoke to my staff yesterday. There have been over 2,000 Hamas rockets fired in the last week. Israel needs to replenish these rockets.

Then there is the issue of the surge of unaccompanied children presenting themselves at our border, asking for refugee status. In order to really be able to meet this crisis—and they are coming in by the thousands; 59,000 kids have come this year. We know the immigration and customs service, if we don't meet this emergency funding, will run out of money in August. Border Patrol will run out of money in early September. That doesn't mean the Border Patrol agents or the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents will stop working; it means the Department of Homeland Security—22 agencies—will take money out of existing funds to fund this. So it means they could take money out of Federal emergency management just as we are going into hurricane season, just as we are in high tornado season. We could be taking money out of FEMA to put it in Border Patrol unless we do this emergency funding. We have to do it.

Health and Human Services runs out of money in August. They are the ones in charge when the children present themselves while their legal status is being determined. The children must

be taken care of in a humane way, the American way. We don't treat children in an abusive manner. It means we will feed them, we will clothe them, we will shelter them, we will meet any emergency health needs they have, and we need to do that while we determine their legal status.

My bill—the supplemental I am presenting—helps accelerate the determination of their legal status. My legislation and this supplemental spending actually provide more immigration judges and legal representation for the children. That is so we can quickly determine if they have a right to asylum while we are also taking care of them. We need to be able to do that.

I hope others will get the briefings that I had and visit the border the way I did to find this out. The reason we have a crisis at the border is because we have a crisis in Central America. This legislation provides the money to do this. People say root causes such as poverty have been going on for years. This doesn't only deal with poverty. We want to work with the governments of Central America to really go after the narcotraffickers, the human traffickers, and the coyotes engaged in smuggling.

Why do we want to do that? If we ask these children where are the home towns they are from, they will give us the names of little cities and little towns, and when we look at their poverty rate, we find the poverty rate in these communities has been consistent for a number of years. That is a sad circumstance. But when we look at the crime rate, the murder rate, the recruitment into violent gangs, the recruitment into human trafficking, with the threat of death or torture—that is where these kids are coming from.

We have to go after the criminals in Central America and not treat these children as though they are criminals. We cannot treat children in this country as though they are the criminals. We need to go after the real criminals in Central America using our assets and working with the assets in Central America. They have programs and they have plans. Honduras is a great example of what they are trying to do. They need our help. If we don't want the crisis at our border, we need to deal with the crisis in Central America.

That also deals with our insatiable, unending, voracious appetite for drugs. The drugs have created the narcoterrorists. Once people start selling drugs, they are willing to sell women and children like commodities, and if they are willing to sell women and children like commodities, then that is where the vial, repugnant practice of human trafficking and human smuggling and even a new form of slavery—sexual slavery—begins.

These children are on the march. And when we talk to these children, we learn they are terrific children. They are brave and gutsy. When we talk to the boys, we learn they don't want to be part of the gangs. They want to get

out. They want to get out, so they start this long march from their home country to Mexico to make it on the Rio Grande on rafts and by swimming and so on so they can make it to our border. When we talk to the girls, we learn the girls want to go to school and get an education. They don't want to be recruited into these vial circumstances. These are earnest, hard-working children who want to have safety, who want to have a future, and we want to be able to see, by interviewing them, if they qualify for refugee status. If they don't, they will have to go back home, but if they do, they get to stay here. So they deserve the protection under law. We need to pass this legislation.

This bill is a funding bill. It does not include immigration legislation. We say those kinds of things can either be brought up in another way or another method, but this is a clean funding bill. When I say "clean," it means it has no legislative language on it related to immigration. So I hope we can pass this legislation.

Now, I have listened to my own constituents, and many of them are saying to me: Hey, BARB, we are not against these kids. In fact, recent polling says 69 percent of the American people say if they are refugees, we should take care of them and they have a right to determine their legal status. But many of my constituents say: Hey, BARB, what about us? What does this mean? You are going to spend more money? What about my schools? When do we get help? My kids need help. They need schools; they need health care. You talk to families now. They are getting ready to go back to school. Many parents cannot wait for sales-tax-free day in Maryland, where you can get your backpack and your school supplies and your little clothes and shoes. My God, the cost of kids' shoes now is a small fortune, and they will outgrow them by the time they get to Thanksgiving. Parents are looking for bargains, for deals, to be able to do this. They are not hostile, but they wonder about them.

I want to say to them, I hear you. I was touched by a very poignant story over the weekend about how we have a food bank at Steelworkers Hall in Baltimore. Bethlehem Steel closed. It will never, ever, ever come back. The steelworkers of America, who contributed to the United Way, were always the first in line if a blood bank was necessary. Now many of those who lost their job are using the very food bank that they once donated to.

That story was so moving because we have lost our manufacturing. We have just lost a bill earlier today on bringing jobs back home—something I know the Presiding Officer is for, I sure am for, and so on. So I know American families are hurting. Yes, they are. But I want to bring out that the cost of this bill is the same amount of money as we are going to spend on training the Afghan National Security Forces. Did

you know that? So we are going to spend \$4 billion—that is "billion" as in "Barb," not "million" as in "Mikulski"—\$4 billion to train the Afghan National Security Forces. I am not going to debate the merits of that. But we can spend money all over like that and we cannot spend money at our border and also for threats to our border because of narco terrorism that breeds other vile, repugnant, heinous behavior? I think we have to get real here.

The reason I want a supplemental—that is urgent and meets that criteria—is that we do not have to take the money from other important programs that do help America's families in education, in health, in job retraining in order to bring our jobs back home.

So I really do hope we pass this bill. Not spending money will not save money. It means we will just take out of existing programs and the American people will pay for it doubly. They will pay for it through inaction, which will ultimately cost more. They will pay for it because they will lose programs they thought they were going to have access to or there will be limited availability.

We have a chance here now to help our neighbors in our Western States. I know Wisconsin has been hit by it terribly, and we are so sorry for the loss of property and the danger to that community. It will help a treasured ally, Israel, which we must. Also, we will help our own country. The way to protect our border is two ways: fight it in Central America and also show what we stand for. If children are applying for refugee status, they should have their day in court and under the law proceed.

So, Madam President, we are now on this motion to proceed. Let's get on with it. Let's yield back our time. Let's get to the bill. Let's get the job done. I hope at the end of the day the vote will be "yes."

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I want to talk principally in the next few minutes about a bill that Senator BOXER and I have introduced this week on Israel and talk about what is going on in Israel, but on the work that is the bill before us right now, I am always hesitant to disagree with the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, my chairwoman, my good friend, Senator MIKULSKI. I just think we are headed in the wrong direction here.

Providing money, and not trying to solve this problem, not sending the right message, I think is a mistake. People are leaving these dangerous countries—if they are dangerous to be in, they are also dangerous to travel through, they are dangerous to leave.

One of the concerns I have had during this whole debate is how many kids leave their home country and never get to the American border? What happens to those kids? We have heard stories in

briefings that were not classified about kids who never get here because they get sold into some sort of terrible situation, even kids whose organs are harvested and sold that way. This cannot be something we need to continue to encourage.

In fact, if you do qualify for asylum in the United States, there is a way to do that. That is why we have embassies. That is why we have consulates. Surely, it is safer for someone in Guatemala City to go to the American Embassy in Guatemala City than it is to leave Guatemala City and try to come through their country, through other countries, through Mexico to get here, under the control of people who have tried to make the most of the President's announcement that if you get here, you can stay here.

This is not the Red Cross bringing kids here. This is not some altruistic group bringing kids here. These are people who are taking advantage of misinformation in their country about what happens if you get here. And some of these kids do not get here. Doing this in this way—money without policy; acting like somehow it does not cost anything if it is an emergency, and so we can continue to do everything the chairwoman mentioned that needs to be done in the United States, but we can also do this because it is a supplemental, it is an emergency, and it is more money we borrow from somebody else—life is full of choices, and for our government we have choices.

There are things that need to be done right now to send a message: Do not leave your home country. The door is not wide open, no matter what the President's announcement in 2011 led people to believe.

The law needs to be changed so that immigrants from all countries coming to our borders are treated just like immigrants from Mexico and Canada coming to our borders. They have an immediate hearing within 7 days or so. Almost all of them are told: You have to go back. Once that happens, almost all of them stop coming.

It would be a mistake to do this in this way, and I believe this bill never winds up on the President's desk. The House of Representatives does not share this view, even if a majority of the Senate does.

We need to send a message to Guatemala, to El Salvador, to every other country that the door is not open. Just getting here is not enough. This is not a safe "Disneyland-type" ride to the United States of America. This is a very, very dangerous thing for you to try to do, and you should not try to do it. When you get here, it is not going to be successful.

Again, let me say, if you have a case that you should have asylum in this country, there is a way you do that which is much safer than showing up at the border. We should not encourage the danger that these kids go through. I think the case is very dramatic on the side that cares for the lives of these

kids. We should send the message strongly and now: Do not come the way you are coming now. The kids who get to the border—we are concerned about what happens to them as a country because of who we are. We should be equally concerned about the kids who never get to the border because of this false message we have sent.

U.S.-ISRAEL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT

But, Madam President, let me spend a few minutes talking about a bill that Senator BOXER and I introduced this week, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014. This is an updated version of legislation we first introduced in March 2013.

This bill that was introduced this week is already backed by more than three-quarters of the Senate. I am hoping we figure out how to get this done and get this done this week. There has never been a more important time to send a message to the world and to Israel about this relationship, about what it means to us, about how committed we are to it.

This legislation reaffirms our unwavering commitment to Israel's security and the strong relationship that goes back to the founding of Israel. It supports deepened U.S.-Israel cooperation on defense, including continued U.S. assistance for the Iron Dome. By the way, the Iron Dome assistance in the Defense appropriations bill that the Appropriations Committee approved, that is the way to fund the Iron Dome. Do the work for the fiscal year that begins October 1. We are 2 months and a couple days from the time this fiscal year is over. We should be having bills on the floor that talk about the Iron Dome, but it should be the Defense bill. It should not be some bill that we are talking about because we are unwilling to go through the regular process.

But we do in this bill talk about the Iron Dome. We reiterate our support to negotiating a settlement, a political settlement that the Government of Israel is for where you would have two states, but both of those states have to recognize each other. You cannot have two states where Hamas and others that are significant parts apparently now of the coalition on the other side deny that Israel has a right to exist. But we do support the Israeli concept that we want to have two states peacefully coexisting. That is reiterated here. But it is also clearly understood that you cannot have one of those states say the other one does not have a right to exist.

We have a longstanding relationship here. Really it dates back to the very moment that Israel was founded. My fellow Missourian, President Truman, in great leadership, decided we would immediately recognize Israel, and that moment, that decision, that commitment from the United States continues today through security, through energy, through trade. We would like to make that clear and make that clear this week.

What does the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act do?

First of all, it authorizes an increase of \$200 million in the value of U.S. weapons held in Israel, to a total of \$1.8 billion. What does that mean? Does that mean we are spending \$200 million more? No. It means we are putting more of our equipment in Israel, with the clear understanding that it is there for us to use in the time of a crisis. It is also there for Israel to have access to when they need it. And when they use it, they pay us back and replenish that stockpile that we have strategically placed in Israel for our future use and for an immediate challenge to Israel where they may need to look at that stockpile of our weapons there.

It requires the administration to take steps to include Israel in the top-tier category for license-free exports. The top-tier category of looking at the technologies we share with any other country we would suggest you should also be able to share with Israel. If they are uniquely held in our country, technologies that we do not want to share with anybody, they are not considered in that category.

It authorizes the President to carry out cooperation between the United States and Israel on a range of policy issues. They include defense; water, things like the water salinization efforts that Israel is, frankly, ahead of us in and we need to understand, as we look forward to water needs; homeland security, alternative fuel technologies, more cooperation in cyber security. All those things are authorized in this bill.

There is new language that encourages the administration to work with Israel to help the country gain entry status in the Visa Waiver Program, which would make it easier for Israeli citizens to travel to the United States without first having to get a waiver, but it would also make it easier for people in our country to go there.

It requires the administration to provide more frequent and more detailed assessments of the status of a qualitative military advantage that we have committed that Israel would always have. This bill that Senator BOXER and I have introduced just says we are going to check that even more often and in more detail to be absolutely sure in that troubled part of the world that Israel's adversaries look at Israel and can clearly understand that Israel has an advantage that makes up for the difference in its size.

It strengthens the collaboration between the United States and Israel on energy development. It encourages increased cooperation in academic, business, and governmental sectors.

This legislation amends previous legislation related to how people can travel between our two countries. We do have a unique situation. In the recent fighting in Israel, two American citizens, members of the Israeli Defense Forces with dual citizenship in this country and in Israel, were killed in that fighting. This is one of the unique relationships we have in the world where people actually leave our com-

munities, go to another country they also care about, fight in the uniform of that country, because this country is our ally. We need to look for ways to continue to emphasize that.

It authorizes but does not require the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to waive the nonimmigration refusal rate requirement for Israel, but only if Israel meets all of the other program requirements, and then it is still authorized but not required.

This is a particularly important time to send this message. This is an important time to send this message of continued support between our two countries. Israel—we see, looking at the Gaza situation today, during recent months uncertainty in Egypt, support from terrorist groups all over the world, weaponry, missiles taken into Gaza, money that could have been spent on concrete that could have been used to build houses, schools, hospitals, and places for jobs, was used to build tunnels so that people could come into Israel and attack Israel.

Certainly the Government of Israel and the citizens of Israel look at this moment and think: No time to quit now with this job partially done. Some of the messages that have been sent from our country have not been helpful and encouraging in regard to what has to happen in the middle of this conflict.

But this kind of legislation sends a message, the message we should send. I hope we can get to it this week. I am pleased that three-quarters of our colleagues—I think that number is right at 80—have cosponsored this legislation. The legislation was just introduced this week. So if there is any question to our friends in Israel, and maybe more importantly others around the world, where the Senate, and hopefully by the end of the week the Congress, stands, this action sends that message. I cannot think of a more critical time to send that message. I hope we see this bill on the floor and send that message this week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I rise today to speak in favor of a critical issue for Coloradans; that is, fighting, mitigating, and recovering from wildfire. Recent history has shown my State that there is no greater threat to our communities, water supplies, and our special way of life than wildfire. Successive megafires over the past few years have broken records faster than they can be written down.

Even today's flash floods in recently burned areas are a reminder that after the embers of wildfires have cooled, their destruction lingers for months and years. I used to joke that Coloradans were strong and prepared for anything, come hell or high water. But I had no idea that the past several years would bring both, with modern

megafires and floods devastating thousands of households and businesses. We have endured these tests, and we have communities all over the State, such as Black Forest, that are rebuilding. But these recent disasters and the fires burning today in Colorado, California, Washington, and across the West show that the status quo is unacceptable. The cost of inaction for homeowners and first responders alike is too high to not act. That is why I have come to the floor today to speak in favor of a few smart, bipartisan, and fiscally responsible bills that are in front of our Congress right now.

These bills, taken together, address wildfires in a comprehensive way by attacking the problem before, during, and after a fire. So if I might, I want to share some of the elements in these important pieces of legislation.

First, I want to focus on what we can do before a wildfire at the individual and community level to reduce risk. There are many studies, numerous studies, that single out the most important factor in protecting homes. That is, if you do mitigation work. You involve yourself with ignition-resistant construction techniques. You reduce hazardous fuels around your home.

That is one of the reasons I introduced the commonsense legislation that is entitled the Wildfire Prevention Act of 2013. It will help homeowners in communities better reduce the risk of wildfire damages upfront. I am very pleased that the bill is moving forward in a bipartisan fashion. I am working with Senator INHOFE as my Republican partner. In the House, two Members of our delegation from Colorado, Congressmen POLIS and TIPTON, have joined with their California colleagues to lead this bill through the House. That is what Coloradans expect from their elected representatives, collaboration for the good of our State and country.

This bill is a game changer, not just in my State but across fire-prone communities in the West and increasingly in other parts of our country, the upper Midwest, the Northeast, Florida. You name it, wildfire has continued to be a threat more broadly across our country.

What this act will do, the Wildfire Prevention Act, is it will allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, to provide hazard mitigation grants to States and localities to implement these mitigation projects. These mitigation projects will help put Colorado communities and public lands managers on the offensive. We put our communities and our public lands managers in front of the threat of megafires. We can head them off before they even start. It is an idea that came from Colorado. It is more than just a commonsense idea; it is a fiscally responsible approach to dealing with the threat of wildfire.

Why do I say that? Well, studies show that for every dollar you put on hazard mitigation upfront, it saves an average

of \$4 down the line if you have to fight a fire. For that reason, and the other ones I mentioned, I am going to keep doing everything I possibly can to move this bipartisan bill to the President's desk this year.

The second point I want to make and discuss with colleagues is that we must fundamentally change and modernize how the Federal Government funds wildfire-suppression operations. That is another way of saying fighting fires, wildfire-suppression operations. The rising severity of modern fires has caused land management agencies to divert resources away from the critical fire prevention efforts I just described to fight fires that are already burning. This is a vicious self-perpetuating cycle that is called "fire borrowing," which then only increases the risk of catastrophic fires later.

It is a backwards way of budgeting. It is classic robbing Peter to pay Paul and leaves us all to bear much larger costs, most notably our communities in Colorado. That is why I joined Senators Wyden and Crapo on their bipartisan bill that would finally separate wildfires like other natural disasters and help make sure that we are not fighting fires that could have been prevented. This is a sensible approach for many reasons. It has been cosponsored by 120 Members of Congress in the House and the Senate. It has been endorsed by over 150 groups, ranging from the timber industry, to the environmental community. That speaks volumes about the utility of this and the broad support, obviously.

My hometown State newspaper, the Denver Post, put it this way earlier this month, "Using disaster fund money for wildfires could solve a lot of problems long-term, and we hope Congress sees it that way." I also hope my colleagues see it that way. If we are serious here about helping prevent future wildfires and reducing the threats to lives and property, we all join together and pass this legislation.

Proper wildfire budgeting and the use of disaster relief funds would help break this vicious cycle of fire borrowing and allow our natural resource agencies to manage healthy forests, instead of fighting megafires. I have the great privilege of chairing on the energy committee, which the Presiding Officer serves on, the National Parks Subcommittee. I know all too well the problems this bill could solve. If we adopted this measure, this new way of wildfire budgeting, we could ensure that the resources are available for our national forest supervisors to reduce hazardous fuels, provide quality recreation experiences, and provide the timber supply to sustain a diverse forest products industry. It would be there for the uses we need them to be there for.

We could do this also while upgrading our safe, modern air tanker fleet in such a way that would keep our communities and firefighters safe. So this legislation I just described is in the emergency supplemental appropri-

tions measure before the Senate here today. We really need to pass it. It is crucial. It is an opportunity we have to grab. In the supplemental appropriations act before this body, there is \$615 million to prevent fire borrowing this year, get resources on the ground fighting these blazes, and help our resource agencies plan unto the future.

I know House Appropriations Chairman ROGERS. The Presiding Officer and I both know Chairman ROGERS. He did say that he did not include wildfire funding in their supplemental because, in his words, "there is no urgency for such money." I have to respectfully disagree with my friend Chairman ROGERS. I know Coloradans, as well as people in Washington State, California, and many States across the West would not only disagree, they would strenuously disagree. I would invite Chairman ROGERS to come out to the West and see firsthand how urgent the situation is for our communities.

Let me finish with a couple of remarks about other elements in this supplemental.

My colleague Senator BLUNT from Missouri, just spoke of the Iron Dome system. The supplemental includes emergency funding for Israel's Iron Dome system. It has intercepted hundreds of Hamas rockets targeting civilian areas over the last several weeks. It has literally been a lifesaver for our Israeli allies many times over.

I chair the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, which has responsibility for the Iron Dome and working with Israel and the Israeli Defense Forces. I heard today from an Israeli who said the system is miraculous. As Hamas continues to rain rockets down, we need to ensure that this system continues to protect our friends and allies in Israel.

Finally, this supplemental includes critical resources to help address the root causes that have led to the humanitarian crisis at our southern border. So, in summary, I am glad we have moved forward on debating this crucial supplemental appropriations bill. Let's move to an up-or-down vote as soon as we possibly can. This is a timely debate. Passage of this bill is too important to allow partisan gridlock to interfere. So let's come together, let's show the American people we can meet our obligations and rise above partisanship.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

POLICIES FOCUS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the disturbing leadership failure we are seeing out of the White House. Over the past year the President and his administration have seemed increasingly out of touch with the many challenges facing our country at home and abroad. Two weeks ago the President's spokesman told reporters, "I think that there have

been a number of situations in which you have seen this administration intervene in a meaningful way that substantially furthered American interests and substantially improved the tranquility of the global community." Let me repeat that. "Substantially improved the tranquility of the global community."

Well, fighting is going on right now in Israel and the Gaza Strip. Russia is actively involved in a war in Ukraine and recently played a role in bringing down a Malaysian airliner with 298 people onboard.

Iraq is virtually in chaos. Much of the country is under the control of a terrorist organization considered by al Qaeda to be too extreme.

Those are just some of the most serious trouble spots that we face right now. Yet the President's spokesman claims that "there have been a number of situations in which you have seen this administration intervene in a meaningful way that have substantially improved the tranquility of the global community."

Not only can I not think of a number of situations in which the President's action has substantially improved tranquility, I find it hard to think of one. We are actually looking at more points of serious instability than we have seen in decades.

Writing in the Washington Post over the weekend, the paper's editorial page noted that during the President's administration: "we have witnessed as close to a laboratory experiment on the effects of U.S. disengagement as the real world is ever likely to provide."

Disengagement is a good description of the President's attitude because right now the President doesn't even seem to be paying attention. Obviously America can't fix all of the world problems, but strong American leadership can help, as we have seen many times over the past century.

Strong American leadership, however, requires a President who is fully engaged and this President is anything but.

Tens of thousands of children are arriving at our southern border. The President is playing pool. When a plane is shot down in Ukraine, the President keeps right on with his campaign schedule.

Earlier this month, as thousands of unaccompanied children were making their dangerous trip across the southern border—because of the President's statement if they got here they could stay—the President traveled to Texas, but he didn't go to assess the situation himself. He was, as the Associated Press reported, "primarily in Texas to raise money for Democrats."

Weeks later, despite taking multiple trips to fundraise for Democrats, the President still hasn't visited the border, despite calls to visit from members of his own party. Indeed, the President has largely stopped even discussing the crisis. This is the same President whose spokesman described

him as having substantially improved the tranquility of the global community.

Our world is facing a number of very serious crises now, and the President seems completely unaware of it. Unfortunately, when it comes to domestic issues, the President seems equally out of touch.

The President has recently taken to telling his audience that "by almost every economic measure, we're doing a whole lot better now than we were when I came into office."

Try telling that to the American families who are doing worse. Average household income has dropped by nearly \$3,000 on the President's watch. Meanwhile, prices have risen. Food prices are higher. The price of gasoline has almost doubled. College costs continue to soar.

Health care premiums which the President promised would fall by \$2,500 have increased by almost \$3,000, and they are still climbing.

Combine high prices with declining income and we get a whole lot of families who were once comfortably in the middle class are now struggling to make ends meet. The Obama administration's economy provides few opportunities for these families to improve their situation.

In 2009 the President's advisers predicted that the unemployment rate would fall below 6 percent in 2012. Two years later unemployment still hasn't fallen below 6 percent. The only reason the unemployment rate is as low as it is is because so many Americans have given up looking for work and dropped out of the labor force altogether. If the labor force participation rate were as high today as it was when the President took office, our unemployment rate would be about 10 percent.

Even when jobs do become available, too often they are low-paying jobs, not the kinds of jobs that help middle-class families achieve financial security or move low-income families into the middle class.

Take the most recent jobs report. Under the President's policies, the economy lost 523,000 full-time jobs and gained 799,000 part-time jobs last month, which is the largest 1-month jump in part-time employment in 20 years.

I will give the President this, he does talk. He talks about helping middle-class families, but he has steadily opposed measures to help them.

Republicans have proposed numerous measures to create good-paying jobs and increase opportunity. We have urged the President to approve the Keystone Pipeline and the tens of thousands of jobs it would support. In fact, Democrats have urged the President to approve it too. The President said no.

Republicans have proposed fixing the 30-hour workweek provision in ObamaCare, which is cutting workers' hours and wages. The President has said no.

Republicans have proposed repealing the medical device tax, which has al-

ready eliminated thousands of jobs in the medical device industry and will eliminate many more if it isn't repealed. A lot of Democrats agree with that position. The President said no.

The President hasn't just said no to measures that would help the middle class, he has implemented policies that have hit the middle class with tremendous financial burdens. Chief among the President's burdensome policies of course is ObamaCare. The President told an audience in Wilmington, DE, the other day that thanks to his administration, millions more now have the peace of mind of having quality, affordable health care if they need it.

Try telling that to the Americans who lost their health care plans as a result of the President's law and were forced to replace them with plans that cost more and offered less. Try telling that to the Americans who obtained health care plans under the Affordable Care Act only to discover their plan didn't cover the doctor they wanted it to cover. Tell it to the families paying thousands of dollars more each year in premiums, deductibles, and copays thanks to the President's health care law. That does not even mention the drag the health care law is having on the economy.

Part of the reason there are so few opportunities for American families to get ahead is because the President's health care law is making it more difficult for businesses to afford to hire new workers.

Now the President is piling up his budget-busting health care law with a national energy tax that will drive up energy bills for American families and put hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work.

Nero may have fiddled while Rome burned, the President fundraises.

The Washington Post reports:

In his two presidential terms combined, Bush hosted 318 fundraisers. Obama has already smashed that number with 393 events to date.

And he still has 2½ years to go in his administration.

Instead of urging the President to focus on crises at home and abroad, Democrats have taken a leaf from the President's book and spent the past several months focused on elections. Rather than taking up legislation to provide real help for struggling middle-class families, Senate Democrats have spent months—months—on political show votes and designed-to-fail legislation they hope will win them a few votes in November.

Our country is facing challenges at home and abroad. Campaigning has its place, but in Washington Members of Congress and the President should be focused on solving the problems facing our country, supporting middle-class families, and restoring America's economic vitality.

It is time for Democrats and the President to stop focusing on politics and start focusing on the policies we need to create jobs, to grow the economy, and support freedom and opportunity at home and around the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Next week, between August 4 and August 6, the United States will welcome leaders from across the African Continent to Washington, DC.

I first wish to acknowledge the work of our colleague Senator COONS, the chairman of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Foreign Relations Committee, for the work he has done on behalf of the Senate to make this opportunity a real chance to strengthen the economic ties, to strengthen the strategic ties between the countries of Africa and the United States.

We expect there will be robust discussions that will be encouraging economic growth, unlocking opportunities, and fostering greater ties between our country and Africa.

One of the areas that I hope will get some debate and discussion during next week's meetings will be a key government trade initiative that makes these ties possible; that is, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA.

AGOA provides qualifying sub-Saharan countries duty-free access to the U.S. market for a wide variety of products. It was first signed into law in 2000 by President Clinton and has been strengthened and extended by Congress and both President Bush and President Obama.

AGOA enjoyed broad bipartisan support throughout the years because its advocates recognize the crucial role Africa plays in the global economy.

The African Continent is one of the world's fastest growing regions. For instance, by 2035, it is estimated that Africa will have a larger working-age population than China. I mention that because it is certainly in our interest to have stable partners who develop their economy and can work in strategic partnership with the United States, but it also means we are going to have stronger markets for U.S.-produced goods and products. As we have a growing middle class in Africa, it represents a market for U.S. manufacturers, producers, and farmers, which creates more jobs in the United States.

AGOA allows the United States and Africa to both take advantage of this dynamism. Since the act was fully implemented in 2001, U.S. imports under AGOA have tripled. Nonoil AGOA trade has increased fourfold.

Some of the sectors that AGOA has helped open are apparel, textiles, jewelry, handicrafts, and electronics. AGOA has created hundreds of thousands of jobs in those sectors, most of those in the apparel sector, where women comprise 75 to 90 percent of the industry.

In sub-Saharan Africa women are at the highest risk of being poor. AGOA has tackled barriers to poverty reduction by eliminating tariffs on goods that come from many sectors in which women are employed.

Modern trade agreements and initiatives are much more than just lowering tariffs. It also involves dealing with good governance practices.

In an increasing global economy, we can no longer consider issues such as labor rights, human rights, and good governance as issues that are separate from trade.

Trade with our country is a benefit with deserving nations that share our values. Strong commitments to the rule of law and human rights are an essential part of those values and level the playing field between the United States and our partners in the global marketplace.

AGOA is no exception. The Act has been encouraging these commitments since it was first enacted. In other words, this is not only an opportunity by lowering barriers to our markets, it is also about expectations and enforcement that the African countries will improve their good governance and their labor rights so we have a more level playing field.

To qualify for AGOA benefits, countries must establish or make continual progress on measures that promote good governance and a fair economic system. These include fundamental rights, the rule of law, a system that combats corruption, and policies that increase access to health care, education, and expand physical infrastructure. In other words, the African countries involved that take advantage of AGOA must have continuing progress on the good governance key issues.

For example, as part of the annual AGOA review process, the U.S. Department of Labor examines AGOA countries' efforts to implement and enforce workers' rights, including the right of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively, prohibitions on forced or compulsory labor, a minimum age for the employment of children, and acceptable conditions of work.

These are the International Labour Organization standards. The ILO standards are very much a part of the progress we made under AGOA in the African countries. Improvements in these areas have been shown to foster the kind of inclusive economic growth and opportunities that raise families and nations out of poverty.

We understand that by developing stronger economies in African countries, we are building more stable African countries, countries that are more reliable to be partners with the United States in dealing with global issues.

We understand that by doing that we are going to have a stronger partner sharing U.S. values. This is just one of the tools we use. We also use our transparency initiatives. We included in the Dodd-Frank legislation transparency on extractive industries that operate globally but also in Africa so we could find and make sure the wealth of a country is actually going to its people. That requires good governance. AGOA is one of our tools to accomplish that good governance.

So these countries that have mineral wealth, the wealth is not a curse but truly benefits the people of that country.

AGOA helps, the transparency initiatives that we passed help, but this is the issue: The current authorization of AGOA expires on September 30, 2015. Once again, Madam President, as you know, as you worked so hard, we need predictability in our law. Short-term extensions don't do much good. What we need is a long-term economic commitment with the continent of Africa.

A bipartisan effort in Congress to extend and improve this important legislation is already underway. The U.S. Trade Representative has been reviewing AGOA's successes as well as the areas that can be improved. Later today in the Senate Finance Committee we will be holding a hearing on AGOA, and Ambassador Froman will be one of the witnesses at that hearing. So we will have a chance to work together, bipartisan members of Congress with the administration.

One of the areas we are looking at is strengthening the eligibility criteria to further incentivize improvements in human rights, and I will be talking about that in the Finance Committee. Another area is providing coordinated technical assistance and capacity building. This is very important. Too often trade and development policies operate on separate tracks. Granting trade preference means little without providing countries with the ability to take advantage of those benefits. We have development assistance that we provide to countries. We have trade that we do. Let's combine it and recognize that these trade opportunities can only be taken advantage of if the country has the capacity to deal with the issues we are talking about.

Capacity building is already underway in Africa. For instance, the Department of Labor provides capacity-building assistance to AGOA countries to improve workers' rights through partnerships with a broad range of organizations, from NGOs, to health organizations, to social and economic researchers. By providing this aid in a more efficient and clearly measurable fashion and seeking more input from local cooperatives and groups, we can help foster more sustainable growth in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The time to develop consensus on AGOA improvements is now. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting and strengthening the AGOA Act so we can maintain this important tool to increase the trade relations between the United States and Africa and fight global poverty. I look forward to seeing the results of next week's meetings with the African leaders. It is my sincere expectation that these meetings will produce concrete ways we can improve the ties between Africa and the United States, and I certainly expect it will help us lead to the improvement and reauthorization of AGOA.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

USA FREEDOM Act

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the transparency provisions in the USA FREEDOM Act. I am a proud cosponsor of Chairman LEAHY's bill, and I am particularly proud to have written its key transparency provisions with my friend Senator DEAN HELLER of Nevada. As I said yesterday, both of us are indebted to Senator LEAHY for his leadership on this issue.

For over a year now there has been a steady stream of news stories about the National Security Agency's surveillance programs. Yet right now, by law, Americans still cannot get very basic information about these programs.

Americans understand that we need to give due weight to privacy on the one hand and national security on the other. But when they lack an even rough sense of the scope of the government's surveillance programs, they have no way to know if the government is getting that balance right. There needs to be more transparency.

The controversy unleashed by Edward Snowden's disclosures has been going on for over a year. Yet Americans still don't know the actual number of people whose information has been collected under these programs. They don't even know how many of these people are Americans, and they have no way of knowing how many of these Americans had their information actually looked at by government officials as opposed to just being held in a database. This lack of transparency is pretty breathtaking.

I believe the provisions Senator HELLER and I wrote will go a long way toward addressing and fixing this. It will give Americans the information they need to judge the government's surveillance programs for themselves.

Three programs are at the center of this debate: the telephone call records program, the collection, through 2011, on Americans' Internet communications records, and the so-called PRISM Program that targets the communications of foreigners abroad.

Our provisions would require detailed annual reports for each program. The government will have to tell the public how many people have had their information collected and how many of those people are likely American. For the call records program and the PRISM Program, the government will also have to say how many times it has run a specific search for an American's data.

By creating these reporting requirements, the government will have an in-

centive to also disclose the number of Americans who have actually had their information reviewed by government officials, and we give the government authority to do that too.

We don't just require the government to issue more detailed transparency reports. We are also helping American Internet and phone companies tell their customers about the government requests for customer information they are receiving. For years those companies have been under gag orders. As a result, people around the world think the American Internet companies are giving up far more information to the government than they likely are. Those companies are losing billions of dollars because people think they are handing over all of their customers' data to the NSA.

Our provisions expand the options that companies have to issue their own transparency reports, and they let companies issue those reports more quickly. Our provisions give the public two ways to check on the government—government transparency reports and company reports as well.

Like all major bills, this bill is a compromise, and we didn't get everything we wanted, but our provisions will go a long way toward giving the American people the information they need to evaluate the government's surveillance program.

After 9/11, our Nation faced a security crisis. Most Americans had never lived through anything like that. We are now experiencing a crisis of trust where a big part of the American public now thinks our intelligence agencies are out to spy on them, not on foreign countries.

The administration has committed to end the bulk collection of Americans' data, and Congress has written a bill to ban the bulk collection of Americans' data. But unless we pass these transparency provisions, Americans have no way to know if the government is making good on those promises. Our transparency provisions will force the government to prove annually and publicly that bulk collection is over. This is an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability which will allow the American people to decide for themselves whether the government is striking the right balance between privacy and security.

We should take up this bill as soon as possible so that Americans are not in the dark a single day longer. We should take it up so that American companies stop losing business because of misperceptions about their role in domestic surveillance. We should take this bill up so that Americans can get the information they need to hold their government to account.

TRIBUTE TO ALVARO BEDOYA

Before I yield the floor, I wish to take a moment to recognize and thank Alvaro Bedoya, my chief counsel, who is to my left. This is Alvaro's last week on my staff. Alvaro has been a member of my team since my very first day in

office, and I have relied on and trusted his counsel on so many things in the 5 years since.

He has been instrumental in helping me launch and set the agenda for the Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and the Law that I chair, and we would not have reached this point in working to make the NSA more transparent and accountable to the American people if it were not for Alvaro.

Alvaro's counsel has also been crucial as we have sought to improve our Nation's broken immigration system, as we fought for marriage equality and LGBT rights, including the right of all children to be free from bullying in schools, and as we work to ban apps that allow domestic abusers to stalk their victims.

Alvaro was even at my side during my very first week in office when the Judiciary Committee held confirmation hearings for Sonia Sotomayor to serve on the Supreme Court. That was my fifth day in the Senate, and I remember pulling some late nights preparing for that.

Alvaro's departure is bittersweet for me. I am, of course, sad to see Alvaro leave, but I am very excited for him as well. He will soon become the founding executive director of Georgetown Law School's new Center for Privacy and Technology. I have no doubt the folks at Georgetown soon will learn what I already know—that Alvaro is one of the most talented, intelligent, hardest working, decent, good-guy lawyers I know.

Thanks, Alvaro.

And I thank the Presiding Officer.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CORPORATE INVERSIONS

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, our Tax Code is tilted toward the rich and the powerful. Huge corporations hire armies of lobbyists and lawyers to create, expand, and protect every last corporate loophole. That is how we end up with a tax code that makes small businesses and restaurants and construction companies pay, that makes teachers and truckdrivers and nurses pay, but that allows huge American corporations to make billions of dollars in profits and not pay a single dime in taxes.

The Tax Code is rigged. Apparently, even this rigged game does not go far enough for some corporations. Those companies are taking advantage of a new move—a loophole that allows them to maintain all their operations in America but claim foreign citizenship so they can cut their U.S. taxes even further.

Here is how the loophole works. An American company merges with a

much smaller company located in a foreign country, usually a tax haven such as Ireland or Bermuda. As long as the shareholders of the foreign company own 20 percent of the newly merged company, our tax laws allow that new company to claim foreign citizenship. That means American companies can hire a bunch of Wall Street bankers and a bunch of lawyers, fill out some paperwork, keep everything the same in their operations, and dodge their U.S. taxes.

Tax lawyers call this process a corporate inversion, but do not let that bland name fool you. These companies are renouncing their American citizenship, turning their backs on this country simply to boost their profits. They are taking advantage of all the good things our government helps provide—educated workers, roads and bridges, a dependable court system, patent and copyright protections—and then running out on the bill.

If a person did that, we would call them a freeloader. We would insist that they pay their fair share. That is exactly what our tax laws do for people who renounce their American citizenship. Even if they do not sell their property in the United States, when they renounce their citizenship, we treat them as if they had sold it. If they try to send money back to a U.S. citizen, we tax that amount too. And if someone attempts to evade their tax obligations by renouncing their American citizenship, we bar them from coming back to this country.

For a person who does not want to pay a fair share, our message is clear: You can renounce your citizenship but do not come back and expect the rest of us to pick up the tab. But we do not do that for corporations. Corporations can renounce their American citizenship—and make absolutely clear in legal documents that they are doing it to avoid their U.S. tax obligations—and not suffer any consequences.

In this corner of the Tax Code we have gone way past treating corporations as people. In this corner of the Tax Code we are treating corporations better than people. That is not right. That is why I have teamed up with Senator LEVIN and more than a dozen of our Democratic colleagues to introduce the Stop Corporate Inversions Act. The bill is simple. It allows American corporations to renounce their citizenship only if they truly give up control of their company to a foreign corporation and truly move their operations overseas. The bill would help protect \$17 billion in tax revenue—money we could spend on Head Start Programs, on fixing our roads and bridges, on investing in medical research.

President Obama and Secretary Lew have spoken in favor of the proposal. I commend their leadership, and I join them in urging the Senate to pass this bill right away.

Some say wait. They say we should address this loophole in the context

only of broader tax reform. I am all for a major overhaul of our tangled tax system, but make no mistake, more and more companies are rushing to renounce their citizenship to take advantage of this inversion loophole before we can get to full tax reform. We cannot allow the larger fights over tax reform to stop us from holding these freeloaders accountable.

I believe the Senate should act on this, but I am also realistic. Even if the Senate passes this bill today, we know that, like so many good Senate bills before it, it will face a tough road in the House. If we have learned anything from the past few years, it is that House Republicans will claw, scratch, whimper, beg or do whatever else it takes to defend every last corporate tax loophole.

But the administration does not need to wait for Congress. It can use its existing authority to slow down and reduce the attractiveness of these sham inversions right now. According to a paper published this week by Steve Shay, a Harvard Law School professor and former senior tax policy official at the Treasury Department, the administration could take action today to reduce the tax benefits of corporate inversions.

It could use its authority under section 385 of the Tax Code to prevent companies that renounce their citizenship from using any other loopholes to shield themselves from additional taxes that they would otherwise be required to pay. This will not totally solve the problem, but it would significantly reduce the benefits of corporate inversion. It would be an important first step toward treating companies that renounce America the same way we treat people who renounce America—as freeloaders who get cut off from other benefits.

America is a great place to do business because of the investments we have made together. In Massachusetts and across this country, we invest in public education, and our colleges and universities produce millions of skilled workers. We invest in infrastructure, in our roads and bridges and ports, making it easier for our companies to move their products across the country and beyond. We invest in scientific and medical research, giving our companies access to the most innovative and cutting-edge technology. We invest together to make America a place where any kid will have a chance to come up with an idea and turn it into the next great American corporation.

The companies that are pursuing these corporate inversions know all of this. That is why they are not actually leaving America behind. They just do not want to pay for it. Our achievements are not magic. They did not simply happen on their own or through dumb luck. America works, our government works, our democracy works because we all pitch in and do our part to build that which none of us can build alone, giving everyone a chance to succeed.

If these companies want to leave all of that behind, well, that is their right. But if they exercise that right, if they leave America behind, then they should not get to turn around and claim all of the privileges of being an American company. We have had enough of rich corporations taking whatever they want and expecting everyone else to pick up the pieces. The time for freeloading is over.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for up to 20 minutes as in morning business.

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

ISRAEL

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, it has been 22 days now since Hamas began its most recent campaign of terrorist attacks against the innocent citizens of Israel. Since the operation began, 32 tunnels have been uncovered that would have been used to attack Israel. On Saturday and Sunday—this past Saturday and Sunday alone—almost 100 rockets were fired at Israel. In the Gaza strip, since the beginning of Operation Protective Edge—that would have been July 8—there have been over 2,000 Hamas rockets fired into Israel, with Tel Aviv and Jerusalem both targets.

Israel has responded, as any nation protecting its people would, with air strikes and ground troops to silence these Hamas terrorists. Israelis are tough. I have to remind people all the time that since their independence back in the 1940s, they have been attacked—Israel has been attacked—six different times.

Remember how they were outnumbered in the Six-Day War in 1967. They won. They prevailed. Then again, the same thing in Yom Kippur—that was in 1973. Again, they prevailed. I have often kidded with them—I have told Prime Minister Netanyahu this, that the Israelis consider a fair fight being outnumbered two to one. So they are a great bunch of people. We have got to continue to support them.

The Hamas terrorists are not only killing Israelis; they are killing their own people too because they place their rocket launchers—we see this is happening, just yesterday we saw a picture of this—in the middle of their own population centers. We are talking in homes, in hospitals, in mosques. Like the cowards they are, they use civilians as human shields. Despite Israel's extensive precautionary behavior and measures to avoid collateral damage, casualties, unfortunately, have occurred. Hamas bears complete responsibility for the civilian deaths.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu said: Israel is using missile defense to protect our citizens, and Hamas is using their civilians to protect their missiles. To date, the Israeli missile defense system, called the Iron Dome, has

successfully intercepted over 400 Hamas rockets headed toward the populated areas in Israel. I was just in Israel last month. I visited the Iron Dome battery. You see, there has to be a place where they initiate these protective devices. Here they are over there. I was so impressed with the young Israeli troops who operate it in the southern city of Ashkelon. The same battery you see on TV every night intercepting Hamas rockets comes from the Gaza Strip, 13 kilometers away.

I have a picture here I want the Presiding Officer to look at. This beautiful young first lieutenant in the Israeli Army I met. She is the one in charge of the Ashkelon battery down there. She is doing her duty right now as we speak, bravely protecting her fellow citizens. Her name is Lee Shmulevitch. I salute her.

It gives people an idea of the commitment that is being made by the Israeli people and the successes they are having. As ranking member, which I am, of the Armed Services Committee, I am proud to say I have been a constant supporter of the Iron Dome, which we have done on a nonpartisan basis. We have put in the authorization for \$175 million in this last authorization bill. Then we added another \$176 million that would take care of not just the Iron Dome but also other systems that we have such as David's Sling and Arrow 3.

These are jointly developed by the United States and Israel. I think it is important that people understand. I have heard people say: Well, you are just sending all this stuff over from us to Israel. If that were true, it would be worth doing it anyway, because they are looking out after our interests. Those things which they are not able to do in the Middle East we would have to be doing with our equipment, with your young people.

This is not the case. They have a lot of brave people over there. In the case of the Iron Dome, of David's Sling, of Arrow 3, and of a lot of the UAVs, their technology is technology that we use. So it is not something that we are doing for them. We are doing it mutually for each other.

I think it is important also to note at this point that—and nobody seems to put this together—Hamas would not have the rockets and capability of trying to kill all of these Israelis if it were not for Israel's greatest threat, and that is the country of Iran. Quite frankly, I think Iran is the greatest threat to the United States also. A lot of people do not realize this, but back in 2007 our—at that time it was classified—Our intelligence said that by 2015, Iran would have the weapon and a delivery system. Well, that is only 6 months from now.

That has been reconfirmed in our unclassified intelligence starting in about 2010. So right now it is really Iran that is responsible for what Hamas has been able to do. I might ask the question:

What is President Obama doing? His rush to reach a nuclear agreement with Iran has undermined years of bipartisan sanctions that were working. We have sanctions, not just by us but by European countries and other countries that have really brought Iran down—not to their knees, because they are still developing their weapons. But nonetheless, they were working.

As part of the President's agreement—this is what he is doing right now. His agreement is to reduce Iran's sanctions, as he announced in January. He has endorsed Iran's right to enrich uranium. So let's stop and think about it. This is a deal he has cut. He said: All right. We will pull off our sanctions so you will be able to receive the benefit of that. At the same time we are going to let you go ahead and continue to enrich uranium.

He has allowed Iran to keep 19,000 centrifuges while unlocking \$7 billion in assets. These are assets that were held which they can now use to their benefit. He has just extended the deal by agreeing to provide Iran with an additional \$2.8 billion in frozen assets. That brings the \$7 billion up to almost \$10 billion. While Iran is building a bomb, Obama is releasing sanctions.

I believe the Iranians are using negotiations to buy time as they are developing their nuclear weapon. Again, Netanyahu called the President's agreement a "historic mistake" that is making the world a much more dangerous place. History is going to prove that he is right. Obama should demand Iran dismantle its nuclear program, but he will not do it. We should reinstate full sanctions now and consider additional sanctions. But President Obama will not do it.

Does anyone really believe Iran is not involved with Hamas and its attacks?

Today, Obama is rewarding Iran by releasing more financial assets to Iran, funding that will be used to support more terrorism against Israel. There is little to show for the administration's reckless gamble for Israel. President Obama is negotiating with an Iranian regime that has repeatedly deceived us and concealed its nuclear program for over 2 decades.

I see nothing different in this deal. Israel lives in a dangerous neighborhood, surrounded by terrorists who refuse to even acknowledge the Jewish state's right to exist. They need all the friends they can get. I keep hearing people talk about the two-state solution. The two-state solution between Hamas and Israel is kind of interesting because Hamas does not consider Israel to be a state. So how can you have a two-state solution if you only have one state? That is the situation.

That is why I want to salute the country of Egypt. There are some other friends that we have over there. I have been upset with some of the Members here in this body because they do not have an appreciation for what Egypt does and the part they play in the Mid-

dle East and their support for Israel. Let me tell you, this started a long time ago. The Camp David Accords was in 1979. In the Camp David Accords they made a deal with Israel. Now, you have to keep in mind that this was the military of Egypt. It is hard for people in this country to see that sometimes there is a difference between the administration in a country and the military.

So it is the military here that has said: We will be protecting Israel. We had, not too long ago, an effort from this body to try to stop the shipment of some F-16s that Egypt had already bought. Now, granted, that was back during President Morsi and his radical Muslim Brotherhood. But nonetheless, these were going not to him but to the military. The newly elected President Sisi has destroyed—he is working right along with the Israelis. He has been involved, and his people and his military, in destroying over 90 percent of the tunnels that are going from the Sinai to Gaza.

So I only mention this because those individuals who do not understand this might consider punishing Egypt. If you punish Egypt, you are punishing, to the same degree, Israel.

The turbulent times we face serve as a reminder why the United States and Israel have to continue to work together. The same enemies that threaten the existence of Israel also want to destroy America. Over the years the United States has greatly benefited from the cooperation with Israel on missile defense technologies. We have to continue that critical partnership. Israel is our most faithful ally, our most critical partner in the region, and acts as a roadblock against terrorism, terrorism that would be hitting the United States of America.

The United States stands shoulder to shoulder with Israel and supports its right to defend itself.

Since his first budget, President Obama has been degrading our military while also making the world more dangerous through an apologetic and reactive foreign policy of appeasement. I often quote Hiram Mann, who said:

No man escapes
When freedom fails,
The best men rot in filthy jails;
And they who cried: "Appease, Appear!"
Are hanged by men they tried to please.

We have to get out of that system. We have to stand by Israel and hang tough with our best friend. We can't survive without them.

I often look back wistfully at the days of the Cold War. That was back when they had two superpowers in the world, the USSR and the United States. We knew what they had, and they knew what we had. We knew what their capacities were, they knew ours.

They had a system called MAD, mutually assured destruction. It meant: You shoot at you, we will shoot at you. You die, we all die, and everyone is happy.

That doesn't work anymore. Now we have these rogue elements out there

that are developing weapons that can wipe out an entire U.S. city. I am about not just the Middle East but about North Korea also.

So we are looking at the Middle East. We are looking at our only way of defending our allies there and working to stop the capabilities of countries such as Iran to have a weapon that would reach the United States of America. So we have to hang tough with our best friend Israel, and I pray that we do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

49TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

Mr. Kaine. Madam President, I rise in honor of a birthday.

Forty-nine years ago, Medicare was signed into law. Every year, the trustees prepare a report about the fiscal health of Medicare and Social Security, and that report was issued earlier this week. On this 49th birthday of Medicare, I wish to talk about Medicare's health because there is some good news.

The 2014 trustees' report released earlier this week looks at the trust fund financing for Medicare hospital coverage and indicates that trust fund, under current projections, will remain solvent until 2030. Last year the 2013 report indicated that solvency period would go to 2026. So in 1 year the fiscal projections for Medicare and Medicaid improved by 4 years—solvency until 2030.

In addition, the projected Part B premiums, the Part B portion of Medicare, which is the prescription drug premium program for seniors, for the second year in a row the premiums will not increase one penny.

This improved health of Medicare is significant. The health of it has improved dramatically, even in the last year. But where the improvement truly looks significant is if we compare the 2014 report with the 2009 report, the report that was done on Medicare's 44th birthday 5 years ago. The 2009 report said the hospital insurance trust fund was not adequately financed for the next 10 years, and it would be exhausted in 2017.

Again, just to compare, 2009 Medicare trustees' report, the trust fund will be exhausted by 2017; 2014 Medicare trustees' report, the trust fund will be solvent all the way through 2030. There is a difference of 13 years of additional solvency in Medicare, according to the projections and the change just from 2009 to 2014.

I think we know where I am going with this subject. What explains the improving solvency of the Medicare trust fund? Why would it have changed so dramatically from the 2009 to the 2014 projection and added 13 years of solvency to the trust fund?

The Congressional Budget Office and others have indicated it was not the 2009 recession that was the primary driver for Medicare spending reduction. Instead, the CBO and others are indicating that a large part of the improved solvency of Medicare is because

of the reforms that were included by Congress when Congress passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010. When it comes to reducing costs, bending the cost curve, the Affordable Care Act is working.

That is not the only reason Congress passed the Affordable Care Act. Coverage is expanding. Certain health care indicators are improving. More people have access because they are not denied insurance because of preexisting conditions. Kids can stay on family policies. Businesses can get tax credits if they are small.

But one of the areas—and that was why the first day the ACA was affordable. It was to try to do things that would control health care costs.

This Medicare trustees' report on Medicare's 49th birthday shows on cost reforms the ACA is working. The innovative systems of changing the payment model from pay-for-procedure to pay for quality, paying for value over volume, for reducing costs and improving health care delivery systems are extending the solvency of Medicare.

Not only is this cost containment good for the Federal Government, for the Federal Treasury, it is also good for Medicare recipients: 8.2 million Medicare recipients saved more than \$11.5 billion on prescription drugs thanks to closing the Medicare Part D doughnut hole.

In Virginia, people with Medicare saved \$254 million on prescription drugs because the Medicare Part D doughnut hole was closed just since the ACA was enacted—\$254 million since the 2010 enactment. In 2013 alone, 37.2 million Medicare recipients received free preventive benefits, including more than 900,000 in Virginia, because of the Affordable Care Act.

The work obviously needs to continue to bend the cost curve the right way, but the trustees' report from Monday is not the only evidence of the improving health of our fiscal expenditures.

Just this month CBO again revised downward its 10-year estimate for spending on Medicare and our Nation's major health care programs. Since 2010 CBO has lowered its estimates for Medicare and Medicaid and other health care programs by \$1.23 trillion—lowered projections of health care spending since the Affordable Care Act was passed.

The CBO said in a recently issued long-term budget outlook that the government will spend 1.6 percent of GDP less on health care programs than estimated in 2010 before the ACA was passed. A report released this week by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at HHS reported essentially no growth in Medicare expenditures on a per capita basis last year.

That report also said Medicare spending between 2009 and 2012—for beneficiaries in the traditional program—was approximately \$116 billion lower than it would have been if the average

growth rates from years 2004 to 2008 had been projected forward.

So there are many reasons we should be thankful the Affordable Care Act passed, that we should be absolutely committed to maintaining it, and that we should also be committed to maintaining it wherever we can. But as we celebrate the 49th anniversary of Medicare today, one of the reasons we should be thankful is it is clear that the ACA is helping us make health care more affordable.

To conclude, the report that was issued this week was not all good news because it also had challenges with respect to Social Security. The Social Security trust fund will be exhausted in 2033, and that represents no change from last year. The solvency of the trust fund was not changed at all in the interim year.

But in the area of Social Security disability income, that insurance program—at current projections—will be completed by 2016.

Secretary Lew indicated this week that measures need to be taken to make sure that program—which is of critical importance to millions of Americans who are on disabilities—requires that we take action to fix that program so they can count on it.

So what we see is when Congress in the Affordable Care Act acted in a smart way to deal with Medicare, we have improved the area of Medicare costs and we are saving money. Congress has not acted with respect to Social Security and the Social Security disability insurance program, which is critical to folks with disabilities. It is going to need some quick fix.

I conclude and just say it is good for Congress to act. We can filibuster. We can debate. We can consider nominations. We can do a bill in one House and send it over and wait—as with immigration reform for 1-year-plus—for the other House to do something about it. None of that is action. None of that will fix any of the challenges that face us.

But when we do act and we are willing to tackle tough problems such as Medicare cost growth, we do it in both Houses and take the risk, we will find we will be better off than if we don't act. Social Security needs to have the same kind of focused and careful attention to it, especially the disability insurance program, as we paid to Medicare in 2010.

Medicare is one of the best programs this Nation has ever embraced. I wish it a happy 49th birthday today and congratulate those who were in the Senate in 2010 for being willing to risk action and thereby found a way to save costs and make Medicare work better.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I rise to speak on the urgent supplemental bill, and I rise as the chair of the full Committee on Appropriations that is actually trying to move the urgent supplemental.

“Supplemental” is an important word. It means it is in addition to fiscal year 2014 funding. There are elements where we make requests for an urgent supplemental because of unexpected emergencies, either within our own country or affecting a treasured ally—such as the State of Israel—or the crisis at our border because of what is going on in Central America. Remember, it is the crisis in Central America that is creating the humanitarian surge at our border.

Although I rise now to speak about one element, I have spoken about the fires in our Western States and later today I will speak about the children and actually try to paint a picture for people about what is going on in Honduras, El Salvador, and other countries that are also affected, but now I am going to speak about Israel.

Israel is under attack, and it is under attack by a terrorist group that denies its very right to exist. It is under attack by an organization called Hamas that is sending thousands of rockets to Israeli cities and towns targeting innocent civilians. Its very survivability is being defended by missile defense technology. The most crucial for short-range missiles is a technology called Iron Dome. This missile defense technology has saved hundreds of lives.

I can speak to this—when I say personally, not because I am in Israel and see the horrific attacks, but because I have a classmate from college, a very dear friend, and we have stayed in contact over a number of years. She is a psychiatric nurse. When she married, they made aliyah and moved to Israel, where she has taught at Hebrew University and her husband is a distinguished psychiatrist. They live in a town called Ashkelon.

She sent me the most poignant of emails. I will not read it to my colleagues, but she did tell me what is going on. Every day there are these rockets going on. They spend their lives going to shelters. They can only move around in a small patch because they have to be, under safety rules, within 2 or 3 minutes from a shelter. She said in her email to me that it is literally Iron Dome that is saving their lives.

Iron Dome is a technology that needs to be replenished. It needs to be replenished, and the State of Israel has discussed this with our government. Secretary Chuck Hagel wrote to our committee asking that this be in the supplemental essentially because of this war or terrorist attack against Israel.

The committee has responded by placing \$225 million in there, but in order to replenish it. There are many who say: I don't know if I am going to vote for this. What is Iron Dome, and is this an attack technology?

Let me say what Iron Dome is.

Iron Dome is a high-tech defensive system. It is not an offensive system. It is used as a missile defense system. How does it work? Approximately 10-foot-long missiles intercept rockets.

Their rockets aren't designed to shoot out; they are designed to shoot rockets at rockets that are being fired on Israel from a range of between 2.5 and 43 miles. Each interceptor missile—remember, they intercept another rocket—costs about \$50,000. Stunning, isn't it? Israel has invested over \$1 billion of its own money in Iron Dome. Our government has worked with them on Iron Dome so they can maintain their qualitative edge. But just think. In order to protect themselves, every rocket going off costs \$50,000.

As of July 30, over 2,730 rocket launches have been directed at Israel itself. Iron Dome has sent over 515 interceptions; 9 batteries have been deployed; more than 4,100 targets were attacked since the beginning of the operation.

But remember, over 2,700 rockets have been directed at Israel. Iron Dome has deployed 515 at the cost of \$50,000 apiece. Now what they are saying is, help us replenish our interceptor rockets because we are using them up. Essentially, it is bullets—not directed at people—it is rockets in the air.

Israel has a 90-percent success rate in intercepting these rockets coming from the Gaza. What they are asking for is help from us, the ability to replenish these rockets. I hope we do this in order for them to continue to be able to defend themselves. It is absolutely crucial that Israel has the opportunity to defend itself while others are working on cease-fires or political solutions. Those are excellent diplomatic and humanitarian goals, but right now we have to make sure that Israel can defend itself.

This is important because Israel is a treasured ally. It is important that we enable them to guard themselves against a terrorist organization.

We all know that the long-range solution is that the Hamas infrastructure must be eliminated. That is absolutely so. These so-called—well, they are not so-called. As a member of the Intelligence Committee, I have had many briefings on this. I can't go into detail, but there are tunnels that go right through Gaza and into the edge or, actually, in some instances into Israel itself. During this conflict Israel has discovered 31 tunnels. This is extremely disturbing. And they are big. When we think of a tunnel—this isn't like a little pipe for water. This is a tunnel where as many as two people could cross side-by-side going through and, in some instances, actually weapons being able to be put through. These tunnels are a very threat to Israel's existence.

In addition to the tunnels, the rockets that are pummeling Israel continue to be fired every single day.

We believe, for our allies, in the right to self-defense. We have signed memorandums of agreement to enable them, with their missile defense system, to maintain their qualitative edge.

Now, when they are in the very struggle for their safety and perhaps

their future, we need to be able to pass this important legislation.

We also know that when we pass this legislation, Iron Dome should stand alone. Many people who support the Iron Dome legislation, such as myself, want to also support those people who are also under threat.

That takes me to the children, because right now the children in Central America are under threat. And what are they under threat of? Well, I will talk more about that around 5:00. But what are they under threat of? They are under threat because of the narco drug dealers who have created the most vicious and violent gangs that have now almost taken over some of these Central American countries. They want to recruit the young men to be part of the gang, part of the drug trade, part of the couriers, part of what is involved in doing a drug trade. Then, when they refuse, they either threaten them with death or the most grisly and ghoulish of torture.

There are reported incidents, not in our classified briefings but in public media, of children being tortured to death because they refused to join a gang. They are literally fighting for their lives. These children coming to our border are fighting for their lives, and the way they fight for their life is to flee. They are fleeing the violence.

I know people are dismissive of some of this and they say: Oh, there you go. You are a soft-hearted social worker, you are a liberal, you love children. The answer is: Yes. Yes to all that. Yes, you betcha, I claim it; I own it; that is who I am.

But I don't do this because of some “gushy-poo” feeling here. I am doing this because of the actual documented violence in these countries, and I believe we need to respond to the needs of the children. Let them tell their case not only to a social worker—which is a good step, in my mind—but also to an immigration judge, and using the laws of our country, the legal criteria for asylum and refugee status, let's listen to the stories of the children. And if those children qualify for asylum and refugee status, then they should remain in this country. If they don't, there are other avenues for them to return home. But for gosh sakes, could we stop punishing the children for the crimes of the drug dealers and the human traffickers? Don't punish the children.

There are those who want to further militarize our border by calling out the National Guard. Well, what are they going to do when the children present themselves with little strips of paper saying what their name and their hometown is, and where their aunt is living in Langley Park, MD? That is not the job of the National Guard.

And if we want to use guns at the border, yes—don't use them about the children, use them about the drug dealers. And by the way, it is our insatiable, vociferous desire and appetite for drugs that has fueled this whole economy in these countries.

I am going to say more about this, but I do want to say that what is in this supplemental is the tools for people to defend themselves. For our friends in the Western States, this is money to protect themselves; and for firefighters—and gosh knows our local communities need that help; it is for a great nation such as Israel, our treasured ally, to continue to have the interceptor rockets to be able to defend itself; and it is also here that we take a look at the border, we honor our law in terms of determining refugee status for those fleeing from violence in their home country; and then we go after what is creating the violence which is right there in Central America against the narcotraffickers, because remember—and the Presiding Officer is very knowledgeable in this—if someone is willing to trade in drugs, they are also willing to view everything like a commodity. So they view drugs as a commodity and they view women and children, girls and boys, as a commodity, and they are then moved into human trafficking in the most vile, repugnant sexual trafficking.

We need to get some of our darker appetites under control, and we need to be able to fight. If we want to fight with guns, join with Central America and fight against the narcotraffickers.

I hope that clarifies the intellectual underpinnings of this bill, the compelling financial necessity, and humanitarian issues that are facing people in our own country, at our own border, and with a treasured ally.

I yield the floor.

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.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON DISABILITY RIGHTS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I come before the Senate to call again for the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

I would like to give a little history. We passed the Americans with Disabilities Act here in 1990. It was signed into law by President George Herbert Walker Bush on July 26, 1990—24 years ago last Saturday. That changed the face of America. Anywhere you go, you can see ramps and curb cuts and automatic door openers and accessible bathrooms and in education kids being integrated fully into schools under the IDEA and ADA. It really did change accessibility and also opportunity in the workplace, for example, for people with disabilities.

Some years after the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed, the United Nations set up a committee to study

whether there should be a treaty, an international convention on the rights of people with disabilities. That committee drafted it after consultation with us here in the Senate. In looking at the ADA, in fact—I was told by one of the persons instrumental in this that the Americans with Disabilities Act, which we refer to as ADA, informed them on what they needed to put into the convention. That convention was sent out to member states for ratification in 2008. Since that time, 148 nations have ratified it, with one exception—well, there has been more than one exception, but one glaring exception is the United States.

Under our constitutional system, this treaty was sent to the President. The President sent it to all of his Departments to find out what laws we had that needed to be changed. So it goes to the Department of Commerce, the Department of State, the Department of Agriculture perhaps, and everywhere else to see what laws we would have to change to comply with this treaty. Well, it came back after about a year, and because the Americans with Disabilities Act was so good, we didn't have to change any of our laws—none—because we are the best in the world on it. It was sent to OMB to see if there would be any budget implications, and OMB said there were no budget implications either.

After that, the President sent it to the Senate for ratification under our Constitution. It was sent to the Committee On Foreign Relations. Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts was then the chairman of the committee. They had hearings. In fact, the first two witnesses at the hearings were Senator JOHN MCCAIN and I. There were a lot of other people who testified, both Republicans and Democrats, disabilities leaders, disability rights advocates, and others. This was in 2011.

Then it was brought to the floor in December of 2012, and that was a lame-duck session. It turned out that 38 Senators—all on the Republican side—had signed a letter that we should not vote on a treaty in a lame-duck session. There were some other issues raised, but that was the big one. So we brought it up for a vote. In the Constitution, a treaty requires a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, and so we fell five votes short.

That Congress ended, so the treaty had to be resubmitted from the administration to the Senate. It went through another hearing process. I spoke with the ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee about what we could do to advance it, and they wanted more hearings. So we did that. Senator MENENDEZ from New Jersey is now the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, and he had more hearings on it.

Thanks to the leadership of Senator MENENDEZ, the bill was reported out of the committee last week and it was put on the Executive Calendar yesterday. There has to be 3 days before they can

send it to the floor. They sent it to the floor on Monday, 24-hour layover, and it is now on the Executive Calendar ready to be brought up.

I understand we have a busy week this week and there are a lot of things happening. I suppose people could look around and say: What? There is not much happening around here today.

But we are in postcloture, and under the rules there is 30 hours of postcloture time unless time is yielded back, and evidently—I don't know if that is going to happen. I am hopeful that sometime today or late today maybe or tomorrow, we will have a unanimous consent request in terms of bringing up this treaty, this convention on the rights of people with disabilities.

So that is what I wanted to talk about today, but I wanted to give a brief history of where we are and why we are at this point.

During the past week we have seen extraordinary efforts to move forward with this treaty. As I said, Senator MENENDEZ, the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, has marked up the treaty and brought it out with a 12-to-6 bipartisan vote. The committee added new reservations, understandings, and declarations that thoughtfully addressed the concerns that have been raised, including the matter of a parent's right to decide how their children are schooled as well as issues related to federalism and sovereignty.

This week we are hearing from disability advocates from across the country. Yesterday afternoon there was a big rally on the Mall calling for passage of the treaty. Many of our offices have been flooded with calls and visits from people with disabilities, veterans groups, and business leaders asking us to vote on and pass this treaty. Businesses such as Walmart, AT&T, Sprint, and Coca-Cola have urged passage of this treaty. In the days ahead we will hear from many more calling for its passage.

Now let me talk about a few of the issues that have been raised. First, I will talk about the issue of sovereignty. Some of our colleagues continue to express concern about some aspects, particularly with regard to sovereignty and reproductive health. Let me talk about sovereignty first, but I want to say this first of all: It is important to address these issues thoughtfully and respectfully. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a bipartisan fashion did so last week when it approved a series of new reservations, understandings, and declarations.

For those who don't know what that means, every treaty we adopt has what are called RUDs—reservations, understandings, and declarations. What are those? Those inform other free nations on how we will adopt this treaty, how under our laws and the Constitution we will comport with that treaty. Just about every treaty we have has some reservation or understanding or declaration.

So the Foreign Relations Committee adopted new reservations, declarations, and understandings, but concerns remain.

Last week my good friend the senior Senator from Utah spoke eloquently about his genuine concerns about the loss of or possible loss of U.S. sovereignty. In answering my question as to why this convention is different from the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor treaty, he expressed his fear that the disabilities convention would “threaten American sovereignty and self-government.” The Senator from Utah stated that the child labor convention we passed in 1999 is the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. The Senate adopted it in 1999. So the Senator from Utah says that convention gives authority to ratifying countries to determine whether they are in compliance with the convention while under the disabilities convention—the CRPD, as it is known—the U.N. determines whether ratifying countries are in compliance with their treaty obligations. On the Senate floor, my good friend from Utah stated that “the Disability Treaty gives the last word on whether a nation is in compliance to the UN, the child labor treaty leaves that entirely up to each nation.”

Well, the fact is that the review process of compliance is essentially identical in both the Worst Forms of Child Labor treaty that we adopted in 1999 and the CRPD that we are discussing right now.

Let me further explain that. When an ILO member—that is the International Labor Organization, under which that treaty was signed—when an ILO member state ratifies this convention, it is required to submit regular reports. Those reports are reviewed by the ILO’s independent committee of experts. Keep that phrase in mind—“committee of experts.” It is reviewed by them on the application of conventions and recommendations, and they are known as the committee of experts. The task of the committee of experts is to assess the extent to which the ratifying member’s legislation and practices are in conformity with the ratified treaty. This is an external review committee, and the United States has always supported this type of review. The process guarantees fairness and openness in the implementation of treaty obligations.

While it has been suggested that the United States should conduct its own compliance with treaty obligations, I ask my colleagues, would we be comfortable with all countries assessing their own compliance with important international standards? I don’t think so.

For example, take any treaty—take the START treaty, the arms control reduction treaty. Would we be content to say to Russia “Tell us how you are in compliance with that” and just accept their word for it? We wouldn’t do that. We wouldn’t do that with any

country with which we have a treaty. That is why there is always an external review process to see whether country A, B, C or D that has signed on to any treaty is in fact in compliance with it. You wouldn’t make a treaty and say: OK, Country X, tell us whether you are in compliance and we will just accept that. No one would do that. It goes back to Ronald Reagan’s phrase: Trust but verify. We will trust, but we want verification.

The Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty, the one we adopted here in 1999, has the same conclusions and recommendations as this committee of experts as far as external reviews. It is the same in the CRPD, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and sets up a “committee of experts,” just as it is under the Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty, to review whether a country is basically in compliance. Are they really implementing the treaty as they said in the treaty?

Again, we have the two committees of experts—the one in the CRPD and in the Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty, which was adopted here unanimously in 1999. The Senator from Utah supported that. The recommendations and conclusions of that committee of experts under the Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty that was set up in 1999 are not legally binding on the United States or any other country. Although these recommendations often have great moral weight and persuasive value, the findings cannot be imposed on any government. It is up to each ratifying member to determine whether and to what extent it will act upon those recommendations. That is the same as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This committee of experts will certainly go in and do external reviews of whether a country is in compliance or working to be in compliance. They may issue findings and conclusions and recommendations, but they are not binding on any country. They are not binding on the United States. Let me repeat: It is up to each ratifying member to determine whether and to what extent it will act upon those recommendations.

A review of practices is common whenever a nation undertakes an international obligation, whether it is by treaty or any other international agreement. This does not equate to forfeiture by the American people of our right to govern or of our sovereignty. It does not relate to any abandonment of our cultural and social values in America.

In terms of this external review of compliance, there is no substantive difference between the child labor convention we passed in 1999 and the U.N. disabilities convention that we hope to bring up. Both treaties have much the same reporting requirements, oversight mechanisms, recommendation process, and “committee of experts.” And just as in 1999 with that earlier treaty, the

United States is in no danger of losing any of its sovereignty with the disability treaty—none whatsoever. If we weren’t before, we aren’t now. These are recommendations.

Why should we be afraid of an external review by a committee of experts to see whether we are in compliance with this treaty on the rights of people with disabilities? It was modeled after the Americans with Disabilities Act, for crying out loud, and we were already in compliance. We are far ahead, quite frankly, of any other country. Why should we be afraid of any review of our laws and practices in terms of people with disabilities? We should not be. We ought to be proud of it. In fact, we ought to be proud of exporting the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Given these facts, I ask my colleagues: Why is it acceptable to have sufficient reservations to protect our sovereignty for a treaty about the worst forms of child labor and a treaty on torture and a treaty on degrading punishment and not be able to have sufficient reservations that protect our sovereignty when it comes to a treaty regarding people with disabilities? What is the difference? From my review of this issue, and the review of legal experts, there is no substantive difference to the threat to our sovereignty. As I have stated previously here, scores of Republican policymakers agree with me.

I have heard that some of my fellow Republicans are concerned about losing our sovereignty under this treaty. I will point out that former President George Herbert Walker Bush, who signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, is in strong support of this treaty. Are you telling me he doesn’t care about our sovereignty? I don’t think so. Former President Bush was a strong supporter. I kind of think he cares about our sovereignty. Since the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed, every former Republican leader of this Senate—I am talking about Senator Dole, Senator Lott, and Senator Frist—supported this treaty. I kind of think they care about our sovereignty a lot too. I know every one of them.

Dick Thornburgh, former Attorney General of the United States under George Herbert Walker Bush, is in strong support of this treaty. Don’t tell me he doesn’t know what is in the treaty. He knows every legal part of it. He cares deeply about our sovereignty, and he says this is no threat to our sovereignty whatsoever.

The American Legion is a big supporter. Are you telling me the American Legion commander and all of those veterans are not concerned about our sovereignty? You bet they are. They know this treaty and have read the treaty, and they said it doesn’t affect our sovereignty. Every veterans group supports this bill, and they do care about our sovereignty.

I hope we can lay that issue aside. This does not impinge or threaten our

sovereignty any more than other treaties. Every treaty we have signed has a reservation that basically says a treaty shall be applied in the United States in accordance with the Constitution as interpreted by the United States. That is in every treaty we sign, and it says, basically, we are sovereign and our Constitution is sovereign.

There was a court case called the Bond case which was recently decided, I think in May, by the Supreme Court. A lot of people wondered whether that would affect this treaty. It was a case that was brought up by the United States against a woman for violating the chemical weapons ban treaty because she had been trying to poison one of her husband's lovers or something like that. The Supreme Court said: That is nonsense. Get out of here. Those laws are covered by the State of Pennsylvania, not by a treaty. So that kind of put to rest any idea that somehow this treaty overrode our Constitution—our federalism—and the fact that these criminal laws are State laws. That just happened in May.

The other issue that has come up is reproductive health. Some of our colleagues have also voiced concern regarding the provision on sexual and reproductive health of women with disabilities as it was mentioned in article 25 of the treaty. For those not familiar with this provision, the treaty simply says “persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability.”

The article goes further and says that those countries ratifying the treaty shall “provide persons with disabilities with the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health . . .”

Critics of the treaty say this phrase “creates and expands rights to abortion.” That is not correct. This phrase has nothing to do with abortion. What it is about is equality and access.

Historically, people with disabilities have been disproportionately discriminated against when it comes to health care—especially women with disabilities around the world—because they are blind or have cerebral palsy or autism or any number of physical or mental impairments. They were often viewed as not being able to be mothers or wives or partners in a family.

In fact, because of this prejudiced attitude—which still exists in so many places around the world, and probably some places here in America too—women with disabilities were, and in many cases still are, denied such vital services as Pap smears, gynecological exams, breast cancer screenings, and cervical cancer screenings simply because they are disabled. Denying women with disabilities the same health prevention, screening, and intervention services that are provided to women without disabilities is bla-

tant discrimination, prejudicial, and unethical.

The entire purpose of article 25 of the U.N. convention is to address this prejudiced view of the world that has led to thousands of unnecessary deaths of women because they have not been afforded the same access to reproductive health care as women without disabilities. That is why that was put in there. It has nothing to do with abortion. Article 25 simply reflects the underlying principles of the treaty: equality and access for all. These same principles are the bedrock of our own Americans with Disabilities Act. It has nothing to do with abortion, but some people have whipped it up and said it does.

In some countries women with disabilities have been the most preyed upon. It is women with disabilities—physical and intellectual disabilities—who are the subject of maltreatment, mistreatment, and sexual abuse. All we are saying is they have to be treated the same as any other woman without a disability under the laws of that country. So if a country banned all abortions, that is their right to do so. They cannot then say: Oh, you may have an abortion if your unborn child is disabled. They can't do that. They can't make exceptions.

If they provide any kind of services, they can't say to one woman: Because you are not disabled, you get this service, but if you are disabled, you don't get it. No, no. Equality of access.

There are 71 countries that have absolute prohibitions, or significant restrictions on abortion, that have signed the treaty without reservations about reproductive health. Imagine that—71. They felt no harm would come from a reservation because they correctly determined that the treaty is no threat whatsoever to their sovereignty and their national laws limiting access to abortion.

Poland, a country with strict abortion limitations, was not going to sign this treaty because they were concerned about article 25. I will read the exact language of the reservation put in by the Nation of Poland:

The Republic of Poland understands that Article 23.1(b) and Article 25(a) shall not be interpreted in a way conferring an individual right to abortion or mandating state party to provide access thereto, unless that right is guaranteed by the national law.

Well, when they adopted that reservation, Poland signed it on the treaty. Poland's reservation states exactly what this treaty is about, a guarantee that women with disabilities will have access to the same health care services guaranteed to all other citizens by their national law. To say the treaty is about creating and expanding abortion rights is just plain wrong, and to make such a claim is utterly unfounded and unfair. It is unfair to women with disabilities around the globe. It is creating a false claim out of thin air with no other purpose but to prevent ratification of this important treaty.

Most of the concerns raised by my colleagues are serious concerns. They are also concerns that can be addressed by thoughtful reservations, understandings, and declarations to the treaty. Indeed, they have been addressed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. They have acted, and now it is time for the full Senate to act.

Let us bring the treaty to the floor of the Senate. Listen to Senators' concerns, address those concerns, and then vote on the treaty. We owe this to millions of Americans with disabilities—our veterans and others who want the same rights and access afforded by our own Americans with Disabilities Act. They want it to apply to the globe. We owe this to our veterans who want to be able to travel and pursue opportunities in other countries, knowing they can enjoy the same rights and access they have here in America.

Senator MARK KIRK from Illinois said it very eloquently in a press conference we had with the veterans groups last week. He said: “Our veterans fought for freedom around the globe. They ought to be able to move freely around the globe.”

We owe this to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, and countless companies that know that not only is this the right thing to do for veterans, it is the right thing to do for business. There are all kinds of markets opening all around the world for people with disabilities—new software, new kinds of equipment, new devices that are helping people with disabilities live more full and meaningful lives. A lot of that was developed here in America. I know our businesses would like to be involved with this treaty, to be able to be involved in raising the level of accessibility and opportunity for people with disabilities around the globe. Scores of religious groups want to see this treaty ratified.

In closing, it is time to bring this to the floor. As I say, I know Members have serious concerns and those concerns should be addressed. I believe the Foreign Relations Committee has addressed them. If not, then let's have a discussion about how we meet those reservations. We shouldn't just say I don't like the U.N., so therefore we shouldn't adopt it.

I think there are some people who maybe don't like the U.N. OK, fine. I remember when we passed the convention on the worst forms of child labor. I was in Geneva with President Clinton when he signed it. We came back, re-submitted it to the Senate, and I went to see Senator Jesse Helms to ask him to move this. There was probably no one in my 30 years of history in the Senate who disliked the United Nations more than Jesse Helms of North Carolina. So he went on to tell me just how bad the United Nations was but he would bring the treaty to the committee and have hearings and a markup. He called me as the first witness. I always appreciated that.

So Senator Helms, the chairman of the committee—the Republicans were

in charge of the Senate at the time—brought the convention to the committee and reported it out. I remember him saying one time he didn't like the United Nations, but if this makes them do something good for a change, he would be all right with it, and it passed the floor unanimously.

I say to those who maybe don't like the United Nations: Fine, that is their right; perhaps they have good and sufficient reasons not to like the United Nations. I have some problems with the United Nations myself at certain times with some of the things they do or don't do. But I see this in the same light as the convention on the worst forms of child labor. This makes countries change for the better through persuasion, not through mandate. No country has to change their laws because of what the committee on experts says, but through moral weight, through persuasion, through working with other countries under this umbrella on the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. If this causes countries to change their policies and make life better for people with disabilities around the globe, shouldn't we do it, even though we may not like the United Nations? As Jesse Helms said, if this makes them do something good for a change, we ought to be for it.

So I hope colleagues will listen to the veterans groups who are for it. All business groups I have met with support it strongly. Religious groups and disability groups are united behind this. Listen to our former Republican leaders, including former President George Herbert Walker Bush, President Bush; former Senator Bob Dole, the majority leader of the Senate, worked his heart out on this. He cares about sovereignty. He knows this is not going to take away our sovereignty. Every former Republican leader of the Senate—Senator JOHN MCCAIN—colleagues tell me Senator JOHN MCCAIN doesn't care about our sovereignty? I happen to think he cares a lot about our sovereignty. He gave a lot of his life protecting our sovereignty. MARK KIRK, Senator KELLY AYOTTE, Senator JOHN BARRASSO, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator COLLINS are all strong supporters of this.

I have been involved in disability policy since I first got here in 1975, starting in the House. Everything I have ever worked on, including Education of All Handicapped Children Act, the Television Decoder Circuitry Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA Act Amendments later on in 2008—these were all nonpartisan. They didn't devolve into any kind of partisan issue. Now, that didn't mean that everybody voted for it, but it passed overwhelmingly with both Republican and Democrat support. That ought to be the case with this too. Yes, we should address the legitimate and honest concerns people have about home schooling, abortion, and sovereignty. I believe we can do

that with reservations, but I want every Senator to know that nothing this committee on experts will ever do under the CRPD takes precedence over our Constitution or over our laws. It does nothing to take away our sovereignty, and we can spell that out just as we have in every other treaty we have signed in the past.

So I hope we can bring this to the floor, and I hope we can have a discussion. I hope we can work these areas out and have strong support from both sides to pass this treaty and help change the face of the globe as we have changed the face of America for people with disabilities.

I see the Senator from Wyoming is on the floor. I was listing all the people who support the treaty, and one of the strongest supporters of this treaty from the very beginning has been Senator JOHN BARRASSO from Wyoming. I inadvertently, going through the names, left it off, but I see him here, and I apologize because he has been such a strong advocate for people with disabilities in this country and a strong advocate for people with disabilities in the world. I personally want to publicly thank Senator BARRASSO for his great leadership on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. I thank my colleague from Iowa for his kind comments. We have worked on this issue, and I do this as a physician who has taken care of patients in Wyoming for a quarter of a century. I have so many friends and there are so many folks who have had extra challenges in life, and I was happy to stand with Senator Dole and Senator MCCAIN and others in this effort. So I thank my colleague for his comments.

HEALTH CARE

As a physician, I come to the floor today as I have week after week since the President's health care law was passed because I have many concerns about the way this health care law is impacting families in my home State of Wyoming, as well as across the country—people who find out their rates are going up, they are paying higher deductibles, higher copays, higher premiums. They feel the government is in control, Washington is in control rather than them, when Washington decides if the insurance policy they have had and that worked for them is something they will be able to keep, and many times they weren't because the President's law said no, it wasn't good enough for them, even though the families in Wyoming are better able to make the decision about what is better and more important for them. They don't like it when the President tells them they need to buy insurance they don't want or need or can afford, in many ways, with a long list of provisions that Washington mandates be included.

I hear every week, as I did last weekend in Wyoming, from folks who have had work hours cut, resulting in lower

take-home pay because of the impact of part of the law that resulted in bipartisan opposition that says the work week is 30 hours. So people who are working part-time have had their hours cut to below 30 hours and have lower take-home pay.

I talked to ER doctors at home and around the country where I have trained and where I have gone to medical school. The Wall Street Journal even wrote about it last month: "ER visits rise despite the law. Health act isn't cutting volume." On the front page the lead paragraph said: "Early evidence suggests that emergency rooms have become busier since the Affordable Care Act expanded insurance coverage this year, despite the law's goal of reducing unnecessary care in ERs." It says: Democrats who designed that law hoped it would do the opposite, but that hasn't been the case.

I heard last weekend in Wyoming the story about all of these fake applications that—actually I guess the Government Accountability Office said let's see how well this works; is the Obama health care law working? So they made up 10 fake applications, sent them in, and they found out that actually a dozen fictitious applicants, online or by phone, using invalid or missing Social Security numbers—this is the Washington Post writing about this, but it was in stories across the country—invalid or missing Social Security numbers, inaccurate citizenship information—all but one of the fake applicants ended up getting subsidized coverage.

So here we are, a health care law that is supposed to provide a number of things, including integrity, and we find out that when the Government Accountability Office says, let's just put in a number of applications and see what happens, it is not working.

The administration set up the Health Insurance Marketplace in ways—we are hearing from the Government Accountability Act—that leave it vulnerable to fraud and a waste of taxpayer money. That is what we are dealing with in this health care law.

I know many Senators are preparing to head home, and they will be traveling around their home States in the month of August. I expect every Senator who goes home will hear from people in their State about very damaging side effects that so many people across America are feeling from the President's health care law. I hear it every weekend, but I hear it when I travel as well. As chairman of the Republican policy committee, one of my responsibilities is to study how policies that come out of Washington, such as the President's health care law, affect people all across America, and that is what I try to look at. So in looking around the country, here is what I found in Louisiana.

Last month, the Shreveport Times in Louisiana had an op-ed written by a Dr. Regina Fakner. The headline was: "Washington ties doctors' hands"—not

the doctor, not the hospital, not the patients—“Washington ties doctors’ hands.” The doctor who wrote this op-ed says she has practiced pediatric medicine in Shreveport since the early 1990s.

We need pediatricians. We need people to take care of children. We need primary care physicians. There is a gross shortage of nurses, of physicians, of additional health care personnel.

She says health care was and is impossible to navigate because it is wrapped in layers of red tape and government regulations. This doctor knows America’s health care system needed reform. We needed to do something.

That is what Republicans here in the Senate have been saying too: We need to do something. The American people wanted reform that gave them access to high-quality, affordable care. That is not what people got.

As this doctor writes in the *Shreveport Times*: ObamaCare only adds to the mess, she said. This is a pediatrician who takes care of lots of children. She says “patients and health care providers suffer for it.” The government does not suffer. The Senate Democrats who voted for it do not suffer. Patients and health care providers are suffering. She puts patients first, which is what doctors do.

The President’s health care law has added tens of thousands of pages of red tape and Washington mandates—thousands of pages of red tape and mandates. The doctor says in her op-ed that “this one-size-fits all approach limits patient freedom, while picking their pockets.” This is a doctor who talks to her patients every day. She says she has seen for herself in Louisiana how Washington is standing between her and her patients. Nothing should be between a patient and that person’s doctor—nothing—not a government bureaucrat, not an insurance company bureaucrat, no one. The doctor-patient relationship is one that is sacred.

This doctor’s experience is typical of what I am hearing and what we are hearing from all across the country from doctors.

Every Democrat in the Senate voted to pass this terrible health care law. President Obama says Democrats who voted for the health care law should, as he said, “forcefully defend and be proud of” the law.

Is the President proud that patients and health care providers such as this pediatrician are suffering because of his health care law and all of its dangerous side effects? Where are the Democrats ready to forcefully defend standing between Louisiana doctors and their patients? Where are they? I do not see them coming to the floor.

Democrats in Washington were so eager to pass the President’s health care law that they made a lot of promises, and they were not true. They said people could keep their insurance. That was not true. It seems as though 5 mil-

lion people received letters saying their insurance had been canceled, in spite of what the President had promised them.

People in Wyoming, people in Louisiana, people all across the country lost the insurance they had because it did not include all the unnecessary coverage the President’s health care law mandated.

Democrats said people could keep their doctor. That was not true. People in Wyoming, Louisiana, all across America lost their doctor because the new, narrow provider networks made people lose the doctor they had worked with, who treated them, who treated members of their family, whom they knew and trusted.

The President said the American people would save \$2,500 per year, per family on insurance premiums. Democrats in the Senate who voted for the law promised the same. I remember them standing here. I can see one after another saying that. It was not true.

People all across America are paying more than ever because of the health care law. Well, people in Louisiana specifically, where this pediatrician lives and works and takes care of patients, are paying a lot more.

There is an article from the *Associated Press* newspaper in Lake Charles, LA, last Thursday: “Health insurance price increases could top 10 percent for thousands in Louisiana.” That was the headline on the front page above the fold.

According to the article, Blue Cross—that is the largest health insurer in Louisiana—is planning to raise rates by more than 18 percent next year.

Is President Obama ready to forcefully defend these premium increases because of the law? He is the one who said premiums were going to go down. The American people see what has happened. The President did not say, well, they are just not going to kind of go up as fast. He said they were going to go down \$2,500 per year, per family. So we are seeing large increases all across the country.

Are the Democrats in the Senate proud that families in Louisiana are getting hit with another 18-percent premium increase in some locations? Higher premiums, higher copays, higher deductibles—all to pay for coverage that people do not want, do not need, cannot afford, but were mandated to have.

People in Louisiana were already paying more because of the President’s health care law. There is a recent study which found that health insurance premiums for an average 27-year-old man in Louisiana are over 100 percent higher this year than last year—double, double this year from last year. That is before they were forced into the ObamaCare exchange. Premiums for an average 64-year-old woman are \$2,000 more this year than they were last year. These are very expensive side effects for families in Louisiana as a result of the President’s health care law.

What does the President have to say about these outrageous rate hikes that he caused because of his health care law? What does he have to say to the people suffering from the costly side effects of the health care law?

Well, the President went to Kansas City, MO, in the last couple days. I think when he travels outside of Washington, the President should actually meet with doctors who live in those communities, doctors such as this woman, this pediatrician, who practices in Louisiana. He should sit down with the women whose children are patients of doctors such as this one, talk to the parents of these children about what the impact of his health care law has been on them.

The President should hear directly—directly—from these people about the devastating side effects of his health care law and how it is hurting them and hurting their families.

Every Democrat in the Senate voted for this health care law—every one of them.

Where are the Democrats willing to forcefully defend these costly and damaging side effects of their health care law? Democrats do not want to defend this terrible law and all of its devastating side effects.

Republicans are going to keep talking about this law. We are going to keep standing for American families who are being hurt by this law. We are going to continue to come to the floor to talk about stories that we hear from back home, what we hear from families in our home States, people who have lost their insurance and end up having to get insurance they do not need or do not want or are never going to use that is much more expensive than what they had before because the insurance that worked for their families the President said was not good enough.

We are going to continue to come and talk about the families who have seen their take-home pay go down because instead of being able to take that money home and working the hours they want, they have had their hours cut, not because they were not needed at work, not because there was not a demand for their services, but because of the health care law that says anybody working over 30 hours a week is then considered full time, and by the President’s mandate, they have to be supplied with health insurance at work.

So what happens? Businesses—and it is not just businesses—what we are seeing are school districts, counties, county governments, the whole State of Virginia—the different governing bodies—as to any part-time workers, they are saying: Well, we have to keep them below 30 hours because we cannot afford the insurance for these folks. So these folks are saying: Well, I lose my take-home pay. And the reason is the President’s health care law. School districts are having to say: Well, we can keep them above 30 hours and then have to pay for their insurance, but

then we are going to have to fire a number of reading teachers, fire the coach, fire the bus driver, fire someone else who works in the school.

That is not a way to help people in a community. That is not good for anybody's health. But those are the side effects of the President's health care law—a bill that so few people actually read before they voted for it because, as NANCY PELOSI famously said: First you have to pass it before you get to find out what is in it.

So we are going to continue to talk about patient-centered reforms, reforms that get people the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower cost. We are going to talk about restoring people's freedom, freedom to buy health insurance that works for them and their families because they know what is best for them. It is not Washington controlled; it is local decisions, families making decisions for themselves. And we are going to talk about giving people choices, not Washington mandates. Republicans are going to keep offering real solutions for better health care without all of these tragic side effects.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, there is a long list of items on the Senate agenda that are important to our country, including reforming the VA health system, addressing the crisis at our border, and ensuring funding is available for improvements to our roads and bridges.

While it may seem as though other issues are on the back burner, they are not. I want Arkansans to know I hear you loudly and clearly about your dislike for ObamaCare. Recent court rulings confirm ObamaCare is unworkable. Americans understand how the law infringes on our rights. The Supreme Court reserved the right for business owners to object to overbearing government mandates that would violate our religious beliefs.

The promises that were made were not true—like the law will lower our premiums. The reality is ObamaCare drives up health insurance premiums and copays, and that is what hurts our wallets.

Sean from Hackett, AR, wrote to me about a blood test his fiancée needed to help diagnose her illness. In the past, she had a copayment and the rest of the bill was paid by her insurance. But Sean wrote:

Normally it would only cost \$25 for a copayment. Now she received a \$200 bill.

You remember the other promises, such as you can keep your doctors and Medicare will not be cut.

Cyndi, who lives in rural Arkansas, detailed the problem she is having with Medicare because of ObamaCare. The changes made through ObamaCare have cost her both time and money. "Not everyone lives in the big city where clinics, doctors and hospitals are easily available," she wrote. "Many of

these facilities have closed their doors or the doctors are not accepting Medicare patients."

Connie, a registered nurse in Arkansas, told me that she is sick of ObamaCare and sees the problems her patients and family have to deal with under the law, which includes losing their doctors and the use of the local hospital. She wrote that the cost of the insurance payments increased and customers have to pay such high deductibles that they cannot afford to go to the doctor.

These failed promises are negatively impacting Arkansans. The ugly reality is people are struggling under this law. Amanda's story is what so many middle-class families are experiencing. Her family is already trying to make ends meet, but she says ObamaCare is not affordable. "There is no way humanly possible that my family can afford a monthly fee of \$654," she wrote.

ObamaCare costs American taxpayers more than \$2 trillion, but like in the case with Amanda's family, health care is more unaffordable.

I believe we need to start over by creating real reforms that lower costs, increase choice, and eliminate Washington's control of our health care. We need health care reform, but ObamaCare is not the answer. We need to transition the employer-based private insurance market toward one that allows for flexibility, choice, portability, and fairness.

Let's allow small business owners to pool together to purchase group insurance. Let's allow individuals to purchase insurance across State lines to increase competition. Let's expand health savings accounts and flexible savings accounts. Let's address medical malpractice reform and prevent lawsuit abuse.

I want you to know that unraveling ObamaCare and starting over is at the top of my agenda because health care needs to be much more affordable than it currently is under ObamaCare.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I join my colleagues here to talk about some of the stories we are hearing from the people we work for. I have been to the floor many times talking about the stories we are getting from families, from moms, from people trying to get that first job, from people who suddenly are no longer working the 40 hours they used to work because of the impact this has had on the 40-hour workweek.

Let me mention, as I am here between Senator BOOZMAN and Senator JOHANNIS, just two recent contacts we have had. We have had one from Joanne in Fulton, MO. She said her premiums went up from \$110 a month to \$311 a month—an increase of \$201 a month. She said:

Our monthly premium has gone up to \$311 a month. It is a large increase for us—it is nearly triple of what we paid before my hus-

band's retirement. It really takes a bite out of our budget.

She believes this would not have happened without what is happening in our health care system. I had a list of employees from one of our counties in Missouri the other day. Because it is a small county, they rate their employees. Each one of them pays a different premium, even though the county helps some with that premium. Everybody who is over 50 had their premium—that is going to be the premium next year—at least doubled. If you were 19, 20, 21, your premium was about what it had been the year before. If you were 51 or 61, your premium was twice what it had been before.

Then we got a letter from Jerrold of Kansas City, who said he has seen significant increases in his out-of-pocket costs, both for what he pays in premiums and what he pays for prescriptions. Jerrold said that instead of retiring at 65, he has had to keep working to help pay for his medical and prescription costs. Jerrold says:

I started paying \$131.00 a month for health and \$31 for prescriptions. As soon as ObamaCare was phased in my premiums went up to \$149.00 for health coverage and my prescription plan went to \$49.

Like many other people, he expects his plan to go up even more next year.

So these are real impacts on the lives of families, people who are paying more for the care they get and finding the choices they have as to where they get their care are less than they have ever been before. These stories keep coming. This is affecting the health care needs and the health care of individuals and families. We need to do something about it.

I thank Senator JOHANNIS for letting me tell those two stories before he took time to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I was here during the days when the Affordable Care Act was being debated, if you could call it that. I was here during the time when the effort of Senate Democrats was simply to keep 60 together so they could pass this bill under any circumstances. There were all kinds of promises made as to what this bill was going to do.

President Obama himself, when he talked about his plan for health care, said: My plan is going to reduce your premiums by \$2,500 a year.

But I could go on and on. I could spend the whole afternoon talking about the promises that were made. Now it is time though to take stock and determine whether those promises were in fact kept. The people of our States tell that story. A Nebraskan from the central part of the State wrote to me recently and said this: He and his wife are losing the health insurance they have had for over 21 years. Their premiums had doubled, threatening their retirement savings.

He went on to say, "ObamaCare has ruined the lives we planned and we

worked so hard for." So let me compare what this gentleman from Central Nebraska has seen with the promises that were made. Remember that promise the President made over and over again. Members on the Democratic side of this body made the same promise. The promise was, if you like your plan, you are going to get to keep it—and the promise that your health insurance premiums would go down.

This gentleman from Central Nebraska is living proof that those promises were not kept.

Another Central Nebraskan wrote to me about the effect of the health care law on his wife's job and on his family: "Because of the ACA she was cut back to less than 25 hours a week and lost our health insurance."

He went on to say that their new premium is twice as much as the plan they liked and the one they lost because of ObamaCare.

So you see again we have a situation where we can compare reality with the promises that were made. The promises that your premium would go down, that you could keep the plan you had if you liked it went out the window for those two families.

A small construction company from the western part of Nebraska shared this with me: They will be paying an additional \$5,000 in ObamaCare fees this year. They expect to dedicate over 52 hours to report and comply. To them this is incredibly frustrating because these fees and hours of compliance have no direct benefit on their employees, their employees' benefits or their business mission. It is just the Federal Government has now taken this small company and forced upon them additional costs and additional compliance requirements.

One of the most compelling stories comes from the mother of a family in Omaha, NE. She explained in her letter that they qualify for a subsidy on the exchange, but the options on healthcare.gov were still unaffordable for this family. The lowest cost plan had a \$9,600 deductible. Does the Presiding Officer know what a \$9,600 deductible means to most Americans and to most Nebraskans? It means that if they have the kind of illness or accident or whatever it is that requires significant medical care and if they have to eat through a \$9,600 deductible, that means bankruptcy.

When considering this massive deductible, she wrote to me and said, "It makes more sense to put more money away in savings and just pay for the whole doctor's visit." Due to the high cost of plans and their other expenses, she said, "We are forced to make the choice to go with no insurance."

I was on the floor during this debate. Democrat after Democrat promised: You are going to have insurance now, promised that premiums would go down, promised that if you liked your plan, you got to keep it. Unfortunately, that has not been the case.

With the new enrollment period on the horizon, the stories will of course

continue to roll in. The supporters of ObamaCare, just as when this bill was being debated, would like us to believe their train wreck has been cleaned up, the train cars are no longer lying next to the tracks, and this law is finally on track. But that is not consistent with recent headlines, reality, court decisions, inspectors general reports or just the average American who takes the time to write to us.

Politico reported earlier this month: "Most state health insurance rates for 2015 are scheduled to be approved by early fall, and most are likely to rise."

This law should have never been passed, but now it is time to scrap this law and its Washington-knows-best mandates; instead, work toward solutions that truly do address the cost of care and give Americans the flexibility to choose a plan that makes sense for their families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, we are now several months into the implementation of ObamaCare. The dust has settled. People from my State, Hoosiers, continue to see the reality of this law. Unfortunately what they see is not what they had hoped for. Earlier this month a news report revealed that health insurance rates will increase fairly dramatically in "most States"—not just a few, not some but most. They said they are likely to rise in the coming year.

Unfortunately, my State is one of those States. Unfortunately, "likely to rise" is an understatement. "Dramatic increase" would be a better phrase. The recent headline from the Indianapolis Business Journal reads, "Indiana's ObamaCare rates for 2015 are all over the map." The first sentence of the article states, "Initial 2015 premiums filed for the ObamaCare exchanges in Indiana range from as high as a 46-percent hike to as low as a 9-percent cut."

The article continues: "Those are the average changes in premiums proposed by the four health insurers that sold plans on the ObamaCare exchanges for 2014." One of those insurance companies providing health care to the State exchange we now learn is requesting rates that range from a 31-percent to a 59-percent increase in premiums. So the picture ahead for those who have been incorporated into ObamaCare in my State is the shock of double-digit and significant double-digit increases in their health care costs, not to mention that under their current plans they are paying higher deductibles, which result in higher costs they first have to put out before they are reimbursed. But now there is an increase of significance for their premiums going into next year.

I know the majority leader said all the stories we have been telling about real people and their reactions to the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare, are fiction. I was on the floor when he said that. We all did a double take because

we have been receiving thousands—literally thousands—of emails, physical mail, and phone calls. The phones are ringing off the hook about people alarmed over what they were experiencing signing up for ObamaCare, and, secondly, what the terms were going to be.

So we collected all of these. We have hundreds if not thousands of real live examples, not made up, not fiction, basically describing the impact on them and their families as Obamacare was put in place. Let me state one of those incidents. I will use just the first name. I do not want to put this person at risk for some kind of pushback. But Charles from Auburn, IN, emailed me and shared that his wife had just received a cancellation notice from her insurance provider. Charles said the notice indicated that the wife—he said:

They said my wife's policy did not comply with the requirements of ObamaCare and the replacement policy—

Which she would have to take if she wanted the coverage.

—would be \$695.38 a month as compared to her current policy premium of \$316 a month.

By my math, that is over a 100-percent increase. That is more than a doubling of what he had paid before. Also, the notice said, "Your deductible will be \$6,000." That is every medical expense that she has will have to be paid for before Charles and his wife can get any reimbursement. Now I wish these stories were fiction, but unfortunately I receive emails such as this on a regular basis.

Thousands of Hoosiers have lost their coverage that they liked, that they chose and relied on because of the implementation of Obamacare.

We have been talking about replacing this act with something far more sensible and something far more reasonable. Yet we have been denied the opportunity to go forward with offering any kind of amendments, modifications, repeal or any other process. That is unfortunate but not just for us. It is unfortunate for the country and unfortunate for all of those people whom we represent who would like to see modifications and a much more affordable and much better range of choices for the provisions of health care.

The 2,000-page ObamaCare law was sold to the American people on what now has turned out to be false pretenses. I believe we owe it to them to replace this law with some common-sense solutions that increase access to quality care without increasing costs. It is doable if we had the opportunity to do it. Unfortunately, we have been denied that, but the American people are speaking. I think they will continue to speak about the need for those reforms that will have to take place if we are going to provide affordable care for Americans.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WILDFIRE DISASTER FUNDING

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today there are wildfires burning across the West. I wish to speak for a few moments about some very important work that Chair MIKULSKI and her colleagues have done on the Appropriations Committee that is really built on a bipartisan proposal that Senator CRAPO, our colleague from Idaho, and I, with a large group of bipartisan Senators, are proposing to change the way in which forests are managed and reduce the likelihood of some of—what I call—these infernos. These are fires that are bigger, hotter, more damaging, and they act like a wrecking ball pounding at the rural West.

What has happened over the years is that the preventive efforts in the West in terms of our forests are underfunded. There isn't enough effort that goes to hazardous fuels management and thinning and programs that reduce the huge load of fuels on the forest floor.

Just this past weekend I was in Medford in rural southern Oregon and in Portland, meeting with the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. They told me about the problems that Senator CRAPO and I are trying to address in bipartisan legislation that Chairman MIKULSKI has included in her appropriations bill.

The heart of the problem is that these prevention efforts are underfunded. When it gets very dry and very hot, and particularly when there is a lightning strike or a series of lightning strikes, what we have is an enormous fire in a hurry. All through the West there is an effort to try to share resources, and communities work together and try to share efforts—airial resources and others—but the reality is there is not enough money in the agency's budgets to put out those huge fires.

What happens then is the bureaucracy borrows from the prevention fund in order to have funds to put the fire out. Then we are on our way to two bigger problems. We are on our way again to a lack of preventive dollars because of this fire borrowing. Some of our colleagues call it fire robbery, but I am trying to be diplomatic. It is fire borrowing, I guess, if we want to be diplomatic. But we underfund prevention. Then, of course, we don't have enough money needed for suppression as well.

This trend that I have described is getting more and more pronounced and more and more serious. So what Senator CRAPO and I are proposing to do in order to put the focus on wildfire prevention is in effect to say that the most serious fires, especially in the West—the kind of fires that are dominating our TV screens night after night—1 percent of those infernos

ought to be treated like the major natural disasters they are and would be funded in the same way as other natural disasters, such as floods and hurricanes.

Specifically, the legislation that Senator CRAPO and I and others are advancing would move any spending above 70 percent of the 10-year rolling average for fire suppression outside of the Agency's baseline budget by making these additional costs eligible to be funded under a separate disaster account.

So far this year, more than 33,000 fires have burned a total of 1.6 million acres nationwide, and the numbers are growing by the minute.

Just this past weekend, visiting with our wonderfully talented folks at the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management in Medford, they were telling me that their concern is that in southern Oregon it is very hot and very dry and there can be lightning strikes. They were concerned about the prospect of another Biscuit Fire, which we had at the beginning of the century and which burned 500,000 acres—really, our most destructive fire ever. That was what was on the mind of the firefighting professionals when I visited with them in Medford last Friday.

This year the administration already expects to exceed its firefighting budget by more than \$600 million, and that isn't going to surprise anybody in the West. In 8 of the past 10 years, the Forest Service has spent more than its wildfire suppression budget, requiring the Agency to engage in what I have just called "fire borrowing" to cover these wildfire suppression costs. The reality is that, in many cases, the borrowed monies are not repaid. In the cases where the funds are repaid, it is only through costly supplemental spending bills that Congress has to enact or by taking money out of future years' budgets.

So what we have is this kind of borrowing that is extraordinarily disruptive to the ongoing work the Forest Service and their contractors are in the middle of performing. And, I might add, what all this does is it makes it more expensive in the future and makes it less likely that we are going to get the important prevention work that is so necessary.

In our part of the world, I think it is fair to say that westerners are coming to consider that the Forest Service charged with managing the Nation's forests for multiple uses and users has really become something that more appropriately should be called the U.S. Fire Service, because in effect that is what this agency is month after month using more of its resources on.

What I was told in Portland last Saturday, having visited rural Oregon on Friday and Portland on Saturday—the specialists in Portland on Saturday told me that the fire season is 70 days longer than it was until recently.

So we have this challenge of more fuel load built up on the forest floor,

drier conditions, lightning strikes, and fire seasons lasting longer. That is a prescription for trouble in the rural West, and in fact that is what we are seeing.

My hope is that, as a result of the work that Senator CRAPO and I and others are seeking to do, we can have more hazardous fuel treatment, more preventive work that will be effective at reducing fire risks and lowering costs.

A fire in central Oregon this year slowed to a halt when it reached treated areas outside the city of Bend. I saw that when I was in Bend looking at the difference between treated areas—this preventative kind of approach—and areas that were untreated.

A study published by Northern Arizona University's Ecological Restoration Institute concluded that treatments "can reduce fire severity" and "successfully reduce fire risk to communities."

Based on Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture analysis, 1 percent of wildland fires represents 30 percent of firefighting costs. That is what Senator CRAPO and I want to address in our bill.

What we are saying is, for that 1 percent, the 1 percent that is really driving up costs, let's handle those fires as what they are, which are natural disasters. And then, instead of raiding the prevention money to put the fires out, we will be able to cause less problems in the future because we will have the kind of preventive work that is so effective that I saw in Bend and elsewhere.

It seems to me, as we see in a lot of parts of government, there is a choice. We can spend modest sums up front on prevention in order to generate significant savings down the road. If we have \$1 to spend, we ought always to try to put it in prevention and then target scarce resources to fight fires. To the greatest extent possible, we must target disaster money on those infernos that are bigger and hotter and more damaging and cost about 30 percent of the overall budget.

In summary, the legislation that Senator CRAPO and I and others are pursuing would fund the true catastrophic fire events under separate natural disaster programs. Routine wildland firefighting costs would be funded through the normal budget and appropriations process.

Oversight hearings, letters, and numerous discussions with the administration and colleagues helped to produce the approach that Chairman MIKULSKI has included. I remember not long ago being in Idaho, being hosted by our colleagues Senator CRAPO and Senator RISCH. We had Members from across the political spectrum. Congressman LABRADOR from the other body was there. We had progressive Members. This is something that is common sense. It just makes sense to make sure that the small number of

fires, these infernos which are dominating our news accounts, that we handle them from the natural disaster fund. Then let's put most of the money and allow the Forest Service, BLM, and professionals to put their focus and their resources where we can prevent as much of the problem as possible—and prevent it early on.

That is the point of our legislation. We are very grateful to Chairman MIKULSKI for her effort. I thank Senator CRAPO for his support. He and I have been at this with Senator RISCH, Senator MERKLEY, Senator CANTWELL, Senator MURRAY, Senator BENNET—Western Senators and others such as Senator BALDWIN and MANCHIN that understand the importance of national forests. Senator UDALL has been doing important work on this in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. All of the Western Senators are of like mind here. Chair MIKULSKI recognizes what we are looking at and the prospect that we would be leaving this week without this change to make better use of our resources. I call it legislative malpractice because we have an opportunity in a bipartisan way to make a real difference here. If our colleagues are outside the West, I would say it is a chance to spend scarce dollars more effectively. For us in the West, it is nothing short of survival.

Mr. President, I yield the floor

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

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I say to my colleague from Oregon, his leadership, along with Senator CRAPO, on this firefighting budgeting and fire borrowing issue—that is really what it is—is critical to all of us in Western States. Every single one of us has seen communities touched by these catastrophic wildfires as our climate is changing and we see fires get bigger and bigger. But we have solutions, and the solutions are bipartisan and common sense.

I can only hope that we are able to move quickly to make these budget changes. They will make a real difference for all of us up and down in the Intermountain West.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I thank all of my colleagues who have been vocal about their commitment to address the Central American refugee crisis along our southern border.

We have heard the stories of unimaginable violence, of corruption, of instability in places such as Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala—factors that are driving many children to the United States and to other neighboring countries in Central America. In some cases these children are literally fleeing for their lives.

Our Nation has responded with a spectrum of attitudes toward immigrants ranging from hostile to downright hospitable. It is my hope that our attitude as a nation continues to be defined by the image of the Statue of Liberty and not by shouting protesters

holding signs labeled “Return to Sender” as they stand in front of buses full of Central American children.

I recently received a letter from a constituent in my home State of New Mexico whose grandmother, as a result of extreme poverty, left her family and emigrated by herself to the United States from Ireland at the age of 14 at the end of World War I. Brendan said that when he was growing up, his grandmother frequently shared this Irish proverb with him. She said, “Courage is the trust that your feet will bring you to where your heart is.” Brendan asked that I continue to remind my colleagues that the immigrants who arrive at our borders come by foot following their hearts and do so in the hope of building a better life.

Last week I sat down with Ambassadors from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, and we discussed how our Nation's approach to stemming the influx of unaccompanied children to the United States must be collaborative and get at the root cause of the dire situation in these countries. With out-of-control drug cartels and nearly 90 murders for every 100,000 persons annually, Honduras now has the highest murder rate in the world. Similarly, El Salvador and Guatemala have the world's fourth and fifth highest murder rates. There is no easy solution to these problems, but Congress has an opportunity and a responsibility to act on pragmatic measures before time and resources run out.

Secretary Johnson has warned that Immigration and Customs Enforcement will run out of money in August and Customs and Border Protection will run out of money in mid-September if nothing is done. With resources already running scarcer by the day, Customs and Border Protection won't have any other choice but to direct border agents away from other sectors of our southern border and into the Rio Grande Valley.

So let's be clear. Those who would choose not to support this emergency supplemental are putting our border security at risk. New Mexico, California, Arizona, and West Texas will all see fewer agents and fewer resources on our border if the House and Senate do not act.

This is no way to address a crisis. We must pass the Senate's emergency supplemental funding bill introduced by Senate Appropriations Committee chairwoman BARBARA MIKULSKI. This emergency funding bill includes important resources to help stem the current refugee crisis while continuing to treat these refugee children humanely as required by the law. This situation is an emergency, and we need emergency funding.

Passing the emergency supplemental would also allow the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice to deploy additional enforcement resources, including immigration judges, Immigration and Customs Enforcement attorneys, and asylum officers, as well as

expanding the use of the alternatives to detention program.

Instead of ensuring that we provide these necessary resources to address this crisis on our border, some of our colleagues are actually proposing that the solution is to actually weaken Federal child trafficking law and to roll back protections for unaccompanied child refugees seeking asylum. The proposal introduced by our colleague from Texas Senator CORNYN would weaken the 2008 William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Act and short-circuit justice in order to deport refugee children faster and without the due process afforded under our law.

According to a poll released Tuesday by the Public Relations Research Institute, 69 percent of those surveyed believe that U.S. authorities should treat the children as refugees and allow them to stay in the country if it is determined it is not safe for them to return to their home country.

Some would use this crisis to eliminate crucial child trafficking protection, punish some of our Nation's brightest DREAM Act students, and promote a narrow border-enforcement-only agenda. I believe we are a better nation than that, frankly.

Let's step back and remember that just 1 year ago the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill that included provisions to further strengthen the border but that would also protect refugee children and crack down on smugglers and transnational criminal organizations. Notably, the bill was widely supported by both Democrats and Republicans in the Senate. Public support and good economics have not been enough to convince House Republican leaders to hold a vote on immigration reform, but they cannot turn a blind eye to the current humanitarian crisis along our southern border.

The bipartisan Senate bill that passed more than a year ago includes provisions for family reunification and for the protection of children who have been the victims of human trafficking. The bill also includes measures that would address refugee and asylum laws.

The public, including faith-based organizations, educators, local elected officials, small businesses, and many others, overwhelmingly supports this balanced approach to immigration reform. However, here we are more than 1 year later, and House Republicans are still unwilling to even hold an up-or-down vote on the Senate's proposal. Each day the House fails to act on serious solutions to our broken immigration system is another day our Nation and our economy suffer.

The Congressional Budget Office reported that last year's bipartisan immigration reform bill that passed this body would reduce the budget deficit by \$197 billion—billion with a “b”—over the next decade and about \$700 billion in the second decade. In a companion analysis, CBO also estimated

that fixing our broken immigration system would increase our country's GDP—our economic output—by 3.3 percent in 10 years and 5.4 percent after 20 years.

The evidence is clear. Immigration reform is good for our economy, good for our workforce, and it is good for the future of the American middle class.

I am familiar with the promise America represents to its families. My father fled from Nazi Germany in the 1930s as a young boy. As the son of an immigrant, I know how hard immigrants work and how much they believe in this country and how much they are willing to give back to our Nation. Those of us who represent border communities understand the difficult challenges we face, but there are solutions before us that are pragmatic, bipartisan, and that uphold rather than compromise our American values.

In the short term we must approve the Senate's emergency supplemental bill, and in the long-term we should partner with Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador to stabilize their nations and end the cycle of gang violence we see there. A key part of our long-term solution is for House Republicans to finally put the Senate's immigration reform bill on the floor for an up-or-down vote.

We in Congress have a historic opportunity to pass comprehensive immigration reform and to address root causes rather than just symptoms for a change. I believe we will have failed if the only immigration legislation we pass as a body in this Congress is to weaken legal protections for refugee children. With this in mind, I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure that we address this humanitarian crisis and fix our immigration system once and for all. Let's seize this opportunity.

Mr. President, I see that I have been joined on the floor by the Senator from Florida, and I would ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with Senator NELSON.

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

The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for his leadership, and I wish to ask my colleague if he is aware of the testimony the commanding general of U.S. Southern Command, General Kelly—a marine four-star general—gave to the Armed Services Committee and to the Foreign Relations Committee recently, in the last couple of weeks?

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I am aware of the testimony of General Kelly, but given his role at SOUTHCOM and in particular its location in Florida and the fact that the Senator from Florida was there for the testimony, I would ask him to remind us exactly what General Kelly had to say about how we are or in some cases are not interdicting and dealing with the flow of narcotics and particularly

cocaine that has been at the root of so much of the instability and violence we see in these three Central American countries today.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, the Senator from New Mexico has put his finger on exactly the root cause of the problem. It is the substantial loads of cocaine that are coming into these three Central American countries; that because of the violence, because of the killing, the parents have three choices when their child gets on up toward their teenage years. Their first choice is to let their kid join the gang.

These gangs are criminal gangs, and they are tied in with the drug lords. The drug lords have taken over the country because of all the money that is being made from these big shipments that come in.

The parents have three choices: No. 1, let their kid join the gang; No. 2, go to their child's funeral; or No. 3, they become subject to the subtle and direct plea by the coyotes: Oh, for \$1,500, \$5,000, we can get your kid to the border and your child will be safe in America.

Why those three countries? Why are the children who have been showing up in the last several months at the border not coming from Belize, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama? They are coming from three countries—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—because that is where the big shipments of drugs are coming from—from South America into those areas in a boat with 1 to 3 tons of cocaine. Once they get on land, they break them down into small packages, and they go through a very efficient distribution system that is drugs and criminal elements—they can distribute just about anything they want, including trafficking in humans. And they are going north.

So if Honduras is the murder capital of the world and if El Salvador and Guatemala are not far behind, how do you get at that immediately to stop the flow of children going north? You more effectively interdict the drug shipments. That is why the United States has been so successful.

General Kelly, the commanding general of Southern Command, tells us that sadly he has to sit there with his Joint Interagency Task Force—all the agencies of the U.S. Government arrayed together and headquartered in Key West—and they have to watch 74 percent of primarily these boats—not so much the flights; primarily boats because they can carry big loads of cocaine—get through.

If it gets to the point of voting for the supplemental, I would certainly vote for it, but it doesn't get to the root cause of the problem. What we have done—and I have shared this with as many people as I can, consulting with General Kelly. They boiled this down to \$122 million out of the President's request of \$3.7 billion, and the Senate Appropriations Committee has pared that down to \$2.7 billion.

This Senator is asking for \$122 million, and it will cover such things as

\$31 million for U.S. Government inter-agency task force maritime patrol craft; \$40 million for maritime patrol requirements to deploy U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement detachments; \$15 million for intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance by putting up contractor-owned Predators 24 hours a day, 5 days a week. That contract is being drawn up. If we did this, General Kelly could execute that contract immediately, and then you would start to see some results.

Mr. HEINRICH. If I understand the Senator from Florida correctly, General Kelly simply does not have the resources to do the job we have done historically in terms of interdicting cocaine moving north for the market that, frankly, is in North America—

Mr. NELSON. That is correct.

Mr. HEINRICH. —in the United States and Canada. They have to literally sit there and watch these narcotics go by without having the resources to stop them in their tracks.

Mr. NELSON. The Senator is correct. Whereas General Kelly—and I am just using him as the symbol since he is a four-star general. It is the Joint Interagency Task Force in Key West that is actually headed by a Coast Guard admiral. They can interdict, and do interdict, about 25 percent of those big shipments coming from South America. They go through the Caribbean on the east and also through the Pacific on the west. And because they have been effective at 25 percent of the shipments, what we are seeing is a shifting of those shipments. They are now actually sending more of them to the east—not only to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, but now to Puerto Rico, which is a U.S. territory. When they get those drugs into Puerto Rico—and that is American territory—they can ship them by mail from there to the rest of the United States and avoid detection.

Mr. HEINRICH. My understanding is that the resource situation in Southern Command has changed so dramatically in recent years that not only is this interagency task force limited, but they have literally canceled more than 200 engagement activities and multi-lateral exercises with our partners in the region who can multiply that effect and interdict even more narcotics as they are moving forward.

Mr. NELSON. The Senator is correct. As a matter of fact, the staff of the Senate Appropriations Committee, with whom I have consulted, is very familiar with the great operation of the Joint Interagency Task Force to go after these drugs. As the Senator from New Mexico said, you can imagine their frustration when they know about the boat shipment, and sometimes they can watch it from their overhead assets, and they can't do anything about it.

As a result, look at what has happened over the last several months. We are trying to solve the problem on the border. We have all of these children

showing up at the border. We ought to solve that problem. We need to go back to the very beginning and stop what is causing this problem.

Mr. HEINRICH. The Senator from Florida also brought up another issue that I think is worth exploring. It is my understanding that he was recently briefed on the relationship that exists between these drug cartels and the entities that are actually engaging in human trafficking and moving people, for a fee, through Central America and Mexico and to the U.S. border. Can the Senator tell us a little bit about the nature of that relationship?

Mr. NELSON. The Senator is correct on how all of these things are interlocked. You can imagine how a sufficient quantity of drugs, which is worth so much, is a corrupting influence on any kind of law and order. As a result, the systems of governments—and Senator KAINE and I both met with the President of Honduras. He is trying as hard as he can. He has a bounty on his head by these drug lords because he is opposing them. The judicial system is corrupted. The local police are corrupted. When that happens, then you can imagine when other criminal activities occur, in addition to other drug activities, such as human trafficking, and terrorists potentially being utilized in these efficient delivery networks, then it is all the more a threat to the national security interests of the United States.

I think the U.S. Congress and the U.S. administration better wake up to the fact of what is happening right under our nose and get at this, in addition to solving the problems that we see that are a symptom, ultimately, of the root cause—the creation of a whole criminal network that is, in large part, fueled by the drug trade.

Mr. HEINRICH. If the Senator from Florida will yield for a minute, the sad thing is it didn't used to be that way in this part of Central America, and I know that for a fact because my wife and I traveled there 15, 16 years ago. We traveled extensively in Honduras, and at that time these gangs simply did not have the influence. They did not have this level of destabilization and they did not have this murder rate.

I always joke about trying to drive into Tegucigalpa, and I would not recommend it to anybody who has not had time to acclimate to the speed and crush of cars in that capital city, but it was a completely different country at the time. We traveled extensively in urban areas in San Pedro Sula and rural areas such as Santa Rosa de Copan, and it was an economically challenged country.

For those folks who have claimed that all of these immigrants are simply heading north out of economic desperation, the economic situation has not changed all that much. It is worth looking at the rest of Central America. The surrounding countries, such as Belize and Costa Rica and other countries in Central America, are also seeing refugees from these countries.

Nicaragua, which has substantial economic challenges right now, is losing economic immigrants, and those immigrants are not making it to our southern border in any substantial numbers. In fact, less than a year ago, I was in Costa Rica and many Nicaraguans are working in Costa Rica because the economy is better there. Yet we don't see them showing up—especially the unaccompanied minors, 7, 8, 12-year-olds—at our border by themselves. They are not being driven out by the extreme violence we have seen in these three nations where the drug cartels have such a disproportionate influence on their country's stability.

Mr. NELSON. If the Senator will yield, to underscore his point, we can look at the extraordinary success of Plan Colombia. Outside of Central America—if you go a little further south, you are on the continent of South America. And lo and behold, 15, 20 years ago, a large part of Colombia was controlled by elements that were controlled by the drug lords. With the assistance of the United States and extraordinary heroism on the part of the Government of Colombia, we have seen the Government of Colombia take back control of most of its country. Even though cocaine is still grown there and the FARC is still operating, their criminal element is a diminished insurrection of what it used to be. If you visited a place like Bogota, the capital city, it was not safe to go out alone and walk on the streets. Now you can easily walk on the streets. The situation there has changed.

We are seeing the same replicated now in Central America where the drug lords have basically taken over by buying off people with considerable money, and therefore it makes it very difficult to have the rule of law in those struggling governments, as it is for the President of Honduras, who is trying so hard to bring back his country.

Mr. HEINRICH. If the Senator from Florida will yield for a moment, having formerly served on the House Armed Services Committee, I know the Department of Defense budget is somewhere in the order of \$550 billion. Surely SOUTHCOM must have a substantial amount of resources to be able to meet this, right?

Of that \$550 billion, does the Senator from Florida know how much actually goes to Southern Command?

Mr. NELSON. What this Senator knows is that before the sequester started hitting the defense budget—even though we were conducting a war in two countries, Afghanistan and Iraq—with all of the multiplicity of threats that are around in the region, including what we see now with ISIS between Syria and northern and western Iraq, the Department of Defense had to make some hard choices. They had to cut back because of this mindless budgetary meat ax called the sequester, and as a result they had to set their priorities.

When they came down to it, they had to support the troops out in the field

and had to cut back on other commands. The U.S. Southern Command is one of those commands that was cut back. But now we are seeing the lack of wisdom to these budgetary policies—sequester—and the scarcity when you cannot allocate the defense resources to other agencies. Remember, this is a Joint Interagency Task Force. We are now seeing the effects of that in what has been on the front pages of the newspapers which is reporting all of the children coming to the border.

By the way, the children are just a diminutive percentage of the total people still coming to the border. I can't remember if it is 20 percent or 40 percent, but it is something well less than half of all of the people who are still coming to the border. But, of course, the children, because of the humanitarian crisis for them, are the ones who have received the attention.

If we know there is a problem, how do we fix the problem? Well, we need to go back to the root cause, and that is the case I have been making on that side of the aisle and on this side of the aisle. Yet we are at this point of impasse, and needless to say, it is very frustrating to this Senator.

Mr. HEINRICH. I thank the Senator from Florida for continuing to be an advocate for this cause. I know that Southern Command's annual budget now is about \$1 billion—literally \$1 billion out of \$550 billion in the Department of Defense. Given the necessity of engaging with Central and South America on these issues, I think it is time to reevaluate, in terms of resources but also in terms of priorities, how we look at Central and South America, to reengage with our neighbors and try to address some of these issues at the root level instead of always at the symptom level.

I see we have been joined by our esteemed chair of the Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI of Maryland. So I thank the Chair for allowing the Senator from Florida and I to indulge in this colloquy. And, once again, I wish to say how much I hope we take this opportunity to do something, not just about the symptoms of the current crisis which has to be dealt with, but also the underlying causes of this crisis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I think we have just heard something really interesting and I think—excuse me. The way the Senator from New Mexico concluded—was the Senator from California scheduled to speak next?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I believe so.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thought I was at 4:52. I didn't mean to jump the line. I really do want to hear from the Senator from California, the chair of the intelligence committee, as well as the chair of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and Border Security of the Judiciary Committee. She is a Senator with a lot of experience, and I look forward to her remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Senator. I wish to begin by saying the Appropriations Committee is in very good hands. Chairman MIKULSKI has done an excellent job, and I strongly support this supplemental that she has put together.

I wish to give my colleagues just some brief background of my involvement in the unaccompanied alien children issue. It began around 1999. On Thanksgiving Day, a 5-year-old in an inner tube off the coast of Florida, 3 miles out, was picked up by a fisherman. His name was Elian Gonzalez. The fisherman rescued him and he was taken to a hospital, but his mother and 11 others on the raft had drowned in their attempt to come to the United States from Cuba. That launched in this country a major debate about an unaccompanied alien child, whether he goes back to his father or whether he remains with his uncle in Miami.

Then, secondly, I am home one day and I turn on the television set, and I see a 15-year-old Chinese girl who had been placed on a container ship from China by her parents to flee China's rigid family planning laws. She came to this country. She was alone. She was desperate. She was picked up.

I saw her asylum hearing. She was unrepresented. She was shackled, her wrists were bound, and big tears were rolling down her face. She couldn't understand a single word that was spoken. She was held in a jail cell for eight months and in another detention facility for another four months after that. She eventually received asylum in our country, but she unnecessarily faced an ordeal no child should undergo.

At the time, she was only one of 5,000 other foreign-born children who were apprehended in the United States in need of protection. I remember thinking that that such treatment was terrible, and I had to do something.

In 2000, I introduced the Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act. I also pushed for the change in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which successfully transferred the responsibility for the care of unaccompanied alien children from the former Immigration and Naturalization Service to the Department of Health and Human Services.

However, that change by itself was not enough to ensure that unaccompanied children were properly treated. Therefore, over the next 6 years, I continued to consult with relevant Federal agencies, children's advocates, immigration attorneys, House Members such as ZOE LOFGREN on the House Judiciary Committee, and fellow Senators.

Finally, in 2008 the legislation was included, amazingly enough, by voice vote in both Houses, as part of a larger trafficking bill, the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act. It was signed into

law by President Bush on December 23, 2008. It took effect 6 months later. That year, the number of children was in the vicinity of 8,000. It provided the framework for how unaccompanied children would be treated while in the United States and for their safe and orderly return to their home countries without undue delay if they did not qualify to stay.

We now have a dramatically escalated situation that was not foreseeable at that time. Last fiscal year 2013, 24,000 unaccompanied children arrived in our country. This year more than 62,000 unaccompanied children have arrived in our country, and the Department of Homeland Security is preparing for as many as 90,000 such children to arrive in the country by the end of this year.

The numbers are so great and so unprecedented that our Federal agencies understandably are having difficulty carrying out the procedures and timelines in place. I have sent members of my staff in California to every Office and Refugee Services shelter in the State, and they have sent me photos and their impressions. I wish to take a moment to thank all our people, whether it is Border Patrol or ICE of Homeland Security or anybody else—such as Health and Human Services—for the excellent job they are doing. I saw 8 to 10 facilities through pictures and reports, where children were in bright rooms, had beds with covers, and a day program. So, every effort has been made.

But the numbers are so great and unprecedented that the difficulties continue. When we run out of money, there is going to be a different story.

But we must remember that the children at issue, who are unaccompanied, are primarily from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, three Central American countries which are deeply troubled. Many have entered as victims, I am sorry to say, of rape, abuse, poverty, and above all, violence.

They are alone, subject to abuse and exploitation. Many are young and unable to articulate their fears, their views, or testify about their needs as accurately as adults can. Considering this, there is no other option but for us to help and continue to treat them humanely, with compassion and due process. That is what this supplemental does.

I have met with Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson, and the head of the Department of Health and Human Services, Sylvia Burwell, and both tell us their agencies run out of funds by September. We must responsibly fund these agencies, for not only are they managing the current humanitarian crisis at our border, but they are also charged with protecting human life and our homeland security.

With this funding, not only can we preserve our commitment to treat children as the children that they are, we can improve the way that the current law is being administered and more efficiently put our resources to work.

Earlier today, I met with immigration judges from the U.S. Department of Justice's Executive Office of Immigration Review. They informed me they are desperate for increased resources with which to handle not only the influx of children's cases but also a current backlog of 375,000 cases. Due to there being only 243 immigration judges across the country, immigrants today wait 587 average days for a hearing. That is one year and 7 months before they have the opportunity to come before an immigration judge.

With adequate funding from this supplemental, which provides for immigration judge teams, legal representation and services, government immigration litigation attorneys and courtroom equipment, among other things, this crisis can be managed and make the processing of children more efficient.

One of the judges who sits in Miami told me that through her court where a child has representation, a voluntary return to the country of origin was able to be achieved in a majority of her cases. So the majority of children actually took voluntary departure and returned to their countries. A judge can't make a phone call, but a counsel can—the attorneys could make the calls to do the necessary preparation and see that a safe home could be arranged. Because of this representation, cases are processed more quickly and children could safely return.

I understand there has been concern that unaccompanied children will not appear for their immigration court proceedings. That is simply not true. The fact is, whether represented or not, 60.9 percent do appear, and the number increases to 92.5 percent when represented by counsel. So these children do get before a judge—60.9 percent of them, and if they have a lawyer, 92 percent.

With this supplemental funding, the immigration courts, with help from legal representatives, would be able to hear more quickly immigration cases and determine with justice who may stay and who must go.

I was contacted recently by Winston Lord, a former U.S. Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State, who is all too familiar with managing situations of international crises while preserving our national interest. In reflecting on the current crisis, he acknowledged the need for effective border control and immigration enforcement to ensure national security and a comprehensive solution. However, he also identified the heart of the matter here: "These challenges . . . need not be met by using ineffective and indiscriminate approaches that harm innocent children."

He is right.

We are a great Nation, capable of safeguarding our national security while simultaneously proceeding with humanity in addressing this crisis, and any future challenges that this country faces. This problem demands action now to provide these agencies with the funds they need to meet this crisis.

Now, if we don't pass this, and if these departments run out of money, and if facilities have to be closed, and if there is nowhere for these children to go, let us think for a moment what happens to them. Should they experience the same thing in this country they have back home? What will they do? And what does that do to our conscience?

I think this supplemental is well put together. The chairman of our committee has gone through it with a fine tooth comb. She has reduced it in size. I think it is well representative of the situation that dramatically needs funding. So I really hope there is a heart in this body and that this supplemental appropriation is approved.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, to the Senator from California, I thank her for her excellent statement. She brings such experience and expertise. It is very much appreciated. Has the Senator looked at my supplemental recommendations where we have actually added money for judges and then support to pro bono lawyers willing to represent children?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Well, that is exactly right. The chairwoman's supplemental does that. That is really what makes the difference for the child. If a child can't speak the language and if a child is held in a jail cell and if a child is shackled and handcuffed before a judge, and a child has nobody to help them and no one they know in this country, what can they do except cry? That is what I saw directly myself, and that is what sort of awakened me then to a problem, which was just 5,000 a year in the start of this. Now we are at 54,000, and probably 90,000 before the end of the year.

Ms. MIKULSKI. That is right.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. So I thank the Senator for her support and her energy and effort that she has put forward.

I hope this body does the right thing.

REMEMBERING ADMIRAL CHUCK LARSON

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I would like to continue the discussion on the urgent supplemental. But before I do, I want to say that the senior Senator from Arizona is on the floor, and I want to say something heartwarming to my colleague. I say to the Senator from Arizona, you are a graduate of the Naval Academy, class of 1958. We both have a very dear friend who has passed away, ADM Chuck Larson.

Admiral Larson served with distinction in the Navy. He did many tours of duty in the defense of our country but also did two tours of duty at the U.S. Naval Academy, where I came to know him, and then subsequent to that there was the wonderful role that he played in education and transformational leadership.

I know he was a good friend of the Senator from Arizona too. So I would like to express my condolences to you

and to the—of course, then it was guys only at the Naval Academy—class of 1958. I was the class of 1958 at Mount Saint Agnes College. We probably saw each other at a tea dance or two. I was the chunky one over there, not in the corner, though. But I just wanted to express my condolences. What a great class that seems to be. I hope we can work together on something that would truly recognize Chuck Larson and the great transformational leader he was.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have a colloquy with the Senator from Maryland.

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

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I would say first of all to the Senator from Maryland, on behalf of all Naval Academy graduates and all of us who love the Naval Academy, your support of the Naval Academy has been consistent, unswerving. You have been probably the staunchest supporter of the U.S. Naval Academy I have ever had the privilege of encountering. I want to also tell the Senator that the devotion she has extended to the Naval Academy is reciprocated by the Naval Academy and its graduates to her. I thank her for that.

Yes, Mr. President, I say to my colleague from Maryland, a dear and beloved friend, ADM Chuck Larson passed away. I would be honored to join with her in any way that we could to honor his memory. I would just like to point out that the Senator from Maryland was heavily involved when there was a very serious cheating scandal at the Naval Academy. Senator MIKULSKI led the investigation and demand for correcting that situation, and Admiral Larson was called back from retirement to be the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, on the recommendation of the Senator from Maryland—the only naval officer in history who served as Superintendent twice. And he put the Naval Academy back on the right track.

I would like to say, again, that he mentioned to me often the consistent support for reform, for the institution, and they are incredibly proud of her representation not just of the people of Maryland but specifically of that wonderful institution. I know I speak for Chuck Larson when I say that.

I thank you.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the Senator very much. I love our U.S. Naval Academy. But when you have great leaders, we want to in some way be able to memorialize them in a way that they inspired this ongoing, this next generation, and the generations to come about really what a great leader is and what value-driven leadership is all about.

So I look forward to working with the Senator from the Naval Academy and the State of Arizona.

Mr. President, I would also like to continue the discussion on the urgent

supplemental and the crisis—many people call it the crisis—at our border. Well, we have a surge of children at our border because of the crisis in Central America. The crisis is in Central America, creating a surge of children desperately coming across our borders to seek political asylum.

I would hope that when we look at this urgent supplemental, we understand what we are trying to do. Yes, provide humane care for the children, real support for judges and other legal assistance to determine their legal and asylum status and, at the same time, to do the prevention in Central America, by going after what the surge is all about. The surge is about the escalating narco criminal-driven violence in these countries.

People will say: Well, what does that mean? It means that when you look at where the children are coming from, they are not coming from every country in Central America. They are coming from three countries in Central America. They are coming from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, but they are not coming from Nicaragua and they are not coming from Panama and they are not coming from Costa Rica. Why is that? The reason is because the violence rate is not as high. Yes, in these countries, particularly in Nicaragua, the poverty rate is the same as the other three. So why are they coming? They are coming because of the violence, and this is what we need to be able to deal with.

Last week, along with many Senators, I met with the Ambassadors from the three countries of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. At the invitation of Senator MENENDEZ, the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, I met with the President of Honduras, the President of Guatemala, and the President of El Salvador to talk about these issues, to say: What is it that we need to do to deal with these issues?

This is what they talked about. They talked about the violence coming from the drug cartels and organized crime—organized crime—drug cartels fueled by America's insatiable demand for drugs. They have worsened in these three countries.

Then there is the recruitment. The narco criminals have gone after the children to recruit them, either for their profit or for their pleasure. I have to talk about this in a way that civilized people should not have to hear that this is going on against children in our own hemisphere. This is our own hemisphere. When I talk about the recruitment of children for profit or for pleasure, that is exactly what they are talking about—to recruit the children to be part of gangs, violent gangs, gangs to engage in narco trafficking, to engage in extortion, to engage in murder, to engage in intimidation. This is the particular targeting of boys—the particular targeting of boys to recruit them for the gangs. And if the boys do not want to join the gang and they resist, they hide, they try to run away,

they are often grabbed, many sometimes are kidnapped, threatened with torture or their mother or their grandmother or their sister is threatened with either death or violent sexual attack. All sexual attack is violent, but they talk about it in ways that I will not discuss on the Senate floor.

Then there is the recruitment for profit—yes, to make sure that maybe they are couriers for the drug trade, but also to recruit, nab or force young children to be involved in human trafficking and sexual slavery.

But we have to deal with this. We have to stop the violence with a tough battle. We have to go after the cartels, and we have to also really begin to deal seriously with our addiction to cocaine and to heroin.

When you talk to the President of Honduras about the drugs in his own country bound for the United States, he talks about how they smuggle drugs, and they smuggle children along the same trade routes. It is good trade to traffic in drugs and it is also good trade to traffic in women and children. You see, to the drug dealers, to the narco traffickers, to the seven organized crime units—and, yes, we know who they are and where they are; we just need to marshal the resources of our country and the hemisphere to go after them. We know who they are, where they are, what they do, and how they do it. They look at women and children, boys, as well as girls, as commodities to be sold across countries and across borders. My God. And we want to blame the children?

We hear: Let's send them back. Send them back to what? This is why these children are on the go. This is why these children are on the march. And the children do not care how they get here, as long as they escape the violence.

This is why we have included money of over \$112 million to the Department of Homeland Security for enforcement—no, not National Guard at our border, but really moving assets to Central America to deal with law enforcement, to strengthen the courts, and to be able to deal with the issues of narco trafficking and organized crime in their own country.

We also know that while we are doing this type of intervention down there to go after the smugglers, coyotes, and human traffickers, we also need to deal with the fact that when these children are here, they have the right to seek legal asylum. Now, as Senator FEINSTEIN pointed out, there are only 240 immigration judges in the country. The fact is there is a backlog of over 100,000 cases. These kids move to the front of the line, but even if they move to the front of the line, it could be as much as 2 or 3 years before their cases are heard. This is not right. It is not right for them and it is not right for our country.

So I have more money in this bill for more immigration judges to resolve the asylum cases, additional legal rep-

resentation for the children, including bilingual representation, and the kind of backup and support where pro bono lawyers are coming to the aid to be able to do this.

I hope we pass this supplemental so we can do this.

Second, I made the trip to the border. I will talk about this on another day. I know my time is exceeded, but what I wanted to emphasize today is why these children are coming, the legal services we need to present here, and I look forward to talking more about this. I know my time is up, and I do want to be courteous to my colleague from the other side of the aisle.

So let's pass this bill. Let's do the interdiction in Central America. And let's enforce our laws here and provide the legal representation the law requires.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business for as much time as I may consume.

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

SYRIA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, quite often—on numerous occasions—I have come to the floor of the Senate to talk about the ongoing tragedy of Syria, not in the belief that any action may be taken of any real impact, although it has always been my hope and prayer, but because my conscience dictates that I come to the floor of the Senate and discuss one of the great and unfortunate and shameful chapters in our history.

Last February I came to the floor to appeal to the conscience of my colleagues and fellow citizens about the mass atrocities that the Assad regime is perpetuating in Syria. I brought with me at that time a series of gruesome images that documented the horrors the Assad regime has committed against political prisoners in its jails across that country. Those images were smuggled out of the country by Caesar—Caesar—a Syrian military policeman who risked his life and the lives of his family and friends to show the world the real face of human suffering in Syria today.

At the time I had hoped that those images would cry out to our national conscience and compel our great Nation to help end the suffering and genocide of the Syrian people. How could anyone—how could anyone—look at those pictures and not press for immediate accountability and an end to those mass atrocities?

In the months since those images were first made public, United States and European investigators have pored over the images and concluded that not only are these images genuine but they are evidence of an industrial-scale campaign by the Assad regime against its political opponents. According to the State Department, these photo-

graphs are evidence of systematic atrocities not seen since Hitler's Nazi regime exterminated millions during World War II.

Stephen Rapp, the State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes, stated that:

This is solid evidence of the kind of machinery of cruel death that we haven't seen frankly since the Nazis. It's shocking to me.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power, after a briefing to the U.N. Security Council members, stated, "The gruesome images of corpses bearing marks of starvation, strangulation and beatings and today's chilling briefing indicate that the Assad regime has carried out systematic, widespread and industrial killing."

Despite the statements from these and other senior officials, the administration has yet to finish its investigation. Perhaps when the administration does complete its forensic analysis of the evidence provided by Caesar, President Obama will decide it is finally time to take action in Syria and prevent the continuation of mass atrocities that according to his Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities is "a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States."

I have to tell my colleagues I am not hopeful. In the time that the investigation to prove what we all know to be true has been underway, approximately 40,000 more people have died, another 1 million people have been forced from their homes, and over half of Syria's population is now believed to be in dire need of food, water, and medicine.

The Assad regime continues to bomb northern Syria, using crude cluster munitions known as barrel bombs with the sole purpose of terrorizing and killing as many people as possible when indiscriminately dropped from Syrian Government aircraft on schools, factories, and mosques. It continues to raze entire neighborhoods for no military purpose whatsoever, simply as a form of collective punishment of Syrian civilians.

It continues its "surrender or starve" famine campaign, starving people to death by denying entire neighborhoods any access to food or water. Just last month the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which has been tasked with destroying Syria's chemical stockpiles, announced there is credible evidence that toxic chemicals are still being used in a systematic manner in Syria.

Indeed, this kind of inhumane cruelty is a pattern of behavior for the Syrian government. As early as August 2011, a damning 22-page report was issued by the United Nations human rights office, which concluded that Syrian Government forces had committed crimes against humanity by carrying out summary executions, torturing prisoners and harming children, the evidence of which we now see clearly in those images.

The report prompted President Obama to issue a statement calling for President Assad to step down. The President declared:

We have consistently said that President Assad must lead a Democratic transition or get out of the way. He has not led. For the sake of the Syrian people, the time has come for President Assad to step aside.

That was 2 years ago. The President ended this statement by saying, "It is clear that President Assad believes that he can silence the voices of his people by resorting to the repressive tactics of the past, but he is wrong."

Following the President's statement, there was no shortage of administration officials publicly professing that President Assad's days were numbered. In December 2012, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told a NATO gathering that Assad's fall was "inevitable." She later repeated, "It is time for Assad to get out of the way." That was from our then-Secretary of State.

That same month White House spokesman Jay Carney echoed Clinton's proclamation stating:

Assad's fall is inevitable. As governments make decisions about where they stand on this issue and what steps need to be taken with regards to brutality of Assad's regime, it is important to calculate into your consideration the fact that he will go.

He went on to say, "The regime has lost control of the country and he will eventually fall." In May 2012, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey told FOX News that "escalating atrocities would likely trigger a military intervention following a massacre that left more than 100 dead."

One hundred dead—that was back when we were talking about Syria's dead in hundreds rather than thousands and tens of thousands. One month later, in June 2012, then-Secretary of Defense Panetta stated:

I think it's important when Assad leaves—and he will leave—to try to preserve stability in that country . . . I'm sure that deep down Assad knows he's in trouble, and it's just a matter of time before he has to go. I would say, if you [Assad] want to be able to protect yourself and your family, you better get the hell out now.

That was in June of 2012 by our Secretary of Defense.

Where are we now? Three years after President Obama and his administration rightly decided it was time for him to go, President Assad remains in power, and I know of no one who believes Bashar Assad is going to negotiate his departure. In fact, he just orchestrated another "reelection." I remember when an American President said that a foreign leader must go, it conveyed a commitment to doing something about it. But instead of taking decisive action in support of the President's declared policy, the administration has simply moved away from calls for Assad to step down over the past year.

In fact, instead of being forced to step down, Assad has continuously gotten the administration to treat his re-

gime as a central interlocutor, first with the chemical weapons agreement through which Assad forced the United States into acknowledging its legitimacy and ensuring that he would remain in place until the agreement was carried out, then by serving as the sole authority on distribution of aid within the country, and now by presenting himself as critical to the fight against terrorism and the Al Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

So as it turns out, President Obama was right that Assad's violence and repressive tactics could not silence the voices of the Syrian people who even in the worst imaginable conditions have continued to fight for freedom and a Democratic Syria. Instead, it has been the voice of President Obama and other administration officials that President Assad has managed to silence. We cannot be silent, but we cannot allow words to replace action either.

What has become exceedingly clear in the wake of recent events is that even if we can ignore the moral imperative to act, the growing threat to American national security interests means that doing nothing is now out of the question. The conflict in Syria is largely to blame for the resurgence of Al Qaeda in Iraq, which has grown into the even more dangerous and lethal Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, commonly referred to by the acronym ISIS or ISIL.

Top officials testified in last week's Foreign Relations Committee hearing that ISIS represents a threat that is "worse than Al-Qaeda."

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq and Iran Brett McGurk stated that ISIS is no longer simply a terrorist organization but "a full blown army seeking to establish a self-governing state through the Tigris and Euphrates Valley in what is now Syria and Iraq."

The Director of National Intelligence, the Director of the FBI, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Attorney General have all warned repeatedly about the threat posed by ISIS's state-like sanctuary in Syria and Iraq and the largest safe haven for global terrorism in the world.

If the September 11 attack should have taught us anything, it is that global terrorists who occupy ungoverned spaces and seek to plot and plan attacks against us can pose a direct threat to our national security. That was Afghanistan on September 10, 2001. That is what these top officials are now warning us that Syria is becoming today.

Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson said, "Syria is now a matter of homeland security." FBI Director James Comey recently warned Congress that the terrorist threat from Syria against the United States is "metastasizing." Their assessments were confirmed earlier this month by Attorney General Eric Holder, who said that recent intelligence reports of terrorists from Syria partnering with

Yemeni bombmakers are "more frightening than anything I think I've seen as attorney general. It's something that gives us really extreme, extreme concern."

He added:

If they—

Meaning ISIS—

are able to consolidate their gains in that area, Iraq and Syria, I think it's just a matter of time before they start looking outward and start looking at the West and at the United States in particular. So this is something that we have to get on top of and get on top of now.

It is clear President Assad's strategy is to convince the administration that we only have two options, him or Al Qaeda-linked terrorists. It is a sad testament to the administration's leadership on Syria that Assad's strategy seems to be working. According to a report by the Daily Beast, administration officials are debating whether to abandon the President's goal of toppling Assad and enter into a de facto alliance with the Assad regime to fight ISIS or other Sunni extremists in the region.

Such a decision would represent the height of folly. Nobody—nobody—should believe Assad is an ally in the fight against terrorism. Former Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford, who resigned in May after asserting that he could no longer defend American policy in Syria, made it clear how foolish such thinking is. He said:

The people who think Bashar Assad's regime is the answer to containing and eventually eliminating the Islamic-based threat do not understand the historic relationship between the regime and ISIS. They do not understand the current relationship between Assad and ISIS and how they are working on the ground together directly and indirectly inside Syria.

He added,

If this administration wants to contain the Islamic State on the ground, they are going to have to help the Free Syrian Army.

After more than 3 years of horror and suffering and devastation and growing threats to our national security, the conflict in Syria continues to get worse and worse, both for Syria and for the world, but the United States has no effective policy to bring this conflict to a responsible end. The outcome of the administration's disengagement has been a consistent failure to support more responsible forces in Syria when that support would have mattered.

The descent of Syria into chaos and growing regional instability, the use of Syria as a training ground for Al Qaeda affiliates and other terrorist organizations, the ceding of regional leadership to our adversaries, and the shameful tolerance of war crimes and crimes against humanity—in short, all of the horrible things the critics said would happen if we got more involved in Syria—have happened because we have not gotten more involved. Now President Obama finds himself in a position where the United States will have to do far more today to stave off disaster in

Syria than we would have needed to do in 2012. The administration seems to have finally come around to the idea that we must arm, train, and equip the moderate opposition in Syria. But arming moderate FSA units is only one element of what must be done for a much broader strategy that includes both Syria and Iraq.

I will be the first to admit there are no good options left, if good options ever existed to begin with. But as bad as our options are, we still have options to do something meaningful in Syria.

The conflict in Syria is reaching a critical point. Government forces are advancing on Aleppo, effectively cutting off routes into and out of the city from the south and west, exercising a stranglehold on the people of Aleppo. More than 6 months of punishing daily air strikes have killed thousands of residents and forced tens of thousands more to flee. But at least 500,000 residents remain in Aleppo, and they are being slowly asphyxiated by Assad's forces as they brace for Aleppo's upcoming siege.

Meanwhile, disillusioned fighters, starved of the resources and equipment they need, have been drifting from the front lines and, in some cases, joining the better funded and equipped extremist groups.

It is a moral outrage to watch the destruction of what remains of Aleppo and refuse to do more to help those fight against our enemies in the region. Worse still, the government's campaign has been aided and abetted by ISIS, which is attacking the Free Syrian Army from the northeast in an attempt to take control of two vital supply lines from Turkey and forcing the moderate opposition to fight simultaneously on two fronts.

Such activists are suggesting that the fall of Aleppo could be the nail in the coffin for the modern opposition, and the situation for civilians still living in Aleppo has become so disastrous that the United States recently authorized the delivery of cross-border humanitarian aid without prior approval from the Assad regime.

These efforts are a bandaid on a bullet wound. It will not be enough to mitigate the dire crisis unfolding in the city, and we must offer quick support to the moderate opposition as they battle the Assad regime and extremists from the Islamic state before it is too late.

The rise of ISIS, combined with the events in Gaza and Ukraine, has placed Assad's assault on Aleppo safely outside of the headlines. With the international community distracted by these disturbing events in other parts of the world, Assad will again manipulate time and terror in his favor.

President Obama, who spent much of his time in recent weeks at fundraising events, said nothing about Syria or Iraq during recent appearances to discuss Gaza and Ukraine.

Worse still, details of the sole initiative proposed by the administration on

Syria since the collapse of the Geneva peace talks reveals a plan that would train less than a battalion-sized unit of 2,300 individuals and wouldn't begin until the middle of next year. By that time Aleppo may be lost and there may be no more units left in Syria to support.

The conflict in Syria is a threat to our national interests, but it is more than that. It is an affront to our conscience. Images such as these should not just be a source of heartbreak and sympathy, they should be a call to action. For the sake of our national security we must move quickly to help the moderate opposition now before it is too late. For the sake of our national conscience, we must do more to help the 150,000 political prisoners who remain in Assad's prisons and put an end to the suffering of the Syrian people.

It is with great sadness that I met with Caesar yesterday and had to tell him the truth: that although our great Nation could have done more to stop the suffering of others, that we could have used the power we possess—limited and imperfect as it may be—to prevent massive atrocities and the killing of innocents, it is with everlasting shame that we have not.

Shame on all of us for our current failure. If there ever was a case that should remind us that our interests are indivisible from our values, it is Syria, and we cannot afford to go numb to this human tragedy.

I have seen my fair share of suffering and death in the world, but the images and stories coming out of Syria haunt me most. But it is not too late. The United States is still the most powerful Nation in the world today, and we have the power and capabilities to act when brutal tyrants slaughter their people with impunity. No one should believe that we are without options even now. I pray that we will finally recognize the costs of inaction and take the necessary actions to end Assad's mass atrocities and to help the Syrian people write a better ending to this sad chapter in world affairs.

I note the presence of our distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee. I urge my colleagues—among many reasons—to support him in his effort to bring the National Defense Authorization Act before this body. Part of that act also authorizes for the training and equipping of the Free Syrian forces.

I thank my friend and colleague the Senator from Michigan and the chairman of our committee, whose unstinting effort has made this National Defense Authorization Act something that deserves the attention, debate, amending, and passage from the Senate.

I thank my colleague from Michigan.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD my statement on the National Defense Authorization Act following the remarks of Senator LEVIN and Senator INHOFE.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. LEVIN. Would the Senator from Pennsylvania yield for a unanimous consent request?

Mr. CASEY. I yield to the Senator from Michigan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. May I inquire of the Senator from Pennsylvania how long he intends to speak?

Mr. CASEY. About 10 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. After the Senator from Pennsylvania concludes, I would ask that the Senator from Oklahoma and I be recognized for 20 minutes, evenly divided, to talk about the need to get the Defense authorization bill to the floor, and each one of us would control 10 minutes under this unanimous consent request.

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

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. CASEY. I rise to speak about a topic that we don't talk about enough, which is what is happening in Afghanistan with regard to women and girls.

I know the senior Senator from Arizona was speaking about Syria before I had recognition, and I am grateful to him for the work we have done together. He is working with me and others on the best way forward for us to have a constructive impact on what is happening, working to get more dollars and more efforts in the direction of supporting the well-vetted Syrian opposition. I am grateful to him for his compassion and his commitment on this issue, and we look forward to working with him going forward.

I rise today to talk about an issue that we don't focus on enough here and that is the outlook for Afghan women and the children who have grown up during the past 13 years of war in Afghanistan. Children all too often are the innocent victims of the conflict.

According to a recent report by the U.N. Secretary General to the Security Council in Afghanistan, child casualties increased by 30 percent between 2012 and 2013.

While reporting was limited by the security environment, there were at least 790 documented incidents in which 545 children were killed and 1,149 were injured. That is just a snapshot of the horror that so many children have suffered in Afghanistan. Armed opposition groups such as the Taliban are responsible for a majority of the recorded child casualties.

I have spoken on the floor a number of times about the substantial improvements that have been made in Afghanistan, with significant United States support. Our tax dollars, our people, and our government have helped enormously to get greater numbers of Afghan children, especially girls, into school. Where there were once only a few educational opportunities, now more than 8.3 million children are in school, boys and girls. By

one assessment, up to 40 percent of those 8.3 million children are girls.

The security situation and persistent Taliban aggression in Afghanistan continue to threaten this progress. According to the same U.N. report, there were at least 73 reported attacks on schools. In some especially horrifying incidents, improvised explosive devices—we know them as IEDs—were planted inside school premises. The American people should be proud of the sacrifices that have already been made by our fighting men and women and our diplomats who have served in Afghanistan and the progress—which I have just mentioned—that has been made. As the political transition approaches and we prepare for a full security transition, this issue merits continued focus.

In 2013 and 2014, I led a bipartisan effort with Senator AYOTTE to include language in the National Defense Authorization Act that highlights the security issues Afghan women and girls face and promotes the recruitment and retention of women in the Afghan National Security Forces.

I focused on the issue because I believe the future of women and girls is critical, essential, to the stability of Afghanistan going forward and consequently our own national security interests in the region. According to the Institute for Inclusive Security: “There is evidence that women in uniform are more likely than their male colleagues to de-escalate tensions and less likely to use excessive force.”

Some improvements have been made to recruit and retain women in the Afghan National Security Forces. For example, earlier this month, 51 women graduated from the Afghan National Police Academy. These women defy the Taliban's threats by serving as police officers.

During the elections earlier this year, female police officers and searchers helped secure polling stations for women, and their effect was tangible: significant turnout by female voters despite serious security threats.

Although significant progress has been made in women's rights and security, there are still far too many horrific incidents of violence against women and children.

I was particularly disturbed, as I know many women were, by an article that ran in the New York Times on July 19 entitled: “Struggling to Keep Afghan Girl Safe After a Mullah is Accused of Rape.” That is the name of the article dated July 19.

The article describes how a 10-year-old Afghan girl was raped by a mullah in a mosque. A local women's shelter took in the young girl after the attack to protect her from her own family, who were planning to carry out an honor killing. The activists at the shelter received death threats in addition to the threats to the girl.

Once the young girl recovered, she was returned to her family. However, as the article concludes: “Those caring

for the girl said she had been terribly homesick and wanted to return to her family, but no one had the heart to tell her they had been conspiring to kill her.”

To say that this story is heart-breaking doesn't begin to translate the horror of what some young girls have to face in Afghanistan and other parts of the world as well. Extremists will no doubt continue to threaten women leaders and target innocent children in an effort to terrorize the Afghan people during this transition. We should send an unequivocal message that the United States continues to stand with Afghan women and children and that we see them as an important part of building a stable and secure Afghanistan.

In an effort to honor the sacrifices of the American people and our service men and women, and to make sure those sacrifices are remembered, we have to make sure that we take steps in the Senate. I filed an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, and I am grateful again for the work Senator AYOTTE has done with me. We were joined most recently by several cosponsors, Senator SHAHEEN, Senator WARNER, and Senator BOXER.

This amendment will address three main issues:

No. 1, continue to prioritize recruitment and retention of women in the Afghan National Security Forces.

No. 2, Support police units that are specially trained to work with female or adolescent victims and increase the number of female security officers specifically trained to address cases of gender-based violence. This would include ensuring Afghan National Police's Family Response Units have the necessary resources and are available to women across Afghanistan.

No. 3, Finally, emphasize the need to maintain the female searcher capabilities that were established in the April 2014 Presidential elections and for the 2015 parliamentary elections.

We must ensure that the gains made by Afghan women in every sector of society are preserved in a post-2014 Afghanistan. It is in our national security interests to help prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven and training ground for international terrorism.

We have seen from the recent events in Iraq what happens after a security transition if some groups are marginalized. As we approach transition in Afghanistan, women and young people should not just be the target of Taliban violence; they should be full partners in building a stable Afghanistan.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today, along with Senator INHOFE—Senator MCCAIN was here before—to express the hope that the Senate will be able to take up the National

Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 during our September work period.

In June Senator INHOFE and I came here to urge Senators to begin the process to file amendments to our bill, and many amendments have been filed. We have been working to clear as many amendments as possible in preparation for Senate consideration of our bill. The amendment described just a few moments ago by the Senator from Pennsylvania is the type of amendment that we believe we can clear and would strengthen our bill and strengthen the position of our Nation.

When the Defense authorization bill is brought to the floor, our goal is first to be in a position to offer a package of cleared amendments. Our second goal—probably as important, perhaps more important than our first—is to see if we can identify specific relevant amendments that could be included in an unanimous consent agreement ready to be debated and voted on or, in the alternative, to craft the unanimous consent agreement with a limited number of relevant amendments, leaving it to the managers and the leaders to identify which relevant amendments would be brought to a vote.

Given the small number of days that are left for legislative action in this Congress, we must all—all of us individually and as a body—pull together if we are going to get our Defense bill completed. In my judgment, the course I have outlined will facilitate that conclusion.

I know there is a backlog of important nominations the Senate must still address, and these nominations have been taking up much of the Senate's time. But we have enacted a national defense authorization act every year for 52 years.

The bill this year—S. 2410—was reported out of the Senate Armed Services Committee on the 2nd day of June with a strong bipartisan vote of 25 to 1. It provides critical authorities, funding, assistance, and guidance for our military, for our men and women in uniform and their families, at a time when they face a wide array of threats around the world.

In our national defense authorization bill, we enact authorities and programs that would create important initiatives that would be unnecessarily delayed if we do not adopt this bill.

If we fail to enact this bill, our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines will not receive many important special pays and bonuses. These include the critical skills retention bonus; enlistment and reenlistment bonuses; bonus and special pays for health professions, including those in critically short wartime specialties; and many other bonus and special pays that enable the military services to shape the force as we draw down that force.

If we fail to enact this bill, we will not be able to slow the growth of military personnel costs and the Department will not be able to use the savings, as planned, to make up for readiness shortfalls that undermine our military's ability to respond to emerging national security crises. The committee-reported bill includes over \$1.8 billion in savings in 2015 and over \$20 billion in savings over the Future Years Defense Program. If this bill doesn't pass, those savings will not be achieved and the readiness and modernization accounts will be even further depleted.

If we fail to enact this bill, we will risk delaying the implementation of programs to address the mental health of our Armed Forces by developing a standard method for collecting, reporting, and assessing suicide and attempted suicide data for members of the National Guard and Reserves. Our Presiding Officer is very active in that particular area, in trying to address the suicide problems we have in our Armed Forces.

If we fail to enact this bill, we will delay a much needed reorganization of the Department's prisoner of war/missing in action community to enable the Department to more effectively accomplish its mission of accounting for POWs and MIAs.

If we fail to enact this bill, school districts all over the United States that rely on our supplemental impact aid to help them educate military children will no longer receive that money.

If we fail to enact this bill, we are unlikely to authorize the National Commission on the Future of the Army—a critical step to enable the Army to ensure that its forces—including its Active-Duty, Reserves, and Army National Guard components—are properly structured and supported to meet current and future threats.

If we fail to enact this bill, no new military construction projects will be authorized for fiscal year 2015 and our Armed Forces will too often continue to live, train, and work in substandard facilities.

Previous years' national defense authorization acts have been strengthened and enhanced through a debate on the Senate floor, and that includes the opportunity for Members to offer amendments. Debating and enacting those authorizations are critical not only to our national security but to ensure that our Nation keeps its sacred vow to provide for our armed servicemembers and their families.

Senator INHOFE and I will do our part, but we urge our colleagues to continue to file amendments colleagues would like to see in the bill, and we will do our best to clear them. We will also do our utmost to draft a unanimous consent agreement for consideration by our leadership that would provide for some contested relevant amendments so that we can show our leaders we can deal with this bill in a day or two.

We will do all that we can, but we need 98 other Senators to help us. So we urge our colleagues, please continue to bring amendments to us. Please help us craft a unanimous consent agreement that would allow for a reasonable number of contested relevant amendments to be debated and voted on. This is the best way we are going to be able to persuade our leaders and our colleagues that we can bring the bill to the floor, have a reasonable period for debate, dispose of at least some relevant amendments, and pass the critically needed National Defense Authorization Act.

Our troops and their families deserve maximum effort on the part of all of us. I hope that that will be forthcoming so we will not miss in the 53rd year a passage of a bill that is so critical to our national security.

Before I yield, I wish to thank my good friend from Oklahoma, our ranking member, who has worked so closely with me. Our staffs worked so hard on this bill. Together, as partners, we have been able to bring this bill to the floor. I thank him for the very strong leadership he has shown in the security area and on this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first, I thank my good friend, the chairman of the committee, Senator LEVIN.

It is true that we have worked so closely together—not just the two of us but our staffs directly, the minority and majority staff. It is rare that we have a difference of opinion. When we do, we sit down and work things out, debate, and get things done. So there is a reason, as Senator LEVIN said, that we have passed this bill for 52 consecutive years.

There are a lot of bills that hit the floor, and some are important, some are not. Some are more important to different Members than others. This is important to everybody. There is not one Senator here who doesn't want to pass a defense authorization bill. When Senator LEVIN mentioned that it passed by 25 to 1—we have been ready to go since that time. That is why we are encouraging people and have been encouraging people to bring amendments down.

Let me mention that I personally went—as did Senator LEVIN—to both the majority and the minority leader.

They said: Well, go ahead. You have our go-ahead to get these people to bring down their amendments.

This is very important. And I have to say that one of the problems we had last year was there are a lot of Republicans—and I am on the Republican side. A lot of Republicans had amendments that they didn't think were going to be able to get heard. Well, this is their chance to do that right now.

The count as of today is that 94 amendments have been filed. Of that, 73 are Democratic amendments and only 21 are Republican amendments. So

I appeal now to the Republicans because what I don't want to happen is for us to come back and maybe go into some type of lameduck session and find ourselves in the same position we were in last year. Now is the time to preclude that from happening by getting their amendments down. I think we can do it. We have 4 or 5 weeks during this August recess for our staff to work on these. As the chairman said, a lot of these are going to be put together and are going to be accepted and be in the manager's amendment—but not unless Members get them down right now.

We know that right now we are probably in the most perilous situation we have ever been in as a country. I sometimes say that I look wistfully back to the days of the Cold War when we had two superpowers and we knew what they had and they knew what we had and we assured certain destruction if they did anything to us. Now there are places led by people with certainly questionable character and abilities. We have North Korea, Iran, and all these countries developing nuclear weapons. Our intelligence is good but not good enough to be able to know when it is going to come our way. So we have to be ready. That is the primary function of this committee.

We rely on all the people making our Nation safe right now, and they are looking at what we are doing. We need to take care of them in training, readiness, pay, benefits. These are things that are going to happen.

The other day the President came out with the OCO request for \$59 billion. In there, he mentioned two programs that—frankly, I have never heard of—either one of them. One was \$4 billion to go to the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund, and the other was \$1 billion for the European Reassurance Fund. I don't know what these are.

This is the forum we will use when we start debating the NDAA. It is going to be to get to all these programs that are new on the horizon, to see whether we really want to devote any of our scarce resources to some of these programs. We don't know. When we get the bill on the floor, we will know.

It is too important to our troops to do what we did last year. Not passing it will send a terrible signal to them. But I think it is more important to realize how close we came last year to not having the bill by December 31. If we didn't have it by December 31, just think of what would have happened. If we could not have corrected the situation, we would have had combat pay stopping. We would have had incentive pay for some of the doctors and all that come to a conclusion.

We also would have reenlistment bonuses. Looking at the some of our airmen who are flying sophisticated equipment, people don't realize that to train a new person to get to the level of an F-22 costs about \$15 million. However, a reenlistment bonus is about \$250,000.

So we look at what we can do by doing the right thing and passing the bill.

We have a lot of serious questions we need to debate on problems in Syria, as Senator McCAIN was talking about a few minutes ago, and Iraq and Ukraine and Afghanistan. That is why we need to have the NDAA tended to, hopefully as soon as we get back from this recess. The later we put it into the year to act, the more likely many of these provisions could be rolled into one massive Omnibus appropriations bill. We all know how that would play out. It would be rammed through the Senate without amendments and open debate. We want transparency. We want people to have an opportunity to bring their amendments out, and the more we can get between now and when we go into this recess, the more it can be worked out by the staff because they are going to be working all during the recess to get this done. We have all these people risking their lives on our behalf. They certainly deserve to have this bill in a well-thought-out manner.

Right before we came on, Senator CASEY was talking about the Afghan women and girls, some of the real tragedies that are taking place right now over there. These are things, the language of which we can correct in this bill. So there is no reason to put it off. We don't want to go through what we went through last time, and now is the time to prepare for that, and all we have to do is get the amendments in. No one should complain later on in November or December about not being able to have their amendments heard if they are not out there right now, bringing their amendments now.

With that, it is my understanding that Senator McCAIN was going to participate in this plea we are making, but he has a statement he will be submitting for the RECORD.

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

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today to urge the majority leader to bring to the floor for debate one of the most important pieces of legislation that comes before this body each year—the National Defense Authorization Act.

The Senate Armed Services Committee version of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act provides \$514 billion for national defense in Fiscal Year 2015. This includes \$496 billion for the Department of Defense, DOD, base budget and \$17.7 billion for national security programs.

This bill contains several important provisions. It includes a provision to keep the A-10, a vital close air support combat aircraft. This provision would strictly prohibit the U.S. Air Force from retiring A-10 airplanes for 1 year and fully fund the flight hours, pilot training, fuel, maintenance, and operations for all A-10 pilots and crew through 2015.

Additionally, this bill contains three different provisions that would im-

prove the prospects of competition for military space launch and help move the Pentagon away from using taxpayer dollars to purchase rocket engines from Russia.

Finally, this bill includes a provision that would eliminate wasteful spending in Department of Defense, DOD, IT systems. Before DOD is allowed to spend millions of dollars on new IT projects, the department must identify and eliminate old IT systems first.

These are just a few of the important provisions that have been included in this year's NDAA.

The Senate Armed Services Committee began consideration of the defense authorization bill immediately after the President submitted his fiscal year 2015 budget request. Over the course of 4 months, the committee conducted several hearings, held countless briefings, and then met for 3 solid days in markup to produce this legislation. The bill was approved by the committee on May 22 and is ready to be debated, amended, and passed so that we may conference with the House on their version of the bill.

I strongly urge the majority leader to bring this important bill to the Senate floor for debate. A failure to move to the defense authorization bill as soon as possible is a failure to recognize the critical national security importance signified through the strong bipartisan support this bill has enjoyed in this Chamber over the past five decades.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

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

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

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about an amendment that I filed with the Highway and Transportation Funding Act. While my amendment did not get a vote, the issue it addresses is very important to my home State so I want to take a minute today to talk about the issue and the need to address a situation that was created when we passed the MAP-21 conference report in 2012.

The conference report undid a carefully constructed compromise on the Abandoned Mine Land Program that was put together in 2006. It took apart the work that we had done by limiting the total annual payments of AML funds to \$15 million per year. That is a change that only affected the State of Wyoming. We usually don't do legislation that only affects one State when a number of them receive funds.

What was worse, the provision was not in the House or Senate highway bill. It was added in the dead of night

without consulting anyone from the Wyoming congressional delegation. I was extremely disappointed that the provision was included in the conference report because Senators from other coal-producing States and I spent years working on this issue.

When the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act was passed in 1977, a tax was levied on each ton of coal that was produced. The purpose of that tax was to reclaim the coal mines that had been abandoned before the enactment of the reclamation laws. Half of that tax was promised to the States where the coal was mined. That was known as the State share. The other half went to the Federal Government to administer the reclamation program and to provide additional funding to the States with the most abandoned coal mines.

It was a simple enough concept. Unfortunately, like many things in Washington, while the concept was good, clear, and well-intentioned, its implementation was a nightmare and the program did not work as Congress intended. For years States were short-changed and the reclamation work was not done or the States did it themselves at their own expense, expecting to get reimbursed. That is the case in Wyoming. At one point the Federal Government owed the States more than \$1.2 billion, while more than \$3 billion in reclamation programs remained incomplete and unfinished.

The issued pitted the East against the West and the debate was always the same. When Members from the East would argue that we should send more money to the States to support reclamation efforts, my colleagues from the West were just as certain that we needed to keep the Federal Government's promise to the States to provide the revenue they were entitled to under the provisions of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

In 2006, a bipartisan coalition of Senators—including me—fixed the broken AML structure. It started with Senator Santorum approaching me with a proposal that had the support of a number of local coal companies, also the United Mine Workers of America, several environmental groups, and other businesses. After listening to the proposal, I laid out a set of principles that had to be included in their proposal if they were going to gain my support.

First I wanted to see the return of the money owed to the States, which included \$550 million owed to my State. Because Wyoming is a certified State, I also wanted to see the money that came from the Federal Government with no strings attached. The legislation accomplished that goal by guaranteeing that Wyoming was to receive the money owed from the Federal Government over a 7-year period.

This is money in a trust fund. Trust funds are kind of interesting to the Federal Government. We put money in the drawer and then we take money out and put bonds in the drawer. Think

about that in Social Security. It is another one of our trust funds, and I am one of the protectors.

This was a trust fund but there were only bonds in there, so it was difficult for us to get any money. I wanted to guarantee that future moneys would be paid to States such as Wyoming where significant amounts of coal were produced. We are where most of the Federal half of the tax comes from.

Third, it was important that more money be directed toward reclamation in the States where it was needed. More money was needed.

And fourth, there had to be a provision for orphan miners' health. Sometimes that is kind of overlooked, but Senator Byrd and Senator ROCKEFELLER were very adamant on that.

What is an orphan miner? That was a miner who was promised health care and then their mine went out of business. So there is no company to pay in anymore so they can get their health care, and we made a provision to take care of that.

The legislation that we put together accomplished all four of those goals. We continued our efforts as a bipartisan group, and in December 2006 we passed the AML reauthorization as part of the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006. The coal industry and the United Mine Workers of America supported the bill. Members from certified States less Wyoming supported the compromise, as did members from uncertified States such as Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

As a Senator, President Obama voted in favor of the legislation that included this compromise. From all signs it appeared we had finally fixed our problem and helped strengthen our State economies at the same time. Unfortunately, appearances are often deceiving.

By limited AML payments in the MAP-21 conference report, Congress once again made clear that taxpayers could not count on a Federal trust fund to meet its obligations to administer the tax dollars it collected each year in a proper and legislatively mandated manner. This has been contested and successfully defended year after year to preserve this money, and it was supported by a supermajority from this body until—until—it was included in this highway bill and included in the highway bill in the conference report, not when we had an amendment on the floor that we could once again successfully defeat with a supermajority. It came in the middle of the night, and the next day we had an opportunity to vote for the highway bill.

The highway bill is probably one of the most crucial bills to any State in the Nation, and if all you get to do is vote yes or no, you are not going to take a look at a little portion of the bill where we steal a trust fund from one State—Wyoming—and that is exactly what happened, and it passed.

My amendment to the highway bill this time will address the problem and put things back together the way they

were meant to be. Simply put, it will ensure that when a State has been promised it will receive AML funds, it will receive them. Fortunately, I have the intent of Congress and the support of many colleagues on this matter of such great concern to Wyoming and to all the coal-producing States.

I want to particularly thank Senators HATCH and WYDEN for their commitment to address this issue created by the MAP-21 conference report. This isn't just a problem for Wyoming, because the next time a conference committee goes looking for some money, they can steal it from another AML State.

My amendment also encouraged the production of energy right here at home by opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling. The Congressional Budget Office estimates such an effort will increase gross Federal receipts by \$5 billion over 10 years. That is more than we need to make this payment. There are other possibilities for offsets as well, but that is one that is rather meaty, and that is more than enough to pay the funds that were stolen from Wyoming over 10 years and to pay for 2 years' worth of transportation projects, not just a short-term fix on transportation.

I know my colleagues will see the importance of this matter for Wyoming and to all the coal-producing States. It is important we take a look at this and protect the validity of trust funds that we set up and not redo them without adequate debate or an actual vote on the trust fund that we are violating. We have done that on a couple of other trust funds as well.

One of the ones that we also did was to impose an additional tax on those companies that have private pension funds, because we have a Pension Benefit Guaranty trust fund that is designed so that if a company goes out of business a worker who works for one of those businesses will get at least 60 percent of what they were supposed to get in their retirement. That is why it is called the Pension Benefit Guaranty trust fund. We increased the amount that had to be put in by \$80 per employee for each of the companies involved, and that was going to the trust fund to make sure those funds would be available. But we diverted those funds before they got to the trust fund because the actual money could be replaced by bonds in the drawer of the trust fund. That money went to highways, and that is just another example of how we are taking money from 10 years' worth of trust funds and using it for 2-year projects. We have to change that, and my amendment will be one of the ways of making that change.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Does the distinguished Senator from Utah seek recognition?

Mr. HATCH. I was told 6 p.m.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The Senator from Utah may proceed, if he wishes.

Mr. HATCH. How long will the Senator from Rhode Island take?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I will take approximately 20 minutes.

I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized after the Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH.

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

The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. I thank my gracious colleague. He is one of the better people here, and I have a great friendship with him as well. I appreciate it.

PATENT TROLLS

Mr. President, I rise to speak about the importance of our patent system and how it continues to be abused by patent trolls.

Most Members in this body are fully aware of the crippling effect patent trolls are having on innovation and growth upon all areas of our economy—ranging from Main Street businesses to America's largest technology companies. Through abusive and meritless litigation, patent trolls—often shell companies that do not make or sell anything—extort settlements from innovators throughout the country.

How do they do it? Take, for example, the small coffee shop down the street that provides Wi-Fi service to its customers. The shop owners are using a technology exactly as it is intended to be used, but thousands of miles away a patent troll purchases broad patents previously issued to someone else. Next, the patent troll sends vague and hostile demand letters to the coffee shop, and thousands of similar businesses, accusing them, often improperly, of infringing their questionable patents.

Many trolls target small businesses that they hope will agree to settle even though they have done nothing wrong simply because they do not have the resources to defend themselves in court. These settlements divert capital that could otherwise be used for research and development or to create jobs. In many cases, it costs around \$2 million to fight one of these cases. So they are forced into settling with whatever they can pay rather than doing what they would hope to do; that is, prove that there was an unmeritorious claim.

The sad reality is that many businesses often have little choice other than to settle rather than to expend the far greater resources required to fight them in court. Those who do fight back are forced to spend millions in litigation costs, often with no chance of enforcing a court-ordered award against a judgment-proof plaintiff.

How big of a problem is this? Mr. James Bessen, writing in the Harvard Business Review, confirms that "the economic burden of today's patent lawsuits is, in fact, historically unprecedented. Research shows that patent trolls cost defendant firms \$29 billion per year in direct out-of-pocket costs; in aggregate, patent litigation destroys over \$60 billion in firm wealth each year."

Mr. Bessen further cites three studies on patent lawsuits currently in the works by researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rutgers, Harvard, and the University of Texas. Based upon preliminary findings, Mr. Bessen states:

A consistent picture is emerging about the effects of patent litigation: it costs innovators money; many innovators and venture capitalists report that it significantly impacts their businesses; innovators respond by investing less in R&D; and venture capitalists respond by investing less in startups.

I agree with Mr. Bessen. The evidence from these studies cannot be ignored. Patent trolls do hurt innovation, and it is past time for Congress to do something about it.

For the better part of a year, Congress worked toward a legislative solution to combat patent trolls. In December we overcame the first legislative hurdle when the House of Representatives passed the Innovation Act by a vote of 325 to 91. The White House endorsed the bipartisan legislation by stating: "The bill would improve incentives for future innovation while protecting the overall integrity of the patent system."

Here in the Senate, I worked closely with a bipartisan group of Senators to craft a compromise bill that could pass the Senate. Countless hours of negotiation yielded encouraging results on key litigation reform provisions, including fee shifting, heightened pleading and discovery standards, and a mechanism to ensure that recovery of fees will be possible against shell companies.

In the spirit of bipartisanship, my Republican colleagues and I were willing—albeit very reluctantly—to lower the bar on fee shifting if we maintained strong litigation reforms elsewhere. I continue to believe mandatory fee shifting is the best way to discourage patent litigation in cases where a plaintiff's or defendant's case is so weak it should never have been brought or defended in the first instance. That is why I included mandatory fee shifting in the Hatch-Leahy Patent Reform Act of 2006 and why I will insist on its inclusion in future legislation.

Fee shifting alone gives a prevailing party little relief against patent trolls who litigate in the name of shell companies while their financial backers or interested parties purposefully remain beyond the court's jurisdiction.

Thus, there must be a mechanism to ensure that recovery of fees will be possible even against judgment-proof shell companies. The recovery of award provision I drafted is intended to ensure that shell companies primarily in the business of asserting and enforcing patents and litigation cannot escape potential liability for attorneys fees if they are found to have pursued an unreasonable case. Those deemed interested parties may either voluntarily submit to the court's jurisdiction and become liable for any unsatisfied fees awarded in the case or opt out by re-

nouncing sufficient interest related to the litigation or do nothing.

In my view fee shifting without such a recovery provision is akin to writing a check on an empty account. You are purporting to convey something that is not there. Fee shifting, coupled with this recovery provision, would stop patent trolls from litigating and dashing—dashing away, I might say.

There is no question that America's ingenuity fuels our economy. We must ensure that our patent system is as strong and vibrant as possible, not only to protect our country's premier position as a world leader in innovation but also to secure our own economic future. Patents encourage technological advancement by providing incentives to invent, invest in, and of course develop new technology.

It bears repeating that the governance of patents and copyrights is one of the essential, specifically enumerated powers given to the Federal Government and our Nation's founding. In my view it is one of the most visionary, forward-looking provisions in the entire U.S. Constitution. Unfortunately, at least in the 113th Congress, it is unlikely that this body will act to end the abuses by patent trolls.

It is shameful that even intellectual property bills are now among the latest casualties of our current partisan gridlock.

As Senators prepare to return to their home States for the August recess, I hope they will hear from people who represent the hotel, restaurant, retail, real estate, financial services, and high-tech industries—just to mention a few—about the urgent need to pass patent troll legislation.

I hope Senators will be reminded about the opportunity the Senate abandoned to pass important bipartisan, bicameral legislation that was supported by the White House but pulled from the Senate's agenda by the majority leader.

I hope Senators will recognize we must end the multibillion-dollar assault on American businesses and workers—because that is what it is.

Through commonsense reforms to our patent laws, we can ensure that American resources are used to innovate and create jobs and not wasted to settle or litigate frivolous claims.

I am disappointed that during the 113th Congress the Senate has failed to act to address this critical challenge. Legislation to combat abusive patent litigation will be among my top priorities in the next Congress. I intend to do everything in my power to get such legislation passed for the good of the economy and the good of this country.

ISRAEL

Mr. President, I rise to speak out in strong support of Israel's right to self-defense. This is not a partisan issue. Whether Republican or Democrat, we should all stand behind America's loyal ally as it faces Hamas's cowardly terrorism. In this time of frequent domestic political division, it is encouraging

to witness the remarkable degree of unanimity among my colleagues on this issue.

The wide support for Israel's self-defense here in Congress reflects the unique bond between the United States and Israel. It is an interest we share for many reasons, including our kinship with Israel as a free society and a democracy, our close economic and cultural ties, especially for those of us who consider support for Israel a deeply spiritual matter, our respect for the many virtues of the Israeli society—from its industriousness to its tolerance—our appreciation for Israel's unique stability in an unstable region full of failed and stressed states, and our recognition that Israel wants nothing more than to live in peace with its neighbors.

When Hamas fires constant rocket barrages indiscriminately at Israel's cities and seeks to infiltrate Israel with teams of murderers and kidnappers, Israel has every right to defend itself against this terrorist threat.

In the realities of urban warfare against a guerrilla opponent, some civilian casualties are unavoidable. But in its military actions, Israel has acted with admirable and unprecedented concern for Palestinian civilians—making phone calls, sending text messages, dropping leaflets to warn of impending attacks against military targets, aborting critical airstrips to avoid civilian casualties, and undertaking numerous other measures to protect Palestinian civilians, even at the expense of Israeli military objectives.

While the Israeli Defense Forces act with great courage not only to protect Israeli civilians but also to avoid harming Palestinian civilians, what does Hamas do?

Similar to all terrorists, they hide behind civilians—building bunkers and tunnels to protect its fighters but refusing to shelter civilians; using civilian buildings, including schools, hospitals, and places of worship, to launch rockets and hide other weapons; and even ordering civilians to ignore Israeli warnings and instead turning them into human shields.

In the face of this barbarism, Israel deserves our strongest support as it seeks to root out the infrastructure of terror Hamas has built in and around Gaza. The Israeli people have a right to live free from fear of constant rocket attack. While we should applaud the success of the Iron Dome system in protecting Israeli citizens from the Hamas rocket threat, Israel is acting responsibly by seeking to eliminate the means by which Hamas perpetuates that threat.

Above all else, we must recognize that supporting Israel is truly about supporting peace in the Middle East. Israel wants peace—not peace at any price but a just, secure, and enduring peace. As long as Hamas terrorists hate Israel more than they love their own children—to paraphrase Golda Meir—Israel must occasionally resort to force

of arms in self-defense. In this endeavor our ally deserves our strongest support.

I thank my dear colleague from Rhode Island for allowing me to proceed on these two short but very important sets of remarks. I appreciate that and wish him well in every way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The distinguished Senator from Utah is one of the most distinguished and ablest lawyers ever to serve in this Senate, and his comments about the patent trolls and patent litigation are entitled to great weight.

I thoroughly agree with him that the use of these shell corporations is something we could and should act quickly to get rid of. I think the protection of an end user, such as a coffee shop or a florist or somebody who is not a competitor with a manufacturer or the patent holder, is something we could and should address. I think policing these often extortionate demand letters is something we could and should address. I look forward to working with the distinguished Senator in those areas.

I think when it comes to fee-shifting, that is a very significant step. The principle in the American system of justice that a party pays his or her own lawyer is so deeply engrained in our system of justice that it is actually known as the American rule. To depart from that is something that I think we should do only with a very—let's put it this way. It is a very grave step and I am not sure it is justified in this case. But certainly we could move on the bill that got rid of shell corporations, that protected end users, and that went after these demand letters, and get into conference and, with any luck, something could be done there. But I very much appreciate Senator HATCH's long and sincere interest in this issue.

Mr. HATCH. I wish to thank my colleague for those comments.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise today for the 76th time to urge my colleagues that it is time for us to wake up to the growing threats of climate change. Not a single State remains unaffected by the unprecedented changes we are already seeing, driven by the excessive carbon pollution we continue to dump into our oceans and atmosphere.

Yet in Washington, our Republican colleagues either parrot the polluter line that climate change is just a hoax, or stay silent. No one will step forward.

It was not always this way. Environmental protection was once a top priority of the Republican Party. It seems remarkable now, but it is true. In the early 1970s, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act were all passed with broad bipartisan support and signed by a Republican President. In the 1980s and 1990s, bipartisan majorities voted to

strengthen those laws, led by Rhode Island's Republican Senator, John Chafee, who served as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee and whose seat I now have the honor to hold.

Conservation and stewardship were once fundamental principles of American conservatism. From seminal thinkers of the conservative movement to great Republican leaders of the 20th century, the conservative ideal included a commitment to the interests of future generations. Today, under a relentless barrage of unlimited corporate spending in our elections, much and perhaps most of it by polluters, the interests of future generations have taken a backseat to the interests of the oil companies and coal barons.

The disastrous Citizens United Supreme Court decision let polluters cast their dark shadow over Republicans in Congress who might otherwise work with Democrats on curbing their carbon pollution.

Edmund Burke, an Irish-born member of the British Parliament, is considered by many the father of modern conservatism. Sir Winston Churchill called him "a foremost apostle of liberty." Burke was a staunch defender of our American Colonies and his statue stands here in Washington today. His 1790 conservative manifesto, "Reflections on the Revolution in France," cautioned that we are but "temporary possessors" of our society. If individuals are "unmindful of what they have received from their ancestors or of what is due to their posterity," he wrote, "no one generation could link with another. Men would become little better than flies of summer."

In our case, flies of a carbon-fueled summer.

Russell Kirk was a distinguished scholar at the Heritage Foundation who none other than President Ronald Reagan dubbed "the prophet of American conservatism." He wrote a 1970 piece for the Baltimore Sun: "Conservation Activism Is a Healthy Sign." Kirk wrote: "Nothing is more conservative than conservation."

The noted essayist and Kentucky farmer Wendell Berry, known for what the American Conservative magazine called his "unshakeable devotion to the land, to localism, and to the dignity of traditional life," wrote in 1993:

Our destruction of nature is not just bad stewardship, or stupid economics, or a betrayal of family responsibility; it is the most horrid blasphemy.

Berry would also remind us in this Chamber that "[w]hether we and our politicians know it or not, Nature is a party to all our deals and decisions, and she has more votes."

No figure in American history embodied the conservative value of conservation more than President Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt resented the "malefactors of wealth," as he called them, the timber and mining interests whose "selfish and shortsighted greed seeks to exploit our natural resources

in such fashion as to ruin them and thereby to leave our children and our children's children heirs only to an exhausted and impoverished inheritance." To Roosevelt, this great land of ours was the birthright of all Americans—past, present, and future—to be used, to be sure, in achieving our destiny, but not wasted.

He wrote to Congress in 1907:

To waste, to destroy our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them.

That is a sentiment echoed by Republican Presidents throughout our history, including President Dwight Eisenhower, whose 1961 farewell address invoked this national legacy. Here is what he said:

As we peer into society's future, we—you and I, and our government—must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering, for our own ease and convenience, the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage.

Republican President Gerald Ford, who once worked actually as a National Park ranger, said this in 1975:

We have too long treated the natural world as an adversary rather than as a life-sustaining gift from the Almighty. If man has the genius to build, which he has, he must also have the ability and the responsibility to preserve.

And, of course, no one is more revered by today's Republican Party than Ronald Reagan. His conservative credentials are unassailable and GOP candidates for elected office strive mightily to out-Reagan each other at every turn. In 1984, Reagan put this question to his fellow Republicans:

What is a conservative after all but one who conserves, one who is committed to protecting and holding close the things by which we live? . . . And we want to protect and conserve the land on which we live—our countryside, our rivers and mountains, our planes and meadows and forests. That is our patrimony. That is what we leave to our children. And our great moral responsibility is to leave it to them either as we found it or better than we found it.

President Ronald Reagan's words would make him a fringe liberal candidate in today's extremist Republican Party.

In Congress, we have been boxed in by a barricade of special interest propaganda and we refuse to admit the plain evidence piling up before our eyes. We know with ever greater certainty what our carbon pollution is doing to the climate, what it is doing to our atmosphere, what it is doing to our oceans. And we know with ever greater certainty what that means for the planet and future generations. What do Republicans in Congress today have to say to our heirs, to our children and grandchildren?

"Catastrophic global warming is a hoax," says one of my Republican colleagues.

"It's not proven by any stretch of the imagination," says another.

A third dismisses the issue altogether, saying, "A lot of this is condescending elitism." That is the voice of today's Republican Party.

But what does the next generation have to say back to these Republican voices of denial? More than half of young Republican voters said they would describe a politician who denies climate change is happening as ignorant, out of touch, or crazy—not my words, their words in the poll: ignorant, out of touch, or crazy. That is what the next generation says back to the Republican voices of denial.

Unfortunately, if one is a Republican in Congress today, it is more likely than not that one either holds that view or is afraid to say otherwise. According to one analysis, 58 percent of congressional Republicans in the 113th Congress have denied or questioned the overwhelming scientific consensus that the Earth's oceans and atmosphere are changing in unprecedented ways, driven by our carbon pollution. This includes, I am sad to report, every single Republican member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. And where there is not denial, there is silence.

Outside these barricaded walls, it is different. Outside Congress, more and more Republicans acknowledge the threat of climate change and call for responsible solutions. Former Members of Congress, free now from the polluters' thrall, implore their colleagues to return to their conservative principles. Former Representative Bob Inglis, for example, invokes the tenets of conservative economics. Here is his quote:

If you're a conservative, it is time to step forward and engage in the climate and energy debate because we have the answer—free enterprise. . . . Conservatives understand that we must set the correct incentives, and this should include internalizing pollution and other environmental costs in our market system. We tax income but we don't tax emissions. It makes sense to conservatives to take the tax off something we want more of, income, and shift the tax to something we want less of, emissions.

Sherwood Boehlert and Wayne Gilchrest, former Republican representatives from New York and Maryland, also argue for a market-based approach to reducing carbon pollution. Here is what they said:

We could slash our debt by making powerplants and oil refineries pay for the carbon emissions that endanger our health and environment. This policy would strengthen our economy, lessen our dependence on foreign oil, keep our skies clean, and raise a lot of revenue.

Top advisors to former Republican Presidents have joined the chorus. William D. Ruckelshaus, Lee M. Thomas, William K. Reilly, Christine Todd Whitman all headed the Environmental Protection Agency during Republican administrations. They all recently testified before the Environment and Public Works Committee that it is time to get serious about climate change. Here is how they put it in a New York Times op-ed. They wrote:

As administrators of the EPA under Presidents Richard M. Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George Bush and George W. Bush, we held fast to common-sense conservative principles—protecting the health of the American people, working with the best technology available and trusting in the innovation of American business and in the market to find the best solutions for the least cost.

These former officials recognize both the wisdom of properly pricing carbon and the truculence of the opponents who stand in the way of progress. "A market-based approach, like a carbon tax, would be the best path to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions," they say—"the best path"—"but that is unachievable in the current political gridlock in Washington. . . ." I would interject that political gridlock is the product of big-spending polluters who profit from the gridlock that they create. But let me continue with what the EPA Administrators said: "But we must continue efforts to reduce the climate-altering pollutants that threaten our planet. The only uncertainty about our warming world," they wrote, "is how bad the changes will get, and how soon. What is most clear is that there is no time to waste." Four Republican EPA Administrators.

One day folks are going to look back at this time and we are all going to be judged very harshly with all the dread power that history has to inflict on wrong. The polluters and their instruments will be judged harshly, and the Republican Party will be judged harshly for letting itself be led astray by polluters from its most basic conservative values. Unless they step up, Republicans will leave—to borrow language from Russell Kirk—"[t]he principle of real leadership ignored, the immortal objects of society forgotten, practical conservatism degenerated into mere laudation of private enterprise, economic policy almost wholly surrendered to special interests." That is about as good a description of where they are right now as I could muster, and it comes from the conservative Russell Kirk.

We cannot do this alone, not with the numbers that we have. Republicans and Democrats alike must approach this climate problem head on with the full conviction of our ideals, but working together, working in good faith, and working on a common platform of fact and common sense to protect the American people and our American economy from the looming effects of carbon pollution.

We must rise to our duty here and place our own natural resources, our own American international reputation, and our legacy to future American generations first, ahead of the poisonous influence of the polluters that so dominates this debate now.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, thank you very much for recognizing me.

I also wish to thank the Presiding Officer for his leadership on environmental issues which are so immensely pressing and important for our country, and I am proud and honored to join with him in that cause, which he has helped to lead so often on the floor, but also privately amongst our colleagues and in so many ways across the country. I hope to continue our work together on that issue, and I thank him for presiding now and for continuing that leadership.

Mr. President, I am speaking today, after listening to the people of my State, on an issue that perplexes and challenges us in so many ways. The situation on our southern border perplexes us because it is a problem without easy or ready solutions. It is a challenge to America in the resources that it requires and the spirit that it evokes. Our resources are scarce. Our spirit and our inner strength are boundless. Many have expressed to me in my State of Connecticut concerns about those resources, about the limits on those resources, in facing a seemingly endless challenge, as children come to our borders and stretch the capacity of this Nation to accept them. I am sympathetic with the folks who wonder whether we are capable, very simply, of caring for these children—but I know we can—the children who are coming here because of the humanitarian crisis they face in their countries.

Our supplemental legislation, so ably guided by Senator MIKULSKI, provides a path for providing the resources that are necessary. This supplemental is a thoughtful and significant document that addresses this situation without either breaking the bank or sacrificing American values.

I am immensely impressed and inspired by the spirit that has been evoked, again, among citizens of Connecticut in saying: We must care for those individual children who need asylum because returning them to the countries of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala would be a death sentence for many of them. And we must respect our law which provides for individual consideration and assessment of those children in whether they deserve and need asylum and that status of fleeing persecution and death that many of them, in fact, have faced in those lands.

We must place those individuals, according to law, with their families, if possible. Many of them have parents here, and the vast majority have some family, moms and dads, aunts and uncles. They need to be screened under the law. Their placement has to be in a

safe and secure home with people, in my view, who are here legally. That screening has to be, as the law requires, to assure their safety and security as children. The United States has a responsibility to follow the law, and so do we as citizens and as lawmakers. As torn as we may be, as conflicted as we may feel, as vehement as those conflicting feelings may be felt and expressed by fellow citizens, let us uphold the law and afford due process and individual consideration to those children who, under the law, deserve that individual assessment, individual treatment, individual consideration for the status of asylum in this Nation.

People speak about these children as if they were a mass, indistinguishable, a single societal challenge or problem. A Member of the House of Representatives even referred to them as an "invasion." What I saw at the border when I visited there with two of my colleagues, Senator HIRONO and Senator MURKOWSKI, joined by a third, Senator CORNYN, all friends and distinguished colleagues, hammered home for me that these children are individuals and they should be treated as such.

The vast outpouring of spirit and generosity in this country is mirrored by countless organizations—we heard about them during our visit—that want to help these children, want to volunteer and give of themselves, their time, money, goods and services, everything from blankets, to furniture, to pizza, to you name it. America is pouring out its heart for these children.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter to Secretary Johnson and Commissioner Kerlikowske from Save the Children, a Connecticut organization that has offered, very generously, its help and support in very specific and concrete ways, along with a briefing note that outlines what it perceives the children's needs at the border to be.

Let's end one doubt: the need for and the urgent justification for individual due process consideration and the full and adequate screening of these children and a fair judicial proceeding. I would describe just a few stories.

Girls are fleeing sexual violence at the hands of gangs in Honduras and El Salvador. I will give just a few examples.

Ms. L was raped by more than a dozen gang members in Honduras. After reporting the gang rape to police, her family began to receive death threats.

There are only three shelters in Honduras for rape survivors, and two of them actually operate as brothels. The one remaining shelter declined to take Ms. L because it could not protect her or the other shelter residents from gang violence. She had no choice but to flee Honduras.

Carlita is a 13-year-old who fled gang violence in El Salvador. She was kidnapped by the Zetas in Mexico, used for sex, and forced to be a drug mule for them before escaping and ultimately reaching the United States.

Ms. H survived multiple rapes in Honduras. After she fled she was kidnapped by a Mexican gang and raped and tortured. She eventually reached the United States.

Ms. N and Ms. O, ages 15 and 8, fled El Salvador. Their older female cousins had been forced to work as sex slaves for gang leaders. The gangs threatened to kill Ms. N and were placed in removal proceedings.

Ms. E fled El Salvador when she was 8 years old. Gang members had kidnapped her and two older sisters. The girl's mother did not want her 8-year-old daughter to suffer the same fate, so she arranged for her daughter to be brought to the United States.

Many gangs use sexual violence as a part of the price or rent demanded of girls.

Ms. X fled an area of El Salvador controlled by gangs. Her brother was killed for refusing to join a gang that forcibly tried to recruit him. She was raped by two men, became pregnant as a result, and then was required to pay "renta" to the rapists, which increased over time. She fled El Salvador and was attacked by Mexican robbers during her journey, before arriving in the United States.

Many of these girls are victims of forced prostitution and human trafficking. I have other stories that will be printed in the RECORD. These stories come from personal experiences of advocates and others who have interviewed them at length as well as our own officials. Many of these girls are sexually assaulted during the treacherous journey northward. Those stories are not imagined or fictionalize; they are graphic and dramatic. Rape is so prevalent that many girls begin the journey by taking birth control injections before they leave home from Central America as a precaution against pregnancy.

I refer to these stories because they illustrate and illuminate the need for a thoughtful humanitarian approach, especially to these young girls whose stories are so real and so inspiring, not just in the treacherous journey they overcome, not just in the torture and abuse they suffer, but in the dignity and self-worth and strength and resoluteness they continue to have. A thoughtful humanitarian approach is what is required. It is the approach that this supplemental exemplifies in providing resources.

There is an oath that doctors take: "First do no harm." Let that be the approach of this body in approving basic amounts of money, reduced by the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, so that it meets appropriately and frugally the needs of these children to be placed in humane circumstances with families who are screened for their safety and security and their being here legally.

I will close with one last experience. In one interview I watched at the border, I saw a 7-year-old girl crying quietly as she tried to answer the ques-

tions of an armed border guard. The border guard did his best. He was obviously caring in his approach. But neither his training nor the experience of any border guard equips them really to play this role with a 7-year-old-girl. They are in uniform, a police uniform, which for this girl's whole life has meant fear, potential rape, bodily harm. These children have learned from hard experience that that fear is often justified. They are distrustful of adults generally and authority figures in particular.

Nobody could watch this scene without feeling a sense of compassion for those guards and, of course, most especially the girl, separated from her family, sitting on a bench, her legs swinging free because she was not big enough to reach the floor. The look on her face revealed not just terror but a fervent desire to please, inspired by fear. She could not communicate openly with the border guard.

What she needed was someone trained and equipped to elicit the facts of her background, the reason she had fled, the motivation for her escape, the facts and her feelings about it. That kind of individual assessment is the reason we have the law passed by Congress in 2008, unanimously. This Trafficking Victims Protection Act was designed for these girls and boys coming from noncontiguous countries facing those fears, those threatening conditions if they were to be returned. They face a near certain death, many of them, if they are returned without the individual assessment and consideration. Call it due process, call it judicial, call it humane questioning—the title matters less than what happens.

I know this Nation cannot be expected to rescue all of the children of the world from all of the harsh and inhumane conditions they may face. We are not limitless in our capacity to do good. But I know and I believe we have the resources to do what is just and right under the law considering every one of those children and every one of the potential threats they face if they are returned to their countries.

It is an American value that we follow the rule of law, that we grant asylum under the law to people who deserve it and need it. That much we can do. I know we have the resources to do it. I believe we have the will to do it. The heart of America and its citizens is big. We are a big country. We are not limitless in our resources, but we are boundless in our capacity for generosity and doing what is right.

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

SAVE THE CHILDREN,
JULY 22, 2014.

DEAR SECRETARY JOHNSON AND COMMISSIONER KERLIKOWSKA: Like you and your team, we are deeply concerned about the thousands of unaccompanied minor children crossing our southern border. To address the humanitarian crisis, I am writing to offer our support and propose ways that Save the Children can be of immediate assistance to improve the conditions for children.

Save the Children has nearly a century of experience working with displaced children around the world and has responded to serve children in the face of every natural disaster in the US for the past decade. In the US, we have been a leading partner of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), supporting the needs of children. We have been operating for the past month in McAllen, TX serving children and mothers after their release from Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) custody and have trained more than 80 FEMA Corps members to begin offering basic child programming within the CBP detention and overflow sites. However, we know we can do more to improve the conditions and outcomes for these children.

Your Rio Grande Valley CBP Team, under the leadership of Chief Kevin Oaks, has been a great ally to us as we try to support and assist in this unprecedented situation, offering us tours and being open to dialogue about the needs of children in their custody. However, he has been unable to grant us permission to provide technical assistance and professional child programming onsite without higher authority—it is to you we appeal for this permission.

The conditions in which the children and mothers are being detained are designed for accused criminals, not mothers and children. Save the Children would like to work with you and your team to be a part of the solution. We have the expertise needed to give the children the unique support needed under the current difficult circumstances.

I am writing to propose that Save the Children work with you to immediately help improve conditions for children and address children's urgent needs for care and mental health supports. This would support the safety, protection and wellbeing of the children—and it would relieve stress on the CBP agents. All of these programs could be established at no cost to you—or, if required through DHS/CBP policies and procedures, Save the Children could be reimbursed for this support.

Here is what Save the Children is proposing:

1. Save the Children is offering to immediately provide care for the young children at the CBP detention sites, including the new McAllen overflow site, while their cases are being processed.

Save the Children would provide our Child-Friendly Spaces program, a signature program that we use to support children's mental health and safety in crisis in the U.S. and around the world. This care would be customized to fit the CBP space availability in each border detention site. We would be able to provide basic programs directly in the holding cells or in whatever space may be available. Our teams are trained to provide this program in the U.S. and in challenging, high-risk environments all over the world. For example, we are currently providing this program in Iraq, South Sudan, and the countries bordering Syria.

2. Save the Children is requesting your permission to provide professional staff at each site that has FEMA Corps members, whom we are now supporting to provide urgently needed programming for children in custody. Our professional staff would lead the work with children and provide ongoing support and guidance to the FEMA Corps members while they are in the CBP stations. This will help ensure that there is consistent quality and safety for the children while they participate in the program activities.

Through our partnership with FEMA, the Corporation for National and Community Service and FEMA Corps, this week, Save the Children is training the FEMA Corps teams who are deployed to serve in the CBP stations. Until now, the FEMA Corps mem-

bers were not trained to work with children and have not been supplied with materials or program activities, specifically activities that support children's emotional wellbeing. We know that many of the children had arduous journeys at the hands of smugglers and traffickers. The children need to receive psychosocial support from the moment of their arrival to ensure their wellbeing. Save the Children will be training and providing ongoing technical support to the FEMA Corps members to help them in their mission assignment to support the children in CBP custody.

3. Save the Children is also offering to provide psychosocial support programs to the CBP agents and their families to help relieve their stress and support their emotional wellbeing during this crisis. We know that many of the border agents are heavily stressed by this crisis. By supporting the psychosocial and mental health needs, and the needs of their families, you will help ensure their longer-term wellbeing. I am attaching a fact sheet about our Journey of Hope program.

4. Save the Children is offering to distribute comfort kits to the mothers and children. We have customized the kits to be age appropriate for mothers, infants and toddlers, young children and school-aged children. They include items such as pacifiers, wipes, baby blankets, plush toys, and bilingual storybooks. We would be happy to work with CBP to ensure that the items provided meet with CBP security regulations. We are ready to immediately provide 5,000 comfort kits for the children, 1,000 infant and toddler kits, and 2,000 kits for the mothers.

5. Save the Children is offering to conduct a multi-sector assessment of needs and provide ongoing monitoring to ensure the programs for children support CBP's mission and the children's needs.

Save the Children is uniquely qualified to address the needs of these children in collaboration with CBP and the U.S. government during this crisis. We are reaching out across all relevant federal and state agencies to both advocate for the needs of these children and to offer our support. Thank you again for your attention to this humanitarian crisis and I appreciate your review of our request to work with you and your team for the benefit of all.

I look forward to working together,
CAROLYN MILES,
President & CEO, Save the Children USA.

BRIEFING NOTE: MEETING THE NEEDS OF
CHILDREN ON THE U.S. BORDER
THE CRISIS

For years, children and minors from Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and other Central American nations have sought refuge in the United States. However, their numbers have increased dramatically since late 2013 because of violence, extreme poverty and other factors that make their and their families' lives untenable. Between October 2013 and May of this year, nearly 50,000 children, many unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, arrived at the U.S. border. This is a 92 percent increase from the prior year, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Projections suggest that the number of children arriving will increase to between 60,000 and 90,000 by the end of 2014.

THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Children are always among the most vulnerable in any emergency. Many of the children arriving at the border are suffering from physical illnesses, diarrhea and dehydration, and some have been victimized during their long and arduous journey. They are in urgent need of protective adult care, supportive supervision, medical and hygiene care, and nutritious meals.

With intensive overcrowding at the border stations, reports about sanitation and living conditions for children are extremely disturbing. We have heard stories that children as young as age six are being separated from their mothers for days and kept in border detention sites that are ill-equipped to meet the basic needs of children. Our staff in Texas has also heard first-hand from women that they are fleeing communities because of threats that have been made by gangs to harm their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The large influx of migrants poses huge challenges for local communities and Border Patrol agents charged with protecting the border. Despite these challenges, it is critical for local communities and U.S. government agencies to:

Provide adequate sanitary conditions, and basic needs such as food, water, blankets and places to sleep in the shelters, detention centers and transit centers housing children;

Prevent traumatic separation of mothers from young children where at all possible; and

Facilitate basic health services and mental health support for children who are in need of psychosocial support.

NGOs like Save the Children have decades of experience in addressing the needs of fleeing children in some of the hardest hit areas of the world. In order to ensure that children are receiving treatment and care that is up to international standards, we urge the U.S. government to:

Allow NGOs with expertise in child protection issues to gain access to border detention sites; and

Permit NGOs with expertise in child protection issues to assess the needs of children and their families to devise strategies that will ensure their well-being.

It is both important and obligatory under current U.S. and international law to uphold the legal rights of children, especially those with a possible claim to refugee status. To this end, we ask the U.S. government to:

Provide unaccompanied children with adequate screenings and a fair judicial process to ensure that they are not being returned to life-threatening situations;

Uphold provisions in existing laws that provide due process for unaccompanied children so that those with the right to stay are not short-changed and lost in the shuffle; and

Ensure children and their families are made aware of their legal protections and options.

Finally, any viable long term strategy must include a robust effort to address the root causes for the surge and not focus only on its symptoms. To this end, we request that the U.S. government:

Dedicate funding to address issues of violence and poverty that drive migration from the countries of origin and not only on border security and deterrence.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH.) The Senator from Pennsylvania.

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

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

CHILDREN IN NEED

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I am especially grateful to the senior Senator from Connecticut for his words tonight and the challenge those words present to us. We are grateful for his efforts to stand for children.

I rise tonight to speak about children here in the United States. I spoke earlier about issues that related to women

and girls and children generally in Afghanistan. But I wanted to highlight a report that came out recently by one of the leading organizations in the country that charts the well-being of children over time and advocates on their behalf. The name of the organization that many here have heard of, I am sure, is the Annie E. Casey Foundation—no relation to me—a foundation that has made it its mission to advocate on behalf of children. We cannot be an effective advocate—none of us—unless we chart their progress and find out what is working. So I am going to briefly summarize tonight the findings of the 2014 Kids County Report by the Casey Foundation.

I have here at the lectern kind of a color-coded chart which I will not hold up because I do not have an enlarged version of it. I will not be able to have it printed in the RECORD.

I want to summarize it. Basically, what is in front of me is a summary of various categories that the Annie E. Casey Foundation has developed to chart the well-being of children. They separate the comparisons into four sections, and then they determine whether over time—whether it is over 4 or 5 years or over a longer period of time—whether for children the indicators have worsened or improved. It is a very basic set of metrics.

The categories they track for children are the following four categories: first, economic well-being, and I will talk about some of the indicators there; second, education; third, health; and fourth, a category they call family and community.

The basic indicators for the entire United States—of course, they have a breakdown for how the children in every State are doing on those indicators. For example, in terms of what is getting better, we should highlight and note when there are improvements made. I think the fact that we have improvements on these indicators for children over time indicates that public policy matters, what happens here in the Congress matters, what happens across the country in nonprofit organizations and advocacy organizations that fight every day for children and say over and over again, as the advocates tell us, that children are not small adults—we need specific strategies for children, whether it is for health care or for early education or to make sure they get enough to eat or to protect them from predators. Whatever the issue, we have to have specific strategies for children.

Let's go through a couple of areas where there has been improvement—not dramatic improvement, not enough improvement for us to say we have achieved a measure of success on one metric and we can move on.

In the area of education, just by way of example, eighth grade children—eighth graders not proficient in math, so it is kind of almost a negative indicator the way it is phrased. In 2005, across the United States, 72 percent of

eighth graders were not proficient in math—a very high number, 72 percent. When they looked at it again in 2013, it was down to 66. So it has improved by 6 percentage points, but thankfully it is moving in the right direction. But we can't be satisfied with 66 percent of eighth graders not—not—proficient in math, but it is good news it is moving in the right direction.

Another bit of good news and maybe a more urgent issue in terms of what happens to very young children—in this case, low birth weight babies—there is an improvement there from 2005 to 2012. So over 7 years, the percentage of low birth weight babies, according to this data, has gotten better, but the unfortunate part is it only went from 8.2 percent to 8 percent—not much of an improvement but an improvement.

We have a long way to go in the greatest country in the world when we say that there has been an improvement but still 8 percent of babies are low birth weight. So there is an improvement, but there is a lot more work to do.

Maybe the best area indicator of improvement—and then I will move on to areas where there has been a worsening—children without health insurance. We hear a lot of discussion about health insurance, health care, and the Affordable Care Act in Congress, but in 2008 when that measurement was taken, 18 percent of children did not have health care. So in 2008 it was 10 percent, and as of 2012 it is down to 7 percent. So there is a substantial diminution or reduction in the number of children without health insurance. But if we do the math, 7 percent of the children of the country don't have health insurance. That is a big number. So it is getting better, substantially better, better than almost any other metric in terms of growth or progress, but we have to do a lot more to make sure that it is not 7 percent—that number should be zero—make sure that every child has health insurance. That has to be the goal, and that has to be what we are determined to achieve in the Senate.

I will go through a couple of areas that have worsened, but thankfully, of what is 16 categories, there are more improvement categories than worsening categories. Unfortunately, we have to go through some of the areas where it is worse.

One that is particularly disturbing is children in poverty. That has worsened between the years 2005 and 2012—19 percent in 2005 was the percentage of children in poverty. As of 2012 that went up to 23 percent. So prior to the great recession and then some time after the recession ended, the 2012 number was 23 percent. So that is a worsening number, and it should give us not just pause, but it should be an impetus to action to reduce that number—23 percent of the children in the country in poverty as of 2012. Children whose parents lack secure employment—that

number got worse. Children living in households with high-housing-cost burden—that number got worse, unfortunately.

I will give two more, and then I will conclude my remarks. Children in single-parent families—that number got worse between 2005 and 2012. Finally, children living in high-poverty areas—that was measured over a different time period—2000 versus a time period between 2008 and 2012. That number got worse as well.

What this report indicates—and I won't go through the State numbers—is that first and foremost we have to keep records and we have to track progress. But it also indicates that even when there is an improving metric, when the numbers are getting better, say, for example, on low birth weight babies, that improvement is in many cases very slight and not nearly adequate or acceptable.

I think both on the worsening numbers and on the improvement numbers, it should be a call to action. I believe that if we are doing the right thing for our children, if we are living up to what the Scriptures tell us about justice, where the Scriptures talk about “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied,” if we think of how we treat children as a measure or as an indicator of justice and our commitment to justice, we cannot say that these numbers are in any way acceptable, that our hunger and our thirst for that kind of justice cannot be satisfied with these numbers.

We should be committed to not just tracking and making marginal or incremental progress, we should be committed to the full measure of justice for our children.

Hubert Humphrey said—and he may have said it on this floor when he represented Minnesota—“It was once said that the moral test of a government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.” He said that was the moral test of a government.

So if we are talking about what Humphrey said about children in the dawn of their life, we have to reflect upon and be motivated by the findings of the Annie E. Casey Foundation report. It is one of those reports that remind us how we can improve when it comes to the well-being of our children, but it also reminds us and I think alarms us about areas where we have not improved and we have ways to go.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the President's emergency supplemental request of \$615 million to fight wildfires throughout the United States.

We have witnessed increasingly large and devastating wildfires over the last few decades.

Nationwide, the costs of fighting wildfires has increased from \$200 million in 1986 to \$1.7 billion in 2013. In

that same time, the amount of acres burned has increased from 2.7 million acres in 1986 to 4.3 million acres in 2013.

In many parts of the U.S., fire seasons are now 60 to 80 days longer compared to three decades ago and in some places like Southern California, the fire season never ends.

This is leading to seasonal firefighters being hired several months earlier than normal and federal agencies spending more to make sure our firefighters are prepared and have the necessary resources available for the entire year.

So far this year, California has experienced a 35 percent increase in fire activity and a 16 percent increase in acres burned over an average year. These alarming statistics translate to more than 4,000 wildfires in my State already that have burned more than 52,000 acres since the beginning of the year.

Right now, brave firefighters in California are battling five different large fires. The largest is the Sand Fire, which has burned over 4,000 acres east of Sacramento. This fire has already destroyed 19 homes.

Although it has already been an unprecedented fire season in California, we are not at all out of danger yet as the significant wildland fire potential remains above normal for most of the State through October of this year. It is also above normal in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, and parts of Arizona.

Adding to the difficulty of battling these enormous fires is the constrained fire suppression budget we are currently operating under.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Interior announced that wildfire-fighting costs this summer are projected to run about \$400 million over budget.

In fact, since 2002, the United States has overspent its wildfire suppression budget every year except one—and in three of those years, went over the suppression budget by nearly \$1 billion. This chronic underfunding of our fire-fighting accounts cannot continue.

When we fail to budget for fire suppression, the Forest Service and the Department of Interior are forced to transfer money from fire prevention accounts to make up the difference. That makes no sense!

We are taking money from the very programs that help reduce the threat of wildfires—such as hazardous fuel removal programs.

In my State, plans to remove dry brush and dead trees in the Tahoe National Forest and the Plumas National Forest have been delayed because wildfire prevention funding is not available.

The President's supplemental request not only adds funding for fire suppression during this fiscal year, it solves the problem in the future by creating a Wildfire Suppression Cap Adjustment so that extraordinary fire costs are

treated in the same way as destructive hurricanes, tornadoes, or earthquakes are funded.

This means that money to fight the largest fires would not be subject to discretionary budget caps much like FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund.

As our fire seasons become longer, hotter, and endanger more communities, we must act now to change how wildfire suppression is funded so that we can reduce fire risk and increase the resiliency of the Nation's public lands, forests, and the surrounding communities.

I urge my colleagues to support this emergency supplemental funding and address the growing crisis of wildfires.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

KELLOGG-HUBBARD LIBRARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, every time I go by the children's library at Kellogg-Hubbard Library in my hometown of Montpelier, VT, it brings back happy memories. I would like to have printed in the RECORD an article I wrote about the library and its wonderful librarian, Miss Holbrook.

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

[From the Times Argus, June 13, 1996]

MONTPELIER BOY REALIZES MISS HOLBROOK WAS RIGHT

(By Patrick Leahy)

The 100th anniversary of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library triggers memories for all of us who have lived in Montpelier. And they are great memories.

While I was growing up, Montpelier did not have television. We children did not have the advantage of cable TV with 10 channels giving us the opportunity to buy things we didn't need and would never use or another 10 offering blessings or redemptions for an adequate contribution.

Deprived as we were, we made do with the Lone Ranger and Inner Sanctum on the radio and Saturday's serials at the Strand Theater on Main Street. For a few minutes on Saturday afternoon, we could watch Hopalong Cassidy, Tarzan, Flash Gordon, Jungle Jim or Batman face death-defying predicaments that would guarantee you would be back the next Saturday, 14 cents in hand, to see how they survived (and I recall they always did).

Having exhausted radio, Saturday matinees, the latest comic books (I had a favor-

ite) and childhood games and chores, we were left to our own imagination.

That was the best part.

We were a generation who let the genies of our imagination out of the bottle by reading. Then, as now, reading was one of my greatest pleasures.

My parents had owned the Waterbury Record Weekly newspaper and then started the Leahy Press in Montpelier, which they ran until selling it at their retirement. The Leahy family was at home with the printed word and I learned to read early in life.

At 5 years old I went down the stairs of the Kellogg-Hubbard Children's Library, and the years that followed provided some of the most important experiences of my life.

In the '40s and '50s, the Kellogg-Hubbard was blessed with a white-haired children's librarian named Miss Holbrook. Her vocation in life had to be to help children read and to make reading enjoyable. She succeeded more than even she might have dreamed.

She had the key to unlocking our imagination.

With my parents' encouragement, the Kellogg-Hubbard was a regular stop every afternoon as I left school. On any day I had two or three books checked out. My sister Mary, brother John and I read constantly.

In my years as U.S. senator, it seems I never traveled so far or experienced so much as I did as a child in Montpelier with daily visits to the library. With Miss Holbrook's encouragement I had read most of Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson in the early part of grade school.

To this day, I remember sitting in our home at 136 State St. reading Treasure Island on a Saturday afternoon filled with summer storms. I knew I heard the tap, tap, tap of the blind man's stick coming down State Street and I remember the great relief of seeing my mother and father returning from visiting my grandparents in South Ryegate.

Miss Holbrook was right. A good and an active imagination creates its own reality.

In my profession, I read computer messages, briefing papers, constituent letters, legislation and briefings, the Congressional Record—and an occasional book for pleasure—in all, the equivalent of a full-length book each day.

Interesting as all this is, and owing much of my life to those earlier experiences at the library, the truest reading pleasure was then. I worry that so many children today miss what our libraries offer.

During the past few years I have had many of my photographs published. DC Comics and Warner Brothers have also asked me to write for Batman or do voice-overs on their TV series. In each case, I have asked them to send my payment to the Kellogg-Hubbard Library to buy books for the Children's Library.

It is my way of saying: "Thank you, Miss Holbrook."

RECOGNIZING RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate the 30th anniversary for two excellent charities in my home State of Kentucky, the Ronald McDonald House Charities. The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana in Louisville and the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass in Lexington both first opened their doors to needy families in 1984.

Since then, each house has served more than 25,000 families. In the last

year alone, more than 1,100 Kentucky families have spent nearly 15,000 nights in the two homes operated by these charities. The two homes operate thanks to the generosity of Kentucky's McDonalds' owners, a broad swath of Kentucky businesses, countless individual donors, and the hundreds of thousands of hours given by tireless volunteers.

For those of my colleagues who are not familiar with the Ronald McDonald House, it serves as a home away from home, at low or no cost, for the families of children who are hospital patients. At a time when a family is undergoing such a crisis as the illness of a child, infant, or newborn, the last thing these families need to worry about is finding housing near the hospital. The Ronald McDonald House eases that need by providing a home away from home for families of children receiving health care at area medical facilities while also lending support to other organizations that aid children. Today there are 125 local chapters in 55 countries.

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana first opened in Louisville in September 1984. Since their most recent expansion in 2009, they feature 36 guest rooms, each accommodating up to four people.

In 1992, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana helped pioneer one of the first Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in the world—a smaller version of a Ronald McDonald House located inside a hospital so a parent is only steps away from their seriously ill child. Today there are Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in three Louisville hospitals.

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass in Lexington similarly opened their doors in 1984, and have since expanded to 20 rooms. In 2005, through a partnership with the University of Kentucky, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass began the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile to offer eastern Kentucky's children free professional dental care and education aboard a state-of-the-art mobile clinic. Centered in Hazard, KY, the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile cares for underserved children in their own neighborhoods and schools.

Together, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of both Kentuckiana and the Bluegrass have accomplished a great deal for the Commonwealth and helped thousands of Kentucky families. Kentucky residents and businesses are proud to have supported them for 30 years, and I know will continue to do so for many years more. I want to thank the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana and the Bluegrass for serving as the home away from home for distressed families with a child in the hospital for 30 years. Kentucky is proud of these institutions and the many people behind them who make them work.

TRIBUTE TO JIMMY RUSSELL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a friend and legendary Kentuckian, Wild Turkey Distillery's Master Distiller Jimmy Russell. This year marks the 60th year Jimmy has been making Bourbon for Wild Turkey, a fact that the distillery is rightfully proud to celebrate. As a 60-year Bourbon veteran, Jimmy is the longest tenured active spirits master distiller in the world.

Kentucky is, of course, the birthplace of Bourbon. The drink itself is named for Bourbon County, KY, in the heart of the Bluegrass State, where the product first emerged. Kentucky produces 95 percent of the world's Bourbon supply, and Kentucky's iconic Bourbon brands ship more than 30 million gallons of the spirit to 126 countries, making Bourbon the largest export category among all U.S. distilled spirits. Not only is Kentucky the overwhelming producer of the world's Bourbon, Bourbon gives much back to Kentucky. It is a vital part of the state's tourism and economy.

Jimmy grew up only 5 miles away from the Wild Turkey Distillery, located in Lawrenceburg, KY. His passion for Bourbon led him to study under whiskey luminaries, including Bill Hughes, Wild Turkey's second master distiller; and Ernest W. Ripy, Jr., great-nephew of distillery founder James Ripy and Wild Turkey's third master distiller. Jimmy recalls being taken under Bill's wing and learning everything about the business from the ground up. Since becoming master distiller in the mid-1960s, he has traveled the world as an unofficial ambassador of Bourbon, introducing people from as far and wide as Japan and Australia to American's native spirit.

Over the past 60 years, Jimmy has been responsible for the launches of several new Wild Turkey brands and expressions, such as Tradition, Tribute, 17-year-old Wild Turkey for Japan, Rare Breed, American Spirit, Kentucky Spirit and Russell's Reserve, which he cocreated with his son and distilling partner Eddie Russell. Jimmy broke new ground in 1976 with the first honeyed Bourbon, at the time called Wild Turkey Liqueur. The evolution of that product today is known as American Honey. Jimmy is also responsible for overseeing the production of Wild Turkey 101, the distillery's flagship brand. This fall, Wild Turkey released a commemorative Diamond Anniversary limited-edition Bourbon created by Jimmy's son, distilling partner and Bourbon Hall of Famer Eddie Russell. As for Jimmy himself, he is known to enjoy his Bourbon neat or with a touch of branch water.

As a legend in the distilled spirits industry, Jimmy is a member of the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame. He is a member of the Whiskey Hall of Fame and a whiskey judge for the International Wine and Spirits Competition. He has been honored by the Commonwealth of Kentucky General Assembly,

been anointed a Kentucky Colonel, and received the key to the city from the mayor of Lawrenceburg.

When not hard at work at Wild Turkey, Jimmy spends time with his wife Joretta. They have three children, Eddie, Mike, and Kathy, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. An avid sports fan, Jimmy is a lifelong supporter of local Anderson County High School athletic programs for girls and boys.

I want to congratulate Jimmy Russell for reaching his 60th anniversary of work at Wild Turkey Distillery. His lifetime of achievement in the distilled spirits industry is certainly something to be proud of. I know my Senate colleagues join me in commending Jimmy for decades of success.

TRIBUTE TO MARCUS ADAMS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to SPC Marcus Adams. Adams hails from Magoffin County, KY, and proudly served his country on a tour of duty in Iraq.

Adams graduated from Magoffin County High School, and after his freshman year in college he decided to enlist in the U.S. Army. Because of the strong military tradition in his family—his father, grandfather, and two uncles all served—he felt it was an easy decision to carry on that legacy.

After completing his basic training and advanced individual combat training, Adams was assigned to the 555th Engineer Brigade. In September of 2008, he and his brigade were sent to Balad, Iraq, where they would remain for the duration of their yearlong tour of duty.

In Iraq, Adams was responsible for all of his brigade's technology. Managing the computer networks, servers, and radios were tasks that all fell under his purview.

Adams is now happily back in his old Kentucky home with his wife Ashleigh and his son Alistair and will soon be joined by his first daughter Hermione.

For his honorable service to this country, he is well deserving of praise from this body. Therefore, I ask that my U.S. Senate colleagues join me in honoring SPC Marcus Adams.

The Salyersville Independent recently published an article detailing Adams' service in Iraq. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Salyersville Independent, July 3, 2014]

QUICK DECISION LEADS TO IRAQ

(By Heather Oney)

One "drop of the hat" decision took Marcus Adams all the way to Iraq.

Adams, a graduate of Magoffin County High School, was 19 years old and had completed one year of college when he came in one afternoon in February 2007 and told his wife, Ashleigh Nicole Prince Adams, he had joined the Army.

"There were no objections," Adams laughed. "She stayed in college at Morehead and I went to basic training."

Adams said given his family's history, with his dad, grandfather and two uncles serving in the military, it was a no-brainer.

"With 9/11, I felt because everyone else in my family had served, I felt the responsibility to at least do a minimum tour," Adams said. "I didn't feel productive in college and the Army could give me steady employment and healthcare."

Adams finished his basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, then his Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at Fort Gordon, Georgia. He was then assigned to the 555th Engineer Brigade, based out of Fort Lewis, Washington.

His primary job with the brigade, which he stayed in all through his enlistment, was to be the computer guy, Adams said. He was responsible for the computer networks, servers, radios—any technology—the engineers needed.

In September 2008, only seven years after 9/11, Adams and his brigade were sent to Balad, Iraq, where the team would stay a year.

"The War in the Middle East we have been engaged in for the past 10-plus years is opened by its very nature," Adams said. "In Vietnam, we had an actual bad guy, in uniform and everything. In Iraq and Afghanistan, when the enemy is terror, who is that? There's no way to define victory."

Despite recent developments in Iraq, Adams said, "I'm proud of the work we did. Less than 1 percent of U.S. Americans ever serve in any capacity. The importance of serving and the things I got from it turned me into the person I am."

Adams said the majority of the time he remained on base, which was a former Iraqi Army base where temperatures got up to 130 degrees in the day.

"It's hard to express how hot that is," Adams remembered.

He had one mission off-base, where he said he saw how big the gap was between the poor and the rich in Iraq.

"Here, the poorest people get food stamps and aid," Adams said. "I've seen Iraqi men walking around bare naked, picking up garbage, and the guys working with us are wearing suits and eating lobster. We saw people working at a dump in a junk-yard, building shelters out of it."

While their truck was armored with additional plates, he said a man threw a Russian RKG-3 anti-tank grenade between the truck and the plate, causing damage to the truck, but no one was hurt.

At one point Adams and a few other men received four-day passes and they went to Doha, Qatar, to unwind. Located on the Persian Gulf, Qatar is more of a tourist country, with only 30 percent of the people in the country at any given time actually being residents. Since they were there during Ramadan, when it is illegal to be caught eating or drinking during the daylight hours, Adams said they had to be careful to stay hydrated. They would pull the curtains on the bus they were traveling on and drank anyway in order to not dehydrate in the well over 100-degree temperatures.

In September 2009, he came back to the states, getting to travel all around the country. He worked in Fort Irwin, California, twice, Fort Campbell, Kentucky and Yakima Training Center, Washington.

The hardest part, he said, was reintegrating with his wife.

"It's weird when you leave that long when you've been the head of the household," Adams said. "You have to leave and hand it all over to her—the bills and all the decisions—and when you come back, you try to

come back in the same role, but she's like, I've got this."

Adams said for the first month back, all the soldiers had to report for a daily briefing set up to help them with the reintegration process, but he saw many dealing with infidelity issues when they returned, as well as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

"People can get really messed up and they used to just tell us, Suck it up and deal with it," but I think they are seeing now that's not the best policy."

Thankfully, for him, he said they never had to deal with either issue.

He could have gone to Afghanistan for another tour, however, his contract would have had to be extended past the usual six years. Since he was now the father of one, he took the Army's offer for an early honorable discharge, leaving three months early to be with his son. He was ranked as a Specialist, under the E4 pay grade.

Marcus and Ash'leigh Adams have one son, Alistair Dean Adams, who is three years old, and one daughter on the way (at press time), Hermione Sue Adams.

CYPRUS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, in 1974, 40 years ago this month, Turkish troops invaded the Republic of Cyprus. By August they had taken control of more than one-third of the island. Turkey's invasion had immediate consequences, such as the confiscation of property and the displacement of Greek and Turkish Cypriots alike.

The invasion has also had more enduring consequences—consequences that are still felt today. The so-called green line, a demilitarized United Nations buffer zone, still cuts a jagged path across the island, dividing one part of the country from the other. It even bisects the capital city of Nicosia. In 1983, Turkish Cypriots declared a separate country in the northern third of Cyprus—a country recognized to this day by Turkey alone.

Vice President JOE BIDEN visited Cyprus in May, and he spoke of being called the White House optimist for his belief that the best days are yet to come. Well, by that standard, my colleagues here must think me the Senate optimist. But I really do believe that the future is bright for Cyprus and that most Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots want to put aside decades of division and move forward together.

I was pleased to read that leaders issued a joint declaration in February calling the status quo "unacceptable", and I am encouraged by the resumption of high-level negotiations on a comprehensive settlement. I think the United States, with its deep ties to Cyprus and Turkey, can play a productive role in facilitating these discussions. I also urge the Government of Turkey to step up and be a constructive partner throughout this process.

It has been my experience that intractable problems rarely have simple or easy solutions, so I am not under any illusions about this. But I have seen what folks can accomplish when they set ideology aside, and I remain a believer in a just settlement that brings an end to 40 years of division and reunites Cyprus.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, in my capacity as chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I wish to draw attention to the fact that July 20 marked the 40th anniversary of the invasion of Cyprus by a Turkish army. Sadly, this year also marks more than 50 years since a power-sharing arrangement between the two communities on Cyprus collapsed following independence from Britain. As the situation in the eastern Mediterranean and the wider Middle East is becoming more volatile and fragile, it is time to end the forcible division of Cyprus, which has endured for far too long.

The continued presence of Turkish troops in the northern part of Cyprus exacerbates a number of human rights concerns including property restitution, restrictions on freedom of worship, and damage to religious and archaeological sites. I have consistently raised these concerns and want to emphasize that all religious sites in the north must be protected.

It is gratifying that the Government of Cyprus remains fully committed to the U.N.-sponsored process to reach a sustainable and enduring settlement that would reunify Cyprus based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation in accordance with relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The joint statement agreed to by Greek Cypriot President Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu on the island in February of this year lays a solid foundation for results-oriented talks. The basic parameters for a solution laid out in the statement should be fully respected.

I applaud the efforts of both leaders to move this process forward. Following the signing of the joint statement in February, President Anastasiades called the chance for peace a "win-win situation." "I believe that a solution that would be accepted by the Greek Cypriots would create stability in the region. Greater cooperation with Turkish Cypriots will contribute to foster growth . . . to do that you have to have a settlement that is not at the expense of one community or to the benefit of the other," he said.

After meeting in April with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu said that during negotiations with Greek Cypriot President Anastasiades, "we'll try to bridge our differences and find a comprehensive settlement in the shortest possible time." "We can finalize a settlement and take it to a separate simultaneous referenda in 2014."

Many observers believe the discovery of vast offshore oil and natural gas reserves in the eastern Mediterranean could be a game changer in pressing negotiations forward and could potentially also act as a stabilizing and unifying factor in the eastern Mediterranean. The cheapest and most expeditious way of exporting the reserves, discovered first by Israel and then by Cyprus, would be through an underwater pipeline to Turkey. I certainly

hope this potential for economic empowerment for all of the people of Cyprus will help both communities to visualize and then implement a final settlement.

In keeping with the numerous U.N. resolutions on Cyprus and the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, it is time for Turkey to remove its troops from the island. The people of Cyprus cannot wait another 40 years for reconciliation.

MONHEGAN, MAINE QUADRICENTENNIAL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, in 1614, 6 years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Captain John Smith—explorer, soldier, navigator, and adventurer—landed at Monhegan Island off the coast of Maine. I wish to commemorate the 400th anniversary of that discovery and to congratulate the people of a truly remarkable community as they celebrate their quadricentennial.

In the very first sentence of his remarkable journal of that voyage, Captain Smith names the “Isle of Monhegan,” the Wabanaki Indian word for “island of the ocean.” In reference to the shared latitude with his home country, he coined the term “New England.”

As the Wabanaki had known for centuries, the fish were plentiful. In addition, Captain Smith used the stands of timber to make small boats to explore the inlets and rivers on the mainland coast. So, Monhegan can rightly claim to be the birthplace of three industries that built the State of Maine—fishing, boatbuilding, and logging.

Certainly, there were disappointments. The whales proved elusive, and the gold Captain Smith sought was nonexistent. But the potential was everywhere.

In addressing the question of what it would take to settle the untamed region, the captain’s log contains these lines that define Monhegan today. It would take, Captain Smith wrote, “the best parts of art, judgment, courage, honesty, constancy, diligence, and industry.”

Maine’s island communities are an essential part of our State’s identity. They survive and thrive because of the qualities Captain Smith so wonderfully described.

The island’s lobster industry is a shining example. More than 90 years ago, long before conservation was a watchword, Monhegan’s lobstermen voluntarily established their own ban on harvesting small lobsters. To the list of Monhegan’s firsts—fishing, boatbuilding, and logging—we can add lobster management.

By mutual agreement, rather than government edict, Monhegan lobstermen set trap limits to prevent overfishing. They established their own management zone to ensure that this generations-old fishery will sustain the generations to come. Most remarkable

of all is the tradition of Trap Day, now October 1, when all boats, captains, and crews wait for each other and head to their fishing grounds together at the crack of dawn. The ethic that “no one goes until everyone goes” is the very definition of community.

For more than a century, Monhegan also has been a magnet for artists. In 1902, Samuel Triscott became the first artist to live there year-round, and he found the subject matter enticing enough to stay the rest of his life, nearly one-quarter century. From Rockwell Kent to Andrew and Jamie Wyeth, this singular place has inspired some of the best artists to create their greatest work.

There is no question that the magnificent scenery is part of the attraction. But as we look at the powerful works of art the island has inspired, it is clear that the people of Monhegan, their judgment, courage, honesty, constancy, diligence, and industry, enhance the natural beauty of the island so that it represents something more profound than crashing surf on rocky shores.

Captain Smith concluded his journal of that voyage four centuries ago with these words: “We are not born for ourselves, but each to help the other. Let us imitate the virtues of our predecessors to be worthily their successors.” Those words are fitting for a celebration of the past that looks with confidence to the future, and I congratulate the people of Monhegan, Maine, on this landmark anniversary.

CAMPOBELLO INTERNATIONAL PARK

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President. I wish to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Roosevelt Campobello International Park. This beautiful and historic park preserves the summer home that Franklin Delano Roosevelt enjoyed both as a boy and as president. It was established by treaty between the United States and Canada and is the only memorial to an American president on Canadian soil.

The 2,800-acre park on Campobello Island, New Brunswick, was opened on August 20, 1964, by Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson and American President Lyndon Johnson. It is jointly owned and managed by both countries and is a beautiful and historic testament to a legacy of friendship. Like all true friendships, the friendship commemorated at Roosevelt Campobello International Park is based not upon expedience or self-interest, but upon shared values.

It is a legacy of friendship between two men: one of America’s greatest presidents and one of Canada’s greatest prime ministers. Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Mackenzie King could not have been more dissimilar in personality—one gregarious and outgoing, the other reticent and intensely private—yet they saw beyond the superficial traits and into the depths of character.

Together, they led their nations out of the Great Depression. Together, they led their nations through the Second World War and made North America the arsenal of democracy so crucial to victory. Although only one lived to see the peace, together they forged an alliance that has allowed that peace to endure.

It is a legacy of friendship between two communities. By land, Campobello Island is accessible only from Lubec, ME, our Nation’s easternmost town, via the FDR Memorial Bridge, itself a stunning example of international cooperation and friendship. The people of eastern Maine and western New Brunswick share a past, a present, and the future. They are bound together by a rugged yet rewarding way of life, by personal and family ties, by commerce and by mutual assistance. They earn their livelihoods from the land and from the sea, and they care for this special place so that those livelihoods may continue for generations to come.

It was at Campobello, his “beloved island,” that young Franklin Roosevelt learned to guide a sailboat through the challenging Lubec Narrows and developed the inner strength and self-reliance that enabled him to meet any challenge. Among the proud and determined people on both shores of the narrows, he felt the power of committed individuals working together in common cause.

In 1933, during his first return visit as President, with First Lady Eleanor at his side, FDR recalled his happy childhood memories and again thanked the islanders who taught him to sail. Then, in words that still ring true today, he described the region as, “The finest example of friendship between Nations—permanent friendship between nations—that we can possibly have.”

The United States and Canada share the world’s longest undefended border, a common history and culture. In trade, we are each other’s best customers. We are, as one of the park’s permanent exhibits declares, “Good Neighbours—Best Friends.”

George Washington wrote that, “True friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity.” The friendship between the United States and Canada is the hardiest of plants with the deepest of roots. The adversities are but minor shocks; they are no match for the values of freedom, human rights and the rule of law that bind us together.

Those values are the foundation of this legacy, and they are our guarantee that this friendship will endure. They are what make the 50th anniversary of Roosevelt Campobello International Park an event so worthy of celebration.

U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I wish to honor the U.S. Marshals Service on the occasion of the 225th anniversary of its founding. Since its establishment in 1789, the Marshals Service has distinguished itself as not only the oldest, but one of the most effective law enforcement agencies in the United States. In recent years, the Marshals Service has demonstrated its versatility through Operation FALCON, a nationwide fugitive apprehension initiative. In this program, resources of Federal, State, city, and county law enforcement agencies are combined to locate and apprehend criminals wanted for crimes of violence. Since its inception in 2005, Operation FALCON has made 91,086 arrests and cleared 117,874 warrants and is the single most successful initiative aimed at apprehending violent fugitives in U.S. law enforcement history. Congratulations to the Marshals Service on 225 years of service to our Nation.

MCDONALD NOMINATION

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, my office continues to receive an inordinate number of complaints about persistent problems with the delivery of health care services and other benefits by the Department of Veterans Affairs to those who have served in our Armed Forces. This is very troubling to me.

Evidence of serious and systemic mismanagement and negligence within the Department led to the resignation of a former Secretary of the Department and a call for a thorough assessment of how to better serve our veterans. We should take very seriously our responsibility to those who have served in our military. Robert McDonald, the next Secretary of Veterans Affairs, will face many challenges to improve the VA system. He will have the support of many of us in Congress as he assumes this important position.

I have recommended on several occasions continued, vigorous oversight by the Department of Veterans Affairs during the implementation of a corrective action plan at the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery VA Medical Center in Jackson, MS. Reports from VA patients, their families and VA hospital officials in Mississippi have served to guide corrections and improvements at the facility.

I support measures to correct the VA's problems and improve the quality of, and access to, care for veterans. I am hopeful that the pending VA reform legislation and the confirmation of a new Secretary of Veterans Affairs will be reassuring steps toward enhancing the delivery of health care services to our veterans.

We can and should do better for those who have devoted themselves to serving our country. •

REMEMBERING ADMIRAL CHARLES R. LARSON

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I want to pay tribute to an exceptional leader, public servant, patriot, and friend. Earlier this week, ADM Charles Larson passed away after a 2-year battle against leukemia. This morning, we said goodbye to him as he was memorialized and laid to rest at the U.S. Naval Academy Cemetery in Annapolis. Although it is always hard to lose a friend, and it is certainly proper to mourn, I also want to celebrate his life and his tremendous accomplishments and contributions to the Navy, Naval Academy, and Nation.

Chuck and I were good friends, flight school roommates, and both members of the Class of 1958. An Eagle Scout, brigade commander and class president, he continued his meteoric trajectory, becoming the first naval officer selected as a White House Fellow and the second youngest officer to be promoted to the flag rank. On top of his operational commands, he also served as naval aide to President Richard Nixon. Chuck was bright, extremely talented, and never shied away from a challenge. For instance, after earning his pilot wings and doing a tour aboard the USS *Shangri-la*, he decided to go to nuclear power school to become a submariner and be at the tactical tip of the Cold War. Similarly, instead of pursuing a lucrative civilian job after finishing his tour as the commander in chief, U.S. Pacific Command, he took on what he considered his most challenging but rewarding job of his career, returning to his alma mater for a second tour as the superintendent.

A man of unparalleled character and vision, Admiral Larson wanted to refocus the academy to be "an ethical beacon for the nation." He established the Character Development Division and implemented innovative ethical and character-enhancing programs and initiatives to both the curriculum and student life. His devotion to the academy and midshipmen went beyond his two tenures at the helm, serving as the chairman of the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation for nearly a decade after his retirement.

Chuck was more than a renowned four-star admiral; he was a friend to many, husband to Sally, father to Sigrid, Erica, and Kirsten, and grandfather to seven beautiful children. I join many past and present members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Class of 1958, the Naval Academy family, and thousands of military personnel who have served under and alongside Chuck in extending our most sincere gratitude for his legacy of excellence and ethical leadership.

Fair winds and following seas, Admiral Larson. You will be missed, but not forgotten.

INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to express my appreciation that the Sen-

ate has passed H.R. 4028, a bipartisan bill Representatives GRACE MENG and DOUG COLLINS introduced that amends the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to include the desecration of cemeteries among the many forms of violations of the right to religious freedom. Last month, Senator RISCH and I introduced a Senate companion bill, S. 2466, to H.R. 4028.

In 1998, Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act to affirm America's commitment to religious freedom, enshrined both in the U.S. Constitution and in numerous international human rights instruments. The act acknowledges the pressure and persecution that many people around the world face because of their religious beliefs and requires the Department of State to issue an annual report on international religious freedom.

Freedom of religion requires respect for those practicing their faith alone as well as in community with others. It also requires protection for those who identify as members of a religious community, for the symbols of the community, for the houses of worship, and for other institutions of the community. The defacing or destruction of a cemetery based on an affiliation with a particular religious or spiritual group should not be tolerated by governments and must factor into our international religious freedom reporting. This bill, H.R. 4028, will ensure inclusion of these acts in the annual State Department reports and will better aid those of us working to monitor and combat anti-Semitism and other religious discrimination.

There is no question that we need to report on these crimes. In recent years, we have witnessed with growing concern a number of cases involving the desecration of Jewish cemeteries in the Netherlands, Hungary, Russia, Poland, France, Germany, Georgia, Moldova, and Argentina. This legislation is even more important and timely given the rise in anti-Semitism across Europe. In just the past few weeks, large-scale anti-Semitic protests have taken place in major cities across Europe. In this year's European Union elections, extremist parties espousing anti-Semitic platforms have made alarming progress. And in Hungary and Greece, extremist parliamentary parties associated with street militias have been successful in elections.

I have served on the Helsinki Commission for nearly 20 years. During my tenure, I have worked tirelessly to combat anti-Semitism and religious discrimination. Ensuring that religiously motivated cemetery desecration is reported is the first important step to combating this serious crime.

I thank Senator RISCH for his leadership on this issue. I also thank Senators MENENDEZ and CORKER for taking up H.R. 4028 and moving it quickly through the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee. Finally, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle supporting this bill and for helping to recognize the desecration of cemeteries as a violation of the right to religious freedom.

REMEMBERING JEFFREY B. WESTERFIELD

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize and honor the extraordinary service and ultimate sacrifice of Gary, IN police department officer Jeffrey B. Westerfield. Dedicated, loyal, and above all compassionate to those in need, Officer Westerfield served with the Gary Police Department, GPD, for 19 years.

On Sunday, July 6, 2014, Officer Westerfield was found shot and unresponsive in his patrol car. Sadly, despite the best efforts of his fellow officers, EMTs, and medical personnel, Officer Westerfield, 47, succumbed to his wounds.

A native of Owensboro, KY, Officer Westerfield joined the U.S. Army at the age of 18. Jeffrey was stationed in Georgia for basic training, where he earned the nickname "Rambo" after sustaining a leg injury and surviving alone in the wilderness for 2 days during a training maneuver.

After being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, Jeffrey began his career in law enforcement. In August 1995, Jeffrey fulfilled his dream when he was sworn in as an officer with the Gary Police Department. Officer Westerfield served in various capacities during his career with the GPD, including with the patrol division, traffic division, K-9 handler, and as a field training officer.

Known for his quiet demeanor, Officer Westerfield was a man of few words and genuine in his actions. "He was very soft-spoken. He was like a huge teddy bear. [H]e was able to actually go to any situation, and calm the situation down immediately, just by his presence and his voice," said Gary deputy police chief Gary McKinley.

Officer Westerfield is survived and deeply missed by his fiancée Denise Cather, and his five children: Allie, Katie, Cheyenne, Rachel and Brady.

Officer Westerfield loved his work, and he gave his life to serve and protect the citizens of Gary. He was a quintessential Hoosier and a true American hero. Let us always remember and treasure the memory of this stalwart, brave man and honor him for his selfless commitment to serving his fellow citizens. My thoughts and prayers, along with those of fellow Hoosiers, are with Jeff's family and friends.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT BENJAMIN PRANGE

Ms. FISCHER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and sacrifice of U.S. Army SSG Benjamin G. Prange,

who was killed in action on July 24 while serving in Kandahar Province in Afghanistan. Staff Sergeant Prange "Ben" to his friends and family—was a soldier in the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, CO. He repeatedly answered the call to deploy, serving three tours in Afghanistan in 6 years.

Ben was born and raised in rural Nebraska south of Lincoln, near Hickman and Roca. He was no stranger to adversity early in life, overcoming the deaths of both of his parents before he turned 16. He was raised by his grandparents, Kent and Carolyn Prange, who live just west of Roca, NE.

Ben attended Norris High School, where he met his future wife Elizabeth. Ben is remembered as a "good, solid kid" by his high school superintendent Roy Baker. Liz and Ben married a year after his graduation. They would have celebrated their 11th wedding anniversary on July 26. He enlisted in the Army in January 2007 to fulfill a dream of becoming an infantryman. Liz is left to care for their two sons, Corbin and Dillon, who I hope will understand in time the tremendous debt of gratitude this Nation owes to their father for selfless sacrifice to protect all that we hold dear.

Ben served our country with distinction. He was a four time recipient of the Army Commendation Medal and a recipient of the Combat Infantryman Badge for service under direct enemy fire. He was also awarded an Army Achievement Medal, two Good Conduct Medals, a National Defense Service Medal, a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, an Overseas Service Ribbon, and two NATO Medals, in addition to his Afghanistan Campaign Medal with three campaign stars for his tours of duty.

My thoughts and prayers remain with his family, friends, and his fellow soldiers who have lost a great father, soldier, and friend. His sacrifice will never be forgotten.

VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE ACT REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I wish to speak on S. 1799, the Victims of Child Abuse Act Reauthorization Act of 2013, which recently passed the House of Representatives and is awaiting the President's signature. In addition to the bill's support for Child Advocacy Centers, it contains an important provision that bears mentioning. S. 1799 makes Congress' intent clear that money from the Crime Victims Fund should only be used to assist victims of crime. Since the funds for the Crime Victims Fund are derived from fines collected from those convicted of Federal crimes rather than tax revenue, Congress directed the funds to only be used for crime victims. I offered the provision clarifying this intent as an amendment to the Justice For All Act, and it was accepted unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee. I am pleased the sponsors of S. 1799 agreed to include it at my request.

Crime victims can face a confusing and sometimes overwhelming system, and so it is important for someone to explain their rights and address other victim-centered issues. Encumbering victim advocates with other non-victim-related tasks could delay or prevent the resources needed to meet victims' needs such as assisting victims with impact statements and collecting restitution information and associated receipts. It could also delay or prevent ongoing safety assessments for the victim. Victim specialists, also referred to as victim advocates, along with their supervisors, victim witness coordinators, should be improving services for the benefit of crime victims and not tasked with other duties, such as arranging travel for witnesses.

My amendment makes clear it is Congress' intent that the funds authorized for victims services are limited to those dedicated to victims services and their direct support staff. This will ensure that that none of the funds available is used for purposes that do not benefit crime victims.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING PATRICIA ZULKOSKY

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Patricia Zulkosky for her outstanding years of service to the State of Alaska and congratulate her on the occasion of her retirement from the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Born into and raised by a large Polish family in northern Minnesota, Patricia moved to Alaska in 1978, making her home in the western tundra community of Bethel. After quickly falling in love with the Yup'ik Eskimo and rural Alaska lifestyle, she took to subsistence fishing and gathering. Patricia built lifelong friendships in Alaska. After 6 years, she began her family by welcoming the arrival of her first and only daughter, Tiffany.

Patricia started working for the State of Alaska in 1985 as a clerk typist for Alaska Public Health Nursing, but it wasn't until Patricia was hired by the Department of Juvenile Justice in December 1988 that she would come to know her passion for working with troubled youth and the families of rural Alaska. Hired as a youth counselor, Patricia's work ethic, commitment, and enthusiasm would quickly help her move up in the ranks. Not letting life get in the way, Patricia pursued her bachelor's degree in social work while being a single mom of a young daughter and working several other jobs to make ends meet.

After graduating in 1996, she returned to Alaska fulltime where she would hold supervisory positions before becoming the Bethel Youth Facility superintendent. Under her leadership as superintendent, the Bethel Youth Facility has become an exemplary facility in Alaska for utilizing subsistence

ways of life as a form of treatment. They have successfully hosted a community-based Cultural Heritage Week and begun to undergo a long-planned expansion. Patricia's love of community, culture, and hard work has resulted in a public service career that exemplifies the Alaska and American dream.

I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Patricia for her many years of service to the people she has come to call family. I wish the absolute best for her and her family as they begin this next stage in their lives.●

RECOGNIZING MINNESOTA POLICE OFFICERS

● Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association, the largest association representing Minnesota's rank-and-file police officers, recently met for its annual conference in Alexandria, MN.

During that conference, MPPOA recognized several outstanding police officers: Sergeant Eric Kilian of the Hutchinson Police Department was named Police Officer of the Year, and Officer Mark Blumberg of the St. Paul Police Department and Officer Brian Hasselman of the Burnsville Police Department received Honorable Mentions. In addition, the Minnesota Association of Women Police, a wonderful organization that trains women police officers and promotes professionalism in law enforcement, recently honored Detective Alesia Metry of the Maplewood Police Department as Officer of the Year at its annual conference in Duluth.

I join MPPOA and MAWP in recognizing these brave public servants, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank both organizations and their members for the work they do every single day to keep our communities safe.●

CONGRATULATING JOHN STROUD

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Commander John W. Stroud from Hawthorne, NV, on being named the National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States for 2015. I am proud to honor a Nevadan who has dedicated his life to serving our country and is committed to ensuring that our Nation's heroes receive the care that they deserve.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I recognize the important role the Veterans of Foreign Wars plays for combat veterans and military servicemembers from the Active, Guard, and Reserve forces. This distinguished national group of veterans has been a constant influence, furthering the voice of all of our Nation's heroes. On July 23, 2014, at the 115th National Convention, John Stroud was elected as VFW national commander. This is the second time in VFW history that a Nevadan has been elected commander. John has served

the VFW in many leadership positions, and I have no doubt that he will work tirelessly in his new position as commander towards the VFW's mission to ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.

Graduating from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a bachelor of science degree in professional aeronautics, Commander Stroud decided to serve his Nation by joining the U.S. Air Force, where he went on to enjoy a distinguished career. Upon joining the Air Force, he was sent overseas for a tour in Korea with the 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base as a flight operations superintendent. For his service, he was awarded four Meritorious Service Medals, three Air Force Commendation Medals, three Air Force Achievement Medals, the Korea Defense Service Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal. Commander Stroud's accomplishments extend far beyond his numerous commendations; he has also been recognized for his service to the community. He dedicates much of his time as a member of many volunteer organizations, like the American Legion and the Elks, and is a Life Member of the Disabled American Veterans, the Military Order of the Cootie, and the VFW National Home for Children.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to Commander Stroud for his courageous contributions to the United States of America and to freedom-loving nations around the world. His service to his country and his bravery and dedication earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals who serve our Nation but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation.

I am both humbled and honored by Commander Stroud's service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Commander Stroud for all of his accomplishments and wish him well in all of his future endeavors.●

RECOGNIZING EDIE JOHNSTON AND ELDERTIDE LLC

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, I wish to commend Edie Johnston and her company, Eldertide LLC, for being named a 2014 Small Business Administration Tibbetts Award recipient. Located in Dresden, ME, Eldertide harvests and produces elderberries for medicinal purposes. Along with Eldertide's sister company, Maine Medicinals, the business creates various herbal supple-

ments with the elderberry product. Fueled by the belief that natural, native elderberries are nutritionally valuable, Eldertide has successfully marketed and sold their Maine-made supplements nationwide and around the world.

With just two employees and 6 years of business experience, the company is expanding vastly. Their antioxidant-rich elderberry juice concentrate is now being distributed nationally and internationally. Maine Medicinals, which serves as the retail branch of the company, recently reached an agreement with Whole Foods to sell their supplements.

Eldertide and Maine Medicinals not only represent a successful entrepreneurial spirit, but they also strive to impact Maine, the United States, and the world with an emphasis on innovation and education. The company has contributed to two university research initiatives through the University of Southern Maine and the University of Maine-Orono and has also engaged Kennebec Valley Community College students in valuable research to examine the health effects of phytochemicals from whole foods such as elderberries. Specifically, this research has examined the impact of elderberry juice on chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes.

In addition, Mrs. Johnston founded the Elderberry School, an institution where family farmers interested in the science and business of herbal supplements can learn the process that has propelled Eldertide to where it is today. Some recent graduates have even gone on to own small businesses dedicated to the same core principles that Eldertide espouses.

We have many great small businesses in Maine, and 2014 Tibbetts Award recipient Mrs. Edie Johnston and Eldertide LLC is certainly one of them. Eldertide and its sister company Maine Medicinals represent the innovative, entrepreneurial spirit that defines the State of Maine. I am proud to join in recognizing their creativity and dedication to larger social and economic goals, and I expect they will continue to impress us—both in Maine and around the world with their superb nutraceuticals.●

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT GENERAL MARC C. REYNOLDS

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, On July 21, 2014, America lost one of her finest veterans. Lt. Gen. Marc C. Reynolds, U.S. Air Force, Retired, passed away with his family by his side after a life full of tremendous achievements and honors. I share a few of those achievements from his own recollections and from the recollections of those who knew him.

General Reynolds was not always a Utahn, although we have proudly claimed him as one for decades. He was born in Chamberlain, SD in 1928 to Morris and Ione Reynolds. He grew up during the Second World War, a time—

as we sometimes forget—of tremendous sacrifice for our entire Nation. He observed that this experience shaped his entire life.

He graduated from Chamberlain High School in 1946 and subsequently moved to Colorado, where he attended the University of Denver. In 1950, the year after his graduation, North Korean forces invaded South Korea. Within 24 hours of hearing the news, Marc went to the Air Force recruitment office in downtown Denver and signed up for the aviation cadet program. He trained at Perrin and Vance Air Force bases and graduated from pilot training as a second lieutenant. He subsequently attended jet interceptor training at Moody and Tyndall Air Force bases.

All of General Reynolds' moving and training was part of the American Defense Command's initiative to build forces in response to the ever-growing threat of tyranny and oppression from the Soviet Union. In 1952, he was assigned to the 83rd Fighter-Interceptor Squadron and Hamilton Air Force Base and moved with the squadron to Paine Air Force Base.

In 1953, near the end of the Korean war, he was transferred to Okinawa, where he flew F-94Bs on fighter-interceptor missions. After the war was over, he was assigned to the 437th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron as the tactical flight commander out of Otis Air Force Base. He later became a maintenance officer with the 602nd Consolidated Maintenance Squadron, also at Otis.

General Reynolds then transitioned to reconnaissance, joining the 19th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron in Europe as flight commander. He served at various posts around the world and completed Air Command and Staff College in 1966.

During this time, war was being waged in Indochina and a proxy war between the United States and the Soviet and Chinese Communist regimes was beginning to form. General Reynolds was assigned to the 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon in South Vietnam. He arrived on December 7, 1966. In reference to the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, he occasionally joked that it was "a good day to go to war."

General Reynolds' achievements and endurance during this time are remarkable. Throughout his 10-month deployment to Vietnam, he flew 230 combat missions—a majority being flown at night. He also flew many missions over North Vietnam, which was heavily defended by Viet Cong radar, anti-aircraft guns, and surface-to-air missiles. Flying 10 of these missions up north would merit month off of the year-long deployment.

In an interview with KUED, he recalled his first mission in Vietnam:

I had one of these ten-mile squares that was probably 80 or 90 miles south of Saigon, so it was deep down in the south. It's flat down there with no mountains, so they put the starter

guys down there, where they won't run into a mountain. I had an experienced navigator, but it was my first mission. We went down there, and we found the target area. We started running up and down these preplanned lines, and I noticed on the third line what I'd call—well, I'd seen a little bit of flak in my life, but this was obviously a .50 caliber or 20 millimeter gun. I'd see these tracers go over my head. So I did . . . three of these lines, and of course, the back-seater's got his head buried in the scope, and he's concentrating seriously on keeping the airplane in the right place in the target area. When I got the end of a line, I came around and I said, "Hey, why don't you pull your head out of the scope a minute and take a look at what's going on up here." And he used immediately, a long series of four letter words to describe how he felt about what was going on, but the last thing he said is like, "Get outta here." I said, "Well, he's been here longer than I have," so we went back to Saigon, and we talked about it. But that was my first mission.

He subsequently served in Japan as a deputy chief of the Reconnaissance Division and then as a commander of the 16th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. Upon his return to the United States in February 1971, he was assigned to Shaw Air Force Base, where he served as assistant deputy commander for operations in the 363rd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing. He graduated from the Naval War College in August 1973 and was subsequently assigned to Ogden Air Logistics Center, Hill Air Force Base, initially as the director of distribution and later as director of maintenance.

In July 1976 he transferred to McClellan Air Force Base, CA, as director of materiel management, Sacramento Air Logistics Center. In March 1978 he became the center's vice commander. General Reynolds moved to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in May 1980 as vice commander of the Air Force Acquisition Logistics Division and took command of the division in October 1981. In July 1983 he was appointed commander of Ogden Air Logistics Center. General Reynolds subsequently received his third star and was assigned as the vice commander of the Air Force Logistics Command at Wright-Patterson, where he served until his retirement.

General Reynolds logged over 5,200 (with 475 combat) flying hours in his career—most of which were spent in physically-taxing small fighter and reconnaissance jets. His military decorations and awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Air Medal with 15 oak leaf clusters and Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters.

In this storied 36-year career, General Reynolds lived all over the world, but, according to those who knew him, one of his favorite places on earth was

the Hill Aerospace Museum near Ogden, UT. After he retired from the Air Force, he became a member of the Utah Aerospace Heritage Foundation board, on which he served for 26 years. He was a driving force behind making the Hill Aerospace Museum one of the premier aviation museums in the country. He was appointed chairman of the board and served in that position for more than 20 years. General Reynolds' work in preserving Air Force history was awe-inspiring and will positively affect many generations to come.

Those who worked with General Reynolds describe his conduct and character as that of a perfect gentleman. His smile was infectious and he always treated those around him with tremendous respect and dignity. I have been told that he lifted everyone around him and was committed to excellence in all that he did.

I offer my deepest sympathies to his dear wife Ellie and to his children: Pam, Barbara, Scott, Lisa, Kristan, and Karine, and to his 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. I was told that the date on which he passed turned out to be a bit ironic. This great patriot-statesman had a weakness, which I am sure many of us share, in that he had trouble remembering his and Ellie's anniversary date. However, in what seems to be coincidence, may have been an act of providence: Marc was able to show his love on this last mortal anniversary by his determination to hold on just one-half hour into the day of their 30th anniversary before passing. Whatever the case may be, the timing offers a sweet thought.

I praise Lieutenant General Reynolds' life as an example to all Americans. I pray that we constantly remember those who serve, who have served, and who have given all that we might maintain our rights and enjoy the blessings of liberty. As citizens of a nation made great by those who serve her, like Lieutenant General Reynolds, it is our duty to honor those who have gone before by living our lives with excellence today.●

RECOGNIZING rosieMADE LLC

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, it is imperative to distinguish the originality of women-owned small business owners who take a leap of faith and invest in an idea that not only awards their own creativity but also inspires other women throughout the Nation. Across the United States, women-owned companies employ 7.9 million people, generate \$1.4 trillion in sales, and are the fastest growing segment in our economy. Today, I am proud to recognize rosieMADE of Meridian, ID, a women-owned small business committed to selling products made in the U.S.A. by women.

In November 2012, Alicia Vanderschuere launched rosieMADE, an online marketplace that features vendors offering quality products made in the U.S.A. by women-friendly companies. After 15 years of experience in

retail and corporate merchandising, Alicia Vanderschuere decided to follow her dreams in pursuit of owning her own business and reached out to the Idaho Women's Business Center, WBC, to help get started. The Small Business Administration's WBCs represent a nationwide network of educational centers designed to assist women entrepreneurs in starting and growing their own businesses.

Inspired by the iconic champion for women Rosie the Riveter, rosieMADE aims to increase the number of women engaged in entrepreneurship while supporting homegrown products. In addition, rosieMADE offers services beyond that of selling products. The business promotes business prosperity through opportunities including training and information sessions on leadership, balancing home and work life, and various elements of small business. The rosieMADE team strives to inspire women to pursue their own business ventures by featuring women-owned business leaders and sharing their stories. As a resource for women nationwide, women who have successfully overcome obstacles in the business environment are honored regularly in the "Real Life Rosies" section of the Web site. These success stories are aimed to encourage other women to take a risk and start their own businesses.

Within a few short years, Alicia Vanderschuere and rosieMADE have already achieved an outstanding reputation for quality, as well as that of a unique Idaho gem. It is not surprising that in 2013 Alicia Vanderschuere was featured on the cover of the Idaho Women's Journal and is currently listed as one of the Idaho Women's Journal's "Who's Who of Idaho Women." In addition, in February 2014 Alicia Vanderschuere received the Women of the Year Award from the Idaho Business Review. With rosieMADE's commitment to female small business owners, I hope they will inspire more women throughout the Nation to become entrepreneurs.

I would like to recognize rosieMADE on their mission to promote products made by women in the U.S.A. and their willingness to take a risk in inspiring future entrepreneurs. I congratulate the entire rosieMADE team and wish them great success in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO SCOTT AND JAMIE NAGY

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Scott and Jamie Nagy of Brookings, SD, as my nominees for the 2014 Angels in Adoption Award. Since 1999, the Angels in Adoption program, through the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institution, has honored more than 2,000 individuals, couples, and organizations nationwide for their work in providing children with loving, stable homes.

In 2006, after being married 14 years, Scott and Jamie, along with their four children Nick, Tyler, TJ, and Natalie,

adopted their daughter Naika from Haiti when she was 2½ years old. Jamie, who was adopted as an infant, found the process helped her better understand her own adoption story. Through their journey with Naika, the Nagys decided to help others understand adoption and the needs of children around the world. In 2009, Scott was one of the first coaches in the country to coach barefoot at a basketball game to help raise awareness for Samaritan's Feet, an organization that provides shoes to orphans and impoverished children in developing countries. Scott cites his interest in helping Naika's home country as a source of inspiration for participation in the program.

Scott and Jamie's story demonstrates how parents and families can foster patience, grace, and understanding as they grow their families and open their hearts and homes. Their desire to help others understand the effect of overwhelming change on both the child and the family and learn how to overcome those challenges speaks to their strength of character. I commend their efforts to assist other families navigate the adoption process and raise awareness of the needs of children around the world. It brings me great pride to honor South Dakotans Scott and Jamie Nagy, my nominees for the 2014 Angels in Adoption Award.●

TRIBUTE TO JOSH CURRY

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Josh Curry, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Josh is a graduate of Elk Point-Jefferson High School in Elk Point, SD. Currently, Josh is attending Augustana College, where he is majoring in business administration and government. Josh is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

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

TRIBUTE TO JASON HELLAND

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Jason Helland, an intern in my Sioux Falls, SD, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Jason is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD and Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN. Currently, he is attending the University of Denver Strum College of Law. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

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

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM HYDE

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize William Hyde, a legal fellow in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

After graduating from the University of San Francisco in 2002, William joined the U.S. Army. He was stationed abroad multiple times and served a combat tour in Iraq. In 2009 William received his M.A. from Stanford University, earning summa cum laude distinction. Currently, William is attending Harvard Law School in Cambridge, MA and is serving as a Blackstone legal fellow through the Alliance Defending Freedom. William and his wife, Celeste, are the proud parents of a son William.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to William for his service to our country and the work he has done on behalf of the people of South Dakota. Bill is a consummate professional with excellent legal research, writing, and analytical skills. I wish him continued success in the years to come as he embarks on his legal career.●

TRIBUTE TO KYLEE KETTERING

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Kylee Kettering, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Kylee is a graduate of Mobridge High School in Mobridge, SD. Currently, Kylee is attending Augustana College, where she is majoring in government and communications. Kylee is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

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

TRIBUTE TO JOHN KLUMPP

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize John Klumpp, an intern in my Sioux Falls, SD, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

John is a graduate of Brandon Valley High School in Brandon, SD. Currently, he is attending Iowa State University and majoring in finance. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

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

TRIBUTE TO RUTH LATTERELL

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Ruth Latterell, an intern in my Aberdeen, SD office for all of the

hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the state of South Dakota over the past several months.

Ruth is a native of Aberdeen and a graduate of Aberdeen Christian School. Currently, she is attending South Dakota State University, where she is pursuing a degree in human development and family sciences. She is a very hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

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

TRIBUTE TO SCOTT MAH

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Scott Mah, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Scott is a graduate of Sioux Falls Christian High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, Scott is attending Northwestern University, where he is majoring in economics. Scott is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

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

TRIBUTE TO SAM REULAND

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Sam Reuland, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Sam is a graduate of White Lake High School in White Lake, SD. Currently, Sam is attending University of South Dakota, where he is majoring in history and political science. Sam is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

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

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE VEENIS

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Katherine Veenis, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Katherine is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, Katherine is attending Texas Christian University, where she is majoring in political science. Katherine is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Katherine Veenis for all

of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO KRISTIN WILEMAN

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Kristin Wileman, an intern in my Aberdeen, SD office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the state of South Dakota over the past several months.

Kristin is a native of Aberdeen and a graduate of Aberdeen Central High School. Currently, she is attending North Central University, where she is pursuing a degree in journalism communications. She is a very hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

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

PITTOCK MANSION CENTENNIAL

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to honor the centennial of a unique historical landmark in my home State. The Pittock Mansion in Portland, OR, educates Oregonians and tourists from around the world about the city's history and the legacy of the family who once owned it.

When Henry Pittock completed construction of the large 46-room house in the West Hills of Portland in 1914, there was nothing like it in the region—and arguably, there still isn't. Henry came to Oregon by covered wagon with little in his pocket but grew to become a respected local businessman and the owner of our State newspaper, the Oregonian. His wife Georgiana was a philanthropist who was known for serving the needs of the elderly, women and children, and for her famous rose garden. Georgiana often hosted garden parties where she would showcase her famous roses and is credited with kick-starting the first Portland Rose Society and the tradition of the Portland Rose Festival, which now draws thousands of people from around the world each summer.

When Henry and Georgiana built their mansion, they hired Oregon craftsman and artisans and used northwest materials, helping their community and contributing to the burgeoning city in a variety of ways. They lived a long, happy life together and had 6 children and 18 grandchildren, including some who lived in the mansion up until it was put up for sale in 1958.

Today, the mansion serves as a historical museum. The interior of the house and the surrounding property are publicly owned and preserved by dedicated staff and volunteers. Tourists, locals, and schoolchildren are often seen wandering through the home and along the paths around the large property learning about the historic significance of the mansion and of Portland.

The house represents an era of growth that was occurring throughout the Pacific Northwest at the time of its construction.

For its symbolism, history, and meaning, today we recognize the Pittock Mansion's Centennial Year. May it continue to serve as a place to learn and enjoy for many years to come.●

BENTON COUNTY FAIR AND RODEO ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this week is the opening of the 101st Benton County Fair and Rodeo. For more than a century, the citizens of Benton County, OR, have come together to show off the literal and metaphorical fruits of their yearlong labor, display their talents, and enjoy a few diversions.

The roots of the Benton County Fair actually run as far back as those of the State of Oregon. Just 7 months after Oregon achieved statehood, the Benton Agricultural Society began holding small fairs. In the early 1900s, Benton County had an outstanding showing at the Oregon State Fair, handily winning the State fair's blue ribbon for its display of produce five times—in 1907, 1908, 1910, 1911, and 1912. In 1912, J.F. Yates, the mayor of Corvallis, announced a public holiday to celebrate Benton County's outstanding showing at the Oregon State Fair. The following year, the county had its own celebration on the grounds of the Oregon Agricultural College, later to become Oregon State University. That year, the county brought out its finest produce, livestock, and technology, starting a tradition that will be continued this week.

The Benton County Fair and Rodeo found its current home in 1957, when the county purchased 20 acres of land for the fair in Corvallis. In 1958, the Future Farmers of America and 4-H joined the thriving county fair in its longstanding practice of showcasing the region's rich agricultural tradition. The fair has matured beyond its roots to include carnival festivities, rides, and concession stands in addition to live music. I know that folks in Benton County will enjoy a wonderful week as they take in the region's storied culture.

I would like to recognize Betty Malone, the Benton County Fair and Rodeo's committee chair, for proposing a quilt to be sewn to commemorate the fair's centennial last year, an important date in the county's history. I would also like to congratulate Dawn Wunder and Donna Johnson for leading the charge to make Betty's proposal a reality. The centennial quilt will be presented to the region's residents in a ceremony today. Dozens of community members decorated the patches that make up the quilt, a collective celebration of the county's history. It is a fitting tribute to folks in Benton County who for more than 100 years have graced the region with their strong spirit and hard work.

It is my pleasure to submit this statement in recognition of the Benton County Fair and Rodeo's 101st year. I look forward to the Fair's continued success for many more years.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:49 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 1799. An act to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

At 1:21 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3896. An act to amend the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act to provide a definition of recreational vessel for purposes of such Act.

H.R. 4315. An act to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require publication on the Internet of the basis for determinations that species are endangered species or threatened species, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4626. An act to ensure access to certain information for financial services industry regulators, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4709. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4809. An act to reauthorize the Defense Production Act, to improve the Defense Production Act Committee, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5062. An act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to specify that privilege and confidentiality are maintained when information is shared by certain nondepository covered persons with Federal and State financial regulators, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 3:17 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 4028. An act to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to include the desecration of cemeteries among the many forms of violations of the right to religious freedom.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

At 5:28 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 107. Concurrent resolution denouncing the use of civilians as human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in violation of international humanitarian law.

H. Con. Res. 111. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make certain corrections in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3230.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the report of the com-

mittee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3230) to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 4315. An act to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require publication on the Internet of the basis for determinations that species are endangered species or threatened species, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 4709. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 5062. An act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to specify that privilege and confidentiality are maintained when information is shared by certain nondepository covered persons with Federal and State financial regulators, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

S. 2685. A bill to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

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

H.R. 4626. An act to ensure access to certain information for financial services industry regulators, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2709. A bill to extend and reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, 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-6638. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department of Defense (DoD) intending to open the skill identifier associated with attending the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle Commander's Course to women; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-6639. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition

Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Domestically Nonavailable Articles-Elimination of DoD-Unique List" ((RIN0750-AI11) (DFARS Case 2013-D020)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-6640. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Use of Military Construction Funds in Countries Bordering the Arabian Sea" ((RIN0750-AI33) (DFARS Case 2014-D016)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-6641. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Application of Certain Clauses to Acquisitions of Commercial Items" ((RIN0750-AI13) (DFARS Case 2013-D035)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-6642. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 12947 with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-6643. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Addition of Certain Persons to the Entity List" (RIN0694-AG16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-6644. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Removal of HOPE for Homeowners Program Regulations" (RIN2501-AD68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-6645. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Protected Resources, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Species: Designation of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Upper Columbia River Spring-run Chinook Salmon in the Okanogan River Subbasin, Washington, and Protective Regulations" (RIN0648-BD51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6646. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Basis of Indebtedness of S Corporations to their Shareholders" ((RIN1545-BG51) (TD 9682)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6647. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the

report of a rule entitled “Partnerships; Start-up Expenditures; Organization and Syndication Fees” ((RIN1545-BL06) (TD 9681)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6648. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Acquisition Regulation: Equal Employment and Affirmative Action for Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities” (RIN9000-AM76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6649. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Acquisition Regulation: Small Business Protests and Appeals” (RIN9000-AM46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6650. A communication from the General Counsel, Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Director of the Peace Corps, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6651. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6652. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14-052); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6653. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2014 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for Deep-Water Complex in the South Atlantic Region” (RIN0648-XD351) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6654. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic; 2014 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for the South Atlantic Lesser Amberjack, Almaco Jack, and Banded Rudderfish Complex” (RIN0648-XD350) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6655. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Yellowfin Sole for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Trawl Limited Access Sector in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XD348) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6656. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone

Off Alaska; ‘Other Flatfish’ in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XD372) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6657. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Recreational Management Measures for the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fisheries; Fishing Year 2014” (RIN0648-BE16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6658. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Unused Catch Carryover; Emergency Action” (RIN0648-BE19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6659. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XD358) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6660. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Dusty Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XD360) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6661. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XD359) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6662. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Annual Report to Congress on the Presidential \$1 Coin Program”; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-6663. A communication from the Chief, Policy and Directives Management Division, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Addresses of Headquarters Offices” (RIN1018-BA52) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6664. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for the Zuni Bluehead Sucker” (RIN1018-AY25) received in the Office of

the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6665. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Revision of Critical Habitat for Salt Creek Tiger Beetle” (RIN1018-AY56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6666. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Northwest Atlantic Ocean Distinct Population Segment of the Loggerhead Sea Turtle” (RIN1018-AY71) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6667. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendments to Compliance Certification Content Requirements for State and Federal Operating Permits Programs” ((RIN2060-AQ71) (FRL No. 9913-88-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6668. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: the 2014 and 2015 Critical Use Exemption from the Phaseout of Methyl Bromide” ((RIN2060-AR80) (FRL No. 9911-99-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6669. 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 Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maine; Nitrogen Oxides Exemption Request” (A-1-FRL-9913-56-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6670. 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; Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds” (FRL No. 9914-44-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-6671. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Money Market Funds and the Wash Sale Rules” (Rev. Proc. 2014-45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6672. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Branded Prescription Drug Fee; Procedural and Administrative Guidance” (Notice 2014-42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6673. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Branded Prescription Drug Fee" ((RIN1545-BJ39) (TD 9684)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6674. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revenue Procedure Guidance on Indexing Under Section 36B and Section 5000A" (Rev. Proc. 2014-37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6675. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revenue Procedure Providing Guidance To Compute the Section 162(I) Deduction with Section 36B Credit" (Rev. Proc. 2014-41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6676. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Section 5000A National Average Premium for a Bronze Level of Coverage" (Rev. Proc. 2014-46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6677. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "IRS Truncated Taxpayer Identification Numbers" ((RIN1545-BJ16) (TD 9675)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6678. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Information Reporting by Passport Applicants" ((RIN1545-AJ93) (TD 9679)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6679. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Applicable Federal Rates—August 2014" (Rev. Rul. 2014-19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-6680. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2014-1057); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6681. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2014-1056); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6682. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a section of the Arms Export Control Act (RSAT 14-3942); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6683. A communication from the Deputy Inspector General, Office of Inspector

General, Department of the Interior transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of the Interior's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6684. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-378, "Residential Real Property Equity and Transparency Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6685. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-376, "Fiscal Year 2014 Revised Budget Request Temporary Adjustment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary:

Report to accompany S.J. Res. 19, A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections (Rept. No. 113-223).

By Mr. TESTER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2132. A bill to amend the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113-224).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. LEVIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Jessie Hill Roberson, of Alabama, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2018.

*Daniel J. Santos, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2017.

Air Force nomination of Col. Clarence Ervin, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Charles L. Gable, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Stephen L. Danner, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Brigadier General Patricia M. Anslow and ending with Brigadier General David C. Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014. (minus 1 nominee: Brigadier General Matthew P. Beevers)

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Mark W. Palzer, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Neal G. Loidolt and ending with Col. Wallace N. Turner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nomination of Col. Robert J. Ulses, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Timothy J. Sheriff, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Timothy S. Paul, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Glenn A. Goddard, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Colonel Gregory C. Bacon and ending with Colonel

David S. Werner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nomination of Col. Robert J. Howell, Jr., to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Kerry M. Metz, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Gene F. Price and ending with Capt. Linnea J. Sommerweddington, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nomination of Capt. Dawn E. Cutler, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

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

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

Air Force nominations beginning with Jonathan Ackley and ending with Aaron Allen Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Richard Edward Alford and ending with Dylan B. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with William J. Annexstad and ending with David J. Western, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Air Force nomination of Robert P. McCoy, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Michael E. Coghlan and ending with Ajay K. Ojha, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 22, 2014.

Army nomination of Burton C. Glover, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Paul A. Thomas, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Aleksandr Baron and ending with Ryan D. Zimmerman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Carlo J. Alphonso and ending with Jordan E. Yokley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nomination of Desiree S. Dirige, to be Major.

Army nomination of Nealanjon P. Das, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Yong K. Cho and ending with Thomas A. Starkoski, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 22, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with John I. Actkinson and ending with Robert E. Zubeck II, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Christopher W. Acor and ending with Richard P. Zabawa, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Mate W. Aerandir and ending with Jacquelinemar W. Wrona, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Christian G. Acord and ending with Brian P. Worden, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Aaron N. Aaron and ending with Chelsey L. Zwicker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Brian F. Breshears and ending with David A. Ziemba, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Daniel J. Bradshaw and ending with Ross W. Peters, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Arlo K. Abrahamson and ending with Tiffani B. Walker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with James C. Bailey and ending with Amanda J. Wells, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Eric S. Kinzbrunner and ending with Eric M. Zack, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Jermaine A. Bailey and ending with Jeremiah J. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Jemar R. Ballesteros and ending with Anne L. Zack, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nomination of Christopher A. Cegielski, to be Captain.

Navy nominations beginning with Kevin C. Antonucci and ending with Joshua D. Weiss, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Ferdinand D. Abril and ending with Allen E. Willey, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael D. Amedick and ending with Dennis M. Wheeler, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Kerry E. Baker and ending with Michael D. Winn, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Kenneth R. Basford and ending with John P. Zalar, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Brian J. Ellis, Jr. and ending with Sylvaine W. Wong, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Kevin S. Bailey and ending with Theodor A. Zainal, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with David L. Bell, Jr. and ending with Nathan J. Wonder, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Ruben D. Acosta and ending with David M. You,

which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nomination of Adam J. Rains, to be Commander.

By Mrs. BOXER for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

*Ann Elizabeth Dunkin, of California, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*Manuel H. Ehrlich, Jr., of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

*Jane Toshiko Nishida, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

By Mr. CARPER for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*James C. Miller, III, of Virginia, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for the term expiring December 8, 2017.

*Stephen Crawford, of Maryland, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for the remainder of the term expiring December 8, 2015.

*David Michael Bennett, of North Carolina, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2018.

*Victoria Reggie Kennedy, of Massachusetts, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2016.

*Joseph L. Nimmich, of Maryland, to be Deputy Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

*Anne E. Rung, of Pennsylvania, to be Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy.

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

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2686. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the extension of the tax collection period merely because the taxpayer is a member of the Armed Forces who is hospitalized as a result of combat zone injuries; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. REID, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2687. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that women members of the Armed Forces and their families have access to the contraception they need in order to promote the health and readiness of all members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2688. A bill to ensure labor organization transparency and accountability; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2689. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. WALSH, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2690. A bill to amend the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 to ensure that student data handled by private companies is protected, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BENNETT (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2691. A bill to encourage and support partnerships between the public and private sectors to improve our nation's social programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself, Mr. HELLER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2692. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. WALSH):

S. 2693. A bill to reauthorize the women's business center program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 2694. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to extend the application of the Medicare payment rate floor to primary care services furnished under Medicaid and to apply the rate floor to additional providers of primary care services; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2695. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to have an independent advocate for campus sexual assault prevention and response; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 2696. A bill to require the Federal Reserve to make certain changes to the small bank holding company policy statement on assessment of financial and managerial factors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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

S. 2697. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to clarify the application of the qualified mortgage rule to rural lenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KING (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. TESTER, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 2698. A bill to provide regulatory easement for lending institutions that enable a vibrant economy; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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

S. 2699. A bill to require the National Credit Union Administration to provide pass-through share insurance for the deposits or shares of any interest on lawyers trust accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2700. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to identify the persons who are eligible to request headstones or markers furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2701. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to address certain inconsistencies between the self-attested information provided by an applicant in enrolling in a health plan on an Exchange and being determined eligible for premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions or in being determined to be eligible for enrollment in a State Medicaid plan or a State child health plan under the State Children's Health Insurance Program and the data received through the Federal Data Services Hub or from other data sources; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2702. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require the social security number of the student and the employer identification number of the educational institution for purposes of education tax credits; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2703. A bill to establish eligibility, assignment, training, and certification requirements for sexual assault forensic examiners for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. REED):

S. 2704. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal Government contracts to inverted domestic corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2705. A bill to establish, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an integrated and comprehensive ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric research and environmental information sharing program to support renewable energy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ENZI:

S. 2706. A bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 2707. A bill to provide for coordination between the TRICARE program and eligibility for making contributions to a health savings account; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COATS (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2708. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide equal access to declaratory judgments for organizations seeking tax-exempt status; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. WARNER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 2709. A bill to extend and reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. THUNE):

S. 2710. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt private foundations from the tax on excess business holdings in the case of certain philanthropic enterprises which are independently supervised, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2711. A bill to reauthorize the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2712. A bill to amend section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow adjunct faculty members to qualify for public service loan forgiveness; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2713. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation located in Bethel, Alaska; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. TOOMEY:

S. Res. 529. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and commending its members for their courage and sacrifice in service to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr.

ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VITTER, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. Res. 530. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the current situation in Iraq and the urgent need to protect religious minorities from persecution from the Sunni Islamist insurgent and terrorist group the Islamic State, formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), as it expands its control over areas in northwestern Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 240

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 240, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to modify the per-fiscal year calculation of days of certain active duty or active service used to reduce the minimum age at which a member of a reserve component of the uniformed services may retire for non-regular service.

S. 392

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from

New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 392, a bill to support and encourage the health and well-being of elementary school and secondary school students by enhancing school physical education and health education.

S. 489

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 632

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 632, a bill to amend the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 to repeal a duplicative program relating to inspection and grading of catfish.

S. 734

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 734, 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.

S. 758

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 758, a bill to establish a comprehensive literacy program.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1040

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1040, a bill to provide for the

award of a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Jack Nicklaus, in recognition of his service to the Nation in promoting excellence, good sportsmanship, and philanthropy.

S. 1089

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1089, a bill to provide for a prescription drug take-back program for members of the Armed Forces and veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1188

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1188, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the individual mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1249

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1330

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1330, a bill to delay the implementation of the employer responsibility provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1381

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1381, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, to further the conservation of certain wildlife species, and for other purposes.

S. 1397

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1397, a bill to improve the efficiency, management, and interagency coordination of the Federal permitting process through reforms overseen by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1463

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1463, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to prohibit importation, exportation, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition,

and purchase in interstate or foreign commerce, or in a manner substantially affecting interstate or foreign commerce, of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. JOHANNES, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 1710

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1710, a bill to require Amtrak to propose a pet policy that allows passengers to transport domesticated cats and dogs on certain Amtrak trains, and for other purposes.

S. 1842

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNES), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 1842, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition and celebration of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

S. 2003

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2003, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the energy credit for certain property under construction.

S. 2023

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2023, a bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes.

S. 2075

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2075, a bill to prohibit a reduction in funding for the defense commissary system in fiscal year 2015 pending the report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

S. 2082

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2082, a bill to provide for the development of criteria under the Medicare program for medically necessary short inpatient hospital stays, and for other purposes.

S. 2109

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from California

(Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2109, a bill to eliminate duplicative, outdated, or unnecessary Congressionally mandated Federal agency reporting.

S. 2115

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2115, a bill to provide for the establishment of a fund to provide for an expanded and sustained national investment in biomedical research.

S. 2133

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2133, a bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other statutes to clarify appropriate liability standards for Federal antidiscrimination claims.

S. 2301

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2301, a bill to amend section 2259 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 2307

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2307, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 2329

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2329, a bill to prevent Hezbollah from gaining access to international financial and other institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 2333

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2333, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for certain behavioral health treatment under TRICARE for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

S. 2359

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2359, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect and preserve access of Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas to health care providers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2481

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2481, a bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide authority for sole source contracts for certain small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and for other purposes.

S. 2515

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New York

(Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2515, a bill to ensure that Medicaid beneficiaries have the opportunity to receive care in a home and community-based setting.

S. 2543

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2543, a bill to support afterschool and out-of-school-time science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2611

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2611, a bill to facilitate the expedited processing of minors entering the United States across the southern border and for other purposes.

S. 2621

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2621, a bill to amend the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act to increase the price of Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps to fund the acquisition of conservation easements for migratory birds, and for other purposes.

S. 2631

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2631, a bill to prevent the expansion of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program unlawfully created by Executive memorandum on August 15, 2012.

S. 2655

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2655, a bill to reauthorize the Young Women's Breast Health Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young Act of 2009.

S. 2673

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2673, a bill to enhance the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel.

S.J. RES. 19

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 19, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S. RES. 517

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 517, a resolution expressing support for Israel's right to defend itself and calling on Hamas to immediately cease all rocket and other attacks against Israel.

S. RES. 519

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 519, a resolution designating August 16, 2014, as "National Airborne Day".

S. RES. 526

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 526, a resolution supporting Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3677

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3677 intended to be proposed to S. 2569, a bill to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2686. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the extension of the tax collection period merely because the taxpayer is a member of the Armed Forces who is hospitalized as a result of combat zone injuries; 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. 2686

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Wounded Warrior Tax Equity Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. PREVENTION OF EXTENSION OF TAX COLLECTION PERIOD FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO ARE HOSPITALIZED AS A RESULT OF COMBAT ZONE INJURIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7508(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) COLLECTION PERIOD AFTER ASSESSMENT NOT EXTENDED AS A RESULT OF HOSPITALIZATION.—With respect to any period of continuous qualified hospitalization described in subsection (a) and the next 180 days thereafter, subsection (a) shall not apply in the application of section 6502."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxes assessed before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2689. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as the founder and co-chair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, I have learned a great deal about this devastating disease affecting nearly 29 million Americans.

Fortunately, due to the Special Diabetes Program and increased investments in diabetes research, we have seen some encouraging breakthroughs and are on the threshold of a number of important new discoveries.

This is particularly true for the estimated 3 million Americans living with type 1 diabetes. Advances in technology, like continuous glucose monitors, are helping patients control their blood glucose levels, which is key to preventing costly and sometimes deadly diabetes complications. We are also moving closer and closer to our goal of an artificial pancreas, which would control blood glucose levels automatically and revolutionize diabetes care.

The National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration have been extremely supportive of these innovations in diabetes care. I was therefore surprised and extremely troubled to learn that insulin-dependent Medicare beneficiaries are being denied coverage for continuous glucose monitors, or CGMs, because the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, has determined that they do not meet the Medicare definition of durable medical equipment and do not fall under any other Medicare category. As a consequence, we are seeing situations—similar to what we saw with insulin pumps in the late 1990s—where individuals with type 1 diabetes have had coverage for their continuous glucose monitor on their private insurance, only to lose it when they age into Medicare.

A CGM is a physician-prescribed, FDA-approved medical device that can provide real-time readings and data about trends in glucose levels every five minutes, thus enabling someone with insulin-dependent diabetes to eat or take insulin and prevent dangerous low or high glucose levels. As demonstrated by extensive clinical evidence, adults using a CGM have had improved overall glucose control and have reduced rates of hypoglycemia or low blood glucose levels. Professional medical societies, including the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists and the Endocrine Society, recognize this clinical evidence and have published guidelines recommending CGM be used in appropriate patients with type 1 diabetes. Today, about 95 percent of commercial insurers provide coverage for CGM devices.

The ironic thing is that it is only because of advances in diabetes care like the continuous glucose monitor that people with type 1 diabetes can expect to live long enough to become Medicare beneficiaries. I am particularly concerned given the implications that this coverage decision will have for future decisions regarding artificial pancreas systems, which will combine a continuous glucose monitor, insulin pump, and sophisticated algorithm to control high and low blood sugar around the clock.

I am therefore joining my colleague from New Hampshire and my Co-Chair

of the Senate Diabetes Caucus in introducing the Medicare CGM Access Act of 2014 to create a separate benefit category under Medicare for the continuous glucose monitor and require coverage of the device for individuals meeting specified medical criteria.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. WALSH):

S. 2693. A bill to reauthorize the women's business center program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, today I am joining with my colleagues to introduce legislation to empower women entrepreneurs and to help address the persistent challenges women face when trying to start and grow a business.

It was just 26 years ago that Congress enacted landmark legislation, the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988 that eliminated requirements that women obtain the signature of their husband or other man to secure a business loan.

Between 1997 and 2013, the number of women-owned businesses in the United States grew by 59 percent, but significant barriers for women still exist and there is still much more work to do.

Last week, the Small Business Committee released a report entitled "21st Century Barriers to Women's Entrepreneurship" that assesses the current challenges faced by women-owned businesses. The report also makes policy recommendations to increase economic opportunity for women and help to put them on a level playing field with other business owners.

Our committee report makes four critical findings and includes policy recommendations to help remedy the business climate for women entrepreneurs.

First, women business owners face challenges in getting access to capital. The report highlights a study by the Urban Institute finding that only 4 percent of the total value of all conventional small business loans goes to women entrepreneurs. That means only \$1 of every \$23 is being loaned to a women-owned business. The report also notes that women are forced to rely on personal savings, loans from family or friends, or high interest credit because they cannot get traditional small business lending from banks.

Second, the report finds that women business owners still face challenges in getting access to loans of the right size. Women-owned businesses have been very successful with the SBA's Microloan program, under which they can obtain loans of up to \$50,000 through intermediaries that also provide assistance in the development of business plans. However, this program has not been updated since 1991.

The report highlights the importance of reauthorizing the Intermediary

Lending Program that expired in 2013 and provided capital for women business owners who were ready to take out loans that exceeded the \$50,000 provided by the SBA's Microloan Program, but were not yet able to take advantage of the SBA's 7(a) lending program.

Third, the report finds that women entrepreneurs face challenges obtaining relevant business training and counseling. Women's Business Centers provide specialized counseling and training designed to address the unique challenges women face in starting a small business. The report shows that the Women's Business Center program has not been re-authorized since the 1990s and is in need of a 21st century modernization.

Last, the committee report finds that women business owners face challenges getting access to Federal contracts. Despite the growing number of businesses owned by women, the Federal Government has never met its goal of awarding 5 percent of its contracts to women-owned small businesses. Our report notes that if the government met this goal, women-owned small businesses would have access to additional market opportunity worth up to \$4 billion a year.

That is why we are introducing the Women's Small Business Ownership Act. This legislation follows the policy recommendations made in the committee report and helps to address the glass ceiling many women entrepreneurs still encounter in the 21st century. While women-owned businesses as a whole continue to grow and succeed, to do so many women must overcome barriers men do not face.

The Women's Small Business Ownership Act increases the flow of capital to women business owners by modernizing the SBA's Microloan program and reauthorizing the Intermediary Lending Program. Women have been particularly successful in using microloans, which are loans of under \$50,000, and receive about half of all SBA Microloans.

The Microloan program would be modernized by increasing the total amount lenders can loan, as well as allowing lenders to provide flexible terms and improved technical assistance to better suit the needs of borrowers.

The Intermediary Lending Program is also an important program, which this legislation reauthorizes to address a gap in lending options for small businesses, including women-owned small businesses that are unable to obtain financing from traditional lenders. The Intermediary Lending Program offers low-interest loans of between \$50,000 and \$200,000 and closes the gap that can exist for small businesses that have outgrown the SBA's Microloan program, but are not yet able to take advantage of SBA's other lending guarantee programs.

This legislation removes barriers to the federal contracting marketplace by allowing sole source contracts to be

awarded to women-owned small businesses. Every other small business in a unique socioeconomic category, including HUB Zone firms, service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and small disadvantaged businesses, can receive a non-competitive or sole source contract, but women's small businesses cannot. Women-owned companies deserve parity with other programs and a fair shot to grow their businesses.

The Women's Small Business Ownership Act ensures that the SBA's Women's Business Centers are adequately and effectively meeting the needs of women entrepreneurs in the 21st century. It provides the resources for Women's Business Centers to provide the technical support and counseling tailored to the unique challenges for women-owned businesses.

Women make up 51 percent of the population and have tremendous potential as business owners and job-creators. We need to empower women to break through the glass ceiling so it will be easier for even more women to succeed in the 21st century, grow the U.S. economy and create more U.S. jobs.

When women have equal opportunity to access capital, obtain the right business counseling, and compete for federal contracts, the economy grows and the country moves forward.

Mr. President, I ask for 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. 2693

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Women's Small Business Ownership Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. DEFINITION.

In this Act—

(1) the terms "Administration" and "Administrator" mean the Small Business Administration and the Administrator thereof, respectively;

(2) the term "disability" has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102);

(3) the term "microloan program" means the program established under section 7(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(m));

(4) the term "rural small business concern" means a small business concern located in a rural area, as that term is defined in section 1393(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(5) the terms "small business concern", "small business concern owned and controlled by veterans", and "small business concern owned and controlled by women" have the meanings given those terms under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

SEC. 3. OFFICE OF WOMEN'S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.

Section 29(g) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) in clause (i), by striking "in the areas" and all that follows through the end of subclause (I), and inserting the following: "to

address issues concerning the management, operations, manufacturing, technology, finance, retail and product sales, international trade, Government contracting, and other disciplines required for—

“(I) starting, operating, and increasing the business of a small business concern;” and

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking “Women’s Business Center program” each place that term appears and inserting “women’s business center program”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, the National Women’s Business Council, and any association of women’s business centers”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **TRAINING.**—The Administrator may provide annual programmatic and financial examination training for women’s business ownership representatives and district office technical representatives of the Administration to enable representatives to carry out their responsibilities.

“(4) **PROGRAM AND TRANSPARENCY IMPROVEMENTS.**—The Administrator shall maximize the transparency of the women’s business center financial assistance proposal process and the programmatic and financial examination process by—

“(A) providing public notice of any announcement for financial assistance under subsection (b) or a grant under subsection (1);

“(B) in the announcement described in subparagraph (A), outlining award and program evaluation criteria and describing the weighting of the criteria for financial assistance under subsection (b) and grants under subsection (1); and

“(C) not later than 60 days after the completion of a site visit to the women’s business center (whether conducted for an audit, performance review, or other reason), when feasible, providing to each women’s business center a copy of any site visit reports or evaluation reports prepared by district office technical representatives or officers or employees of the Administration.”.

SEC. 4. WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

(a) **WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**—Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking paragraph (4);

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively;

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) the term ‘association of women’s business centers’ means an organization—

“(A) that represents not less than 51 percent of the women’s business centers that participate in a program under this section; and

“(B) whose primary purpose is to represent women’s business centers;

“(3) the term ‘eligible entity’ means—

“(A) a private nonprofit organization;

“(B) a State, regional, or local economic development organization;

“(C) a development, credit, or finance corporation chartered by a State;

“(D) a junior or community college, as defined in section 312(f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058(f)); or

“(E) any combination of entities listed in subparagraphs (A) through (D);” and

(D) by adding after paragraph (5), as so redesignated, the following:

“(6) the term ‘women’s business center’ means a project conducted by an eligible entity under this section.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by striking “The Administration” and all that follows through “5-year projects” and inserting the following:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administration may provide financial assistance to an eligible entity to conduct a project under this section”; and

(C) by striking “The projects shall” and inserting the following:

“(2) **USE OF FUNDS.**—The project shall be designed to provide training and counseling that meets the needs of women, especially socially and economically disadvantaged women, and shall”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Administrator may award financial assistance under this subsection of not more than \$250,000 per project year.

“(4) **CONSULTATION WITH ASSOCIATIONS OF WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTERS.**—The Administrator shall seek advice, input, and recommendations for policy changes from any association of women’s business centers to develop—

“(A) a training program for the staff of women’s business centers; and

“(B) recommendations to improve the policies and procedures for governing the general operations and administration of the women’s business center program, including grant program improvements under subsection (g)(4).”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking “the recipient organization” and inserting “an eligible entity”; and

(B) in paragraph (3), in the second sentence, by striking “a recipient organization” and inserting “an eligible entity”; and

(C) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking “recipient of assistance” and inserting “eligible entity”; and

(ii) by striking “such organization” and inserting “the eligible entity”; and

(iii) by striking “recipient” and inserting “eligible entity”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) **SEPARATION OF PROJECT AND FUNDS.**—An eligible entity shall—

“(A) carry out a project under this section separately from other projects, if any, of the eligible entity; and

“(B) separately maintain and account for any financial assistance under this section.”;

(4) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking “applicant organization” and inserting “eligible entity”; and

(B) by striking “a recipient organization” and inserting “an eligible entity”; and

(C) by striking “site”; and

(5) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following:

“(f) **APPLICATIONS AND CRITERIA FOR INITIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**—

“(1) **APPLICATION.**—Each eligible entity desiring financial assistance under subsection (b) shall submit to the Administrator an application that contains—

“(A) a certification that the eligible entity—

“(i) has designated an executive director or program manager, who may be compensated using financial assistance under subsection (b) or other sources, to manage the center;

“(ii) as a condition of receiving financial assistance under subsection (b), agrees—

“(I) to receive a site visit at the discretion of the Administrator as part of the final selection process;

“(II) to undergo an annual programmatic and financial examination; and

“(III) to remedy any problems identified pursuant to the site visit or examination under subclause (I) or (II); and

“(iii) meets the accounting and reporting requirements established by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget;

“(B) information demonstrating that the eligible entity has the ability and resources to meet the needs of the market to be served by the women’s business center for which financial assistance under subsection (b) is sought, including the ability to obtain the non-Federal contribution required under subsection (c);

“(C) information relating to the assistance to be provided by the women’s business center for which financial assistance under subsection (b) is sought in the area in which the women’s business center is located;

“(D) information demonstrating the experience and effectiveness of the eligible entity in—

“(i) conducting financial, management, and marketing assistance programs, as described in subsection (b)(2), which are designed to teach or upgrade the business skills of women who are business owners or potential business owners;

“(ii) providing training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged; and

“(iii) working with resource partners of the Administration and other entities, such as universities; and

“(E) a 5-year plan that describes the ability of the women’s business center for which financial assistance is sought—

“(i) to serve women who are business owners or potential business owners by conducting training and counseling activities; and

“(ii) to provide training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

“(2) **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR INITIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall—

“(i) review each application submitted under paragraph (1), based on the information described in such paragraph and the criteria set forth under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph; and

“(ii) to the extent practicable, as part of the final selection process, conduct a site visit to each women’s business center for which financial assistance under subsection (b) is sought.

“(B) **SELECTION CRITERIA.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall evaluate applicants for financial assistance under subsection (b) in accordance with selection criteria that are—

“(I) established before the date on which applicants are required to submit the applications;

“(II) stated in terms of relative importance; and

“(III) publicly available and stated in each solicitation for applications for financial assistance under subsection (b) made by the Administrator.

“(ii) **REQUIRED CRITERIA.**—The selection criteria for financial assistance under subsection (b) shall include—

“(I) the experience of the applicant in conducting programs or ongoing efforts designed to teach or enhance the business skills of women who are business owners or potential business owners;

“(II) the ability of the applicant to begin a project within a minimum amount of time, as established under the program announcement or by regulation;

“(III) the ability of the applicant to provide training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged; and

“(IV) the location for the women’s business center proposed by the applicant, including whether the applicant is located in a State in which there is not a women’s business center receiving funding from the Administration.

“(C) PROXIMITY.—If the principal place of business of an applicant for financial assistance under subsection (b) is located less than 50 miles from the principal place of business of a women’s business center that received funds under this section on or before the date of the application, the applicant shall not be eligible for the financial assistance, unless the applicant submits a detailed written justification of the need for an additional center in the area in which the applicant is located.

“(D) RECORD RETENTION.—The Administrator shall maintain a copy of each application submitted under this subsection for not less than 7 years.”; and

(6) in subsection (m)—

(A) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) APPLICATION AND APPROVAL FOR RENEWAL GRANTS.—

“(A) SOLICITATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The Administrator shall solicit applications and award grants under this subsection for the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of the Women’s Small Business Ownership Act of 2014, and every third fiscal year thereafter.

“(B) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—Each eligible entity desiring a grant under this subsection shall submit to the Administrator an application that contains—

“(i) a certification that the applicant—

“(I) is an eligible entity;

“(II) has designated an executive director or program manager to manage the women’s business center operated by the applicant; and

“(III) as a condition of receiving a grant under this subsection, agrees—

“(aa) to receive a site visit as part of the final selection process;

“(bb) to submit, for the 2 full fiscal years before the date on which the application is submitted, annual programmatic and financial examination reports or certified copies of the compliance supplemental audits under OMB Circular A-133 of the applicant; and

“(cc) to remedy any problem identified pursuant to the site visit or examination under item (aa) or (bb);

“(ii) information demonstrating that the applicant has the ability and resources to meet the needs of the market to be served by the women’s business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought, including the ability to obtain the non-Federal contribution required under paragraph (4)(C);

“(iii) information relating to assistance to be provided by the women’s business center in the area served by the women’s business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought;

“(iv) information demonstrating that the applicant has worked with resource partners of the Administration and other entities;

“(v) a 3-year plan that describes the ability of the women’s business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought—

“(I) to serve women who are business owners or potential business owners by conducting training and counseling activities; and

“(II) to provide training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged; and

“(vi) any additional information that the Administrator may reasonably require.

“(C) REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

“(I) review each application submitted under subparagraph (B), based on the information described in such subparagraph and the criteria set forth under clause (ii) of this subparagraph; and

“(II) at the discretion of the Administrator, and as part of the final selection process, conduct a site visit to each women’s business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought.

“(ii) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall evaluate applicants for grants under this subsection in accordance with selection criteria that are—

“(aa) established before the date on which applicants are required to submit the applications;

“(bb) stated in terms of relative importance; and

“(cc) publicly available and stated in each solicitation for applications for grants under this subsection made by the Administrator.

“(II) REQUIRED CRITERIA.—The selection criteria for a grant under this subsection shall include—

“(aa) the total number of entrepreneurs served by the applicant;

“(bb) the total number of new startup companies assisted by the applicant;

“(cc) the percentage of clients of the applicant that are socially or economically disadvantaged; and

“(dd) the percentage of individuals in the community served by the applicant who are socially or economically disadvantaged.

“(iii) CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED FUNDING.—In determining whether to make a grant under this subsection, the Administrator—

“(I) shall consider the results of the most recent evaluation of the women’s business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought, and, to a lesser extent, previous evaluations; and

“(II) may withhold a grant under this subsection, if the Administrator determines that the applicant has failed to provide the information required to be provided under this paragraph, or the information provided by the applicant is inadequate.

“(D) NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 60 days after the date of each deadline to submit applications, the Administrator shall approve or deny any application under this paragraph and notify the applicant for each such application of the approval or denial.

“(E) RECORD RETENTION.—The Administrator shall maintain a copy of each application submitted under this paragraph for not less than 7 years.”; and

(B) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

“(5) AWARD TO PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS.—There shall be no limitation on the number of times the Administrator may award a grant to an applicant under this subsection.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended—

(1) in subsection (h)(2), by striking “to award a contract (as a sustainability grant) under subsection (l) or”; and

(2) in subsection (j)(1), by striking “The Administration” and inserting “Not later than November 1 of each year, the Administrator”;

(3) in subsection (k)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) and (4);

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(C) by inserting before paragraph (2) the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administration to carry out this section, to remain available until expended, \$26,750,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019.”; and

(D) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) CONTINUING GRANT AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AUTHORITY.—

“(A) PROMPT DISBURSEMENT.—Upon receiving funds to carry out this section for a fiscal year, the Administrator shall, to the extent practicable, promptly reimburse funds to any women’s business center awarded financial assistance under this section if the center meets the eligibility requirements under this section.

“(B) SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION.—If the Administrator has entered into a grant or cooperative agreement with a women’s business center under this section, the Administrator may not suspend or terminate the grant or cooperative agreement, unless the Administrator—

“(i) provides the women’s business center with written notification setting forth the reasons for that action; and

“(ii) affords the women’s business center an opportunity for a hearing, appeal, or other administrative proceeding under chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code.”;

(4) in subsection (m)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “subsection (b) or (l)” and inserting “this subsection or subsection (b)”;

(B) in paragraph (4)(D), by striking “or subsection (l)”;

(5) by redesignating subsections (m), (n), and (o), as amended by this Act, as subsections (l), (m), and (n), respectively.

(c) EFFECT ON EXISTING GRANTS.—

(1) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A nonprofit organization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, shall continue to receive the grant under the terms and conditions in effect for the grant on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, except that the nonprofit organization may not apply for a renewal of the grant under section 29(m)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)(5)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) LENGTH OF RENEWAL GRANT.—The Administrator may award a grant under section 29(l) of the Small Business Act, as so redesignated by subsection (a)(5) of this section, to a nonprofit organization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, for the period—

(A) beginning on the day after the last day of the grant agreement under such section 29(m); and

(B) ending at the end of the third fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. MATCHING REQUIREMENTS UNDER WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 29(c) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(c)), as amended by section 4 of this Act, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “As a condition” and inserting “Subject to paragraph (6), as a condition”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE RELATING TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COUNSELING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon request by a recipient organization, and in accordance with this paragraph, the Administrator may waive, in whole or in part, the requirement to obtain non-Federal funds under this subsection for the technical assistance and counseling activities of the recipient organization carried out using financial assistance under this section for a fiscal year. The Administrator may not waive the requirement for a recipient organization to obtain non-Federal funds under this paragraph for more than a total of 2 consecutive fiscal years.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining whether to waive the requirement to obtain

non-Federal funds under this paragraph, the Administrator shall consider—

“(i) the economic conditions affecting the recipient organization;

“(ii) the impact a waiver under this clause would have on the credibility of the women’s business center program under this section;

“(iii) the demonstrated ability of the recipient organization to raise non-Federal funds; and

“(iv) the performance of the recipient organization.

“(C) LIMITATION.—The Administrator may not waive the requirement to obtain non-Federal funds under this paragraph if granting the waiver would undermine the credibility of the women’s business center program under this section.

“(7) SOLICITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a recipient organization may—

“(A) solicit cash and in-kind contributions from private individuals and entities to be used to carry out the activities of the recipient organization under the project conducted under this section; and

“(B) use amounts made available by the Administration under this section for the cost of such solicitation and management of the contributions received.”.

(b) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—
(A) except as provided in paragraph (2), and not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, publish in the Federal Register proposed regulations by the Administrator to carry out the amendments made to section 29 of the Small Business Act by this Act; and

(B) accept public comments on such proposed regulations for not less than 60 days.

(2) EXISTING PROPOSED REGULATIONS.—Paragraph (1)(A) shall not apply to the extent proposed regulations by the Administrator have been published on the date of enactment of this Act that are sufficient to carry out the amendments made to section 29 of the Small Business Act by this Act.

SEC. 6. STUDY AND REPORT ON ECONOMIC ISSUES FACING WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTERS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a broad study of the unique economic issues facing women’s business centers located in covered areas to identify—

(1) the difficulties such centers face in raising non-Federal funds;

(2) the difficulties such centers face in competing for financial assistance, non-Federal funds, or other types of assistance;

(3) the difficulties such centers face in writing grant proposals; and

(4) other difficulties such centers face because of the economy in the type of covered area in which such centers are located.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a), which shall include recommendations, if any, regarding how to—

(1) address the unique difficulties women’s business centers located in covered areas face because of the type of covered area in which such centers are located;

(2) expand the presence of, and increase the services provided by, women’s business centers located in covered areas; and

(3) best use technology and other resources to better serve women business owners located in covered areas.

(c) DEFINITION OF COVERED AREA.—In this section, the term “covered area” means—

(1) any State that is predominantly rural, as determined by the Administrator;

(2) any State that is predominantly urban, as determined by the Administrator; and

(3) any State or territory that is an island.

SEC. 7. STUDY AND REPORT ON OVERSIGHT OF WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTERS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the oversight of women’s business centers by the Administrator, which shall include—

(1) an analysis of the coordination by the Administrator of the activities of women’s business centers with the activities of small business development centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and Veteran Business Outreach Centers;

(2) a comparison of the types of individuals and small business concerns served by women’s business centers and the types of individuals and small business concerns served by small business development centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and Veteran Business Outreach Centers; and

(3) an analysis of performance data for women’s business centers that evaluates how well women’s business centers are carrying out the mission of women’s business centers and serving individuals and small business concerns.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a), which shall include recommendations, if any, for eliminating the duplication of services provided by women’s business centers, small business development centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and Veteran Business Outreach Centers.

SEC. 8. SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(7) AUTHORITY FOR SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN IN UNDERREPRESENTED INDUSTRIES.—A contracting officer may award a sole source contract under this subsection to a small business concern owned and controlled by women that meets the requirements under paragraph (2)(A) if—

“(A) the small business concern owned and controlled by women is in an industry in which small business concerns owned and controlled by women are underrepresented, as determined by the Administrator;

“(B) the contracting officer determines that the small business concern owned and controlled by women is a responsible contractor with respect to performance of the contract opportunity;

“(C) the anticipated award price of the contract, including options, is not more than—

“(i) \$6,500,000, in the case of a contract opportunity assigned a North American Industry Classification System code for manufacturing; or

“(ii) \$4,000,000, in the case of any other contract opportunity; and

“(D) in the estimation of the contracting officer, the contract award can be made at a fair and reasonable price.

“(8) AUTHORITY FOR SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN IN SUBSTANTIALLY UNDERREPRESENTED INDUSTRIES.—A contracting officer may award a sole source contract under this subsection to a small business concern owned and controlled by women that meets the requirements under paragraph (2)(E) if—

“(A) the small business concern owned and controlled by women is in an industry in which small business concerns owned and controlled by women are substantially

underrepresented, as determined by the Administrator;

“(B) the contracting officer determines that the small business concern owned and controlled by women is a responsible contractor with respect to performance of the contract opportunity;

“(C) the anticipated award price of the contract, including options, is not more than—

“(i) \$6,500,000, in the case of a contract opportunity assigned a North American Industry Classification System code for manufacturing; or

“(ii) \$4,000,000, in the case of any other contract opportunity; and

“(D) in the estimation of the contracting officer, the contract award can be made at a fair and reasonable price.”.

(b) REPORTING ON GOALS FOR SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.—Section 15(h)(2)(E)(viii) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(h)(2)(E)(viii)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (IV), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating subclause (V) as subclause (VIII); and

(3) by inserting after subclause (IV) the following:

“(V) through sole source contracts awarded under section 8(m)(7);

“(VI) through sole source contracts awarded under section 8(m)(8);

“(VII) by industry for contracts described in subclause (III), (IV), (V), or (VI); and”.

(c) DEADLINE FOR REPORT ON UNDERREPRESENTED INDUSTRIES ACCELERATED.—Section 29(o)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(o)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking “5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection” and inserting “January 2, 2015”; and

(2) by striking “5-year period” and inserting “2-year or 5-year period, as applicable.”.

(d) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking “paragraph (3)” and inserting “paragraph (4)”;

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking “paragraph (2)(F)” each place it appears and inserting “paragraph (2)(E)”.

SEC. 9. SMALL BUSINESS INTERMEDIARY LENDING PROGRAM.

Section 7(l) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(l)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “PILOT”;

(2) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “pilot”;

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking “3-year”; and

(B) by striking “pilot”;

(4) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

“(B) LOAN LIMITS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—No single loan to an eligible intermediary under this subsection may exceed \$1,000,000.

“(ii) TOTAL AMOUNT.—The total amount outstanding and committed to an eligible intermediary by the Administrator under the Program may not exceed \$5,000,000.”; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (G) and inserting the following:

“(G) MAXIMUM AMOUNTS.—The Administrator may make loans under the Program—

“(i) during each of fiscal years 2015, 2016, and 2017, in a total amount of not more than \$20,000,000; and

“(ii) during fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter, using such amounts as are made available for the Program.”; and

(5) by striking paragraph (6).

SEC. 10. ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

(a) MICROLOAN PROGRAM.—Section 7(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(m)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B)(i), by striking “short-term,”;

(2) in paragraph (3)(C), by striking “\$5,000,000” and inserting “\$7,000,000”;

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (E); and

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (E);

(4) in paragraph (6)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “short-term,”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) REPORT TO COMMERCIAL CREDIT REPORTING AGENCIES.—The Administrator shall establish a process under which an intermediary that makes a loan to a small business concern under this paragraph shall provide to 1 or more of the commercial credit reporting agencies, through the Administration or independently, including through third party intermediaries, information on the small business concern that is relevant to credit reporting, including the payment activity of the small business concern on the loan.”;

(5) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by striking “PROGRAM” and all that follows through “Under” and inserting the following: “NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—Under”; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B);

(6) in paragraph (8), by striking “such intermediaries” and all the follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: “intermediaries that serve a diversity of geographic areas in the United States to ensure appropriate availability of loans for small business concerns in all industries that are located in metropolitan, nonmetropolitan, and rural areas.”; and

(7) in paragraph (11)(B), by striking “short-term.”;

(b) GUARANTEE FEE WAIVER.—During fiscal year 2016, the Administrator may not collect a guarantee fee under section 7(a)(18)(A)(i) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)(18)(A)(i)) with respect to a loan guaranteed under section 7(a) of such Act, unless amounts are made available to the Administrator to subsidize the cost of guaranteeing such loans for fiscal year 2016.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every year thereafter, the Office of Capital Access of the Administration shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives a report on assistance provided by the Administration under—

(A) section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a));

(B) the microloan program;

(C) part A of title III of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 681 et seq.); and

(D) section 502 of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 696).

(2) REQUIREMENT.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include, for the year preceding the date on which the report is submitted—

(A) for each type of assistance described under subparagraphs (A), (B), and (D) of paragraph (1)—

(i) the number of loans made by the Administration;

(ii) the total amount of loans made by the Administration;

(iii) the percentage of the number and total amount of loans made by the Administration to—

(I) rural small business concerns;

(II) small business concerns owned and controlled by individuals with a disability;

(III) small business concerns owned and controlled by low-income individuals, broken down by each racial or ethnic minority group of which those individuals are members;

(IV) small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans;

(V) small business concerns owned and controlled by women; and

(VI) small business concerns owned and controlled by members of a racial or ethnic minority group, broken down by each such racial or ethnic minority group; and

(iv) the number of jobs created and retained by borrowers as a result of such assistance; and

(B) for assistance described under subparagraph (C) of paragraph (1)—

(i) the number of investments made by small business investment companies;

(ii) the total amount of equity capital provided and loans made by small business investment companies;

(iii) the percentage of the number of investments and loans made and total amount of equity capital provided by small business investment companies to—

(I) rural small business concerns;

(II) small business concerns owned and controlled by individuals with a disability;

(III) small business concerns owned and controlled by low-income individuals, broken down by each racial or ethnic minority group of which those individuals are members;

(IV) small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans;

(V) small business concerns owned and controlled by women; and

(VI) small business concerns owned and controlled by members of a racial or ethnic minority group, broken down by each such racial or ethnic minority group;

(iv) the number of jobs created and retained by small business concerns as a result of investments made by small business investment companies; and

(v) the number of licenses issued by the Administration under section 301(c) of the Small Business Investment Act (15 U.S.C. 681(c)), including the percentage of licenses issued to entities headed by a woman or a member of a racial or ethnic minority, respectively.

SEC. 11. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) access to capital for small business concerns owned and controlled by women comes from a variety of sources, including important contributions and early investments from angel capital and other venture capital investors; and

(2) those investors should continue to work to develop small business concerns owned and controlled by women to expand the rate at which those women receive venture investment.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. REED):

S. 2704. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal Government contracts to inverted domestic corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, earlier today I, along with Senator DICK DURBIN and Senator JACK REED, introduced the No Federal Contracts for Corporate Deserters Act. Our bill will put a stop to companies that renounce their U.S. citizenship but come back to try to

seek taxpayer funded government contracts. There is an existing law on the books that is supposed to ban Federal contracts with inverted corporations, but just like with the tax code, after about a decade of lawyers looking for loopholes in the law, a number of corporations have found them. This bill would bring that ban up-to-date.

Over the last few months, there has been a growing rush of U.S. corporations seeking to swear off their U.S. citizenship and move their mailboxes, for tax purposes, to a low-tax jurisdiction. I don't think that is right, and it is time we put a stop to it, which we can do by passing the Stop Corporate Inversions Act I introduced 2 months ago with 22 cosponsors.

Most Americans agree with us that taxpayer dollars shouldn't be used for contracts with companies that move their addresses abroad to dodge U.S. laws. And because of that, Congress has passed a series of restrictions on contracting with inverted corporations over the last decade. We passed one in 2002, and another in 2006 and 2007. Since fiscal year 2008, a government-wide provision has been included in every annual appropriations bill banning contracts with inverted corporations.

Our bill would strengthen that ban by closing a number of loopholes in the current law. Those loopholes have allowed some inverted corporations to continue collecting revenue from American taxpayers, while at the same time, shifting their tax burden onto those same American taxpayers. Our bill also makes the existing ban, which has been included in annual appropriations bills, permanent.

Some may say that the real reason for inversions is that our tax rate is too high. It is true the top corporate rate is 35 percent. But the effective tax rate—what corporations really pay—is about 12 percent. When companies can go to places like Ireland or the Caribbean and negotiate sweetheart deals to pay little or no taxes, there will always be tax incentives for companies to abandon their country instead of paying their tax bill, no matter what our tax rate is.

Some may say that we should wait for tax reform to address this issue. There are two reasons why we shouldn't. First, if it happens at all, tax reform is months or years away; these inversions are happening now. Second, this is a bill about contracting. This bill doesn't amend the tax code. I expect it will be referred to the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, not to the Finance Committee. So even Senators who believe that fixing the tax inversions problem should wait until comprehensive tax reform should be able to support this bill.

In the past, in similar circumstances, Congress has chosen to act—overwhelmingly, and in a bipartisan fashion. This should not be a partisan

issue. This is about fairness. It is simply unfair to businesses who don't invert to have to compete with companies that do invert. This is about putting American families who work hard and pay their share. We shouldn't sacrifice the interests of those families. We shouldn't ask them to send their hard-earned tax dollars to contractors who skip out on their tax obligations. I look forward to working with my colleagues to move this bill forward.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2711. A bill to reauthorize the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, USCIRF, Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2014.

This legislation would reauthorize the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, also known as USCIRF, while making important reforms to the Commission to encourage bipartisanship, enhance coordination with the State Department, and improve Congressional oversight.

I strongly support USCIRF's mission of promoting and protecting international religious freedom. My legislation will help USCIRF to more effectively pursue this mission.

In 2011, I authored a number of reforms in the previous USCIRF reauthorization legislation, including term limits for Commissioners; a prohibition on employee discrimination; a requirement that Commissioners follow federal travel regulations; and maintaining nine Commissioners, rather than five Commissioners, as called for by the House-passed reauthorization. I have heard from USCIRF that these reforms have strengthened the Commission, and the legislation I am introducing today will build on these reforms.

The USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act is supported by a broad swath of religious and civic leaders and faith organizations, including, Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good; the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America; United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society; HIAS; Muslim Public Affairs Council; Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington and former USCIRF Commissioner; Dr. William J. Shaw, Immediate Past President of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. and former USCIRF Commissioner; former Congressman and USCIRF Commissioner Sam Gejdenson; Sister Simone Campbell, Executive Director of NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby; Rateb Rabie, President of the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation; Dr. Azizah Al-Hibri, former USCIRF Commissioner and Founder and Chair of KARAMAH: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights;

Rev. Drew Christiansen, S.J., Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Global Development at Georgetown University; Dr. Alfred Rotondaro, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress; Dr. Laila Al-Marayati, former USCIRF Commissioner; and Benjamin Palumbo, Board of Trustees, Catholics United.

There is bipartisan agreement about the need for our government to promote and protect international religious freedom. USCIRF is, by design, a bipartisan organization, with Commissioners appointed by the President and Congressional leaders, and USCIRF can most effectively promote religious freedom by doing so on a bipartisan basis. This issue is too important to be stymied by the excessive partisanship which too often leads to political gridlock in Washington.

It is to be expected that the members of a bipartisan Commission will not always reach consensus. However, I am troubled that some Commissioners have on occasion engaged in partisan rhetoric that is not conducive to USCIRF's bipartisan mission and does not represent USCIRF's official views.

For example, one Commissioner recently appeared on Fox News' Hannity program, and, after identifying himself as a member of USCIRF, claimed that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had failed to take steps to combat Boko Haram in Nigeria and accused the Obama Administration of having "no strategy" for combating terrorism. Mother Commissioner testified in Congress on behalf of USCIRF and said that the Obama Administration "sends a message to other countries that we don't care" about religious freedom.

The USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act will facilitate bipartisanship by taking a number of steps. First, the legislation will codify USCIRF's existing procedures for the election of a Chair and Vice Chair so that these positions rotate annually between Commissioners appointed by elected officials of each political party. This will help ensure continued bipartisan leadership at the Commission.

Second, this bill will establish a dedicated bipartisan staff as a complement to nonpartisan professional staff. The legislation permits Commissioners appointed by elected officials of each political party to appoint designated Staff Directors and three designated staff members. This will help foster a bipartisan environment at USCIRF.

Third, the bill will codify procedures for publishing the views of the Commission. The bill encourages Commissioners to reach consensus on statements on behalf of the Commission. When consensus is not possible, the bill requires a statement to be approved by at least six of the nine Commissioners. This supermajority requirement is current USCIRF policy for the approval of statements that are circulated electronically. Codifying this policy will ensure that at least one Commissioner of each political party supports every Commission statement.

USCIRF has noted that it is the only organization of its kind in the world. The Government Accountability Office, GAO, recently issued a report on USCIRF which highlights some of the challenges inherent to USCIRF's unique mission.

The GAO notes that there are two governmental entities charged with promoting international religious freedom: USCIRF and the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom. The GAO found that these overlapping missions and "the lack of a definition regarding how State and the Commission are to interact has sometimes created foreign policy tensions that State has had to mitigate." The GAO notes that State Department officials highlighted several instances "when the Commission's approach with foreign government officials created bilateral tensions."

The GAO's concerns about the overlap between State and USCIRF are serious enough that it included USCIRF in its annual duplication report. As my colleagues know, Senator COBURN authored legislation requiring GAO to issue this report to identify unnecessary duplication in the federal government.

I am concerned that the lack of coordination between the State Department and USCIRF may undermine our government's efforts to promote international religious freedom by sending mixed messages to foreign governments and human-rights activists who are fighting to defend religious freedom in their countries.

Consider another example. The State Department and USCIRF both produce an annual report on international religious freedom. Under current law, USCIRF is required to publish its report "[n]ot later than May 1 of each year," but the State Department's report is often not completed before May 1. This forces USCIRF to issue its report prior to publication of the State Department report, which leads to unnecessary duplication of efforts, saps USCIRF's limited staff resources, and prevents USCIRF from opining on the State Department report.

The USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act will enhance cooperation between USCIRF and the State Department with two measures. First, it clarifies that the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, as an ex officio member of USCIRF, is permitted to attend all Commission meetings. GAO's duplication report specifically highlights the failure to define the role of the Ambassador at Large as an ex officio member of USCIRF.

Second, this legislation requires USCIRF to publish its annual report after reviewing the State Department's annual report on International Religious Freedom. This division of labor takes advantage of the State Department's worldwide presence and much larger staff to draft a comprehensive report. It also takes advantage of

USCIRF's unique role to provide an independent and bipartisan commentary on the State Department report.

USCIRF is a part of the legislative branch and it is ultimately the responsibility of Congress to oversee USCIRF's work and ensure that it is effectively pursuing its mission. The need for greater Congressional oversight of USCIRF has been highlighted by concerns about USCIRF's practices, including, for example, the work environment at USCIRF for religious minorities, particularly prior to the 2011 reauthorization.

In the past, human rights advocates made allegations about financial improprieties at USCIRF, particularly that USCIRF Commissioners had made lavish travel arrangements. As a result, in 2011 I authored a provision clarifying that USCIRF Commissioners are subject to Federal travel regulations.

I was troubled to learn about more allegations of financial irregularities at USCIRF only a few weeks after the last reauthorization. In early 2012, USCIRF staff notified my office that USCIRF's office manager had been involved in embezzlement and fraud for several years. The office manager subsequently pled guilty and was sentenced to 20 months in prison for embezzling \$217,000 from 2007–2011. This is a significant amount of taxpayer money in any circumstance, but particularly for a small organization like USCIRF.

I am also concerned about unresolved claims that USCIRF, an organization charged with protecting religious freedom, discriminated against a former employee on the basis of her religion.

In 2011, I included language in the last USCIRF reauthorization providing anti-discrimination protections to USCIRF employees and allowing pending civil rights claims to proceed. The impetus for this provision was a lawsuit filed by a former USCIRF employee, who claimed that her permanent employment offer was rescinded after the Commissioners learned of her prior job with a Muslim civil rights organization. USCIRF did not deny the discrimination claim. Instead, they argued that USCIRF employees do not have federal civil rights protections.

Unfortunately, the lawsuit is still pending. I understand that USCIRF's lawyers have refused to enter into settlement negotiations with the Commission's former employee and instead are aggressively litigating the case.

As Christianity Today said, "the trial will be one of the most ironic in American history, with the congressional commission charged with monitoring religious freedom around the world defending its own employment practices in court."

In light of these concerns, the USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act would improve Congressional oversight by reauthorizing the Commission for two years. A 2-year reauthorization

period will allow the Commission to continue to pursue its important mission while Congress closely monitors USCIRF's activities to assure the reforms in this legislation are fully implemented.

I strongly support the mission of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom to protect and promote international religious freedom. I believe the reforms in my legislation will help USCIRF more effectively pursue this mission.

I urge my colleagues to support the USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act so that USCIRF can quickly be reauthorized with these important reforms.

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. 2711

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT AND COMPOSITION.

(a) LEADERSHIP.—Subsection (d) of section 201 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431(d)) is amended to read as follows:

"(d) ELECTION OF CHAIR.—At the first meeting of the Commission after May 30 of each year, a majority of the Members of the Commission present and voting shall elect the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission, subject to the following requirements:

"(1) INITIAL ELECTIONS.—At the first meeting of the Commission after May 30, 2015, the Members of the Commission shall elect as Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party that is not the political party of the President, and as Vice Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party of the President.

"(2) FUTURE ELECTIONS.—At the first meeting of the Commission after May 30, 2016, the Members of the Commission shall elect as Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party of the President, and as Vice Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party of the President. Thereafter, positions of Chair and Vice Chair shall continue to rotate on an annual basis between Commissioners appointed by elected officials of each political party.

"(3) TERM LIMITS.—No Member of the Commission is eligible to be elected as Chair of the Commission for a second term, and no Member of the Commission is eligible to be elected as Vice Chair of the Commission for a second term."

(b) ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.—Subsection (f) of such section (22 U.S.C. 6431(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "The Ambassador at Large shall be given advance notice of all Commission meetings and may attend all Commission meetings as a non-voting Member of the Commission."

(c) APPOINTMENTS IN CASES OF VACANCIES.—Subsection (g) of such section (22 U.S.C. 6431(g)) is amended by striking the second sentence.

SEC. 3. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.

Section 203(e) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6432a) is amended to read as follows:

"(e) VIEWS OF THE COMMISSION.—The Members of the Commission may speak in their capacity as private citizens. Statements on behalf of the Commission shall be issued in writing over the names of the Members. Members of the Commission shall make every effort to reach consensus on all statements on behalf of the Commission, including testimony, press releases, and articles by Commissioners or Commission staff. When a statement supported by all Commissioners is not possible, the Commission shall issue a statement only if such statement is approved by an affirmative vote of at least six of the nine Members of the Commission and each Member of the Commission may include the individual or dissenting views of the Member. The Commission shall in its written statements clearly describe its statutory authority, distinguishing that authority from that of appointed or elected officials of the United States Government. Oral statements, where practicable, shall include a similar description."

SEC. 4. COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) STAFF DIRECTORS.—Section 204 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6432b) is amended by striking subsections (a), (b), and (c) and inserting the following new subsections:

"(a) COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS.—Subject to subsection (c), the Commission may appoint and fix the pay of such staff personnel as it deems desirable. All decisions pertaining to the hiring, firing, and fixing of pay of personnel of the Commission shall be by an affirmative vote of at least six of the nine Members of the Commission, except that—

"(1) Members of the Commission appointed by an elected official of the political party of the President, by a majority vote thereof, shall be entitled to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of a Majority Staff Director and shall have the authority to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of three professional staff members who shall be responsible to the Members of the Commission of the political party of the President; and

"(2) Members of the Commission appointed by an elected official of the political party that is not the political party of the President, by a majority vote thereof, shall be entitled to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of a Minority Staff Director and shall have the authority to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of three professional staff members who shall be responsible to the Members of the Commission of the political party that is not the political party of the President.

"(b) STAFF APPOINTMENTS AND COMPENSATION.—All staff appointments shall be made without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5 relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the Majority Staff Director, Minority Staff Director, and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

"(c) QUALIFICATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF.—The Commission shall ensure that the professional staff of the Commission consists of persons with expertise in areas relevant to the issue of international religious freedom, including foreign affairs, direct experience abroad, human rights, and international law."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (e) of such section (22 U.S.C. 6432b(e)) is amended by striking "The Executive Director" both places it appears and inserting "The Majority Staff Director and the Minority Staff Director".

SEC. 5. REPORT OF COMMISSION.

(a) **REPORT PUBLICATION DATE.**—Section 205(a) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6433(a)) is amended by striking “Not later than May 1 of each year” and inserting “Each year, not earlier than 30 days after, and not later than 90 days after, the publication of the Department of State’s Annual Report on International Religious Freedom”.

(b) **CONSENSUS ON REPORTS.**—Section 205(c) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6433(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) **INDIVIDUAL OR DISSENTING VIEWS.**—Members of the Commission shall make every effort to reach consensus on the report. When a report supported by all Commissioners is not possible, the report shall be approved by an affirmative vote of at least six of the nine Members of the Commission and each Member of the Commission may include the individual or dissenting views of the Member.”.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 207(a) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6435(a)) is amended by striking “2014” and inserting “2016”.

SEC. 7. TERMINATION.

Section 209 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6436) is amended by striking “September 30, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2016”.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2712. A bill to amend section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow adjunct faculty members to qualify for public service loan forgiveness; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I introduced the Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act, a bill that would make adjunct professors eligible to participate in the Public Service Student Loan Forgiveness Program.

Contingent faculty members are like full-time instructors. They have advanced degrees. They teach classes and spend many hours outside the classroom preparing for class. They hold office hours, grade papers and give feedback to students. They provide advice and write letters of recommendation. Students rely on them. Since most adjuncts have advanced degrees and, as almost 75 percent of graduate degree recipients have an average of \$61,000 in student loans, they are also among the 40 million Americans with student debt.

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program is meant to encourage graduates to go into public service by offering student loan forgiveness for eligible federal loans after ten years of full-time work in government or the non-profit sector. Public service fields like nursing, military service, and public health qualify. And many education jobs qualify, including full-time work at public universities and part-time work at community colleges in high-needs subject areas or areas of shortage. But other faculty members who work part-time are not eligible for loan forgiveness because the law requires an annual average of 30 hours per week to qualify for the program. For adjunct

faculty working at several schools on a contingent basis, this requirement can be difficult or impossible to meet, even when they are putting in more than 30 hours of work each week.

The number of faculty hours given for each class is calculated differently at different schools. Some give one hour per hour in the classroom while others actually take into consideration the time required outside the classroom. So, even as these faculty members are working hard and as their options for tenured, full-time positions become slimmer, more of them are overworked and undervalued for their work in public service.

The Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act of 2014 would solve this by amending the Higher Education Act to expand the definition of a “public service job” to include a part-time faculty member who teaches at least one course at an eligible institution of higher education. They would still have to meet all the other requirements to qualify for the program, including making 120 on-time payments while employed at a qualifying institution, and they could not be employed full-time elsewhere at the same time.

This bill would benefit someone like David Weiss, an adjunct professor from St. Paul, Minnesota, who graduated with \$48,000 in student debt and, after 12 years of on-time payments, has \$35,000 left. Like most adjuncts, David has dealt with uncertain job security. In good years, he is able to teach 5 to 7 courses a year, but recently he has only been offered two to three courses. He supplements his income from teaching with other part-time work. This bill would ensure that David and many thousands like him, could obtain credit towards PSLF for payments made while teaching whether or not he was teaching one course or 7.

Unfortunately, for all their contributions to the college programs and the students they work with, adjunct faculty don’t have the same employment benefits or job security as their colleagues. The number of classes they teach every semester varies. To make ends meet, these professors often end up teaching classes at more than one school in the same semester, getting paid about \$3,000 per class and making an average annual income that hovers around minimum wage. This also means that, in some parts of the country, they spend as much time commuting as they do teaching.

Nationally, ⅔ of all higher education faculty work on a contingent basis, with low pay and little or no benefits or job security. In the past, these were a minority of professors who were hired to teach an occasional class because they could bring experience to the classroom in a specific field or industry. Over time, as university budgets have tightened and it has gotten more expensive to hire full-time, tenure track professors, higher education institutions have increasingly hired adjuncts.

From 1991 to 2011, the number of part-time faculty in the U.S. increased two and a half times from 291,000 to over 760,000. At the same time, the percentage of professors holding tenure-track positions has been steadily decreasing—from 45 percent of all instructors in 1975 to only 24 percent in 2011. The number of full-time instructors, tenured and non-tenured, now makes up only about 50 percent of professors on U.S. campuses. The other 50 percent of the 1.5 million faculty employees at public and non-profit colleges and universities in the U.S. work on a part-time, contingent basis.

Illinois colleges rely heavily on adjuncts. In 2012, 53 percent of all faculty at public and not-for-profit colleges and universities in the State, more than 30,400 faculty employees, worked on a part-time basis. This is a 52.6 percent increase in part-time faculty in Illinois compared to a 13 percent increase in full-time faculty since 2002.

Not surprisingly, in Illinois, 69 percent of all part-time faculty work in Chicago, where the cost of living is 16 percent higher than the U.S. average. Based on an average payment of \$3,000 per class an adjunct professor must teach between seventeen and thirty classes a year to pay for rent and utilities in Chicago.

They would have to teach up to 7 classes to afford groceries for a family of four and two to four classes per year just to cover student loan payments. Because they are part-time, they are not eligible for vacation time, paid sick days, or group health-care. So they would have to teach an additional two to three classes to afford family coverage from the lowest priced health insurance offered on Get Covered Illinois, the official health marketplace.

Even though these professors are working in a relatively low-paying field, teaching our students, their part-time status also means they aren’t eligible for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.

This bill does not completely fix this growing reliance on part-time professors who are underpaid and undervalued. But it would ensure that members of the contingent faculty workforce are no longer excluded from the loan forgiveness program for public servants. I hope my colleagues will join me in the effort to provide this benefit to faculty members who provide our students with a quality education.

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. 2712

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. LOAN FORGIVENESS FOR ADJUNCT FACULTY.

Section 455(m)(3)(B)(ii) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(m)(3)(B)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by striking “teaching as” and inserting the following: “teaching—

“(I) as”;

(2) by striking “, foreign language faculty, and part-time faculty at community colleges, as determined by the Secretary,” and inserting “and foreign language faculty), as determined by the Secretary; or”;

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(II) as a part-time faculty member or instructor who—

“(aa) teaches not less than 1 course at an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101(a)), a postsecondary vocational institution (as defined in section 102(c)), or a Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316(b)); and

“(bb) is not employed on a full-time basis by any other employer.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 529—RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES AND COMMENDING ITS MEMBERS FOR THEIR COURAGE AND SACRIFICE IN SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. TOOMEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 529

Whereas on September 17, 1914, members of the American Veterans of Foreign Service and the National Society of the Army of the Philippines merged their organizations and voted in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to adopt the name “Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States”;

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States remains active in communities at the international, national, State, and local levels with more than 2,000,000 members;

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States provides financial, social, and emotional support to members of the Armed forces, veterans, and their dependents throughout the United States;

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States works on behalf of service members of the United States by calling on Congress for better health care and benefits for veterans;

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States annually donates more than 13,000,000 volunteer hours of community service; and

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has played an instrumental role in each significant veterans legislation passed since its founding and continues to play such a role: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States on its 100th anniversary as a national organization with a mission to—

(A) foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts;

(B) serve veterans, the military, and communities across the United States; and

(C) advocate on behalf of all veterans;

(2) commends the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States for

their courage and sacrifice in service to the United States; and

(3) encourages all individuals of the United States to express their appreciation for the honor, courage, and bravery of United States veterans and for the service of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 530—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN IRAQ AND THE URGENT NEED TO PROTECT RELIGIOUS MINORITIES FROM PERSECUTION FROM THE SUNNI ISLAMIST INSURGENT AND TERRORIST GROUP THE ISLAMIC STATE, FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND THE LEVANT (ISIL), AS IT EXPANDS ITS CONTROL OVER AREAS IN NORTHWESTERN IRAQ

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VITTER, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 530

Whereas Iraq is currently embroiled in a surge of violence arising from an Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)-led offensive that began in Anbar province and has spread to key locations such as Mosul, Tikrit, and Samarra and continues to engulf the region in violence and instability;

Whereas, on June 29, 2014, ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi renamed the group the Islamic State and pronounced himself Caliph of a new Islamic Caliphate encompassing the areas under his control, and Mr. al-Baghdadi has a stated mission of spreading the Islamic State and caliphate across the region through violence against Shiites, non-Muslims, and unsupportive Sunnis;

Whereas Iraq's population is approximately 31,300,000 people, with 97 percent identifying themselves as Muslim and the approximately 3 percent of religious minorities groups comprising of Christians, Yazidis, Sabean-Mandaeans, Bahais, Shabaks, Kakais, and Jews;

Whereas the Iraqi Christian population is estimated to be between 400,000 and 850,000, with two-thirds being Chaldean, one-fifth Assyrian, and the remainder consisting of Syrians, Protestants, Armenians, and Anglicans;

Whereas the Iraqi constitution provides for religious freedom by stating that “no law may be enacted that contradicts the principles of democracy,” “no law may be enacted that contradicts the rights and basic freedoms stipulated in this Constitution,” and “[this Constitution] guarantees the full religious rights to freedom of religious belief and practice of all individuals such as Christians, Yazidis, and Mandaean Sabaeans”;

Whereas over 1,000,000 people have been displaced by violence in Iraq, and reports have

surfaced of targeted harassment, persecution, and killings of Iraqi religious minorities by the Islamic State with little to no protection from the Government of Iraq and other security forces;

Whereas the fall of Mosul in particular has sparked enough anxiety among the Christian population that, for the first time in 1,600 years, there was no Mass in that city;

Whereas over 50 percent of Iraq's Christian population has fled since the fall of Saddam Hussein, and the government under Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has not upheld its commitment to protect the rights of religious minorities;

Whereas the United States Government has provided over \$73,000,000 of cumulative assistance to Iraq's minority populations since 2003 through economic development, humanitarian services, and capacity development;

Whereas 84,902 Iraqis have resettled to the United States between 2007 and 2013 and over 300,000 Chaldean and Assyrians currently reside throughout the country, particularly in Michigan, California, Arizona, Illinois, and Ohio; and

Whereas President Barack Obama recently declared on Religious Freedom Day, “Foremost among the rights Americans hold sacred is the freedom to worship as we choose . . . we also remember that religious liberty is not just an American right; it is a universal human right to be protected here at home and across the globe. This freedom is an essential part of human dignity, and without it our world cannot know lasting peace”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms its commitment to promoting and protecting religious freedom around the world and providing relief to minority groups facing persecution;

(2) calls on the Department of State to work with the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Government of Iraq, neighboring countries, the diaspora community in the United States, and other key stakeholders to help secure safe havens for those seeking safety and protection from religious persecution in Iraq;

(3) respectfully requests the addition of a Special Representative for Religious Minorities to be included in Iraq's government; and

(4) urges the President to ensure the timely processing of visas for Iraq's minority groups fleeing religious persecution, in accordance with existing United States immigration law and national security screening procedures.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3706. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3707. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3708. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3709. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3710. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her

to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3711. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3712. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3713. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3714. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3715. Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3716. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3717. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3718. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3719. Mr. WICKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3720. Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHANNIS, and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3721. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3722. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3706. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1087. REPORT ON POW/MIA POLICIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on policies and proposals for providing access to information and documents to the next of kin of missing service personnel, including under chapter 76 of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section 911.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) A description of information and documents to be provided to the next of kin, including the status of recovery efforts and service records.

(2) A description of the Department's plans, if any, to review the classification status of records related to past covered conflicts and missing service personnel.

(3) An assessment of whether it is feasible and advisable to develop a public interface for any database of missing personnel being developed.

SA 3707. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 846. PROGRAM FRAUD CIVIL REMEDIES STATUTE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration with an effective administrative remedy to obtain recompense for the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for losses resulting from the submission to the Department or the Administration, respectively, of false, fictitious, or fraudulent claims and statements.

(b) PROGRAM FRAUD CIVIL REMEDIES.—(1) IN GENERAL.—Part IV of subtitle A of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 163 the following new chapter:

“CHAPTER 164—ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES FOR FALSE CLAIMS AND STATEMENTS

“Sec.

“2751. Applicability of chapter; definitions.

“2752. False claims and statements; liability.

“2753. Hearing and determinations.

“2754. Payment; interest on late payments.

“2755. Judicial review.

“2756. Collection of civil penalties and assessments.

“2757. Right to administrative offset.

“2758. Limitations.

“2759. Effect on other laws.

“2751. Applicability of chapter; definitions.

“§ 2751. Applicability of chapter; definitions

“(a) APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER.—This chapter applies to the following agencies:

“(1) The Department of Defense.

“(2) The National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this chapter:

“(1) HEAD OF AN AGENCY.—The term ‘head of an agency’ means the Secretary of Defense

and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

“(2) CLAIM.—The term ‘claim’ means any request, demand, or submission—

“(A) made to the head of an agency for property, services, or money (including money representing grants, loans, insurance, or benefits);

“(B) made to a recipient of property, services, or money received directly or indirectly from the head of an agency or to a party to a contract with the head of an agency—

“(i) for property or services if the United States—

“(I) provided such property or services;

“(II) provided any portion of the funds for the purchase of such property or services; or

“(III) will reimburse such recipient or party for the purchase of such property or services; or

“(ii) for the payment of money (including money representing grants, loans, insurance, or benefits) if the United States—

“(I) provided any portion of the money requested or demanded; or

“(II) will reimburse such recipient or party for any portion of the money paid on such request or demand; or

“(C) made to the head of an agency which has the effect of decreasing an obligation to pay or account for property, services, or money.

“(3) KNOWS OR HAS REASON TO KNOW.—The term ‘knows or has reason to know’, for purposes of establishing liability under section 2752 of this title, means that a person, with respect to a claim or statement—

“(A) has actual knowledge that the claim or statement is false, fictitious, or fraudulent;

“(B) acts in deliberate ignorance of the truth or falsity of the claim or statement; or

“(C) acts in reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the claim or statement, and no proof of specific intent to defraud is required.

“(4) RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL.—The term ‘responsible official’ means a designated debarring and suspending official of the agency named in subsection (a).

“(5) RESPONDENT.—The term ‘respondent’ means a person who has received notice from a responsible official asserting liability under section 2752 of this title.

“(6) STATEMENT.—The term ‘statement’ means any representation, certification, affirmation, document, record, or an accounting or bookkeeping entry made—

“(A) with respect to a claim or to obtain the approval or payment of a claim (including relating to eligibility to make a claim); or

“(B) with respect to (including relating to eligibility for)—

“(i) a contract with, or a bid or proposal for a contract with, the head of an agency; or

“(ii) a grant, loan, or benefit from the head of an agency.

“(c) CLAIMS.—For purposes of paragraph (2) of subsection (b)—

“(1) each voucher, invoice, claim form, or other individual request or demand for property, services, or money constitutes a separate claim;

“(2) each claim for property, services, or money is subject to this chapter regardless of whether such property, services, or money is actually delivered or paid; and

“(3) a claim shall be considered made, presented, or submitted to the head of an agency, recipient, or party when such claim is actually made to an agent, fiscal intermediary, or other entity acting for or on behalf of such authority, recipient, or party.

“(d) STATEMENTS.—For purposes of paragraph (6) of subsection (b)—

“(1) each written representation, certification, or affirmation constitutes a separate statement; and

“(2) a statement shall be considered made, presented, or submitted to the head of an agency when such statement is actually made to an agent, fiscal intermediary, or other entity acting for or on behalf of such authority.

“§ 2752. False claims and statements; liability

“(a) FALSE CLAIMS.—Any person who makes, presents, or submits, or causes to be made, presented, or submitted, to the head of an agency a claim that the person knows or has reason to know—

“(1) is false, fictitious, or fraudulent;

“(2) includes or is supported by any written statement which asserts a material fact this is false, fictitious, or fraudulent;

“(3) includes or is supported by any written statement that—

“(A) omits a material fact;

“(B) is false, fictitious, or fraudulent as a result of such omission; and

“(C) is made, presented, or submitted by a person who has a duty to include such material fact; or

“(4) is for payment for the provision of property or services which the person has not provided as claimed,

shall, in addition to any other remedy that may be prescribed by law, be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000 for each such claim. Such person shall also be subject to an assessment of not more than twice the amount of such claim, or the portion of such claim which is determined by the responsible official to be in violation of the preceding sentence.

“(b) FALSE STATEMENTS.—Any person who makes, presents, submits, or causes to be made, presented, or submitted, a written statement in conjunction with a procurement program or acquisition of the an agency named in section 2751(a) of this title that—

“(1) the person knows or has reason to know—

“(A) asserts a material fact that is false, fictitious, or fraudulent; or

“(B)(i) omits a material fact; and

“(ii) is false, fictitious, or fraudulent as a result of such omission;

“(2) in the case of a statement described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1), is a statement in which the person making, presenting, or submitting such statement has a duty to include such material fact; and

“(3) contains or is accompanied by an express certification or affirmation of the truthfulness and accuracy of the contents of the statement,

shall be subject to, in addition to any other remedy that may be prescribed by law, a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000 for each such statement.

“§ 2753. Hearing and determinations

“(a) TRANSMITTAL OF NOTICE TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.—If a responsible official determines that there is adequate evidence to believe that a person is liable under section 2752 of this title, the responsible official shall transmit to the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, a written notice of the intention of such official to initiate an action under this section. The notice shall include the following:

“(1) A statement of the reasons for initiating an action under this section.

“(2) A statement specifying the evidence which supports liability under section 2752 of this title.

“(3) A description of the claims or statements for which liability under section 2752 of this title is alleged.

“(4) An estimate of the penalties and assessments that will be demanded under section 2752 of this title.

“(5) A statement of any exculpatory or mitigating circumstances which may relate to such claims or statements.

“(b) STATEMENT FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL.—(1) Within 90 days after receipt of a notice from a responsible official under subsection (a), the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, shall transmit a written statement to the responsible official which specifies—

“(A) that the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, approves or disapproves initiating an action under this section based on the allegations of liability stated in such notice; and

“(B) in any case in which the initiation of an action under this section is disapproved, the reasons for such disapproval.

“(2) If at any time after the initiation of an action under this section the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, transmits to a responsible official a written determination that the continuation of any action under this section may adversely affect any pending or potential criminal or civil action, such action shall be immediately stayed and may be resumed only upon written authorization from the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General.

“(c) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF CLAIM THAT MAY BE PURSUED UNDER THIS SECTION.—No action shall be initiated under this section, nor shall any assessment be imposed under this section, if the total amount of the claim determined by the responsible official to violate section 2752(a) of this title exceeds \$500,000. The \$500,000 threshold does not include penalties or any assessment permitted under section 2752(a) of this title greater than the amount of the claim determined by the responsible official to violate such section.

“(d) PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING CLAIMS.—

(1) Upon receiving approval under subsection (b) to initiate an action under this section, the responsible official shall mail, by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall deliver, a notice to the person alleged to be liable under section 2752 of this title. Such notice shall specify the allegations of liability against such person, specify the total amount of penalties and assessments sought by the United States, advise the person of the opportunity to submit facts and arguments in opposition to the allegations set forth in the notice, advise the person of the opportunity to submit offers of settlement or proposals of adjustment, and advise the person of the procedures of the agency governing the resolution of actions initiated under this section.

“(2) Within 30 days after receiving a notice under paragraph (1), or any additional period of time granted by the responsible official, the respondent may submit in person, in writing, or through a representative, facts and arguments in opposition to the allegations set forth in the notice, including any additional information that raises a genuine dispute of material fact.

“(3) If the respondent fails to respond within 30 days, or any additional time granted by the responsible official, the responsible official may issue a written decision disposing of the matters raised in the notice. Such decision shall be based on the record before the responsible official. If the responsible official concludes that the respondent is liable under section 2752 of this title, the decision shall include the findings of fact and conclusions

of law which the responsible official relied upon in determining that the respondent is liable, and the amount of any penalty or assessment to be imposed on the respondent. Any such determination shall be based on a preponderance of the evidence. The responsible official shall promptly send to the respondent a copy of the decision by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall hand deliver a copy of the decision.

“(4) If the respondent makes a timely submission, and the responsible official determines that the respondent has not raised any genuine dispute of material fact, the responsible official may issue a written decision disposing of the matters raised in the notice. Such decision shall be based on the record before the responsible official. If the responsible official concludes that the respondent is liable under section 2752 of this title, the decision shall include the findings of fact and conclusions of law which the responsible official relied upon in determining that the respondent is liable, and the amount of any penalty or assessment to be imposed on the respondent. Any such determination shall be based on a preponderance of the evidence. The responsible official shall promptly send to the respondent a copy of the decision by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall hand deliver a copy of the decision.

“(5) If the respondent makes a timely submission, and the responsible official determines that the respondent has raised a genuine dispute of material fact, the responsible official shall commence a hearing to resolve the genuinely disputed material facts by mailing by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or by hand delivery of, a notice informing the respondent of—

“(A) the time, place, and nature of the hearing;

“(B) the legal authority under which the hearing is to be held;

“(C) the material facts determined by the responsible official to be genuinely in dispute that will be the subject of the hearing; and

“(D) a description of the procedures for the conduct of the hearing.

“(6) The responsible official and any person against whom liability is asserted under this chapter may agree to a compromise or settle an action at any time. Any compromise or settlement must be in writing.

“(e) RESPONDENT ENTITLED TO COPY OF THE RECORD.—At any time after receiving a notice under paragraph (1) of subsection (d), the respondent shall be entitled to a copy of the entire record before the responsible official.

“(f) HEARINGS.—Any hearing commenced under this section shall be conducted by the responsible official, or a fact-finder designated by the responsible official, solely to resolve genuinely disputed material facts identified by the responsible official and set forth in the notice to the respondent.

“(g) PROCEDURES FOR HEARINGS.—(1) Each hearing shall be conducted under procedures prescribed by the head of the agency. Such procedures shall include the following:

“(A) The provision of written notice of the hearing to the respondent, including written notice of—

“(i) the time, place, and nature of the hearing;

“(ii) the legal authority under which the hearing is to be held;

“(iii) the material facts determined by the responsible official to be genuinely in dispute that will be the subject of the hearing; and

“(iv) a description of the procedures for the conduct of the hearing.

“(B) The opportunity for the respondent to present facts and arguments through oral or documentary evidence, to submit rebuttal evidence, and to conduct such cross-examination as may be required to resolve any genuinely disputed material facts identified by the responsible official.

“(C) The opportunity for the respondent to be accompanied, represented, and advised by counsel or such other qualified representative as the head of the agency may specify in such procedures.

“(2) For the purpose of conducting hearings under this section, the responsible official is authorized to administer oaths or affirmations.

“(3) Hearings shall be held at the responsible official's office, or at such other place as may be agreed upon by the respondent and the responsible official.

“(h) **DECISION FOLLOWING HEARING.**—The responsible official shall issue a written decision within 60 days after the conclusion of the hearing. That decision shall set forth specific findings of fact resolving the genuinely disputed material facts that were the subject of the hearing. The written decision shall also dispose of the matters raised in the notice required under paragraph (1) of subsection (d). If the responsible official concludes that the respondent is liable under section 2752 of this title, the decision shall include the findings of fact and conclusions of law which the responsible official relied upon in determining that the respondent is liable, and the amount of any penalty or assessment to be imposed on the respondent. Any decisions issued under this subsection shall be based on the record before the responsible official and shall be supported by a preponderance of the evidence. The responsible official shall promptly send to the respondent a copy of the decision by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall hand deliver a copy of the decision.

“§ 2754. Payment; interest on late payments

“(a) **PAYMENT OF ASSESSMENTS AND PENALTIES.**—A respondent shall render payment of any assessment and penalty imposed by a responsible official, or any amount otherwise agreed to as part of a settlement or adjustment, not later than the date—

“(1) that is 30 days after the date of the receipt by the respondent of the responsible official's decision; or

“(2) as otherwise agreed to by the respondent and the responsible official.

“(b) **INTEREST.**—If there is an unpaid balance as of the date determined under subsection (a), interest shall accrue from that date on any unpaid balance. The rate of interest charged shall be the rate in effect as of that date that is published by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 3717 of title 31.

“(c) **TREATMENT OF RECEIPTS.**—All penalties, assessments, or interest paid, collected, or otherwise recovered under this chapter shall be deposited into the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts as provided in section 3302 of title 31.

“§ 2755. Judicial review

“A decision by a responsible official under section 2753(d) or 2753(h) of this title shall be final. Any such final decision is subject to judicial review only under chapter 7 of title 5.

“§ 2756. Collection of civil penalties and assessments

“(a) **JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT OF CIVIL PENALTIES AND ASSESSMENTS.**—The Attorney General shall be responsible for judicial enforcement of any civil penalty or assessment imposed under this chapter.

“(b) **CIVIL ACTIONS FOR RECOVERY.**—Any penalty or assessment imposed in a decision

by a responsible official, or amounts otherwise agreed to as part of a settlement or adjustment, along with any accrued interest, may be recovered in a civil action brought by the Attorney General. In any such action, no matter that was raised or that could have been raised in a proceeding under this chapter or pursuant to judicial review under section 2755 of this title may be raised as a defense, and the determination of liability and the determination of amounts of penalties and assessments shall not be subject to review.

“(c) **JURISDICTION OF UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURTS.**—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction of any action commenced by the United States under subsection (b).

“(d) **JOINING AND CONSOLIDATING ACTIONS.**—Any action under subsection (b) may, without regard to venue requirements, be joined and consolidated with or asserted as a counterclaim, cross-claim, or setoff by the United States in any other civil action which includes as parties the United States, and the person against whom such action may be brought.

“(e) **JURISDICTION OF UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS.**—The United States Court of Federal Claims shall have jurisdiction of any action under subsection (b) to recover any penalty or assessment, or amounts otherwise agreed to as part of a settlement or adjustment, along with any accrued interest, if the cause of action is asserted by the United States as a counterclaim in a matter pending in such court. The counterclaim need not relate to the subject matter of the underlying claim.

“§ 2757. Right to administrative offset

“The amount of any penalty or assessment that has been imposed by a responsible official, or any amount agreed upon in a settlement or compromise, along with any accrued interest, may be collected by administrative offset.

“§ 2758. Limitations

“(a) **LIMITATION ON PERIOD FOR INITIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION.**—An action under section 2752 of this title with respect to a claim or statement shall be commenced within six years after the date on which such claim or statement is made, presented, or submitted.

“(b) **LIMITATION PERIOD FOR INITIATION OF CIVIL ACTION FOR RECOVERY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY OR ASSESSMENT.**—A civil action to recover a penalty or assessment under section 2756 of this title shall be commenced within three years after the date of the decision of the responsible official imposing the penalty or assessment.

“§ 2759. Effect on other laws

“(a) **RELATIONSHIP TO TITLE 44 AUTHORITIES.**—This chapter does not diminish the responsibility of the head of an agency to comply with the provisions of chapter 35 of title 44, relating to coordination of Federal information policy.

“(b) **RELATIONSHIP TO TITLE 31 AUTHORITIES.**—The procedures set forth in this chapter apply to the agencies named in section 2751(a) of this title in lieu of the procedures under chapter 38 of title 31, relating to administrative remedies for false claims and statements.

“(c) **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORITIES.**—Any action, inaction, or decision under this chapter shall be based solely upon the information before the responsible official and shall not limit or restrict any agency of the Government from instituting any other action arising outside this chapter, including suspension or debarment, based upon the same information. Any action, inaction, or decision under this chapter shall not re-

strict the ability of the Attorney General to bring judicial action, based upon the same information as long as such action is not otherwise prohibited by law.”

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The tables of chapters at the beginning of subtitle A, and at the beginning of part IV of subtitle A, of such title are each amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 163 the following new item:

“164. Administrative Remedies for False Claims and Statements 2751”.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 3801(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “(other than the Department of Defense)” after “executive department”;

(2) by striking subparagraph (B);

(3) by redesignating subparagraphs (C), (D), (E), and (F) as subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E), respectively; and

(4) in subparagraph (B), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by inserting “(other than the National Aeronautics and Space Administration)” after “not an executive department”.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Chapter 164 of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsection (b), and the amendments made by subsection (c), shall apply to any claim or statement made, presented, or submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3708. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following:

SEC. 557. ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS IN MILITARY JUSTICE REVIEW COMMITTEE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF MILITARY JUSTICE REFORM.

The Secretary of Defense shall provide that the matters considered by the Military Justice Review Committee in its current comprehensive review of military justice reform shall include the following:

(1) A recommendation as to the feasibility and advisability of specifying separately as an offense under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), each of the following offenses that are currently encompassed by general article section 934 of title 10, United States Code (article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice):

(A) Assault with intent to commit murder, voluntary manslaughter, rape, robbery, forcible sodomy, arson, burglary, and house-breaking.

(B) Child endangerment.

(C) Child pornography.

(D) Negligent homicide.

(E) Kidnapping.

(F) Obstruction of justice.

(G) Pandering and prostitution.

(H) Subordination of perjury.

(I) Soliciting another to commit an offense.

(J) Any other offense currently encompassed by general article section 934 of title 10, United States Code that the Military Justice Review Committee considers appropriate.

(2) A recommendation as to the feasibility and advisability of terminating the authority of the Courts of Criminal Appeals to

overturn a finding of guilt based on factual insufficiency, including an assessment of any efficiencies that could be achieved in the appellate process by the termination of such authority.

SA 3709. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following:

SEC. 567. APPLICABILITY OF ELIMINATION OF FIVE-YEAR STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS ON TRIAL BY COURT-MARTIAL TO OFFENSES INVOLVING SEX-RELATED CRIMES TO CERTAIN OFFENSES COMMITTED BEFORE ELIMINATION OF THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

Section 1703(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113–66; 127 Stat. 958; 10 U.S.C. 843 note) is amended—

(1) by striking “the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “December 26, 2013”; and

(2) by striking “that is committed on or after that date.” and inserting “that is committed as follows:

“(1) On or after December 26, 2013.

“(2) Before December 26, 2013, but only if such offense was committed on such a date that the statute of limitations on such offense, as in effect on December 25, 2013, had not expired as of the date of the enactment of the Carl Levin National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.”.

SA 3710. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 827 and insert the following:

SEC. 827. PROHIBITION ON REIMBURSEMENT OF CONTRACTORS FOR CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS AND INQUIRIES.

(a) **CIVILIAN CONTRACTS.**—Section 4304(a) of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(17) Costs incurred by a contractor in connection with any congressional investigation or inquiry.”.

(b) **DEFENSE CONTRACTS.**—Section 2324(e)(1) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(Q) Costs incurred by a contractor in connection with a congressional investigation or inquiry into an issue that is the subject matter of a proceeding resulting in a disposition as described in subsection (k)(2).”.

SA 3711. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction,

and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 830. EXTENSION OF WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS FOR CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES TO EMPLOYEES OF CONTRACTORS OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.

(a) **CONTRACTORS OF DoD AND RELATED AGENCIES.**—Subsection (e) of section 2409 of title 10, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(e) **DISCLOSURES WITH RESPECT TO ELEMENTS OF INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AND INTELLIGENCE-RELATED ACTIVITIES.**—(1) Any disclosure under this section by an employee of a contractor, subcontractor, or grantee of an element of the intelligence community (as defined in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)) with respect to an element of the intelligence community or an activity of an element of the intelligence community shall comply with applicable provisions of section 17(d)(5) of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50 U.S.C. 3517(d)(5)) and section 8H of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)

“(2) Any disclosure described in paragraph (1) of information required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interests of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs that is made to a court shall be treated by the court in a manner consistent with the interests of the national security of the United States, including through the use of summaries or ex parte submissions if the element of the intelligence community awarding the contract or grant concerned advises the court that the national security interests of the United States warrant the use of such summaries or submissions.”.

(b) **PILOT PROGRAM ON OTHER CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES.**—Subsection (f) of section 4712 of title 41, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(f) **DISCLOSURES WITH RESPECT TO ELEMENTS OF INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AND INTELLIGENCE-RELATED ACTIVITIES.**—

“(1) **MANNER OF DISCLOSURES.**—Any disclosure under this section by an employee of a contractor, subcontractor, or grantee of an element of the intelligence community (as defined in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)) with respect to an element of the intelligence community or an activity of an element of the intelligence community shall comply with applicable provisions of section 17(d)(5) of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50 U.S.C. 3517(d)(5)) and section 8H of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)

“(2) **TREATMENT BY COURTS.**—Any disclosure described in paragraph (1) of information required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interests of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs that is made to a court shall be treated by the court in a manner consistent with the interests of the national security of the United States, including through the use of summaries or ex parte submissions if the element of the intelligence community awarding the contract or grant concerned advises the court that the national security interests of the United States warrant the use of such summaries or submissions.”.

SA 3712. Mrs. McCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction,

and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 864. DEFENSE BASE ACT INSURANCE IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) **REQUIREMENT FOR USE OF GOVERNMENT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM FOR INSURANCE UNDER DEFENSE BASE ACT.**—Section 1 of the Defense Base Act (42 U.S.C. 1651) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) **TRANSITION TO GOVERNMENT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—On the effective date of this subsection, the requirements in paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a) imposed on contractors to secure the payment of compensation and other benefits under the provisions of this Act and to maintain in full force and effect such security for the payment of such compensation and benefits shall, for injuries sustained after such effective date, be satisfied through the Government Defense Base Act self-insurance program.

“(2) **GOVERNMENT DEFENSE BASE ACT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM DEFINED.**—In this subsection, the term ‘Government Defense Base Act self-insurance program’ means a self-insurance program developed in the implementation strategy required by section 864(b) of the Carl Levin National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 and under which—

“(A) compensation and benefits for injuries sustained are satisfied directly by the Federal Government, without action of the contractor (or subcontractor or subordinate contractor with respect to such contractor); and

“(B) compensation and benefits are funded by the agencies whose contracts are affected.

“(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The effective date of this subsection is the date occurring one year after the date of the enactment of the Carl Levin National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.”.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR GOVERNMENT DEFENSE BASE ACT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM.**—

(1) **REQUIREMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly develop and execute an implementation strategy for a self-insurance program for insurance required by the Defense Base Act (42 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.).

(2) **MATTERS COVERED.**—The implementation strategy required under paragraph (1) shall address and provide a plan for the following:

(A) Appropriate administration of the self-insurance program, including appropriate program financing.

(B) Appropriate procedures for claims processing, claims adjudication, and benefits delivery, taking into consideration the unique circumstances of insuring overseas contractors.

(C) A timeline and strategy to transfer existing claims covered under the Defense Base Act (42 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.) and the War Hazards Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) by private carriers to a Federal Government self-insurance program.

(D) Recommendations for any additional statutory revisions necessary to carry out the strategy.

(3) **REPORT AND DEADLINE.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly prepare and submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the implementation strategy.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) REPORT REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly prepare a report on the implementation of this section and the amendment made by this section.

(2) MATTERS COVERED.—The report shall cover, at a minimum, the following with respect to the Government Defense Base Act self-insurance program (as defined in the amendment made by subsection (a)):

(A) The cost savings from the use of the self-insurance program.

(B) The quality of administration of the self-insurance program.

(C) Whether the delivery of benefits to injured employees and their survivors (in the case of death) has improved under the self-insurance program.

(D) Recommendations for improvement of the self-insurance program.

(E) Such other matters as the Secretaries consider appropriate.

(d) DEFINITION OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means the following:

(1) The Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(2) The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

SA 3713. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 737. EXTENSION OF QUALIFICATION OF CERTAIN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR PRACTICE IN CERTAIN AREAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the termination of effect of section 199.6(c)(3)(iii)(N) of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on August 18, 2014), any mental health counselor who meets the qualifications for a TRICARE certified mental health counselor under the TRICARE program and possesses a master's or higher-level degree from a mental health counseling program of education and training from a regionally accredited institution shall continue to qualify as a TRICARE certified mental health counselor on and after January 1, 2017, or any earlier termination date for qualification as specified by the Secretary of Defense, for purposes of providing mental health care to beneficiaries of the TRICARE program in each of the following areas:

(1) Areas—

(A) that are 300 miles driving distance or more from an institution of higher education that offers a mental health counseling program of education and training accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs; or

(B) in which veterans in such area do not have access to such an institution via road.

(2) Areas outside the United States.

(b) TRICARE CERTIFIED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR DEFINED.—In this section, the term “TRICARE certified mental health counselor” has the meaning given such term

in section 199.6(c)(3)(iii)(N) of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on August 18, 2014.

SA 3714. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 603.

SA 3715. Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1213. SUPPORT FOR SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN AND GIRLS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Through the sacrifice and dedication of members of the Armed Forces and civilian personnel, as well the American people's generous investment, oppressive Taliban rule has given way to a nascent democracy in Afghanistan. It is in our national security interest to help prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven and training ground for international terrorism and to solidify and preserve the gains our men and women in uniform fought so hard to establish.

(2) The United States through its National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security has made firm commitments to support the human rights of the women and girls of Afghanistan. The National Action Plan states that “the engagement and protection of women as agents of peace and stability will be central to United States efforts to promote security, prevent, respond to, and resolve conflict, and rebuild societies”.

(3) As stated in the Department of Defense's July 2013 1230 Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan (in this section, the “1230 Report”), the United States Government “recognizes that promoting security for Afghan women and girls must remain a top foreign policy priority”. The November 2013 1230 Report also highlights this priority and further states, “A major focus of DoD and others working to improve the conditions of women in Afghanistan is now to maintain the gains made in the last twelve years after the ISAF mission ends.”

(4) According to the November 2013 Report, female recruitment and retention rates for the Afghan National Security Forces fell short of the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of the Interior (MoI) female recruitment goals. In regards to women serving in the ANP, the November 2013 report also states, “Low female recruitment is due in part to the MoI's passive female recruitment efforts, which has no specific female recruitment strategy or plan.”

(5) According to the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR)

April 2014 report, despite more women showing an interest in joining the security forces, women still make up less than 1 percent of the ANA and AAF. Also, according to the SIGAR report, “As in prior quarters, the number of women in the ANP is increasing, but progress has been slow toward reaching the goal to have 5,000 women in the ANP by the end of 2014. This quarter, ANP personnel included 1,743 women—226 officers, 728 NCOs, and 789 enlisted personnel—according to CSTC-A. This is an increase of 539 women since August 22, 2011.”

(6) According to Shaheen Chughtai, Oxfam's deputy head of policy and campaigns, “This lack of policewomen, and effective policewomen, is one of the main reasons why violence and threats against women and girls in Afghanistan are under-reported. It's why prosecutions are so rare and it's why the culture of impunity continues.”

(7) According to the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs report released in January 2014, of 4,505 cases of violence against women in 2013, which include issues such as forced marriage, fewer than 10 percent were resolved through the legal process.

(8) According to the International Crisis Group, there are not enough female police officers to staff all provincial Family Response Units (FRUs). United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees found that “in the absence of Family Response Units or visible women police officers, women victims almost never approach police stations willingly, fearing they will be arrested, their reputations stained or worse”.

(9) FRUs are a core component of strategies for how to both strengthen the roles of women in the police force and ensure attention to crimes of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). However, FRUs have been under-resourced and under-utilized, making it difficult for them to fulfill their mandate.

(10) The Government of Afghanistan, with support from United States-led coalition forces, recruited, trained, and contracted over 13,000 female searchers for the 2014 presidential election thereby ensuring many women-only polling centers would be operational on election day.

(11) The Presidential election on April 5, 2014, saw unprecedented levels of female voter participation. According to the SIGAR quarterly report published on April 30, 2014, approximately 35 percent of those votes were cast by women.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PROMOTION OF SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is in the United States Government's national security interests to prevent Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven and training ground for international terrorism;

(2) as an important part of a strategy to achieve this objective and to help Afghanistan achieve its full potential, the United States Government should continue to regularly press the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to commit to the meaningful inclusion of women in the political, economic, and security transition process and to ensure that women's concerns are fully reflected in relevant negotiations, such as the upcoming NATO summit and the Afghanistan Development Conference of 2014 in London;

(3) the United States Government and the Government of Afghanistan should reaffirm their commitment to supporting Afghan civil society, including women's organizations, as agreed to during the meeting between the International Community and the Government of Afghanistan on the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) in July 2013; and

(4) the United States Government should continue to support and encourage efforts to recruit and retain women in the Afghan National Security Forces, who are critical to the success of NATO's Resolute Support Mission.

(C) **PLAN TO PROMOTE SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN.**—

(1) **REPORTING REQUIREMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense, in conjunction with the Secretary of State, shall include in the report required under section 1227—

(A) an assessment of the security of Afghan women and girls, including information regarding efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of women in the ANSF; and

(B) an assessment of the implementation of the authority under section 1531 of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66; 127 Stat. 937), as extended by section 1523 of this Act, for the recruitment, integration, retention, training, and treatment of women in the ANSF, including the challenges associated with such implementation and the steps being taken to address those challenges.

(2) **PLAN TO PROMOTE SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Defense shall, to the extent practicable, support the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to promote the security of Afghan women and girls during and after the security transition process through the development and implementation by the Government of Afghanistan of an Afghan-led plan that should include the elements described in this paragraph.

(B) **TRAINING.**—The Secretary of Defense, working with the International Security Force (ISAF) and NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), should encourage the Government of Afghanistan to develop—

(i) an evaluation of the effectiveness of existing training for Afghan National Security Forces on this issue;

(ii) a plan to increase the number of female security officers specifically trained to address cases of gender-based violence, including ensuring the Afghan National Police's Family Response Units (FRUs) have the necessary resources and are available to women across Afghanistan;

(iii) a plan to address the development of accountability mechanisms for ANA and ANP personnel who violate codes of conduct related to the human rights of women and girls, including female members of the ANSF; and

(iv) a plan to develop training for the ANA and the ANP to increase awareness and responsiveness among ANA and ANP personnel regarding the unique security challenges women confront when serving in those forces.

(C) **ENROLLMENT AND TREATMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior, shall seek to assist the Government of Afghanistan in including as part of the plan developed under subparagraph (A) the development and implementation of a plan to increase the number of female members of the ANA and ANP and to promote their equal treatment, including through such steps as providing appropriate equipment, modifying facilities, and ensuring literacy and gender awareness training for female recruits and male counterparts.

(D) **ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.**—The \$25,000,000 allocated from the Afghan Security Forces Fund pursuant to section 1523(b) for the recruitment, integration, retention, training, and treatment of women in the ANSF, may be available for activities, including the provision of—

(i) appropriate equipment for female security and police forces;

(ii) modification and refurbishment of facilities to support the recruitment and retention of women within the forces;

(iii) security provisions for high-profile female police and army officers;

(iv) mechanisms to address sexual harassment within the forces;

(v) support for ANP Family Response Units; and

(vi) training to include literacy training for women recruits as well as gender awareness training for male counterparts.

(3) **STAFFING AT POLLING STATIONS.**—The Secretary of Defense should assist the Afghan MOD and MOI in maintaining the female searcher capabilities that were established for the April 2014 presidential elections for the 2015 parliamentary elections, which may include—

(A) providing assistance in the development of a recruitment and training program for female searchers and security officers to staff voting stations during the 2015 parliamentary elections;

(B) working with the Ministry of Interior to ensure that female ANP officers and previously recruited searchers' training is maintained and that those searchers already recruited and trained are reassigned to provide security for polling stations; and

(C) allotting the appropriate amount of funds from the funds allocated to the Afghan Security Forces Fund to hire any additional temporary female personnel required to staff polling stations.

SA 3716. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on 16, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 23, line 10, and insert the following:

CHAPTER 2—FLAME ACT AMENDMENTS

SEC. 2201. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) over the past 2 decades, wildfires have increased dramatically in size and costs;

(2) existing budget mechanisms for estimating the costs of wildfire suppression are not keeping pace with the actual costs for wildfire suppression due in part to improper budget estimation methodology;

(3) the FLAME Funds have not been adequate in supplementing wildland fire management funds in cases in which wildland fire management accounts are exhausted; and

(4) the practice of transferring funds from other agency funds (including the hazardous fuels treatment accounts) by the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior to pay for wildfire suppression activities, commonly known as "fire-borrowing", does not support the missions of the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior with respect to protecting human life and property from the threat of wildfires.

SEC. 2202. FLAME ACT AMENDMENTS.

(a) **FUNDING.**—Section 502(d) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking "shall consist of" and all that follows through "appropriated to" in subparagraph (A) and inserting "shall consist of such amounts as are appropriated to"; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(2) by striking paragraphs (4) and (5).

(b) **USE OF FLAME FUND.**—Section 502(e) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(e)) is

amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following:

"(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Amounts appropriated to a FLAME Fund, in accordance with section 251(b)(2)(E) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 902(b)(2)(E)), shall be available to the Secretary concerned for wildfire suppression operations if the Secretary concerned issues a declaration and notifies the relevant congressional committees that a wildfire suppression event is eligible for funding from the FLAME Fund.

"(2) **DECLARATION CRITERIA.**—A declaration by the Secretary concerned under paragraph (1) may be issued only if—

"(A) an individual wildfire incident meets the objective indicators of an extraordinary wildfire situation, including—

"(i) a wildfire that the Secretary concerned determines has required an emergency Federal response based on the significant complexity, severity, or threat posed by the fire to human life, property, or a resource;

"(ii) a wildfire that covers 1,000 or more acres; or

"(iii) a wildfire that is within 10 miles of an urbanized area (as defined in section 134(b) of title 23, United States Code); or

"(B) the cumulative costs of wildfire suppression and Federal emergency response activities, as determined by the Secretary concerned, would exceed, within 30 days, all of the amounts otherwise previously appropriated (including amounts appropriated under an emergency designation, but excluding amounts appropriated to the FLAME Fund) to the Secretary concerned for wildfire suppression and Federal emergency response."

(c) **TREATMENT OF ANTICIPATED AND PREDICTED ACTIVITIES.**—Section 502(f) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(f)) is amended by striking "(e)(2)(B)(i)" and inserting "(e)(2)(A)".

(d) **PROHIBITION ON OTHER TRANSFERS.**—Section 502 of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a) is amended by striking subsection (g) and inserting the following:

"(g) **PROHIBITION ON OTHER TRANSFERS.**—The Secretary concerned shall not transfer funds provided for activities other than wildfire suppression operations to pay for any wildfire suppression operations."

(e) **ACCOUNTING AND REPORTS.**—Section 502(h) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(h)) is amended by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting the following:

"(2) **ESTIMATES OF WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS COSTS TO IMPROVE BUDGETING AND FUNDING.**—

"(A) **BUDGET SUBMISSION.**—Consistent with section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the President shall include in each budget for the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior information on estimates of appropriations for wildfire suppression costs based on an out-year forecast that uses a statistically valid regression model.

"(B) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The estimate of anticipated wildfire suppression costs under subparagraph (A) shall be developed using the best available—

"(i) climate, weather, and other relevant data; and

"(ii) models and other analytic tools.

"(C) **INDEPENDENT REVIEW.**—The methodology for developing the estimates of wildfire suppression costs under subparagraph (A) shall be subject to periodic independent review to ensure compliance with subparagraph (B).

"(D) **SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.**—

"(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Consistent with the schedule described in clause (ii) and in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C), the

Secretary concerned shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives an updated estimate of wildfire suppression costs for the applicable fiscal year.

“(i) SCHEDULE.—The Secretary concerned shall submit the updated estimates under clause (i) during—

“(I) March of each year;

“(II) May of each year;

“(III) July of each year; and

“(IV) if a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service for the following fiscal year has not been enacted by September 1, September of each year.

“(3) REPORTS.—Annually, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior shall jointly submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives, and the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report that—

“(A) provides a summary of the amount of appropriations made available during the previous fiscal year, which specifies the source of the amounts and the commitments and obligations made under this section;

“(B) describes the amounts obligated to individual wildfire events that meet the criteria specified in subsection (e)(2); and

“(C) includes any recommendations that the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior may have to improve the administrative control and oversight of the FLAME Fund.”

SEC. 2203. WILDFIRE DISASTER FUNDING AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 251(b)(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(E) FLAME WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION.—

“(i)(I) The adjustments for a fiscal year shall be in accordance with clause (ii) if—

“(aa) a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a fiscal year is enacted that—

“(AA) specifies an amount for wildfire suppression operations in the Wildland Fire Management accounts at the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior; and

“(BB) specifies a total amount to be used for the purposes described in subclause (II) in the Wildland Fire Management accounts at the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior that is not less than 50 percent of the amount described in subitem (AA); and

“(bb) as of the day before the date of enactment of the bill or joint resolution all amounts in the FLAME Fund established under section 502 of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a) have been expended.

“(II) The purposes described in this subclause are—

“(aa) hazardous fuels reduction projects and other activities of the Secretary of the Interior, as authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) and the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3115a); and

“(bb) forest restoration and fuel reduction activities carried out outside of the wildland urban interface that are on condition class 3 Federal land or condition class 2 Federal land located within fire regime I, fire regime II, or fire regime III.

“(ii) If the requirements under clause (i)(I) are met for a fiscal year, the adjustments for that fiscal year shall be the amount of additional new budget authority provided in the bill or joint resolution described in clause (i)(I)(aa) for wildfire suppression operations for that fiscal year, but shall not exceed

\$1,000,000,000 in additional new budget authority in each of fiscal years 2015 through 2021.

“(iii) As used in this subparagraph—

“(I) the term ‘additional new budget authority’ means the amount provided for a fiscal year in an appropriation Act and specified to pay for the costs of wildfire suppression operations that is equal to the greater of the amount in excess of—

“(aa) 100 percent of the average costs for wildfire suppression operations over the previous 5 years; or

“(bb) the estimated amount of anticipated wildfire suppression costs at the upper bound of the 90 percent confidence interval for that fiscal year calculated in accordance with section 502(h)(3) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(h)(3)); and

“(II) the term ‘wildfire suppression operations’ means the emergency and unpredictable aspects of wildland firefighting including support, response, and emergency stabilization activities; other emergency management activities; and funds necessary to repay any transfers needed for these costs.

“(iv) The average costs for wildfire suppression operations over the previous 5 years shall be calculated annually and reported in the President’s Budget submission under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, for each fiscal year.”

(b) DISASTER FUNDING.—Section 251(b)(2)(D) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(D)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) in subclause (I), by striking “and” and inserting “plus”;

(B) in subclause (II), by striking the period and inserting “; less”; and

(C) by adding the following:

“(III) the additional new budget authority provided in an appropriation Act for wildfire suppression operations pursuant to subparagraph (E) for the preceding fiscal year.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(v) Beginning in fiscal year 2016 and in subsequent fiscal years, the calculation of the ‘average funding provided for disaster relief over the previous 10 years’ shall not include the additional new budget authority provided in an appropriation Act for wildfire suppression operations pursuant to subparagraph (E).”

CHAPTER 3—FOREST TREATMENT PROJECTS

SEC. 2301. DEFINITIONS.

In this chapter:

(1) COVERED PROJECT.—The term “covered project” means a project that involves the management or sale of national forest material within a Forest Management Emphasis Area.

(2) FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “Forest Management Emphasis Area” means National Forest System land identified as suitable for timber production in a forest management plan in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “Forest Management Emphasis Area” does not include National Forest System land—

(i) that is a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System; or

(ii) on which removal of vegetation is specifically prohibited by Federal law.

(3) NATIONAL FOREST MATERIAL.—The term “national forest material” means trees, portions of trees, or forest products, with an emphasis on sawtimber and pulpwood, derived from National Forest System land.

(4) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “National Forest System” has the meaning given the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland

Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term “National Forest System” does not include—

(i) the national grasslands and land utilization projects administered under title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (7 U.S.C. 1010 et seq.); or

(ii) National Forest System land east of the 100th meridian.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 2302. PROJECTS IN FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREAS.

(a) CONDUCT OF COVERED PROJECTS WITHIN FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may conduct covered projects in Forest Management Emphasis Areas, subject to paragraphs (2) through (4).

(2) DESIGNATING TIMBER FOR CUTTING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 14(g) of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(g)), the Secretary may use designation by prescription or designation by description in conducting covered projects under this chapter.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—The designation methods authorized under subparagraph (A) shall be used in a manner that ensures that the quantity of national forest material that is removed from the Forest Management Emphasis Area is verifiable and accountable.

(3) CONTRACTING METHODS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Timber sale contracts under section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a) shall be the primary means of carrying out covered projects under this chapter.

(B) RECORD.—If the Secretary does not use a timber sale contract under section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a) to carry out a covered project under this chapter, the Secretary shall provide a written record specifying the reasons that different contracting methods were used.

(4) ACREAGE TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) TOTAL ACREAGE REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall identify, prioritize, and carry out covered projects in Forest Management Emphasis Areas that mechanically treat a total of at least 7,500,000 acres in the Forest Management Emphasis Areas during the 15-year period beginning on the date that is 60 days after the date on which the Secretary assigns the acreage treatment requirements under subparagraph (B).

(B) ASSIGNMENT OF ACREAGE TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS TO INDIVIDUAL UNITS OF THE NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act and subject to clause (ii), the Secretary, in the sole discretion of the Secretary, shall assign the acreage treatment requirements that shall apply to the Forest Management Emphasis Areas of each unit of the National Forest System.

(ii) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding clause (i), the acreage treatment requirements assigned to a specific unit of the National Forest System under that clause may not apply to more than 25 percent of the acreage to be treated in any unit of the National Forest System in a Forest Management Emphasis Area during the 15-year period described in subparagraph (A).

(b) ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS FOR COVERED PROJECTS IN FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREAS.—

(1) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary shall comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321

et seq.) by completing an environmental assessment that assesses the direct environmental effects of each covered project proposed to be conducted within a Forest Management Emphasis Area, except that the Secretary shall not be required to study, develop, or describe more than the proposed agency action and 1 alternative to the proposed agency action for purposes of that Act.

(2) **PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT.**—In preparing an environmental assessment for a covered project under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide—

(A) public notice of the covered project; and

(B) an opportunity for public comment on the covered project.

(3) **LENGTH.**—The environmental assessment prepared for a covered project under paragraph (1) shall not exceed 100 pages in length.

(4) **INCLUSION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS.**—The Secretary may incorporate, by reference, into an environmental assessment any documents that the Secretary, in the sole discretion of the Secretary, determines are relevant to the assessment of the environmental effects of the covered project.

(5) **DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.**—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary has published notice of a covered project in accordance with paragraph (2), the Secretary shall complete the environmental assessment for the covered project.

(c) **COMPLIANCE WITH ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.**—To comply with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the Secretary shall use qualified professionals on the staff of the Forest Service to make determinations required under section 7 of that Act (16 U.S.C. 1536).

(d) **LIMITATION ON REVISION OF NATIONAL FOREST PLANS.**—The Secretary may not, during a revision of a forest plan under section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604), reduce the acres designated as suitable for timber harvest under a covered project, unless the Secretary determines, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, that the reduction in acreage is necessary to prevent a jeopardy finding under section 7(b) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(b)).

SEC. 2303. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW; ARBITRATION.

(a) **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW.**—Administrative review of a covered project shall occur only in accordance with the special administrative review process established by section 105 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6515).

(b) **ARBITRATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established in the Department of Agriculture a pilot program that—

(A) authorizes the use of arbitration instead of judicial review of a decision made following the special administrative review process for a covered project described in subsection (a); and

(B) shall be the sole means to challenge a covered project in a Forest Management Emphasis Area during the 15-year period beginning on the date that is 60 days after the date on which the Secretary assigns the acreage treatment requirements under section 202(a)(4)(B).

(2) **ARBITRATION PROCESS PROCEDURES.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Any person who sought administrative review for a covered project in accordance with subsection (a) and who is not satisfied with the decision made under the administrative review process may file a demand for arbitration in accordance with—

(i) chapter 1 of title 9, United States Code; and

(ii) this paragraph.

(B) **REQUIREMENTS FOR DEMAND.**—A demand for arbitration under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) be filed not more than 30 days after the date on which the special administrative review decision is issued under subsection (a); and

(ii) include a proposal containing the modifications sought to the covered project.

(C) **INTERVENING PARTIES.**—

(i) **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION; REQUIREMENTS.**—Any person that submitted a public comment on the covered project subject to the demand for arbitration may intervene in the arbitration under this subsection by submitting a proposal endorsing or modifying the covered project by the date that is 30 days after the date on which the demand for arbitration is filed under subparagraph (A).

(ii) **MULTIPLE PARTIES.**—Multiple objectors or intervening parties that meet the requirements of clause (i) may submit a joint proposal under that clause.

(D) **APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRATOR.**—The United States District Court in the district in which a covered project subject to a demand for arbitration filed under subparagraph (A) is located shall appoint an arbitrator to conduct the arbitration proceedings in accordance with this subsection.

(E) **SELECTION OF PROPOSALS.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—An arbitrator appointed under subparagraph (D)—

(I) may not modify any of the proposals submitted under this paragraph; and

(II) shall select to be conducted—

(aa) a proposal submitted by an objector under subparagraph (B)(i) or an intervening party under subparagraph (C); or

(bb) the covered project, as approved by the Secretary.

(ii) **SELECTION CRITERIA.**—An arbitrator shall select the proposal that best meets the purpose and needs described in the environmental assessment conducted under section 202(b)(1) for the covered project.

(iii) **EFFECT.**—The decision of an arbitrator with respect to a selection under clause (i)(II)—

(I) shall not be considered a major Federal action;

(II) shall be binding; and

(III) shall not be subject to judicial review.

(F) **DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.**—Not later than 90 days after the date on which a demand for arbitration is filed under subparagraph (A), the arbitration process shall be completed.

SEC. 2304. DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUE.

(a) **PAYMENTS TO COUNTIES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Effective for fiscal year 2015 and each fiscal year thereafter until the termination date under section 206, the Secretary shall provide to each county in which a covered project is carried out annual payments in an amount equal to 25 percent of the amounts received for the applicable fiscal year by the Secretary from the covered project.

(2) **LIMITATION.**—A payment made under paragraph (1) shall be in addition to any payments the county receives under the payment to States required by the sixth paragraph under the heading “FOREST SERVICE” in the Act of May 23, 1908 (35 Stat. 260; 16 U.S.C. 500), and section 13 of the Act of March 1, 1911 (36 Stat. 963; 16 U.S.C. 500).

(b) **DEPOSIT IN KNOTSON-VANDENBERG AND SALVAGE SALE FUNDS.**—After compliance with subsection (a), the Secretary shall use amounts received by the Secretary from covered projects during each of the fiscal years during the period described in subsection (a) to make deposits into the fund established under section 3 of the Act of June 9, 1930 (commonly known as the “Knutson-Vandenberg Act”) (16 U.S.C. 576b), and the fund es-

tablished under section 14(h) of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(h)) in contributions equal to the amounts otherwise collected under those Acts for projects conducted on National Forest System land.

(c) **DEPOSIT IN GENERAL FUND OF THE TREASURY.**—After compliance with subsections (a) and (b), the Secretary shall deposit into the general fund of the Treasury any remaining amounts received by the Secretary for each of the fiscal years referred to in those subsections from covered projects.

SEC. 2305. PERFORMANCE MEASURES; REPORTING.

(a) **PERFORMANCE MEASURES.**—The Secretary shall develop performance measures that evaluate the degree to which the Secretary is achieving—

(1) the purposes of this chapter; and

(2) the minimum acreage requirements established under section 2302(a)(4).

(b) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—Annually, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives—

(1) a report that describes the results of evaluations using the performance measures developed under subsection (a); and

(2) a report that describes—

(A) the number and substance of the covered projects that are subject to administrative review and arbitration under section 2303; and

(B) the outcomes of the administrative review and arbitration under that section.

SEC. 2306. TERMINATION.

The authority of this chapter terminates on the date that is 15 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

CHAPTER 4—FOREST STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTING

SEC. 2401. CANCELLATION CEILINGS.

Section 604(d) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c(d)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (6), (7), and (8), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

“(5) **CANCELLATION CEILINGS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Chief and the Director may obligate funds to cover any potential cancellation or termination costs for an agreement or contract under subsection (b) in stages that are economically or programmaticaly viable.

“(B) **NOTICE.**—

“(i) **SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 30 days before entering into a multiyear agreement or contract under subsection (b) that includes a cancellation ceiling in excess of \$25,000,000, but does not include proposed funding for the costs of cancelling the agreement or contract up to the cancellation ceiling established in the agreement or contract, the Chief and the Director shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a written notice that includes—

“(I)(aa) the cancellation ceiling amounts proposed for each program year in the agreement or contract; and

“(bb) the reasons for the cancellation ceiling amounts proposed under item (aa);

“(II) the extent to which the costs of contract cancellation are not included in the budget for the agreement or contract; and

“(III) a financial risk assessment of not including budgeting for the costs of agreement or contract cancellation.

“(ii) **TRANSMITTAL TO OMB.**—At least 14 days before the date on which the Chief and Director enter into an agreement or contract

under subsection (b), the Chief and Director shall transmit to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget a copy of the written notice submitted under clause (i).”.

SA 3717. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1268. REPLACEMENT OF LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF SERVING AT UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC FACILITIES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall ensure that, not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, every supervisory position at a United States diplomatic facility in the Russian Federation shall be occupied by a citizen of the United States who has passed, and shall be subject to, a thorough background check.

(2) EXTENSION.—The Secretary of State may extend the deadline under paragraph (1) for up to one year by providing advance written notification and justification of such extension to the appropriate congressional committees.

(3) PROGRESS REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on progress made toward meeting the employment requirement under paragraph (1).

(b) PLAN FOR REDUCED USE OF LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with other appropriate government agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan to further reduce the reliance on Locally Employed Staff in United States diplomatic facilities in the Russian Federation. The plan shall, at a minimum, include cost estimates, timelines, and numbers of employees to be replaced.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

SA 3718. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1268. INCLUSION OF RESTRICTED ACCESS SPACES IN UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC FACILITIES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND ADJACENT COUNTRIES.

(a) RESTRICTED ACCESS SPACE REQUIREMENT.—Each United States diplomatic facility that, after the date of the enactment of this Act, is constructed in, or undergoes a construction upgrade in, the Russian Federation, any country that shares a land border with the Russian Federation, or any country that is a former member of the Soviet Union shall be constructed to include a restricted access space.

(b) NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—The Secretary of State may waive the requirement under subsection (a) if the Secretary determines that it is in the national security interest of the United States and submits a written justification to the appropriate congressional committees not later than 180 days before exercising such waiver.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

SA 3719. Mr. WICKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. No agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government may expend funds or resources made available under this Act or any other Act to consider or adjudicate any new or previously denied application of any alien requesting consideration of deferred action for childhood arrivals, as announced by Executive memorandum on June 15, 2012, or any successor memorandum.

SA 3720. Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHANNIS, and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 15, after line 22, add the following:

SEC. 1503. No agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government may use Federal funding or resources—

(1) to consider or adjudicate any new or previously denied application of any alien requesting consideration of deferred action for childhood arrivals, as authorized by Executive memorandum on August 15, 2012, or by any other succeeding executive memorandum authorizing a similar program; or

(2) to issue a new work authorization to any alien who—

(A) was not lawfully admitted into the United States in compliance with the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.); and

(B) is not in lawful status in the United States on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3721. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1647. PLAN FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION ON CYBER MATTERS.

(a) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later than 360 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the Secretaries of the military departments, shall submit to the congressional defense committees a plan for the continuing education of officers and enlisted members of the Armed Forces relating to cyber security and cyber activities of the Department of Defense.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The plan submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A framework for provision of basic cyber threat education for all members of the Armed Forces.

(2) A framework for postgraduate education, joint professional military education, and strategic war gaming for cyber strategic and operational leadership.

(3) Definitions of required positions, including military occupational specialties and rating specialties for each military department, along with the corresponding level of cyber training, education, qualifications, or certifications required for each specialty.

SA 3722. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

DIVISION B—EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE OF DIVISION.

This division may be cited as the “Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 4007(a)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “January 1, 2014” and inserting “the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”.

(b) FUNDING.—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by inserting “and” at the end; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

“(K) the amendment made by section 2(a) of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014;”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

SEC. 3. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED BENEFIT PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2005 of the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act, as contained in Public Law 111-5 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note), is amended—

(1) by striking “December 31, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “the date that is 11 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”.

(b) EXTENSION OF MATCHING FOR STATES WITH NO WAITING WEEK.—Section 5 of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-449; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “the date that is 11 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”.

(c) EXTENSION OF MODIFICATION OF INDICATORS UNDER THE EXTENDED BENEFIT PROGRAM.—Section 203 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) EXTENSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4004(c)(2)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “through fiscal year 2014” and inserting “through fiscal year 2015”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

(b) TIMING FOR SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4001(i)(1)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence:

“At a minimum, such reemployment services and reemployment and eligibility assessment activities shall be provided to an individual within a time period (determined appropriate by the Secretary) after the date the individual begins to receive amounts under section 4002(b) (first tier benefits) and, if applicable, again within a time period (determined appropriate by the Secretary) after the date the individual begins to receive amounts under section 4002(d) (third tier benefits).”

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply on and after the date of the enactment of this division.

(c) PURPOSES OF SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES.—The purposes of the reemployment services and reemployment and eligibility assessment activities under section 4001(i) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) are—

(1) to better link the unemployed with the overall workforce system by bringing indi-

viduals receiving unemployment insurance benefits in for personalized assessments and referrals to reemployment services; and

(2) to provide individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits with early access to specific strategies that can help get them back into the workforce faster, including through—

(A) the development of a reemployment plan;

(B) the provision of access to relevant labor market information;

(C) the provision of access to information about industry-recognized credentials that are regionally relevant or nationally portable;

(D) the provision of referrals to reemployment services and training; and

(E) an assessment of the individual's ongoing eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits.

SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(c)(2)(D)(iii)) is amended—

(A) by striking “June 30, 2013” and inserting “June 30, 2014”; and

(B) by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “December 31, 2014”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

(b) CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.—Funds appropriated under either the first or second sentence of clause (iv) of section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act shall be available to cover the cost of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D) by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) as well as to cover the cost of such benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this division.

(c) FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION.—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Railroad Retirement Board \$250,000 for administrative expenses associated with the payment of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a), to remain available until expended.

SEC. 6. FLEXIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

(a) FLEXIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall not apply with respect to a State that has enacted a law before June 30, 2014, that, upon taking effect, would violate such subsection.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) is effective with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

(b) PERMITTING A SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT.—Nothing in title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall preclude a State whose agreement under such title was terminated from entering into a subsequent agreement under such title on or after the date of the enactment of this division if the State, taking into account the application of subsection (a), would otherwise meet the requirements for an agreement under such title.

SEC. 7. ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO JOBLESS MILLIONAIRES AND BILLIONAIRES.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used for payments of unemployment compensation under the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) to an individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than \$1,000,000.

(b) COMPLIANCE.—Unemployment Insurance applications shall include a form or procedure for an individual applicant to certify the individual's adjusted gross income was not equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 in the preceding year.

(c) AUDITS.—The certifications required by subsection (b) shall be auditable by the U.S. Department of Labor or the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

(d) STATUS OF APPLICANTS.—It is the duty of the States to verify the residency, employment, legal, and income status of applicants for Unemployment Insurance and no Federal funds may be expended for purposes of determining whether or not the prohibition under subsection (a) applies with respect to an individual.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

SEC. 8. GAO STUDY ON THE USE OF WORK SUITABILITY REQUIREMENTS IN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the use of work suitability requirements to strengthen requirements to ensure that unemployment insurance benefits are being provided to individuals who are actively looking for work and who truly want to return to the labor force. Such study shall include an analysis of—

(1) how work suitability requirements work under both State and Federal unemployment insurance programs; and

(2) how to incorporate and improve such requirements under Federal unemployment insurance programs; and

(3) other items determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(b) BRIEFING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this division, the Comptroller General of the United States shall brief Congress on the ongoing study required under subsection (a). Such briefing shall include preliminary recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

SEC. 9. DESIGNATION OF AMOUNTS.

Amounts made available in this division are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 and section 4101 of this Act shall apply to such amounts.

SEC. 10. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

(a) PAYGO SCORECARD.—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(d)).

(b) SENATE PAYGO SCORECARD.—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on any PAYGO scorecard maintained for purposes of section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, "Cramming on Wireless Phone Bills: A Review of Consumer Protection Practices and Gaps."

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 2 p.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "The African Growth and Opportunity Act at 14: The Road Ahead."

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 10:15 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled "Paid Family Leave: The Benefits for Businesses and Working Families."

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, in room SD-628 of

the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "When Catastrophe Strikes: Responses to Natural Disasters in Indian Country."

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "VAWA Next Steps: Protecting Women from Gun Violence."

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy, and Consumer Rights be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on July 30, 2014, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Pricing Policies and Competition in the Contact Lens Industry: Is What You See What You Get?"

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 30, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "The Flood Insurance Claims Process in Communities After Sandy: Lessons Learned and Potential Improvements."

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, in room SR-418 of the Russell Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Admitted or Not? The Impact of Medicare Observation Status on Seniors."

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Akunna Cook be granted floor privileges for the duration of the consideration of the Bring Jobs Home Act.

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

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Joshua Wolff, a fellow with the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of today's session and that Aly Boyce and Kate Kollars, interns with the committee, also be granted floor privileges for today's session.

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2709

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I understand that S. 2709, introduced earlier today by Senator MANCHIN, is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2709) to extend and reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes.

Mr. CASEY. I now ask for a second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2014

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 31, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2648, the emergency supplemental appropriations bill, postcloture, with the time until 10 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with Senator SESSIONS controlling the time from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and the majority controlling the time from 11 a.m. to 12 noon; and finally, that the time during the adjournment count postcloture.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, Senators will be notified when any votes are scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:26 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, July 31, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by
the Senate July 30, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CYNTHIA H. AKUETTEH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE GABONESE REPUBLIC, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED

STATES OF AMERICA TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS
AUTHORITY

RICHARD A. KENNEDY, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 30, 2016.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT

ERIKA LIZABETH MORITSUGU, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.