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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Pastor Jeff Wheeler, pastor of the Central Baptist Church in Sioux Falls, SD.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God, with the uncertainty in our world today, we pause to declare Your matchless power and moral perfection. We are reminded that You are in control. You govern Your creation with righteousness and truth. You extend mercy to the downcast and hope to the broken. May these men and women govern with the same spirit.

You tell us righteousness elevates a nation to greatness. O God, forgive our sin and grant righteous judgment to these leaders as they make moral and ethical decisions. Please grant discernment.

Fill our hearts with compassion for the weak, courage in adversity, wisdom through debate, and vision in the storm. May every decision be tethered to the anchor of Your unending truth.

O Lord, be pleased to dwell among us today. Let Your presence dispel the darkness of self-centeredness. Let humility give birth to the servant-hearted spirit. May Your Name once again be great in our Nation, for Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.

In Jesus's Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The senior Senator from South Dakota.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is a great honor for me to be able to welcome to the Senate today our pastor from Sioux Falls, SD, Jeff Wheeler, who just offered our invocation this morning, and to express how much Kimberley and I have appreciated the opportunity to worship and to benefit from his ministry. We enjoy and are blessed by his teaching each and every single week when we are back home in South Dakota. His ministry has and continues to impact people all across our community, across our State, and across our region.

He and his wife Shirlene are with us today in the Senate, and on behalf of myself and my colleagues, we extend the warmest welcome and appreciate the great work he does in serving the Lord in South Dakota and across our country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is clear that the American people are concerned about the administration's ability to properly vet thousands of individuals from Syria. More than half of our Nation's Governors, Governors of both parties, have demonstrated their concern. Many Members in Congress, Members of both parties, have raised concerns as well.

Given all this and given all that has happened in Paris, it simply makes sense to take a step back for now, to

press the pause button so we can determine the facts and ensure we have the correct policies and security screenings in place. That is the most responsible thing for the administration to do right now. That is the most reasonable and balanced thing for the administration to do right now.

We should also not lose sight of why we are in this position to begin with. The Syrian people are fleeing Syria because of a brutal civil war. The ultimate solution to this problem is to make Syria a place the Syrian people can continue to return to, but the administration has never had a coherent strategy to settle this conflict. Every single one of us knows that ISIL presents a threat to our homeland, and it is not contained. So if the administration is serious about starting to turn this situation around, then it is going to have to develop a serious and workable strategy that can swing and win strong bipartisan support.

GUANTANAMO BAY DETENTION FACILITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, years ago, then-candidate Obama made a campaign promise that has not withstood the measure of time or the realities brought by terrorism. He said he wanted to close the secure detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Ever since, he has pursued policies that willfully avoided the targeting chain of capture, interrogate, build intelligence, and target. It turns out that the reality of closing the secure detention facility is a lot harder than making promises on the campaign trail. It is an incredibly complex issue with grave national security concerns for the citizens of our country and for our allies.

The fact that the President has never been able to present any kind of serious plan to Congress seems to say quite a lot. We hear he is working on one now. We will, of course, give consideration to what the President says. We

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



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will, of course, keep an open mind. It doesn't mean Congress is going to agree with him. It is going to be a very tough sell because it is hard to understand why indefinite detention for terrorists on U.S. soil is preferable to detaining terrorists who cannot be released in Guantanamo. This is especially true when one considers the fact that bringing terrorists here presents serious risks that simply do not exist if we keep the terrorists in the secure facility down there in Guantanamo Bay.

This much is crystal clear though: If the President wants to be able to import Guantanamo terrorists into Americans' backyards, he is going to have to persuade a majority in Congress to change the law. The law prevents that.

Just last week, big bipartisan majorities in Congress voted twice to underscore the point. We overwhelmingly passed a defense authorization bill with a clear bipartisan prohibition on the President moving Guantanamo terrorists into our country. We overwhelmingly passed a veterans funding bill with a clear bipartisan prohibition on the President improving military facilities for the detention of Guantanamo terrorists in our country.

The Senate has voted many times in recent years to enact these bipartisan protections. We enacted them in Congresses with split party control. We enacted them in Congresses with massive Democratic majorities. The President signed them all into law. So if the President wants to bring Guantanamo terrorists into the United States, he has to change the law. That is the opinion of the President's own Attorney General. She was asked directly this week if the President should ignore legislation passed by Congress that prohibits him from transferring Guantanamo detainees to American soil. This is what Attorney General Loretta Lynch said: "The law currently does not allow for that." Let me repeat that. "The law currently does not allow for that." That is Attorney General Lynch of this administration. That is what the Nation's chief law enforcement officer, a woman appointed by President Obama himself, had to say on his ability to import Guantanamo terrorists into our country.

This isn't exactly a revelation to anybody. The fact that the President is now contemplating flouting the law in pursuit of a campaign promise from years ago means that it is apparently necessary for his own Attorney General to remind everybody that the law is the law, even for President Obama.

There are a multitude of other reasons not to bring these individuals into our country. I plan to continue reminding my colleagues of them here on the floor from time to time.

If the President ever presents some kind of plan we can actually debate, I am sure there will be several different views on it. I am sure we will each have a lot to say. I am sure the President will make his pitch to convince Congress that moving terrorists into

American communities is a good idea. As I said, it will be a hard sell. But the President should make his case if he feels passionately about it. For now, though, we should at least be able to agree with what one of our Democratic colleagues recently said of the President: "He is going to have to comply with the legal restrictions."

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 3762

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

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3762) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

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

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we all know that the Federal Government has many obligations, but chief among them is to protect the American people from harm. That responsibility is now at the forefront of talk here in our Nation's Capital, and rightfully so. ISIS continues to spread its campaign of terror across the entire world.

The United States is committed to combating terrorism. Our government will do all that is possible to protect the people of this Nation. In this fight against evil ISIS, it is absolutely critical that we as Americans do not lose sight of our Nation's core principles. Those principles are eloquently etched into the base of the Statue of Liberty.

I can remember taking my family there for the first time. I didn't have all my children yet—we had more that had to be born—but my older children still remember that. I remember it.

Here is what it says:

Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The retched refuse of your teaming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed,
to me.

That, of course, is directed to the United States. All across Europe and the Middle East, there are huddled masses of Syrian families desperate to find refuge someplace from Syria's civil war and the ISIS reign of terror. Millions of Syrians fled their country. About 300,000 of them have been killed since the civil war started—300,000. They fled to neighboring nations such as Turkey, Lebanon, and tiny little Jordan.

But the crisis in Syria continues to worsen and people are forced to seek refuge. What else can they do? On a daily basis, Europe's borders are being flooded by people in search of safety and a better life—mothers cradling infants and fathers carrying children in their arms. The nations of Europe have helped. Greece, Germany, and others have accommodated the enormous influx of people as safely as possible.

They are overwhelmed. The United States must do its part. We have a rigorous screening process for when we accept these refugees. The refugees we are accepting are women and children and old and older men with families. Only 2 percent of the refugees are men of military age—2 percent. We accepted a little under 2,000 last year. Two percent of those were of military age.

The United States has a long and proud history of providing refuge to the world's most vulnerable. That history includes my father-in-law, Israel Goldfarb. He and his family came from Russia. They were refugees escaping the programs of a czar. I have been disgusted in recent days to see some of my Republican colleagues shun the American tradition of displaying compassion for those in need, of sheltering those fleeing torture, rape and oppression. Frankly, I have been disappointed by Republican fear-mongering and bigotry.

Apparently they have learned nothing from history. We cannot repeat the dark days of the 1930s when many Americans resolved to turn away helpless refugees fleeing Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler or imprisoned innocent Japanese Americans during World War II, like our late colleague Dan Inouye and his family.

Those mistakes were based on misguided fears of people we did not know. How many people died because of unfounded apprehension? I don't know but far too many. Yet it seems many Republicans are destined to go down that same path again. Some in the Republican Party have suggested that we categorically block all Syrian refugees. One Republican candidate for President suggested we turn away even 5-year-old refugee children. Two other Republican candidates for President implied that the United States of America should have some sort of religious test for refugees. They are saying only Christians.

This is the latest in what has become a disturbing pattern of Republican hatred and intolerance toward Muslims. Remember, Syria is mostly Muslim, but there are Jews, there are Christians—lots of them. During the course of the current Presidential cycle, we have heard from the leading lights of the Republican Party the following: that we are at war with Islam, that we should be shutting down Muslim houses of worship in America, close the mosques, that we should ban Muslims from government service. We have two of my friends who serve in the House of Representatives who are Muslim. They are proud. That religion has made them better people.

Now they are even suggesting that we should reject refugees fleeing persecution on the grounds that they are Muslim. That is not America. That is hate emanating from some Republicans. That anti-Muslim venom from Republicans is a propaganda bonanza for ISIS. Christian groups have responded to those Republican attacks. We have heard what the Pope said: to kill in the name of religion is blasphemous.

World Relief, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service are all dismayed at the anti-refugee fervor pushed forward by Republicans and are urging supporters to contact elected officials on behalf of these victims of the Syrian conflict.

We must pause and think about what they have been through—poison gas, cluster bombs. Let's think about who these refugees are. They are not our enemies. They are expelled from their homeland by the same evil rulers we are fighting. All they want is to find safety, to restart their lives. These people have been persecuted—that is an understatement—by President Assad and ISIS. The Syrian regime, I repeat, has barrel-bombed their own citizens, has unleashed chemical weapons against their own citizens, rapes, justifying the rapes of these hundreds and hundreds of women in the name of their religion—murdering women and children. Those refugees hate Assad. They hate ISIS. That is why they are trying to get out of that horrible situation they find themselves.

The Department of Homeland Security has verified that not one of 1,800 refugees already admitted in the United States has a single confirmed tie to terrorism—not one. To deny our moral obligation to these struggling people would be to abandon the principles of this great country. That is how France feels about it also. On the heels of last week's appalling attacks, the President of France is refusing to neglect France's duty to humanity. Here is what this good man said yesterday:

30,000 refugees will be welcomed over the next two years. Our country has the duty to respect this commitment.

After what they have been through, this is what the President of France

said: Accepting Syrian refugees is the moral thing to do and it is sound policy. Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice agrees that the United States must open its arms to those fleeing persecution. Here is what she said:

What the United States has done is to be open to people who are fleeing tyranny, who are fleeing danger, but we have done it in a very careful way.

Secretary Madeleine Albright authored an op-ed this week for Time magazine. Now, remember, she herself was a refugee. That is how she came to this country during World War II. She said Americans must respond with compassion if we are going to defeat ISIS. We can do all we want with refugees. This is no way to win the war, attacking the refugees. Here is what she said, Madeleine Albright:

Our enemies have a plan. They want to divide the world between Muslims and non-Muslims, and between the defenders and attackers of Islam. By making Syrian refugees the enemy, we are playing into their hands. Instead, we need to clarify that the real choice is between those who think it is okay to murder innocent people and those who think it is wrong. By showing that we value every human life, we can make clear to the world where we stand.

What Secretary Albright said and what Secretary Rice said is absolutely right. We process Syrian refugees in a very careful way. It has worked. We are not the nations of Europe. Has anyone stopped for a minute and thought that we have an ocean between us and them, an ocean, the Atlantic Ocean.

The U.S. refugee screening takes place well before any individual comes to our borders. To enter the U.S. refugee program as an applicant, the U.N. Refugee Agency must first select and refer all potential refugees to our program. We accept refugees solely on a referral basis from the United Nation's agency. We do not go out and solicit any of these people. After being referred, all refugees, including those from Syria, are subjected to extremely rigorous screening and security checks. This is not some easy procedure where refugees fly right through the application process and are sent here in a matter of days. No. It takes an average of 18 to 24 months for a refugee to make it through the process to come to the United States.

Remember, the vast majority of these people are checked and re-checked, taking 24 months; they are women and children and old men. I repeat. It takes 18 to 24 months for a refugee to make it through the process of coming to the United States. That is why only 1,800 refugees have been admitted since the start of the conflict out of the millions who are fleeing Syria. Our government accepts only the most vulnerable of the Syrians, survivors of violence and torture, those with severe medical conditions, women and children, but security precautions are not taking a backseat in the process. These Syrian refugees are real people. Images of their plight should be so

visually apparent in our minds. Think of that little boy whom we saw and everyone saw around the world, a picture of this little dead boy washed up on a beach, a drowned Syrian boy whose body was washed up on this Turkish beach, pictures on the front page of newspapers, all the TV programs for several days.

At that time, Democrats and Republicans together responded with calls for compassion and action. I urge Republicans to remember that little boy. We must help where we can. That is who we are. We are America. We come to the defense of the defenseless. We come to the aid of those in need. Right now we are needed. We are a nation—a nation of freedom. We should not forsake our duty and obligation to these struggling people.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Texas.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that after I promulgate two unanimous consent requests, the remaining time between now and 11 a.m. be equally divided between myself and the assistant Democratic leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 247

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 247 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; I further ask that the bill be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on behalf of the Democratic ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator PAT LEAHY, and myself, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 2302

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2302 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; I further ask that the bill be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, moments ago I asked this body to take up and pass two commonsense pieces of legislation in response to the terrorist attack in Paris. The first, the Expatriate Terrorist Act, is legislation I introduced over a year ago—attempted to pass over a year ago—and that the Democratic Party blocked. That legislation provides that any American citizen who goes and joins ISIS, who takes up arms against America and attempts to wage jihad, by doing so, forfeits his or her U.S. citizenship. Existing Federal law provides for grounds of revocation of citizenship, and this piece of legislation would add joining terrorist groups such as ISIS to those grounds.

Unfortunately, the Democratic Party has just objected to passing that commonsense legislation. As a consequence, and because of that objection, it means that Americans—and the estimates are it could be up to or over 100 Americans—who have gone and joined ISIS right now are waging jihad against America. As a consequence of that objection, it means those ISIS terrorists can come back to America using a U.S. passport and wage jihad against this country—attempt to murder innocent men and women in this country using a U.S. passport. That is, I believe, a profound mistake.

The second piece of legislation I just asked this body to pass and the Democrats just objected to is legislation that would stop President Obama and Hillary Clinton's plan to bring in tens of thousands of Syrian Muslim refugees to the United States in light of the declaration of war from ISIS, in light of the horrific terrorist attack and in light of the admissions from the Director of the FBI, Director Comey—who I might note President Obama appointed—who said the administration cannot vet these refugees to determine whether or not they are ISIS terrorists. Indeed, he said since they do not have the data on which of the Syrian refugees are involved with ISIS terrorism, they can query the database, but with no information in the database, he said they can query over and over again

until the cows come home, but they do not have the information.

Unfortunately, the Democratic Party, the Democratic Senators in this body have chosen to stand with President Obama and his absurd political correctness, his unwillingness even to utter the words “radical Islamic terrorism.” The President refuses to say the words “radical Islamic terrorism.” Hillary Clinton refuses to say the words “radical Islamic terrorism.” Not only do they refuse to say the words, but they are supporting a policy of bringing tens of thousands of Syrian Muslim refugees into this country knowing full well we cannot vet them to determine who is coming here to wage jihad. That is a profound threat to this country, and I hope we will stand as one. This ought to be an area of bipartisan agreement.

I would note that the legislation I introduced includes an exception for persecuted minorities facing genocide—Christians, Yazidis, small minorities facing genocide. In response to my acknowledging genocide as a different circumstance, President Obama, 2 days ago in Turkey, attacked me directly. He said it was un-American to want to protect this country from terrorists and to want to help persecuted Christians. Then yesterday, President Obama attacked me again from Manila, saying it was offensive that I, and so many millions of other Americans, want to keep our children safe.

Mr. President, it is neither un-American nor offensive to believe in the rule of law, to believe in standing up to radical Islamic terrorism. And it is an astonishing statement that so many Democratic Senators choose to stand with a President who will not confront radical Islamic terrorism.

Indeed, just this week Secretary Kerry rationalized the terrorist attack on Charlie Hebdo saying it was understandable why they attacked Charlie Hebdo. We should not be acting as apologists for radical Islamic terrorists. The very first obligation of the Commander in Chief is to keep this Nation safe. And I will say that any official responsible for bringing people in when they do not know if they are radical Islamic terrorists will bear responsibility for the consequences of their actions.

ISIS has been plain. They intend to murder as many Americans as possible and they intend to carry out terror attacks here, such as that which happened in Paris. This commonsense legislation would have helped protect this Nation, but I am sorry to say the Democratic Party is objecting to it.

I believe we should put America first, protecting America first. Unfortunately, my friends on the other side of the aisle are blocking that effort.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I understand there is a limited amount of time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 7½ minutes remaining on the Democratic side.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the distinguished Chair.

Mr. President, I am worried in this country that we hear rhetoric that is dangerous, and it is time to stop. It shames the very nature of what America is. These are ideas that are wrong, and I would say they are deeply anti-American.

My grandparents—my Italian grandparents, my Irish great-great-grandparents—heard some of this rhetoric when some in this country said they shouldn't come here: Don't allow these Papists into the United States; don't allow these Irish, who are opposed to the rule of Great Britain on their island, and they actually stood up and fought against Great Britain.

The words back then, like some of the words today, come from a place of fear and hatred. I do not want to stand by quietly and see the victims of terrorism and torture be demonized just so people will have talking points for the local evening news. We are better than this.

The bill my colleague, the junior Senator the from Texas, introduced an hour ago would prevent refugee protection for virtually all nationals of Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen, regardless of how much they have suffered at the hands of terrorists and despots. Women fleeing gang rapes and children fleeing horrors we cannot even imagine would be closed off.

A few weeks ago the world came together, stunned and heartbroken over the image of a 3-year-old Syrian child's lifeless body washed up on a Turkish beach. His tragic death focused our attention on the desperate plight of so many Syrians who have fled the horror of ISIS and Bashar al-Assad.

We called it the humanitarian issue of the day. We called forth images of our Statue of Liberty and our proud history as a land of refuge for those fleeing persecution. I heard so many on this floor as well as from commentators in the news. Those who call now for us to slam our doors on even properly vetted Syrian and other refugees should remember that the people we will shut out are those very children who touched our hearts just weeks ago.

Of course, we are horrified by what happened in Beirut and Paris, and we need an effective, thoughtful strategy for countering ISIS and other terrorist organizations. That is what we should be debating. What we have done so far is not working, and we should be talking about how more countries should be involved in this fight. ISIS is our enemy; the people fleeing ISIS are not.

In fact, we have had discussions about other things that could be done. Somebody who is on a terrorist watch list but who is in this country legally can go to a gun show and buy all the automatic weapons they want, and they break no law. They can buy all the ammunition they want, and they

break no law. They can go to the store, as did one of the greatest terrorists this country faced—the man who did the Oklahoma city bombing—and buy the components of a bomb, and they break no law. These are the things we ought to be discussing.

I do not understand why Senator CRUZ is on the Senate floor seeking unanimous consent to pass this bill. This very bill is on the Judiciary Committee agenda, and the committee is currently considering it and needed improvements to it.

When the Senate Judiciary Committee debates this bill, we will have a lot to discuss. This legislation affects constitutional rights, and should be carefully vetted by the judiciary committee. Serious constitutional concerns have been raised by voices from across the political spectrum—from the National Review to the ACLU.

Just yesterday I received a letter from former NRA president David Keene and Georgetown Law professor David Cole, in their roles with The Constitution Project. They urge opposition to this bill because it “serves virtually no practical purpose, raises serious constitutional concerns, and would do nothing to keep America safe.” These are strong words, and I take these concerns seriously. Rushing a bill to the floor when that very bill is already scheduled for consideration by the committee of jurisdiction is not a responsible approach to legislating. And when legislation involves something as fundamental as citizenship, we should give the judiciary committee an opportunity to consider and debate this bill before it is brought to the Senate floor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD several articles relating to the topic at hand.

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

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee, Hart
Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee,
Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY, RANKING MEMBER LEAHY, AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS: On January 22, 2015, Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) introduced S. 247, the Expatriate Terrorists Act (ETA). Representative Steve King (R-IA) simultaneously introduced companion legislation in the House. According to the bill's sponsors, the ETA is a common sense counterterrorism tool that would strip U.S. citizenship from Americans who fight with or support foreign terrorist organizations working to attack the United States. The ETA would also purportedly “fill . . . statutory holes” in the Secretary of State's “authority to revoke a terrorist's passport.”

In fact, the ETA serves virtually no practical purpose, raises serious constitutional concerns, and would do nothing to keep America safe. We urge you to oppose it.

Like previous iterations of the same idea, the ETA would amend 8 U.S.C. 1481(a), which

sets out limited circumstances under which U.S. citizens can be denaturalized or expatriated. The bill would add the following to the short list of predicate acts that can result in loss of citizenship: 1) taking an oath of allegiance to a foreign terrorist organization; 2) joining a foreign terrorist organization's armed forces while they are fighting the United States; and 3) “becoming a member of, or providing training or material assistance to,” a foreign terrorist organization.

The ETA also amends the Passport Act of 1926 to require the Secretary of State to deny a passport to, or revoke one from, anyone who the Secretary has determined is a member, or is attempting to become a member, of a foreign terrorist organization.

Senator Cruz has said repeatedly that the ETA works a “formal” or “affirmative” renunciation of U.S. citizenship. To the extent he means to suggest that, under the bill, a person would automatically lose citizenship simply by engaging in the above conduct, he is wrong. The ETA does not and could not achieve that result.

Citizenship is a constitutional right, and the Constitution prohibits the government from revoking a person's citizenship against his will under any circumstances. As the Supreme Court has explained, “the intent of the Fourteenth Amendment, among other things, was to define citizenship . . . [and] that definition cannot coexist with a congressional power to specify acts that work a renunciation of citizenship even absent an intent to renounce. In the last analysis, expatriation depends on the will of the citizen rather than on the will of Congress and its assessment of his conduct.” As a constitutional right, citizenship can be knowingly and voluntarily waived, but it cannot be taken away from an individual absent such a waiver. Thus, to revoke a person's citizenship the government must prove not only that he committed an expatriating act prescribed in section 1481(a), but also that he did so voluntarily and with the specific intent to relinquish his citizenship.

Given these requirements, the ETA will almost certainly result in no additional expatriations. Unless Senator Cruz expects citizens subject to expatriation proceedings freely to admit that they joined or supported a foreign terrorist group specifically intending to renounce their U.S. citizenship, no one will in fact be expatriated. We doubt that government officials would believe it an efficient use of resources to try, especially given the broad reach of existing laws that already provide harsh penalties for U.S. citizens who engage in acts of terrorism.

The bill's passport revocation provisions are similarly unnecessary. There is no “statutory hole” to fill—the Secretary of State already has the authority to deny a passport to anyone whose “activities abroad are causing or are likely to cause serious damage to the national security or the foreign policy of the United States,” and to revoke a passport on the same grounds.

Not only is the bill practically useless, it also raises serious constitutional concerns. The ETA makes membership in or “providing training or material assistance to” certain foreign terrorist organizations a predicate act to expatriation. There are two constitutional problems with this provision. First, neither “training” nor “material assistance” is defined. Similar language in 18 U.S.C. 2389B was ruled unconstitutionally vague until Congress added specific definitions. Because Congress has not done so here, this provision of the ETA suffers from the same constitutional flaw.

Second, unlike other crimes currently listed in section 1481(a) that can result in loss of citizenship (see section 1481(a)(7)), Senator Cruz's addition does not require proof of a

conviction as a prerequisite. That omission undermines the constitutional right of due process. As the Constitution Project's Liberty and Security Committee explained in opposing similar past attempts to amend section 1481(a):

[T]he language of 1481(a)(7) expressly requires a conviction as a necessary prerequisite to denaturalization or expatriation proceedings. This requirement protects the constitutional right of due process, since one cannot actually be said to have committed the acts specified in 1481(a)(7)—each of which are crimes against the United States—until and unless those acts have been proven to a jury beyond a reasonable doubt. As the Supreme Court expressly held in *Kennedy v. Mendoza-Martinez*, Congress cannot deprive an individual of his or her citizenship as a “punishment” absent the procedural safeguards of a criminal trial.

The rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the United States' response to date raises a critical question for Congress to consider, but it is not the ETA. For well over a year, the United States has been at war with ISIL and Congress has still not weighed in, notwithstanding its constitutional responsibility to do so. Members should spend their time debating and voting on this grave question, not preoccupied with needless and likely unconstitutional legislation.

We urge you to oppose the Expatriate Terrorists Act.

Sincerely,

DAVID COLE,

Hon. George J. Mitchell, Professor in Law and Public Policy at Georgetown University Law Center; co-chair of the Constitution Project's Liberty and Security Committee

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[From the National Review, Jan. 28, 2015]

HOW NOT TO FIGHT TERRORISM

(By Gabriel Malor)

Representative Steve King and Senators Ted Cruz and Chuck Grassley have reintroduced the Expatriate Terrorist Act, a bill to strip U.S. citizenship from terrorists. The proposal sounds nice in theory, but it is also unconstitutional and unnecessary, the latest in a sad line of civil-liberties infringements justified by politicians trying to look tough in the war on terrorism. Even if the bill did not have these fatal infirmities, it would put the determination of who will retain their citizenship in the hands of unelected bureaucrats at the Departments of Justice, State, and Homeland Security. On that ground alone, all Americans should unite in opposition.

The idea to strip citizenship from terrorists is not a new one. In 2010, Senators Joe Lieberman and Scott Brown introduced similar legislation, dubbed the Terrorist Expatriation Act. Their bill would have amended the list of expatriating acts in the Immigration and Nationality Act to include material assistance to foreign terrorist organizations. Legal scholars and civil libertarians pointed out that the bill was neither necessary nor constitutional, and ultimately it died.

The new bill put forward by King, Cruz, and Grassley goes further, adding membership, training, and oaths of allegiance to the list of expatriating acts. They claim that this legislation is necessary to protect the homeland from radicalized citizen-terrorists returning from abroad.

But citizenship is not a mere privilege. It is a right specifically protected by the Constitution. Congress cannot simply decide that individuals lose their citizenship when they commit certain acts. Rather, to strip a person's citizenship requires that the government prove not only that he committed an act deemed expatriating by Congress but that he did so knowingly and voluntarily and with the intent to relinquish his citizenship. In the words of Justice White, writing for the Supreme Court when this issue was settled decades ago, "in the last analysis, expatriation depends on the will of the citizen rather than on the will of Congress and its assessment of his conduct."

Senator Cruz's claim that his bill would make the act of becoming a terrorist an "affirmative renunciation" of citizenship is deeply misleading. To be constitutional, expatriation can be accomplished only by intent to relinquish, something that Cruz, a lawyer and litigator of great skill, should already know. And if he doesn't mean what he is saying, he owes it to the American public to tell us how he believes the law would operate or if it would even be practicable at all.

On the issue of deception, King, Cruz, and Grassley say the statutory change targets dangerous terrorist fighters who try to return to the United States from abroad. The plain language of the proposed legislation, however, is not limited to those who actually take up arms. It applies to anyone who merely claims membership in a terrorist organization or gives an oath, training, or material assistance to terrorists, regardless of whether he actually fights. And it is not limited just to terrorists abroad; any of those actions taken inside the United States would also trigger the citizenship-stripping provision under the express terms of the legislation, leading to the deplorable circumstance of creating stateless terrorists within the jurisdictional boundaries of the United States.

This is assuming the courts actually credit King, Cruz, and Grassley's stated security purpose for proposing the law. If the courts were to decide that the expatriation of terrorists was intended to be a punitive act rather than a security measure, a different and more stringent series of constitutional prohibitions come into play, including the Fifth and Sixth Amendment protections for criminal defendants.

King, Cruz, and Grassley are selling fear to justify an unconstitutional deprivation of rights, and they are doing it for no good reason. If the U.S. government has enough information to identify citizen-terrorists abroad and intercept them on their attempted return, it has enough information to bring criminal prosecutions against those individuals for terrorism when they try to reenter the United States. The authority to intercept and detain such individuals has already been granted by Congress to the Department of Homeland Security. The Department of Justice, of course, also has the authority to prosecute such individuals. And so the stated purpose for the proposed legislation is dubious, since the government's responsibility for intercepting returning terrorists is settled law, which has a side benefit of being constitutional.

Even if this legislation were passed into law, because of its constitutional infirmity it would never work as billed by its proponents. Instead, it would mobilize an army of bureaucrats at Justice, State, and Homeland Security to start sniping away at Amer-

icans' rights of citizenship and travel. For example, the Justice Department gets to designate or decline to designate foreign terrorist organizations and so controls the determination of who is subjected to losing his citizenship. State Department officials have the authority to determine who gets sent expatriation certificates. And Homeland Security customs and border officers are responsible for detaining and paroling or removing non-citizens, including expatriated former citizens, who attempt entry to the United States.

All of these bureaucratic acts are subject to abuse. For that reason they are also subject to various types of administrative and judicial challenge, which typically drag on for years at great cost. Such litigation and the bureaucratic infrastructure to support it would be for questionable benefit in light of the alternate means already in place to intercept terrorists.

In short, the Expatriate Terrorist Act is a constitutionally suspect law. Well-established programs for intercepting terrorists attempting to enter the United States already exist. At best, the proposed bill would greatly increase the power of government to use and abuse its discretion to meddle with American lives. It does not represent a genuine attempt to better our national security. On the contrary, it is merely the latest in a series of questionable infringements of civil liberties proposed by politicians eager to exploit the public's fear of terrorism.

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

Re Oppose Senator Ted Cruz's Request for Unanimous Consent on S. 247, the Expatriate Terrorists Act, which Strips U.S. Citizenship without Due Process and based on Suspicion

VOTE "NO" ON S. 247 AS UNCONSTITUTIONAL
S. 247 STRIPS AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP BASED ON MERE SUSPICION BY AN UNNAMED GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

DEAR SENATOR: The American Civil Liberties Union strongly urges you to oppose S. 247, the Expatriate Terrorists Act, which is sponsored by Senator Ted Cruz. The bill would strip U.S. citizenship from Americans who have not been convicted of any crimes, but who are merely suspected by an unnamed government official of wrongdoing.

S. 247 is dangerous because it would attempt to dilute the rights and privileges of citizenship, one of the core principles of the Constitution. As the Supreme Court explained in 1967 in *Afroyim v. Rusk*, "the Fourteenth Amendment was designed to, and does, protect every citizen of this Nation against a congressional forcible destruction of his citizenship, whatever his creed, color, or race . . . [It creates] a constitutional right to remain a citizen in a free country unless he voluntarily relinquishes that citizenship." The bill is also unnecessary because existing laws already provide significant penalties for U.S. citizens who engage in acts of terrorism.

An already unconstitutional federal statute, 8 U.S.C. §1481, provides that an American can lose his or her citizenship by performing either of the following broad categories of acts with the intention of relinquishing his or her nationality:

acts that affirmatively renounce one's American citizenship, such as taking an oath of allegiance to a foreign government or serving as an officer in the armed forces of a foreign nation; or

committing crimes such as treason or conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government, or bearing arms against the United States, "if and when [the citizen] is convicted thereof by a court martial or by a court of competent jurisdiction."

S. 247 would add a new category of expatriating acts—"Becoming a member of, or providing training or material assistance to, any foreign terrorist organization designated under Section 219." This implicates several constitutional concerns.

First, the material assistance provision added by the bill would treat suspected provision of material assistance as an act that affirmatively renounces one's American citizenship. Thus, unlike treason or conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government, this provision would not require a prior conviction. It would only require an administrative finding by an unspecified government official that an American citizen is suspected of providing material assistance to a designated foreign terrorist organization with the intention of relinquishing his or her citizenship.

Second, this provision would violate Americans' constitutional right to due process, including by depriving them of citizenship based on secret evidence, and without the right to a jury trial and accompanying protections enshrined in the Fifth and Sixth Amendments. In sum, the bill turns the whole notion of due process on its head. Government officials do not have the power to strip citizenship from American citizens who never renounced their citizenship and were never convicted of a crime.

Third, the material assistance provision suffers from the same constitutional flaws that plague other material support laws, and goes far beyond what the Supreme Court has held is constitutionally permissible when First and Fourth Amendments rights are at stake. In 2010, the Supreme Court disappointingly ruled in *Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project* that teaching terrorist groups how to negotiate peacefully could be enough to be found guilty of material support. Even if that logic might apply to criminal conduct, it should not cause an American to lose his or her citizenship.

For these reasons, the ACLU urges you to oppose S. 247. Please contact Chris Anders at canders@aclu.org or (202) 675-2308, if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

KARIN JOHANSON,
Director, Washington
Legislative Office.

CHRISTOPHER ANDERS,
Senior Legislative
Counsel, Wash-
ington Legislative
Office.

Mr. LEAHY. I reserve my time, and I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time remains on each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 3 minutes on the Democratic side and 2 minutes on the Republican side.

The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me say at the outset the initial unanimous consent request made by the junior Senator from Texas was a bill which he had pending before the Senate Judiciary Committee today. He did not attend that meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I wish he had. I think we should have all been there if we wanted to take this up and debate it. I objected on behalf of Senator LEAHY and myself, and the Senator has spoken to the reasons for that objection.

Let me address the second part of this bill relative to refugees. We will reflect in years to come about what happened in this world in the last week and 10 days. We will reflect on the terrible tragedy that occurred in Paris,

France, and in Beirut and other nations, which was led by the ISIS terrorists. We will reflect on those poor victims who died as a result of their terrorist acts. And we will also reflect on acts of heroism and wisdom that emerged from this terrible tragedy, heroism on the ground in Paris and other places by those who defied these terrorists and those who risked their lives to bring those responsible to justice, and the wisdom and compassion shown by leaders around the world not to exploit this situation.

When President Hollande of France announced that his country would receive 35,000 refugees after this attack, he made it clear that he would not hold those innocent, helpless refugees accountable for the terrible misdeeds of these terrorists. When the nation of Canada said they would accept thousands of refugees, even after the Paris attack, they showed the wisdom and good sense to differentiate those helpless victims of terrorism around the world who are seeking refuge on our shores from those who perpetrated these terrorist acts. Then listen to the debate on Capitol Hill. Listen to the unanimous consent requests made this morning by the junior Senator from Texas. It is not consistent with that ethic. It is not consistent with those values.

To say we will accept only refugees who are the victims of genocide would close the doors to Cuban refugees who came to the United States, trying to escape all of communism and what it meant to their families. It would have closed the doors to Soviet Jews persecuted in that country who were looking for freedom and came to the United States as refugees. I can list countless others who were not the victims of genocide, but they were the victims of persecution, they were from war-torn countries, and they were the victims, as Senator LEAHY has said, of gang rape and terrorism.

Listen to what has been said on the other side of the Rotunda and in this Chamber today. It does not merit the kind of appreciation of American values that we insist on when we make these critical decisions. In time of war, in time of attack, sometimes rash decisions are made. I predict that in the course of history, as people in the future reflect on what happened in the Senate and the House of Representatives this week, they will hope that saner voices will prevail.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, the Senator from Vermont spoke against overheated rhetoric and in the very next breath accused me of being anti-American, echoing the attack President Obama gave standing on the soil of Turkey. Let me say that speaking the truth is not terrorism.

My Democratic friends invoked their Irish and Italian grandparents. Well, when my Irish and Italian grand-

parents came to this country, they did not pose a terrorist threat because they were not seeking to murder innocent citizens. When my Cuban father came as a refugee, he was not a terrorist threat seeking to murder innocent citizens. This is an example of the Democratic Party's refusal to acknowledge the qualitative difference. Perhaps if they cannot see it, they can hear it, because in 2009 the Obama administration released Abu al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS. As he was being released, Abu al-Baghdadi turned to Army COL Kenneth King and said: See you in New York.

ISIS intends to murder Americans, and if the Democratic Party cannot distinguish between ISIS terrorists and Irish and Italian and Jewish and Cuban immigrants, then they are ignoring reality.

I would note that the Expatriate Terrorist Act is very, very similar to legislation that was introduced in 2010 by Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman and Senator Scott Brown, both of whom apparently, under the view of the Senator from Vermont, are un-American as well. I would note that at the time, then-Senator Hillary Clinton said about legislation virtually identical to my legislation:

United States citizenship is a privilege. It is not a right. People who are serving foreign powers—or in this case foreign terrorists—are clearly in violation of the oath which they swore when they became citizens.

Yet President Obama and the Senator from Vermont apparently now consider Hillary Clinton's statement to be un-American. It is the essence of being American to say the Commander in Chief should protect the safety and security of this country.

I would note that the assistant Democratic leader invoked President Hollande in France. President Hollande said he would support stripping French citizenship. We should protect ourselves every bit as much as the other nations on Earth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator's time has expired.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

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

sume consideration of H.R. 2577, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
A bill (H.R. 2577) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Collins/Reed amendment No. 2812, in the nature of a substitute.

Collins/Reed amendment No. 2813 (to amendment No. 2812), to make a technical amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

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

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

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE AND SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I wish to speak about Friday night for a few moments. In Connecticut, on Friday night the world really did stop. Thousands of people in my State watched their television set or their smartphone as images like this one poured in from the blood-soaked streets of Paris: horrific reports, scores dead, more badly wounded. Deep down, in Connecticut, we ached deeply for Paris's loss. Maybe it is because for those of us who hail from the former colonies, we feel a special sense of brotherhood with the French. In my boyhood town of Wethersfield, CT, I grew up a stone's throw from the tavern where Washington and Rochambeau met to plan their campaign against the British. We pain for France because of 250 years of friendship and also because we know, unfortunately, exactly what they are going through. That ominous sense of familiarity and that perverse bond among nations that have been visited by mass terrorist attack are part of the reason why we ached so acutely on Friday night, over the weekend, and into this week.

But also, these pictures cause us pain because we fear this isn't the end of the mass slaughter. We grieve because the massive scale of this particular attack, on a nation that already had its antenna tuned for a potential attack, made us realize how vulnerable we still are today to a similar assault. The threat of another large-scale extremist attack just became so much more real for millions of Americans who had, frankly, begun to settle into an understandable comfortable complacency, a decade and a half since that last major terrorist attack just miles from Connecticut's border.

In Connecticut, to be honest, people are mad and they are scared. Having watched all of this coverage, I understand why. But images such as this also move the people of my State. These are two little kids, Ralia and Rahaf, 7 and 13 years old. This is where they sleep at night, on the streets of Beirut. They went there from Damascus after their mother and their brother were killed by a grenade. Along with

their dad, they have been sleeping on the streets for over a year. Rahaf, who is 13, says she is scared of the “bad boys” in Beirut on those streets at night. When she talks about that, Ralia starts crying.

I don't want to cast with a broad brush all of the people of my State, but I think I can safely say that their hearts ache for pictures like this, for images such as the one of the 3-year-old boy—just about the same age as my youngest son—who washed up limp and dead on the beach in Turkey. My neighbors are not comfortable living in a country that simply turns its back on little kids who have been ravaged by torture and rape, dying from barrel bombs and executions and slipshod escape vessels.

There has been a lot that has disturbed me about the debate here in Washington, across the country, and on the cable news channels since Friday's massacre: the hyperpartisanship, the concern for one religion over another, the refusal to wait for facts before jumping to policy conclusions.

Maybe what has disappointed me the most is the suggestion that the people in my State or the people of this country or this Congress need to make a choice between acting on concern for this image or acting out of concern for this image. The suggestion is that if your priority is protecting us from a Paris-style attack, you can't show compassion for those two little kids. If you want to show compassion for these innocents, then you compromise national security.

Here is the truth: Not only are these two priorities not mutually exclusive, they are actually interdependent. There is simply no choice to be made between protecting this country and helping the victims of terror. We can take steps together—Republicans and Democrats—to make sure terrorists do not get into this country, and we can continue in the best traditions of America to be, as our Statue of Liberty says, a home for “your tired, your poor, your huddled masses.” How do I arrive at this conclusion that we can do both, that we can protect our country and respond to the victims of terror in Syria? First, I asked the questions my constituents are asking: How can we be sure refugees fleeing Syria aren't going to pose a risk to the security of the people who live in my State in Connecticut?

Yesterday I sat through two exhaustive briefings to seek the answer to this question, and here is what I learned. There is no one who comes to the United States, in any immigration category, that receives a more comprehensive and exhaustive background check than refugees: biometrics, international background checks, interviews, fingerprints—a process that takes anywhere from 18 months to 2 years to make sure we get it right. It is exhaustive, and it is probably why of the nearly 2,000 Syrian refugees who are resettled in the United States this

year, not a single one has been connected to terrorist activity. The other reason for this, as I learned yesterday, is because the profile of the refugees we are prioritizing for entry into the United States tells the story as well. We largely bring women and children, the frail and the sick, those who have been beaten, raped or tortured by terrorists—the ones who simply cannot survive in the refugee camps. It means that of all the Syrians who are already here, only 2 percent of them are young, single males. We aren't bringing into the United States the type of people who fit the profile of those who could pose a danger to us.

The second reason I have concluded that ending the refugee program really will not make us safer is because of conversations I have had with experts about the nature of ISIS itself. I don't think you can argue that ISIS has been contained. Paris showed us ISIS can be lethal anywhere, anytime. Over the past year, ISIS has proffered two narratives to its recruits. The first is that this so-called caliphate is expanding. It is an unstoppable, inexorable force that challenges young Muslims to get on board now before it overtakes them by force. The second is this narrative that there is a war between the West that is left over from Iraq, left over from Afghanistan, left over from the aftermath of Sykes-Picot, left over from the Crusades. It is this idea that the Western World is out to destroy the East, they argue, and we have to fight for our survival.

The first narrative is still strong, but it is not strong as it used to be. ISIS isn't expanding its territory in the Middle East anymore. They have 25 percent less territory than they did last year at this time. The second initiative now actually becomes more important, and the Paris attacks are evidence of this. Indiscriminate attacks on civilians in a place like Paris are designed, in part, to provoke a response from the West to feed this argument over a clash of civilizations. That doesn't mean we shouldn't respond, it doesn't mean we shouldn't respond forcefully, but it should wake us up to the reality of the necessity of this us-versus-them narrative that is essential to the growth of ISIS. The story of the Christian world's marginalization of the Muslim world is the nourishment that feeds the growth of ISIS.

That is what makes our response to the Syrian humanitarian disaster interwoven into our strategy to defeat ISIS. Turning our back on those who have been tortured and raped and battered and beaten by Bashar al-Assad, after having welcomed massive refugee flows from Cuba and Vietnam and Bosnia, feeds straight into this radical Sunni argument that we are at war with Islam. Imagine the glee in Raqqa when they see postings of American politicians arguing we should take Syrian refugees but only the Christian ones and not the Muslim ones. That is a story line that is an ISIS recruiter's dream.

None of this is to suggest we shouldn't be taking the fight to ISIS in Syria and Iraq. I have been a vocal supporter of the thousands of bombing runs by American planes, of our efforts to support the Iraqi Army and the Peshmerga as they seek to kill as many ISIS fighters as possible. Fighting ISIS inside Syria and Iraq is absolutely necessary in order to defeat them. So we engage in that fight with the knowledge that our involvement may also help with recruitment. We weigh the benefit against the cost and we fight.

When it comes to turning away the victims of terror inside Syria, if we are able to build a system that screens out any Syrians who pose a threat to the United States, then the meager benefit can never outweigh the costs of feeding this anti-Muslim narrative. Now that narrative is more important than ever to sustain ISIS.

Here is the most important point to make. The people I represent don't believe we can just stand still in the wake of Paris, even if they believe the screening program is robust enough. They may be convinced of this, but they are certainly right that we can't accept the status quo. My worry over the past week is that this hyperfocus on the refugee program that has only brought in 2,000 immigrants last year—mostly women and children—misses the forest for the trees.

The Visa Waiver Program brings in 20 million people a year—not 2,000—20 million people. It has background checks, too, but nothing like what is applied to refugees. There is a good reason for this difference, because the countries that are part of the Visa Waiver Program are our allies—countries we can generally rely on—but with several of the Paris attackers bearing EU passports, making them eligible for the Visa Waiver Program, this sense of security we have had with these countries has been shattered. If we want to have a real conversation about changing our immigration laws to better protect this country, then focusing on 20 million lightly vetted visitors rather than 2,000 highly vetted visitors sounds like the better approach.

There is absolutely room to make the Visa Waiver Program stronger. There are a myriad of security information sharing agreements between the United States and Europe and among countries within Europe that have not been executed. Now is the time to demand that these agreements, like the umbrella law enforcement agreement between the EU and the United States, be executed, be signed. Now is the time for both the United States and Europe to require that every EU nation modernize their protocols for uploading law enforcement and anti-terrorism information onto the databases that we use to compile our no-fly list. If these agreements aren't signed or these protocols aren't updated, then we need to consider whether an unreformed Visa

Waiver Program is still in our national interests.

If our goal is really to keep America safe from infiltration of terrorist groups, this reform is the most important one we can make to our immigration system, and it should bring together Republicans and Democrats.

Every day that I go home to my 7-year-old and my 4-year-old, I am reminded that my most sacred duty here is to enact policy that keeps them safe and keeps my constituents safe. The hundreds of calls and emails that my office has received since Friday reinforces for me this commitment, but I live in a nation like no other. I live in the United States of America, a nation that in the late 1800s had emerged from Civil War to become a beacon for the oppressed and the repressed all over the world and millions showed up on our shores—people like my Irish and Polish ancestors—and a nation that was spreading its wings over the world, beginning to understand the impact for good that we could have. It was during that time that the poet Emma Lazarus called America “The New Colossus.” The feeling was that we were capable of a greatness, a bigness of both achievement and heart that the world had never witnessed and exceptionalism, one that still burns bright today.

The argument that America cannot both protect itself and protect those who are fleeing terrorism feels so small. It feels so contrary to this idea of exceptionalism that has been at the foundation, at the root of the American story. It feels very weak. In fact, the moments where we have made choices solely out of fear to marginalize others are moments we now regret. We interred Japanese Americans in camps because we were at war with Japan or hesitated to take Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis out of fear that some might be spies. In hindsight those measures did not reflect on who we really are as a nation.

The America I live in does not settle for false choices that make America look and feel small or powerless. We can save the terrorized and protect ourselves from being terrorized at the same time. In fact, we have to do the former to accomplish the latter. In doing so we can come together as a Congress and as a country to make good policy and to recall that sense of American exceptionalism that caused Emma Lazarus's poem to end up on a statue that was sent as a present to the United States from France as a reminder of our unbreakable bond with them.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 366 through 371; that the Senate vote on the nominations without intervening action or debate; that following disposition of the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, for the information of our colleagues, we are making good progress in clearing a number of amendments that have support on both sides of the aisle. I expect we will be able to proceed with an amendment offered by Senator CORNYN and Senator REID shortly, and in the meantime I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up my amendment No. 2844.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, reserving the right to object, over 1,000 Americans have called my office in the last couple of days, and they are very concerned about admitting people from the Middle East when we are not sure what their intentions are. The Boston bombers were here under the refugee program, and two Iraqi refugees came to my State with the intent to buy Stinger missiles.

I have asked for a very simple amendment. I ask unanimous consent to have an amendment placed in the queue for a vote that lets the American people vote on whether we want to bring more people here from the Middle East and whether we are doing an adequate job of screening these people. I think having a vote on that is a reasonable request, and therefore, until I am allowed to have a vote for which I think the American people are clamoring, I will continue to object.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I also ask unanimous consent to bring forward

my amendment to limit and end the subsidized housing for new people who come here from the Middle East. My amendment is No. 2843, and I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to set aside the current business and bring my amendment forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, on behalf of myself and the ranking member of the subcommittee, Senator REED, I object. We are in a process where we are trying to clear amendments, and we are making good progress on this bill. I understand Senator PAUL has raised an issue that is issue, but it does not belong on this bill and indeed would result in this bill not progressing.

We are trying to get back to regular order on the appropriations process. With cooperation, I am confident we could finish this important appropriations bill today. We could show the American people that we can govern and fund essential transportation and housing programs that are included in this bill. By and large, we have had excellent bipartisan cooperation. I was hoping we could move to the amendment offered by the Senator from Texas—a member of the Republican leadership—and cosponsored by the Senate Democratic leader. It is an amendment that I believe we could dispense with quickly, and we would then be able to continue to work through the amendments on this bill.

Since the amendment from the Senator from Kentucky would grind this bill to a halt and does not belong on this bill—and there will be other opportunities to deal with this issue because the House is going to be passing legislation this week dealing with the issues raised by the Senator from Kentucky—I will object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I agree with the senior Senator from Maine and the bill manager that the concerns Senator PAUL has raised, which are shared by many of us as far as the adequacy of the screening process for the refugees coming to our country, is a serious matter. It is a matter, as the Senator from Maine has said, that will be voted on today, and my prediction is that there will be broad bipartisan support for the additional security measures contained in that bill.

This is a transportation bill, and it is very important for us to get our work done, and unfortunately that is appearing more and more difficult.

If I could say a word about my amendment because this is an important matter to me and to my State, as well as to other States. My amendment would direct the Secretary of Transportation to conduct cost-benefit determinations for new airports which are seeking entry into the federal

tower program but have been unnecessarily prohibited by the Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA's current moratorium on accepting new airports negatively impacts airport sponsors that have already submitted their applications to the FAA, including the North Texas Regional Airport in Grayson County, TX. I know there are airports like that around the country, which is why this amendment has such broad bipartisan support.

This amendment would simply require the Secretary of Transportation to process applications that have already been submitted—in some cases years ago—but have been punished by this arbitrary administrative delay. It would not have any negative impact on any current contract tower airports and would only allow new airports to be admitted to the program if funds are available.

I am grateful to Senator COLLINS and Senator REED for their favorable consideration of this amendment, and I hope we can work through the objection raised by the Senator from Kentucky so we can process this legislation and pass it in the near future.

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Madam President, on another note, I wanted to say a few words about National Adoption Month.

Yesterday, Senator GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, convened a very important hearing on the subject of international adoptions; specifically, ensuring that the process—which at times can be bogged down in bureaucratic redtape and take an excruciatingly long time to complete—remains a priority for this administration.

Last year, if my recollection serves me correctly, there were about 22,000 intercountry adoptions. In other words, there were families here in the United States who wanted to adopt these children who, in many circumstances, have very poor prospects in the countries where they were born.

As I said, this is National Adoption Month. I am glad Senator GRASSLEY enabled us to highlight the challenges of people who are trying to adopt children from, for example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are about 400 adopted children the government of the Congo will not release. Yesterday, many of us, on a bipartisan basis, met with the ambassador and asked: What is the way forward for these families and these children, many of whom are in pretty poor circumstances back in their home country.

Americans, of course, adopt not only children from their local communities or their State, but from literally around the world. It is something we ought to encourage. Devoted parents who make the decision to adopt ought to be commended for providing an opportunity for a better life for a child in need and for providing support and the love that all children need and deserve.

One of the things that struck me yesterday during the hearing, as we heard

from the State Department, are the numerous protections that are embedded within the adoption process to ensure that these internationally adopted children are placed in safe homes and how important they are for protection of these children. These measures include commonsense safeguards such as thorough background checks, intensive interviews with potential parents, multiple visits to the child's future home, and, of course, proper vetting of other people who will be living under the same roof. This is important for the protection of this adopted child.

This is a process that puts safety and the interests of the child first, and I think we would all agree that is exactly where that priority should stand: the best interests of the child first.

So while it was reassuring to me to hear about these rigorous requirements that our government has put in place to protect these adopted children, I was reminded that protecting children during the placement process should not be just limited to when we are talking about adoptions. Over the last two fiscal years, more than 95,000 unaccompanied children have crossed our southern border without legal permit, the large majority of them making a perilous and deadly journey across thousands of miles from Central America. We can only imagine the horrible circumstances that parents must see and the poor prospects for their own children's future for them to turn them over to essentially criminal organizations that will then ferry them, if they are lucky, from their country of origin through Mexico and into the United States. But the surge of which we are all familiar—again, 95,000 unaccompanied children in just the last 2 years—has exposed the vulnerability of our southern border to human smugglers and transnational criminal networks. As a matter of fact, I asked one of the witnesses at the hearing yesterday: Are the same criminal organizations that engage in human trafficking and illegal immigration and illegal importation of drugs—are they all the same people?

He said: Absolutely.

I don't know how we can turn a blind eye to some of the illegal immigration issues and to say we are completely outraged at the drug trafficking going on between our countries or the human trafficking going on between our countries when, in fact, that activity is being conducted by exactly the same criminal organizations that have one interest in mind, and it is not the best interest of the child. It is money. They view children as a commodity just as they view drugs as a commodity.

Yesterday's hearing showed us that the lack of border security can cause a humanitarian crisis that endangers the lives of children who were turned over by their parents and then smuggled into the United States. We know from numerous reports and testimony that children on this journey are preyed upon in the form of human trafficking,

rape, and even murder. Many of them don't even make it here because they are killed along the way, held hostage, perhaps for ransom, or otherwise assaulted. To this day, we still have no idea how many children and parents have perished during this unprecedented surge across our border. Once these children arrive here in the United States, I think—I would hope—we would all agree that it is our joint and collective responsibility to do what we can to protect them and ensure that they are no longer preyed upon by criminals and human traffickers.

Current law requires that within 72 hours of being located by law enforcement officials, a child be placed in the protective custody of the Department of Health and Human Services so they can be protected from the danger of abuse and exposure to forms of violence. Unfortunately, current law also requires that these children be released, sometimes even to nonfamily members, sometimes even to noncitizens, without any assurance or systematic protections that they are being sent into a safe environment—certainly nothing even remotely approaching the sort of care and precautions that we use when it comes to international adoptions.

As I heard yesterday, the administration is capable of making these assurances in the context of international adoptions, so why would we not take steps to ensure that the same level of protection is there for these unaccompanied children?

During the surge of these children across our border in 2014, I stood right here and I posed two very important questions: Could anyone in the administration say with certainty that the children being released from U.S. custody were leaving with an actual family member? Believe it or not, there is no legal requirement that these children be turned over to an actual family member. Also, could the administration say with certainty that none of these children have been handed over to an adult with a criminal record?

The answer to both of these questions was and continues to be no, and that ought to shock our collective conscience. Sadly, we don't know how many of these children have fallen into the wrong hands.

Earlier this year, four individuals were indicted for their involvement in a trafficking ring that smuggled unaccompanied Guatemalan children into the United States and forced them into slave labor at egg farms in Ohio. These children faced horrific conditions, including long work hours, abuse, threats, and exploitation. But even more shockingly, many of these children could have been spared if the Federal Government and the Department of Health and Human Services had an adequate system for screening and vetting the nongovernmental sponsors for these unaccompanied children. None of

the protections—none of the protections—that are available for international adoptions have been applied here to protect these children.

The human traffickers in this case that I mentioned were able to gain custody of these children by simply showing up at an HHS shelter, telling the U.S. Government that they were family friends, and submitting a fake family reunification application. This is unacceptable, and it is our duty to these children to make sure that we do a better job of protecting them, just as we do in cases of international adoption.

I know that our colleague from Ohio, Senator PORTMAN, in his oversight role in the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is taking a hard look at this process through which we move unaccompanied children out of protective custody and into the hands of potential danger—not even family members, not even citizens, no criminal background check, and absolutely no way to know what the government is turning these children over to. I look forward to reviewing the findings of his forthcoming report, and I hope we can make efforts to implement his recommendations.

Last Congress, I was proud to be the author and sponsor of a piece of legislation that we called Helping Unaccompanied Alien Minors and Alleviating National Emergency Act—or the HUMANE Act—which would require all potential sponsors of unaccompanied children to undergo a rigorous biometric background and criminal history check. This is bipartisan legislation. Though there is certainly more we can do to ensure an acceptable screening process, I believe that the protections in my legislation are a good start and would make a difference.

So I urge my colleagues, or anybody else who may be listening, as we reflect on National Adoption Month and the appropriate protections we put in place for international adoptions, to think about these almost 100,000 other children who have crossed our borders over the last few years and who were afforded none of the protections that we afford adopted children.

I truly hope we will take a comprehensive look at the concerns I have raised here today.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Ms. COLLINS. 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.

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

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

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, last November, faced with Congress's failure to act, President Obama, through Executive action, took a courageous and practical step on immigration.

Like every President since President Eisenhower, President Obama exercised his legal authority to prioritize U.S. immigration enforcement and make our system more fair and just. The most significant parts of the President's Executive actions were those intended to keep families together and give more people the opportunity to come out of the shadows.

The President announced an expansion of the successful Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program. He also created a new Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents called DAPA. DAPA allows the undocumented parents of U.S.-born children to stay in this country with their families.

Since its creation in 2012, DACA has given nearly 700,000 undocumented young people the opportunity to pursue their dreams through education and jobs. Sixty percent of DACA recipients have been able to find new jobs, contributing to our tax base and our economy. Experts estimate that DACA recipients will contribute \$230 billion to our GDP over the next decade.

Together, the expanded DACA and DAPA programs will mean that around 5 million more individuals will be able to work legally, pay their taxes, and care for their families.

While the President's actions generated a great deal of support and excitement, they also generated opponents who challenged these actions in court. These court challenges resulted last week in a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that further delays help for these 5 million people in our country. As Judge Carolyn King stated in her very strong dissent in the Fifth Circuit case, "a mistake has been made."

The administration is acting to swiftly appeal this decision to the United States Supreme Court. I am hopeful that the Supreme Court will find that the President's actions are lawful and that justice for millions of workers and families will eventually be served. We cannot continue to be inactive in Congress while millions of people remain in the shadows. Yet, here we are.

Today, politicians—from Presidential candidates to sitting Governors—appeal to our Nation's fears in arguing against any meaningful reform of our broken immigration system. Conjuring up shadowy images fuels these fears—violent gang members from South America, terrorists from the Middle East. In their divisive rhetoric and in their rush to build walls and close our borders, they neglect the faces of those they demonize, and they forget the facts.

The National Academies of Sciences recently released an authoritative look on how immigrants assimilate into the United States. That report paints a very different picture from what you will hear from Republicans on the campaign trail. For example, the Acad-

emies found that neighborhoods with more immigrants have lower rates of crime and violence than comparable nonimmigrant neighborhoods, and foreign-born men are incarcerated at ¼ the rate of native-born Americans.

Today's immigrants are learning English just as fast as prior waves of immigrants; only our schools aren't equipped to help them as well as they should be. Eighty-six percent of first-generation male immigrants have jobs, as do 61 percent of women. In fact, immigrant men with the lowest education levels are more likely to have jobs than comparable groups of nonimmigrant men.

These paint a very different picture than gang members and terrorists. In fact, it is clear that immigrants are an asset to our communities and our Nation. The vast majority of people come to America seeking a better life for themselves and their families. They work extremely hard and in many cases under very difficult circumstances.

Despite our country's being a nation of immigrants and the great benefit immigration has meant to our culture and economy, immigration remains a difficult issue in America.

Just last month we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Prior to President Johnson's signing that law, the United States had a racially discriminatory quota system. In fact, prior to 1965, Asians were essentially excluded from immigrating to the United States. The 1965 law wasn't perfect, but it moved our system forward by focusing on family reunification—not racial quotas amounting to racial discrimination—as a guiding principle.

Since the 1965 law, our Nation has benefitted greatly from the millions of immigrants from all over the world who have come here. Immigrants have built vibrant communities, become titans of industry, expanded American arts and music, and strengthened our public institutions. Their positive contributions have changed America and what it means to be an American.

No matter how toxic the immigration rhetoric may be right now, we can't stop pushing to improve our broken system. President Obama's Executive actions were neither a complete nor a permanent solution for immigration reform, but they were positive steps forward. It has been more than 2 years since the Senate passed its comprehensive immigration reform bill with 68 bipartisan votes. I was proud to have worked on this bill as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Sadly, the House refused even to consider the bill—even after Republicans released their immigration principles, acknowledging the brokenness of our immigration system. Congress remains deeply divided, and there is still no indication that we will be able to pass comprehensive immigration reform any time soon, leaving 11 million people in our country in the shadows.

As the only immigrant serving in the Senate today, I remember very well my mother's courage in bringing her three children to this country so that we could have a chance at a better life. That is what comprehensive immigration reform will mean to the 11 million people living in the shadows in our country—a chance for a better life for themselves and their families. These are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers; and they are neighbors and friends. They are not looking for handouts. They are looking for the chance for a better life, and that is the universal appeal of our great country.

As leaders, we need to act to make real for these millions of people the promise of America. We need to pass comprehensive immigration reform soon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to leave the bill for a couple of minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I would yield to the Senator from Oklahoma for the purpose of explaining an amendment that he has at the desk, and a modification—a very good amendment, I might add.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Thank you, Madam President.

It is my intention to ask to set aside the pending amendment for the purpose of considering the Inhofe amendment No. 2820, and I want to explain what this is.

Today the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the FAA are working on the next generation radar system. We have talked about this for a long period of time. I think the Senate knows that this Senator has been active in aviation for a long time, and this is something we have been working on together. The next generation radar system, called Multi-function Phased Array Radar, or MPAR, is comprised of individual radar stations capable of both air traffic tracking and weather surveillance.

The new system will replace the multiple systems separately maintained by the FAA and NOAA and allow the consolidation of the number of discrete radar sites in the United States by about a third and yet do a more thorough job.

To support the development of the next generation radar, it is important for the FAA and NOAA to be working together and one not getting out in front of the other one. For that reason—and I think my junior Senator, who is going to be working on this, agrees—there is some concern that the FAA is getting out in front of NOAA on the selection of technology to meet both goals. We would clarify that in the amendment.

What I will be asking for is the consideration of amendment No. 2820, as

modified. The modification is at the desk now, expressing the sense of the Senate that the FAA and NOAA continue to work together so that one agency doesn't get out ahead of the other and ensuring that the priorities of both agencies are met. Sometimes you have to get involved with the bureaucracies when there is more than one working on it.

At the proper time, I will be wanting to do that. There is a courtesy being extended to another Member to be involved perhaps in this.

So with that, I will yield the floor and be prepared to offer my amendment.

Ms. COLLINS. I want to thank the Senator from Oklahoma for his courtesy to one of our colleagues who is on his way to the floor to repeat an earlier ritual that we went through when one of our colleagues attempted to make an amendment pending.

So in deference to that colleague, 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. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I spent some time on the floor a few minutes ago explaining an amendment that I have. It is amendment No. 2820, as modified. The modification is at the desk. It is one of those things where there is no opposition at all.

We are trying to get to a new radar system that is—it is rather complicated. It will end up saving a lot of money and letting other people in other parts of the country—all over the country—have the radar capability they don't have today. So it is something I know that no reasonable person would object to.

Madam President, for that reason, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment to call up my amendment No. 2820, as modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, the biggest issue of the day is how we protect ourselves from terrorism. My amendment goes to the heart of the matter.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. PAUL. Are we sufficiently vetting those who might come here and attack us from the Middle East?

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield? Mr. PAUL. I don't think we are. The two Boston bombers were here during the refugee program. Two Iraqi refugees came to my hometown—

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, Parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. PAUL. Of Bowling Green, KY.

Mr. INHOFE. Parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. PAUL. I have an amendment that is not only pertinent—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PAUL. To the biggest issue of the day. I have an amendment that is germane.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PAUL. For those who make a mockery of this process by saying we are going to have regular order, we are not going to have regular order—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PAUL. Until we address the issues of the day on a germane amendment.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. COLLINS. 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.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam 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

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, until 2 p.m. today.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRANSPORTATION-HUD APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, for the information of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I would like to explain the situation we face. First, let me say that working very closely with the ranking member of the subcommittee, my friend and colleague Senator JACK REED, we have been making very good progress on this bill.

We have a number of amendments offered by Senators from both sides of the aisle that we have agreed to work out, to clear on both sides, with both managers of the bill. In some cases we have also gotten to the authorizing committees, the Budget Committee. In other words, a great deal of hard work has gone into clearing amendments that are ready to be considered, that could be accepted by voice vote or

unanimous consent or in a managers' package. I am confident because of this bipartisan cooperation, because of the extraordinarily hard work of our staffs, that we could finish this appropriations bill today.

Would that not be progress for the Senate, to be able to complete action on a bill that has vital funding for homeless veterans, for homeless youth, for disabled and low-income elderly who depend on the subsidized housing programs that are funded in this bill? This bill has important infrastructure spending. All of us are aware of the deteriorating infrastructure, the crumbling roads and structurally deficient bridges that we have in this country, the need for improvements in rail safety, in our transit system.

There are so many issues that are important to the American people. This bill funds the Community Development Block Grant Program, possibly one of the most popular programs with State and local officials for spurring economic development and job creation in their communities, but, alas, we have encountered a roadblock. As we have seen this morning, even amendments that have been cleared on both sides of the aisle are not being allowed to proceed. I think that is so unfortunate because with cooperation I am confident we could have finished work on this bill and moved to final passage today. Regrettably, that is not going to occur unless there is a change of heart.

I do want to say I recognize there are other very important issues for us to deal with. The House today is taking up a bill that would deal with the screening process for refugees who come into this country. All of us recognize that our first obligation is the security of the American people. That is not what the bill before us is dealing with, but there is action on the House side. A bill is expected to pass today with widespread bipartisan support and will be sent over for our consideration. So I think it is unfortunate that we apparently cannot complete action on the appropriations bill that is before us.

However, I do want to assure my colleagues that we are going to continue to work on this bill. We are going to continue to review the amendments that have been filed. We are going to work with the sponsors. We are going to work with the floor managers. We are going to continue to make progress behind the scenes in the event that we find a way around this roadblock.

In the meantime, I do want to express my appreciation to my ranking member, Senator REED, for his close cooperation on this bill. He and I introduced the substitute amendment jointly when we began work on this bill. A special thanks to our staffs who have been working night and day to clear amendments that are ready go but unfortunately cannot be considered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, this whole process has been moved forward

by the leadership of Chairman COLLINS. She and her staff have done an extraordinary job of taking the additional resources made available by the budget agreement and constructively focusing them towards addressing important policies in transportation and housing in the United States.

As Chairman COLLINS discussed, we have about nine amendments—bipartisan amendments—that have been agreed to that focus on housing and transportation issues exclusively. These amendments also display the give-and-take and back-and-forth that is necessary, the compromise that is necessary. One example is the amendment that Senator CORNYN, along with Senator HARRY REID, proposed that dealt with small airports throughout the United States.

Those are the types of issues that should be the focal point of our deliberations on the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill, and that is what we have tried to do. Frankly, under Senator COLLINS' leadership, we were moving forward, but we have run into a bit of an impasse. We are going to continue to work because it is critical to the country that we rebuild our infrastructure and make sure that we have adequate, affordable housing, which is key to so many things—to having a job, to holding a job, to children being in a school for the whole year and not moving from school to school. All of these are tied directly to our efforts here today.

I again compliment the chairman for her extraordinary efforts. The staffs have done a superb job. We will continue to work. Our objective is to get a bill done and move forward in the process. Unfortunately, we have hit this bump, but we are still going down the road.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Madam President, the Presiding Officer has been in the chair before when I have done my waste of the week. This is my 27th "Waste of the Week" this year, where I come to the floor of the Senate and take a documented waste, fraud, or abuse within the Federal Government, expose that abuse, and inform taxpayers that their hard-earned money is being wasted by this Federal Government. We are taking those items that have been documented by government accounting agencies, by agencies that have been charged with the responsibility of looking into how we spend the taxpayers' money and alerting us to problems of fraud, waste, and abuse.

So No. 27 waste of the week is up this week, and this week it involves the issue of paid leave. This is an executive policy which applies to departments and agencies across the Federal Government.

Specifically, what I wish to do today is highlight the \$31 million in payments to Federal employees who have received paid leave for over a 1-year period of time. For Federal employees, paid administrative leave is typically a paid, excused absence that is separate from vacation time. It includes things such as jury duty or time to allow a person to transition home after an overseas deployment or post. Some agencies also use paid leave when making personnel evaluations. This could include things such as investigations into alleged misconduct, security threats, and similar situations where the employee should be restricted from the worksite while the investigation occurs. Many of these are legitimate. Many of these fall into this category. But being given paid leave for over a year?

First, it raises the question, What is going on here? This is way beyond the norm.

Secondly, shouldn't we have some documentation as to why this takes place? Currently, Federal agencies across the Federal Government have the authority to set their own policies regarding administrative leave, and this leads to a variety of different policies from agency to agency. Why are there discrepancies among agencies in both length of time and the frequency of the granted paid leave?

What is particularly troubling to me is that an audit by the Government Accountability Office, the GAO, found that 263 employees have received paid administrative leave for over a 1-year period of time—more than 1 year. Most of us expect, yes, OK, 2 days off or a week off because I have been selected for jury duty. I have a citizen's and a resident's obligation to do that. Paid leave is justified on that basis. For someone returning from a post overseas, to get resettled, paid leave is justified. There are some other justifications. But over a year? Paid leave for over a year and \$31 million paid out to people who haven't worked for over a year? Something needs to be looked into regarding how and why that takes place.

Last month, the Washington Post told a story about how this issue has persisted within the Department of Homeland Security even after the report was issued. The Post article states that "close to 100 DHS [Department of Homeland Security] employees still are being paid not to work for more than a year."

So I think the question we need to ask ourselves in response to this report is why? Why did the Federal Government spend \$31 million to pay 263 employees not to work for more than a year? And what is the justification for the 1-year paid leaves? Unfortunately, the Government Accountability Office was unable to disclose the specific details as to why these 263 individuals were on paid leave for over a year. However, there are public reports that give examples of employees who have

continued to receive paychecks for over a year.

The Washington Post again reported the case of a former high-level Environmental Protection Agency employee who pretended he was a member of the Central Intelligence Agency for years. This employee collected paid leave under the pretense he was conducting top-secret work for the CIA when, in fact, he was home exercising and pursuing a personal research project. He effectively, according to the Post, stole \$900,000 from taxpayers for work he never did. That included his salary and bonus. He was actually paid bonuses. The man was paid a bonus payment for not working—defrauding the Agency he worked for. The good news is that they caught him. The bad news is that it took 2½ years to figure out something was going on.

An article in the Washington Times details a 4-year case where an employee at EPA was fired for “sending a ‘hostile email’ and making inappropriate statements that ‘caused anxiety and disruption in the workplace.’” That employee was ultimately removed from the EPA a second time but only after he received 1,496 hours of backpay.

And on and on it goes. I could stand here for a long time talking about examples of paid leave to personnel totaling \$31 million for payments of paid leave for over a 1-year period of time. It is not just the EPA. I am not picking on one agency. Every agency in government has these policies. GAO estimates that there are some bad track records for these agencies. For instance, the Department of the Treasury has 25 employees on paid leave for over a year and the Department of Veterans Affairs has over 46. And even more disturbing is the fact that the GAO investigation found that Federal agencies don't have sufficient documentation for the paid leave, if they had any documentation at all. How can you put someone on paid leave, how can you make payments for over a year and have no documentation as to why you are making the payments?

Coming to the floor with these waste of the week, fraud-and-abuse situations, it is hard to comprehend how these things go on. The ingenuity of those who are committing fraud and those who oversee agencies that are paying this out is stunning.

I want to make it clear that I am not against paid leave. There are many valid cases. But taxpayers deserve to know why Federal agencies are paying their employees not to work for over a year without sufficient documentation for taking such action. In fact, this ought to go for all paid leave, whether it is for 1 day, 1 month, or 1 year.

Particularly, though, what ought to be ringing an alarm bell is someone who is on the record as receiving paid leave for several months or over a year—and I am only documenting that which was documented for over 1 year. Who knows how much this would total

if we looked into every agency's policies and found out that they weren't documented and that they couldn't prove that the paid leave was legitimized.

I need to give credit where credit is due. The Office of Personnel Management has finally recognized that this is a costly issue and has moved to take steps to address this misuse of taxpayer dollars. This summer, the agency announced guidance on what does and doesn't constitute paid administrative leave. I urge OPM to follow up now and ensure that all Federal agencies are implementing these recommendations. But why did it take us so long? Why do we have to have an investigative report? Where is the management? Where is the management in these agencies that oversees this and does not allow this to happen? Why do we have to wait for the Government Accountability Office to come in and audit these agencies and find this unbelievable amount of waste, fraud, and abuse that takes place?

So taxpayers are on the hook for another \$31 million of waste. We add that to our ever-growing total of waste, fraud, and abuse, now reaching well over—almost \$119 billion. And we have Members down here talking about a program that needs funding because it is an essential program, but we don't have the money to do it. Others come down and say we can't cut a penny more from any of the programs we have—and that is another issue—and yet we continue to waste this kind of money.

Next week it will be item No. 28 as we go forward exposing waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government, taking hard-working taxpayers' dollars at a time when the economy is not doing all that well. This is something which continues to be a noose around the Federal Government's neck and which needs to be addressed.

Madam President, with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I was seeking the floor, but it is my understanding that Senator McCONNELL, our leader, is on his way to the floor. I will wait until he speaks. I don't think we have to ask for a quorum call because I think he will be here in just a minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

CLOTURE MOTIONS WITHDRAWN

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the two pending cloture motions with respect to H.R. 2577 be withdrawn.

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

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2015, PART II

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3996, which was received from the House.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3996) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 3996) was passed.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TERRORIST ATTACKS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, because of what happened in Paris last week, a lot of speeches are going to be given on the floor of the Senate about terrorism. But it is too bad that we only seem to talk about the dangers of terrorism when bad things happen in the United States or happen in Paris or someplace else that brings the issue to our attention. I think what we all need to remember is that it is a constant danger that may not appear to us daily, but somewhere out there are people thinking about killing us for what we believe.

So I rise today, again, expressing my sympathies to the people of Paris and those affected by Friday's terrible attacks by radical Islamic terrorists there. On behalf of the people of Iowa, I continue to stand with the people of France.

Unfortunately, the attacks last Friday should not have been a surprise. Radical Islamic terrorists have been waging war against the United States and our allies for years. When thinking about the last three decades of the last century, you think about the terrorism at the Munich Olympics or an American being murdered on a TWA plane. Then we had a Jewish person in a wheelchair thrown overboard in the Mediterranean. There was the attempt to bring down the Twin Towers in 1993

by car bombs. Marines were murdered in Lebanon—over 200, I think it was. We had the attack on the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, where our military people were living. We had the East African Embassy attacked, and we had the USS *Cole* attack.

Now, all of those happened before 9/11. Since 9/11, attacks have occurred around the world—from the train bombings in Madrid in 2004 to the suicide bombings in London in 2005 to the senseless slaughter in the streets of Mumbai in 2008. My focus today, however, will be on the United States homeland.

Terrorists have continued to try to attack us here on many occasions since 9/11. Some of these attacks have succeeded. Most of them have failed. Some of them have involved direct coordination with terrorist leaders abroad, and some have been committed by lone wolves inspired by terrorists overseas or the views of those terrorists. But these threats are ongoing, and that is what we should not fail to understand. Consequently, we must be vigilant to guard against those threats. We know that we will face them again.

Several prominent terrorist attacks in the United States come to mind. We all remember the carnage at the Boston Marathon in April 2013, where two brothers detonated bombs at the finish line that killed an 8-year-old boy and two others and injured hundreds more. Although the brothers did not appear to have direct ties with terrorist organizations, they were motivated by radical Islamic beliefs.

We also remember the November 2009 shooting at Fort Hood, TX, where 13 people were killed and several dozen others were wounded. Incredibly, the Obama administration refused to categorize this as a terrorist attack, in spite of the fact that the shooter had traded emails with then senior Al Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki. The shooter also later identified his extremist beliefs as a basis of his attack.

But those tragedies only continued the pattern followed by radical Islamic terrorists since Al Qaeda hijacked and crashed airplanes into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon that fateful day in 2001. Soon after 9/11, for example, British citizen Richard Reid attempted to detonate explosives packed in his shoe while on a flight to Miami in December 2001. He had previously trained at Al Qaeda terrorist camps in Afghanistan. Thankfully, he failed, but this attempted attack put us on notice that these terrorists were not finished with what happened on 9/11.

More attacks and plots followed, perhaps less well remembered after the passage of time. And the passage of time is our biggest enemy here, as we don't think about this often enough. But they still demonstrate the ongoing threat we face.

In July 2002, an Egyptian shot and killed two Israelis and wounded four others at the Los Angeles International Airport. Although the FBI did

not find evidence linking the shooter to a terrorist group, the agency concluded the shooting was an act of terror.

In March 2006, another radical Islamic terrorist injured six people when he drove his vehicle into a group of pedestrians at the University of North Carolina. The attacker claimed to have conducted the attack in order to avenge the killing of Muslims around the world by our American Government.

Another example is the “Fort Dix Six” plot in May of 2007. In that case, six men planned to kill American soldiers at the military base in New Jersey but were arrested before they could do so. The men were inspired by jihadi videos.

In June 2009, a terrorist shot two recruiters at a military center in Little Rock, AR. One of the recruiters was killed, and the other was seriously wounded. The shooter told the judge in his case that he was a soldier of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

Later in 2009, three radical Islamic terrorists were arrested just before they were able to conduct suicide attacks in New York City. One of these terrorists drove all the way from his home in Colorado to strike the New York City subway system with homemade explosives hidden inside a backpack. He later admitted in court that he was trained by Al Qaeda to be a part of what they call a “martyrdom operation.” He further confessed that Al Qaeda officials ordered these suicide attacks from Pakistan.

Also in 2009, on Christmas Day, a terrorist often referred to as the Underwear Bomber attempted to blow up a bomb concealed in his underwear while on a flight over Detroit. Several days later, Al Qaeda affiliates in Yemen and Saudi Arabia claimed responsibility for that effort.

In May 2010, a terrorist tried to set off a car bomb in the middle of Times Square in New York City. He was arrested while attempting to flee the country on a flight to the Middle East. The bomber was trained and financed by the Pakistani Taliban.

More recently, the threat from radical Islamic extremism has sprung from the chaos in Syria. By now we are all familiar with ISIS, or the Islamic State. Last year, we witnessed the horrors of ISIS's brutal and barbaric beheading of American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, and aid worker Peter Kassig in Syria.

As FBI Director Comey explained to the Senate Judiciary Committee earlier this year, ISIS presents a new type of Islamic extremist organization. For one thing, ISIS exploits social media to promote its terrorist agenda and encourage people within the United States to commit terrorist attacks. As Director Comey explained, ISIS's propaganda machine is like a devil on somebody's shoulder saying: “Kill, kill, kill;” and “if you can't come to Syria, kill somebody where you are. Kill

somebody in uniform. Kill anybody.” Those are the words Comey used in paraphrasing the message that comes from ISIS on social media.

ISIS's deadly message of terror is having a profound effect here in our country. Over the last year, the government has stopped numerous individuals in the United States who tried to travel to Syria to fight for ISIS. According to Director Comey, over 200 Americans have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria for this purpose. I fear that such individuals who successfully return home could recreate the Paris attack here in our country, given the training, the indoctrination, and the battlefield experience they received abroad. The Washington Post reported on November 16 that 66 men and women in the United States have been charged with crimes associated with ISIS, including both attempting to travel to Syria to join ISIS or planning attacks here.

Beyond ISIS's recruitment of Americans to fight in Syria, the Paris attack demonstrates the extreme dangers the group now poses here in North America. Look at what occurred just over the past year or so. In October 2014, a radical Islamic terrorist who could not obtain a passport to travel to Syria shot up the Parliament in Canada, killing a Canadian soldier on duty at the Canadian National War Memorial. The next day, a self-radicalized Muslim convert attacked four police officers on the streets of New York City with a hatchet after watching ISIS Internet propaganda.

In January of this year, the FBI arrested a person in Ohio for plotting to attack the U.S. Capitol with pipe bombs and guns. The terrorist also allegedly expressed a desire to support ISIS, and he had posted videos and messages on social media, supporting violent attacks by radical Islamic terrorists.

Later, in May of this year, two Islamic terrorists drove from Arizona to Garland, TX, to attack a conference center during an art exhibit. The center was hosting an exhibition of cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet Mohammed. The pair shot and injured a security guard before being killed by a police officer. ISIS subsequently claimed responsibility for that attack.

In June 2015, law enforcement officers in Massachusetts shot and luckily killed a knife-wielding member of a group of ISIS supporters who were plotting attacks here in the United States, along the lines of what Director Comey has said: Just go out and “kill, kill, kill.” Two other alleged terrorists were arrested and are being prosecuted.

Just this month, an American was arrested in Ohio for supporting ISIS. He allegedly posted online detailed personal information, including their addresses, of 100 U.S. military members. He had then allegedly called on fellow

terrorists to kill these military personnel in their homes and communities, along the lines of what the social networking message is from overseas to people in the United States, as Director Comey has reported to us: “Kill, kill, kill.” Just kill anyone.

More chilling than a lot of this is the video released earlier this week. On Monday, ISIS released a video warning countries against participating in air strikes in Syria. The video claimed that ISIS would attack these countries just as it attacked France last Friday. The video specifically threatened to attack this city, right here, Washington, DC.

According to the New York Times just this morning, “at least three dozen people in the United States suspected of ties to the Islamic State were under heavy electronic or physical surveillance even before the Paris attacks.” That ought to wake us all up to the dangerous environment that exists.

It is all too obvious that we will continue to face attacks from radical Islamic terrorists in the future. We ought to remind ourselves every day about this potential threat. So to help remind us both of that certainty and that we must be prepared for it, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the RECORD a long list of terrorist attacks in the United States that I prepared from public sources. The list may not include each and every attack by terrorists, but it does include a wide variety of attempted and planned attacks against our citizens. Because of space limitations on material submitted for the RECORD, a more complete and annotated list can be found on my website. That list also includes a separate list of individuals prosecuted in the United States for attempting to leave the country to fight for ISIS.

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

RADICAL ISLAMIC TERRORIST ATTACKS AND PLOTS IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE 9/11

I. SUCCESSFUL ATTACKS

July 4, 2002: Hesham Mohamed Hadayet, a 41-year-old Egyptian national, shot and killed two Israelis and wounded four others at the El Al ticket counter at Los Angeles International Airport. Although the FBI did not find evidence linking Hadayet to a terrorist group, the agency concluded the shooting was an act of terrorism because of Hadayet's stated anti-Israel views and opposition to U.S. Middle East policy.

March 5, 2006: Mohammed Reza Taheri-Azar injured six people when he drove a Sport Utility Vehicle into a group of pedestrians at the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. Taheri-Azar claimed to have conducted the attack in order to avenge the killing of Muslims around the world by the U.S. government.

July 28, 2006: Naveed Afzal Haq shot and killed one woman, and wounded five others, at the Jewish Federation building in Seattle, Washington. During the shooting, Haq spoke with a 911 dispatcher and said “these are Jews and I'm tired of getting pushed around and our people getting pushed around by the situation in the Middle East.”

June 1, 2009: Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad shot two military recruiters at a Little

Rock, Arkansas Army/Navy Career Center, killing one and seriously wounding the other. Muhammad had previously converted to Islam and spent approximately 16 months, beginning in 2007, in Yemen. Although no independent, public confirmation of Muhammad's ties to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula exists, Muhammad wrote to the judge in his case stating that he was “a soldier” of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and undertook his attack as revenge for U.S. killing of Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan.

November 5, 2009: Nidal Malik Hasan, a U.S. Army Major serving as a psychiatrist, shot and killed 13 people and wounded several dozen others at Fort Hood, Texas. Hasan stated that his motive was jihad to fight “illegal and immoral aggression against Muslims” in Iraq and Afghanistan. Hasan had earlier exchanged 18 e-mails with Anwar al-Awlaki, an important, U.S.-born leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

April 15, 2013: Tamerlan Tsarnaev and his younger brother, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, detonated two bombs within moments of each other near the finish line of the Boston Marathon, killing three people and injuring hundreds more. Although the brothers were motivated by radical Islam to carry out the attacks, they did not appear to have had any direct ties to Islamic terrorist organizations.

October 23, 2014: Zale Thompson attacked four New York City police officers with a hatchet, injuring two of them (one critically) at a Queens, New York shopping district. The police shot and killed Thompson, and a bystander was injured in the process. Thompson appears to have been a self-radicalized Muslim convert who had posted “antigovernment, anti-Western, anti-white” messages online.

May 3, 2015: Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi began shooting outside the Curtis Culwell Center in Garland, Texas during an art exhibit hosted by an anti-Muslim group called the American Freedom Defense Initiative. The center was hosting an exhibition of cartoon adaptations depicting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad. The pair shot and injured a security guard before being killed by a police officer. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria subsequently claimed responsibility for the attack, though the group did not provide evidence of how it was involved with the shooters or in the attack.

July 16, 2015: Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeer—who reportedly had been in various locations in the Middle East for nearly seven months last year—shot at government personnel in two military installations in Chattanooga, Tennessee, first through a drive-by shooting at a recruiting center, then by traveling to a naval reserve center and continuing to fire. Before being killed by police, Abdulazeer killed four Marines, and wounded another Marine, a Navy sailor, and a police officer. The Navy sailor died from his wounds two days later. The FBI is investigating the attack as an act of terrorism.

II. UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS AND PLOTS

December 22, 2001: British citizen Richard Reid attempted to detonate explosives packed in his shoes while on a flight from Paris to Miami. The airplane's crew and passengers subdued him, and the plane landed safely in Boston. Reid had previously received training at Al-Qaeda terrorist camps in Afghanistan.

May 8, 2002: Jose Padilla was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and subsequently accused of plotting to attack the United States with a radiological weapon (a “dirty bomb”). He had previously spent several years in the Middle East, and the U.S. government produced evidence at his trial indicating he had attended an Al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan.

May 1, 2003: Iyman Faris pled guilty to providing material support to Al-Qaeda and providing information to Al-Qaeda about potential targets in the United States—including a bridge in New York City.

August 2004: A group of men in the United Kingdom, led by Al-Qaeda “member or close associate” Dhiren Barot, were arrested for being part of an Al-Qaeda plan to bomb the International Monetary Fund, New York Stock Exchange, Citigroup and Prudential buildings in the United States, as well as targets in the United Kingdom. Barot had earlier scouted the American targets while visiting the United States in 2000 and 2001.

August 2004: Shahawar Matin Siraj and James Elshafay were arrested after conducting surveillance at the Herald Square subway station in Manhattan. The pair were planning to attack the station with explosives in response to actions by American military forces in Iraq.

August 31, 2005: Kevin James, Hammad Samana, Gregory Patterson, and Levar Washington were indicted on charges to wage war against the United States through terrorist activities. The men planned attacks against targets including American military and Jewish institutions, located in Southern California.

November 24, 2006: Uzair Paracha was convicted of conspiring to help an Al-Qaeda operative member suspected of planning bombing attacks in Maryland to enter the United States. Paracha was later sentenced to 30 years in prison.

June 23 2006: Seven men, known as the “Liberty City Seven,” were arrested for being involved in a plot to blow up the Sears Tower in Chicago as part of an Islamic jihad. Attorney General Gonzales stated later that year that the plotters had promised to fight “a full ground war against the United States.”

July 7 2006: Three men were arrested in Lebanon for plotting to bomb transit tunnels underneath the Hudson River in New York City. The men intended that the New York financial district would then be flooded. The FBI discovered the plot and gathered information on it through emails and chat-room postings on web forums used to recruit Islamic terrorists.

December 8, 2006: Derrick Shareef was charged with plotting to detonate hand grenades at a shopping mall in Illinois during the Christmas shopping season. Shareef was a Muslim convert who reportedly had discussed his desire to wage jihad against civilians and had also spoken of attacking government facilities.

2007: Sabrihan Hasanoff and Wessam Hanafi, beginning in 2007 and at the direction of Al-Qaeda members in Yemen performed surveillance on several potential targets, including the New York Stock Exchange, for future terrorist attacks in the United States. El-Hanafi forwarded the report to Al-Qaeda.

May 2007: Six men planned to kill American soldiers at Fort Dix, New Jersey, but were arrested before they could do so. This plot is popularly known as the “Fort Dix Six” plot, and the men appear to have been inspired by Jihadi videos

June 3, 2007: Four men were indicted for plotting to blow up jet-fuel tanks and a fuel pipeline at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City. Assistant Attorney General Kenneth Wainstein said that the men “sought to combine an insider's knowledge of JFK airport with the assistance of Islamic radicals in the Caribbean to produce” a “devastating attack.”

January 28, 2009: Bryant Neal Vinas pleaded guilty to joining Al-Qaeda and developing a plan with Al-Qaeda leadership to conduct an attack on the Long Island Railroad in New York.

February 26, 2009: Christopher Paul, also known as Abdul Malek, was sentenced for conspiring to use weapons of mass destruction against targets in Europe and the United States. Paul, who had received terrorist training at overseas terrorist camps in Afghanistan, and had subsequently joined Al-Qaeda, had worked with an Islamic terror cell in Europe to prepare to attack targets in the United States.

May 20, 2009: Four men were arrested for plotting to bomb Jewish synagogues in New York City after they had planted what they thought were bombs near two synagogues. The men also allegedly planned to shoot down U.S. military planes operating out of Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York. The men were apparently angry over the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, and one told an FBI informant that he'd be interested in joining a Pakistan-based terrorist group "to do jihad."

September 2009: Daniel Patrick Boyd and Hysen Sherifi were charged with plotting to kill U.S. military personnel at the Quantico marine base in Virginia. They had undertaken reconnaissance of the base and had practiced attacking the base in July. Boyd, along with several other suspects, had earlier been charged with international terrorism charges in August, but those charges did not concern attacks in the United States. Prosecutors played a tape during Boyd's detention hearing where he decried the U.S. military, decried the struggle of Muslims, and mentioned the honor of martyrdom.

September 2009: Najibullah Zazi, and later Adis Medunjanin and Zarein Ahmedzay, were arrested for planning to conduct suicide attacks with homemade explosives in the New York City subway system. All three had received weapons training from Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and Zazi admitted in court that he was trained by Al-Qaeda to be part of a "martyrdom operation." Evidence indicates that senior Al-Qaeda officials ordered the attacks. According to the indictment against Medunjanin, before being arrested for the planned subway attacks, on January 7, 2010, Medunjanin attempted to conduct an attack in New York City by intentionally crashing his car on the Whitestone Expressway.

September 24, 2009: Michael Finton, also known as Talib Islam, was arrested and charged for attempting to kill federal employees by detonating a car bomb at the federal building in Springfield, Illinois. He was arrested after he attempted to detonate what he thought was the bomb, but which was in fact a fake bomb. Finton reportedly idolized (and had written to) American-born Taliban member John Walker Lindh.

September 24, 2009: Hosam Maher Husein Smadi, an illegal immigrant from Jordan, was arrested for placing, with the intent to detonate, what he thought was a car bomb outside of the 60-story Fountain Place office tower in Dallas, Texas. FBI undercover agents met with Smadi over several months while posing as members of an Al-Qaeda sleeper cell. According to the FBI, Smadi "stood out based on his vehement intention to actually conduct terror attacks in the United States."

December 14, 2009: Ehsanul Islam Sadequee and Syed Haris Ahmed were sentenced for their earlier terrorism convictions in support of terrorism. Among other activities, Sadequee and Ahmed had driven to and taken videos—for use by "the jihadi brothers abroad" with whom the pair were connected via the internet—of targets in Washington, DC, including the U.S. Capitol, the World Bank, the Masonic Temple, and a fuel tank farm.

December 25, 2009: Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian citizen, attempted to blow up the commercial airliner

he was flying on over Detroit by igniting high explosives concealed in his underpants. Several days later, Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Yemen and Saudi Arabia claimed responsibility for the attempted attack. Abdulmutallab later pled to the charges against him and read a statement in court saying "I attempted to use an explosive device which in the U.S. law is a weapon of mass destruction, which I call a blessed weapon to save the lives of innocent Muslims, for U.S. use of weapons of mass destruction on Muslim populations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and beyond."

May 1, 2010: Faisal Shahzad attempted, but failed, to detonate a car bomb in Times Square in New York City. Evidence indicated that the Pakistani Taliban was behind the attempted attack, and that Shahzad was in contact with the group via the internet while living in the United States. Shahzad was attempting to flee the country through a flight to the Middle East when arrested.

May 2010: Paul and Nadia Rockwood, from King Salmon, Alaska, were arrested for lying to the FBI about having compiled a list of 20 domestic terrorism targets, including members of the U.S. military, the media, and two religious organizations. The couple had also begun to acquire components for mail bombs. Rockwood, who had earlier converted to Islam and was studying the writings of Anwar al-Awlaki, sought to "exact revenge by death on anyone who desecrated Islam."

October 20, 2010: Zachary Adam Chesser, a supporter of designated foreign terrorist organization Al-Shabaab, pleaded guilty to charges that included soliciting other jihadists online to murder U.S. citizens in the United States. Among other things, he pleaded guilty to taking specific, repeated steps to encourage jihadists to attack the writers of an American television show for the way the show had depicted Muhammad.

October 27, 2010: Farooque Ahmed, a naturalized U.S. citizen, was arrested for plotting to bomb multiple Washington, D.C. metro stations. Ahmed believed he was conspiring with Al-Qaeda operatives in plotting the attacks.

November 26, 2010: Mohamed Osman Mohamud, a Somali-American, attempted to wage jihad by trying to ignite what he thought was a real bomb, but which was a fake bomb supplied by an undercover officer, at a Christmas tree lighting ceremony in Portland, Oregon. Among other statements Mohamud made regarding the attacks, he said "I want whoever is attending that event to leave, to leave either dead or injured."

December 8, 2010: Antonio Martinez, also known as Muhammad Hussain, was arrested after a sting operation for plotting to blow up the Armed Forces Career Center in Catonsville, Maryland. Martinez, a Muslim convert, was motivated to plot the attack because he was upset that the U.S. and other militaries were fighting Muslims.

February 24, 2011: Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari, a Saudi Arabian student in the United States, was arrested for planning and having begun to build bombs for use in various terrorist attacks in America. Targets of the attacks included former President George W. Bush's home, hydroelectric dams, nuclear power plants, nightclubs, and the homes of American soldiers who had been stationed in Iraq at the Abu Ghraib prison. Aldawsari described in his journal, as well as on blog postings, his desire for violent jihad.

May 11, 2011: Ahmed Ferhani, a native of Algeria, and Mohamed Mamdouh were arrested for plotting to attack Jewish synagogues in New York City. The pair were arrested after purchasing several handguns and one grenade. The two were said to be "committed to violent jihad."

June 23, 2011: Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif and Walli Mujahidh were arrested after pur-

chasing machine guns and grenades for the purpose of conducting a suicide attack against a federal building housing the Military Entrance Processing Station in Seattle. The pair's motive was to conduct physical jihad in the United States, as they were upset about U.S. military activities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Yemen.

July 27, 2011: Naser Jason Abdo, a U.S. Army Private who had been Absent Without Leave (AWOL), was arrested in a plot against Fort Hood, Texas. He was found with jihadist materials, weapons, explosives instructions, and materials. The explosives instructions were from an Al-Qaeda explosives course manual.

September 28, 2011: Rezwan Ferdaus was arrested, following an FBI undercover operation, and charged for plotting to use a remote-controlled aircraft filled with explosives to attack the U.S. Capitol and the Pentagon. Ferdaus planned to commit violent jihad with the materials, and hoped to cause a "psychological impact" by killing Americans—who he referred to as "enemies of Allah."

November 20, 2011: Jose Pimentel was arrested for building and plotting to detonate pipe bombs in and around New York City. Pimentel's intended targets included U.S. military personnel who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. postal facilities, and police. Pimentel was described as an "Al-Qaeda sympathizer," though he is believed to have worked on his plot alone.

January 7, 2012: Sami Osmakac, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Kosovo, was arrested for plotting to use weapons and explosives "to create mayhem" in Tampa, Florida. He planned to conduct a car bombing, then take hostages, and to finally detonate a suicide belt he would be wearing. Osmakac told an FBI undercover agent that "We all have to die, so why not die the Islamic way?"

February 17, 2012: Amine El Khalifi, a Moroccan who was illegally inside the United States, was arrested following an FBI sting operation for plotting to carry out a suicide bombing inside the U.S. Capitol building. When arrested near the Capitol, Khalifi was carrying what he believed to be a loaded automatic weapon and a suicide vest.

September 15, 2012: Adel Daoud was arrested, following an FBI undercover investigation, for attempting to detonate what he thought was a car bomb in front of a bar in Chicago. Daoud had earlier expressed his interest online in engaging in violent jihad in the United States or overseas.

October 17, 2012: Quazi Mohammad Rezwanul Ahsan Nafis, a Bangladeshi, was arrested following a sting operation for plotting to bomb the Federal Reserve Bank in Manhattan. He was arrested after attempting to detonate what he thought was a 1,000 pound bomb near the door of the bank. Nafis undertook his plot on behalf of "our beloved Sheikh Osama bin Laden."

November 29, 2012: Raees Alam Qazi and his brother, Sheheryar Alam Qazi, both naturalized U.S. citizens of Pakistani descent, were arrested for plotting to attack New York City, possibly at Times Square. Raees, inspired by Al-Qaeda (members of which he had tried to contact) had recently traveled to New York to attempt to obtain explosives for the attack.

December 13, 2013: Terry Lee Loewen, an avionics technician, was arrested following an FBI sting operation for attempting to explode a car bomb in a suicide attack at the Wichita Mid-Continent Airport in Wichita, Kansas. Loewen is a Muslim-convert who had said to an FBI employee that "I have become 'radicalized' in the strongest sense of the word, and I don't feel Allah wants me any other way."

September 15, 2014: Mufid A. Elgeeh was charged with encouraging and helping prepare two other people to go to Syria and join

ISIS. He had also allegedly plotted to shoot U.S. military members in the United States who had returned from Iraq. Elgeeh was arrested after purchasing two handguns, ammunition, and silencers.

February 25, 2015: Abdurasul Hasanovich Juraboev was charged for offering online to kill the U.S. President if ordered by ISIS. He, along with Akhror Saidakhmetov, allegedly then planned to travel to Syria to wage jihad on behalf of ISIS.

April 2, 2015: Noelle Velentzas and Asia Siddiqui were arrested, following a sting operation, for plotting to detonate explosives in the United States. The two allegedly discussed possible targets online and had acquired both multiple propane tanks and instructions on how to turn the tanks into bombs. Siddiqui had allegedly contacted members of Al-Qaeda on repeated occasions.

April 10, 2015: John T. Booker was arrested, after a sting operation, for allegedly trying to detonate a car bomb at the Fort Riley military base in Kansas on behalf of ISIS. Booker allegedly had spent months discussing different plans of attack before deciding on a suicide attack against the base, and had begun acquiring components for a vehicle bomb before becoming the subject of the FBI operation. He also allegedly repeatedly stated that he wished to engage in violent jihad on behalf of ISIS.

June 12, 2015: David Wright and Nicholas Rovinski were charged with conspiring to commit attacks against persons inside the United States, which was intended to further ISIS's objectives and therefore constituted material support to that group. Wright and Rovinski also allegedly intended to behead a man who had organized a conference in Garland, Texas that featured cartoons depicting Muhammad. Moreover, Wright and Rovinski allegedly conspired with Usaamah Abdullah Rahim—Wright's uncle—who was shot and killed after attacking police officers. The FBI stated that Rahim had been under surveillance because he had bought fighting knives and spoken of imminently attacking "boys in blue." Rahim, when confronted by the police on a sidewalk, menaced the officers with a military-style knife before shooting him when he refused to drop the knife.

June 17, 2015: Fareed Mumuni and Munther Omar Saleh were arrested for allegedly conspiring to attempt to assist ISIS in committing a terrorist attack in the New York area. Mumuni and Saleh allegedly charged, with knives, at law enforcement officers who were trying to arrest them. Mumuni also allegedly told authorities that he had pledged his support to ISIS.

June 19, 2015: Robert McCollum, who changed his name to Amir Said Abdul Rahman Al-Ghazi, was charged with, among other offenses, attempting to provide material support to ISIS. He allegedly had pledged his support to ISIS via social media, took steps to create propaganda for the group, and had tried to persuade others to join ISIS too. He allegedly had also expressed his desire to conduct an attack on the United States, and had attempted to purchase an assault rifle.

July 13, 2015: Alexander Ciccolo was arrested on gun charges after purchasing two pistols and two rifles from an undercover FBI informant. His apartment allegedly was loaded with bomb-making equipment and jihadi paperwork. Ciccolo allegedly had planned to travel to a town with a state university where he could attack students at the college. Ciccolo was turned in by his father, who said his son was inspired by ISIS, had said he is "not afraid to die for the cause," and reportedly characterized America as "Satan" and "disgusting."

July 28, 2015: Harlem Suarez was charged with attempting to use a weapon of mass de-

struction against a person or property within the United States. Suarez came to law enforcement attention following Facebook posts he made with Islamic extremist rhetoric and promoting ISIS. Suarez allegedly had told a confidential FBI source that he wanted to make a "timer bomb," which was to include galvanized nails and for which he had purchased components, to be buried and detonated at a beach in Key West, Florida.

November 12, 2015: Terrence McNeil was arrested in Ohio for soliciting the murder of members of the U.S. military. He had disseminated ISIS rhetoric and detailed U.S. military personnel information for 100 military members, then called on fellow terrorists to kill the military personnel in their homes and communities.

Mr. GRASSLEY. These lists include successful attacks that harmed Americans as well as unsuccessful attempts that did not—often thanks to law enforcement's efforts. What is common to all the attacks is that they were undertaken by terrorists who coordinated with radical Islamic extremists, were inspired by them or by those who shared their views. The listed attacks should serve as a reminder that we must always be vigilant. We must never forget that radical Islamic extremists are waging war against us. We must always be prepared to fight this battle and to defend against their attacks.

I am grateful this Thanksgiving season for the people in this country who do the difficult work of protecting us from terrorists every day. We must continually strengthen our country's ability to win this war. We must ensure that our military and Special Forces have the ability to take the fight to the terrorists overseas, wherever they are lurking. We must ensure that our intelligence agencies have the tools needed to identify terrorists and their plots, while preserving the civil liberties that make our country very special. And we must ensure that law enforcement is able to use the lawful tools provided by Congress, consistent with our Constitution and approved by our courts, to help stop these terrorist attacks.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO BART AND CHERRY STARR

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor two great Americans, two wonderful people—Bart and Cherry Starr—for their numerous personal, professional, and charitable contributions to the Nation and the great State of Wisconsin.

We are all aware of Bart's extraordinary contributions on the football field as quarterback for the Green Bay

Packers. Drafted in the 17th round in 1956, Bart proceeded to win 5 world championships, including victories in the first 2 Super Bowls. He was named the Super Bowl's Most Valuable Player for both games, but ever humble, Bart gave full credit to his teammates and to legendary coach Vince Lombardi for the team's historic success.

Over the years, Bart has received many honors. He was selected as a Pro Bowl Player four times and was named the NFL's Most Valuable Player in 1966. He was recognized in 1970 with the Gladiator of the Year Award for best exemplifying the character attributes of a citizen-athlete. And he has been inducted into multiple Halls of Fame: The Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1976, the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1977, and the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame in 1981.

Bart's football legacy goes beyond technical skill. His excellence in leadership and strength of character earned him the respect of his coaches, teammates, and fans worldwide. He continues to be lauded as an example throughout the NFL. Every year, the Bart Starr Award is presented to an NFL player who demonstrates leadership and integrity on the field and in his community.

Bart considers his wife Cherry to be the most important member of the Starr family team. Cherry supported and inspired her husband as they raised their children, Bart Junior and Bret, and devoted herself to numerous charitable causes throughout their life together. Their gifts of time, financial support, and celebrity continue to be a part of a lifelong mission benefiting many charities and causes.

At the height of his career with the Packers, Bart and Cherry cofounded Rawhide Boys Ranch, a home for at-risk boys. Over the years, the Rawhide Boys Ranch has grown into a campus comprised of seven boys homes, a state-of-the-art high school named in honor of Bart and Cherry Starr, and numerous work experience facilities that expose youth to a variety of trades.

Bart and Cherry also served as honorary chairpersons for the Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation for more than 44 years. Their work behind the scenes was central to raising more than \$16 million for cancer research.

In addition, Bart and Cherry have been longtime supporters of Cornerstone Schools of Alabama. Cornerstone offers a Christ-centered education committed to academic excellence for Birmingham's inner city children whose families have limited school choice.

Finally, Cherry's passion for animals fuels their generous support over many years for the Greater Birmingham Humane Society.

Bart and Cherry are very proud of their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, but the accomplishment they value most, that they cherish most, is their 60 years of loving marriage. I am honored to recognize

Bart and Cherry Starr for their exemplary lives. May their humble leadership, sacrifice, and love for others serve as an inspiration for all of us.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise to speak once again on the topic of religious liberty. This is the sixth in a series of addresses I have given on this critical subject. In my previous remarks, I have discussed why religious liberty matters and why it deserves special protection from government interference. I have also detailed the history of religious liberty in the United States and its centrality to our Nation's founding. Likewise, I have debunked the erroneous notion that religion is a purely private matter that has no place in the public domain.

Last week, I discussed the status of religious liberty in contemporary American life. I argued that, in ways that are both alarming and unprecedented, religious liberty is under attack here in the United States. Today, I turn my attention beyond our borders to examine the status of religious liberty abroad. Again, my argument is straightforward: across the world, religious liberty is under serious attack.

My observations are particularly relevant as we approach Thanksgiving. Our Nation commemorates this special holiday in remembrance of our pilgrim ancestors who fled persecution in search of religious freedom. These brave men and women sailed uncharted waters and settled strange lands in order to build a society where they could practice their religion free from state interference. Their earnest efforts precipitated not only the establishment of a new colony, but the birth of a nation committed to the principles of religious pluralism.

For America's earliest settlers, this land stood as a symbol of refuge—a haven from the storm of religious oppression that lingered over Europe. Centuries later, victims of religious persecution across the world still look to our shores for sanctuary. They see America as John Winthrop once described it: "As a city upon a hill"—a light that reaches across the oceans, giving hope to those still living in the shadows of religious intolerance.

Today our world needs that light more than ever. Nearly four centuries after the Pilgrims made landfall at Plymouth Rock, the state of religious liberty across the world is increasingly precarious. From brutal crackdowns on religious minorities in Central Asia to

a growing wave of anti-Semitism in Europe; from the violent campaigns of Boko Haram in Africa to the nefarious specter of ISIS in the Middle East—religious liberty is under attack like never before.

Despite the rapid advance of democracy over the last century, the blessings of religious freedom are still inaccessible to a majority of the world's population. In fact, a recent Pew study finds that three-quarters of the global population "lives in countries with high-government restrictions and significant hostilities surrounding religion."

Think about that. In spite of the substantial progress our own society has made in securing individual rights and enshrining religious liberty in law, there are still billions of people across the world who are unable to exercise their religion freely and fully. There are still billions of individuals living under despotic regimes that not only fail to protect people from persecution, but that actively constrain the conscience of citizens through law. There are still billions of people who understand religious liberty as little more than a philosophical concept, much less a reality.

I wish I could offer these people hope. I wish I could say that the gradual march of progress will part the waters of religious intolerance, paving a clear path forward for religious liberty, but reality restrains my optimism. Around the world, hostility to religion is increasing.

Religious liberty abroad faces opposition from two sources: states and nonstate actors. While I would like to relate an exhaustive account of the war being waged on both fronts, time permits me to highlight only the most grievous examples of persecution.

I begin with state-sponsored acts of religious oppression. Far from being a relic of the past, government persecution of religious minorities is alive and well. First, consider the state of religious liberty in Asia. China is perhaps the world's leading instigator of religious persecution. Last year, in a nearly unprecedented crackdown on religious expression, the Chinese Government bulldozed or removed crosses from more than 400 Protestant and Catholic Churches. According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, many experts have characterized this growing tide of oppression against Christians in China as "the most egregious and persistent since the Cultural Revolution."

And Christian denominations are not the only groups facing oppression. Members of all faiths, including Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists, "face arrests, fines, denials of justice, [and] lengthy prison sentences" because of their religious beliefs. Practitioners of Falun Gong experience the most intense persecution. Sixteen years ago, the Chinese Government imposed an outright ban on the practice of Falun Gong. Since that time, the government

has imprisoned believers in forced labor camps, subjecting them to psychiatric experiments and other heinous forms of torture. The government has even executed practitioners of Falun Gong, mutilating their bodies and harvesting their organs for profit. Our Nation can no longer turn a blind eye to these atrocities.

Nor can we ignore the plight of religious prisoners in North Korea, where Kim Jong-un has incarcerated thousands of his own citizens for their religious beliefs. These men and women are separated from their families and forced to work in concentration camps. While the government punishes followers of any faith, the country's Christians face the greatest persecution. If caught practicing their religion, Christians face imprisonment without trial. Many face execution.

In Southeast Asia, Myanmar is responsible for propagating religious bigotry, not so much by what it does but by what it doesn't do. Across the country, religious and ethnic minorities face increasing persecution at the hands of the Buddhist majority. Rather than intervene to protect these vulnerable groups from mistreatment, the Myanmar Government has stood idly by as an observer to the violence. As a result of the government's inaction, 140,000 Muslims and at least 100,000 Christians have been internally displaced.

In Africa and the Middle East, the situation is just as bleak. In Iran, despite President Rouhani's promise to extend greater protections to religious minorities, the number of individuals detained because of their religious beliefs has actually increased during his term. Baha'is, Christians, Jews, and Sunni Muslims throughout the country face perpetual persecution, arrest, beating, and imprisonment. Some are even executed for their beliefs. And of course, there is perhaps no government on earth more vocal in its anti-Semitism than Iran.

Meanwhile, in Saudi Arabia, the state prohibits all non-Muslim public places of worship. Any citizen who dares question the government's repressive policies is likely to face charges of apostasy, blasphemy, and even sorcery—a crime punishable by death.

In Syria, Bashar al Assad has abandoned all appearances of religious liberty by deliberately targeting Sunni Muslim civilians in a bloody civil war. As he massacres his own people, he does so on the basis of their religious affiliation.

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

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

Mr. HATCH. In Pakistan the government consistently fails to protect its own citizens from religiously motivated violence, and the courts exploit repressive anti-blasphemy laws to prosecute religious minorities. Egypt's

courts convict and imprison citizens under the same pretext.

In Sudan the government harasses its minority Christian population and subjects Muslims and non-Muslims alike to the punishments of Sharia law. The state even executes citizens who convert from Islam to another religion.

Even in Europe, religious liberty is under attack, albeit in more subtle ways; take, for example, Switzerland, where a constitutional amendment placed a countrywide ban on the construction of minarets—a widely recognized symbol of Muslim prayer and devotion.

In another blow to Europe's Islamic population, France recently outlawed the wearing of burqas and niqabs in public. When a Muslim woman appealed the ban to the European Court of Human Rights, the court upheld the law.

What I have related here is only a small sampling of the manifold abuses taking place around the world. If I were to relate every instance of state-sponsored religious bigotry abroad, I would be speaking here for days.

And none of this is to mention the war against freedom being waged by non-state actors. In the past decade, we have witnessed an unprecedented rise of terrorist groups and other criminal organizations seeking to eradicate religious liberty altogether.

Take, for example, the rise of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region of Africa. This Islamic terrorist organization made headlines last year after kidnapping over 276 Nigerian schoolgirls. According to the Human Rights Watch, Boko Haram has since forced these young girls to convert to Islam and undergo severe physical and psychological torture. Many of these young women have been subject to forced labor, and others have been raped while in captivity.

Boko Haram's central mission is to annihilate all Western social and political activities, including any religion that isn't Islam. In its fight against religious freedom and other Western values, the group has conducted indiscriminate attacks on civilians and has even used children as suicide bombers.

The brutality of Boko Haram is only surpassed by the barbarism of ISIS. Far from being the "jayvee team" President Obama once described, ISIS has proven to be perhaps the most formidable terrorist network in operation today. I fear that too many underestimate the threat ISIS poses to religious freedom. This is an organization whose very raison d'être is to establish a global Islamic caliphate and usher in the apocalypse.

As Islamic State militants carry out their mission, religious liberty is often the first casualty. In the barren world ISIS envisions, there is no room for dissent: either convert or be killed. Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims throughout the Middle East have been confronted with this impossible ultimatum. Refusal to give in to the Is-

lamic State's demands has resulted in mass executions, extrajudicial killings, kidnapping of civilians, forced displacement, the killing and maiming of children, rape, and other forms of sexual violence. The savagery of ISIS has even gone viral as the group posts videos of grisly beheadings on the Internet. In almost every case, captors target their victims on the basis of religion.

As we are all too aware, the cruelty of ISIS is not confined to the Middle East. Just last week, three teams of ISIS militants carried out terrorist assaults throughout Paris, detonating suicide bombs at a soccer stadium and opening fire on innocent civilians at a concert hall. The violence injured more than 350 innocent bystanders and claimed at least 129 lives in what is considered the worst terrorist attack on French soil in the nation's history.

We could call these attacks "senseless acts of violence" because that is exactly what they appear to be, both in the scope of their brutality and in the scale of their indiscrimination. But I fear that dismissing these attacks as "senseless" too often hides from our view the radical rationale that motivates such violence. ISIS does not kill merely to feed an insatiable bloodlust; it kills because it wants to terrorize, shock, and intimidate other civilizations into submission. It kills because it wants to impose on all people a narrow-minded, medieval ideology of Islam—one that would rob us of our religious freedom and other fundamental rights.

Sadly, ISIS is not alone in its animus toward religious freedom. Nearly every terrorist organization that has vowed our destruction—be it Al Qaeda, Hamas or Hezbollah—seeks to strip us not only of our sense of security but also of the fundamental freedoms that make religious pluralism possible.

If we are committed to defending religious liberty overseas, we must confront the growing menace of Islamic extremism, and we must challenge those nations that engender religious intolerance through law. Today, by calling attention to the suffering of religious peoples throughout the world, I have demonstrated clearly and without question that religious liberty faces growing hostility abroad from both state and non-state actors alike. From the heavy hand of government to the violent campaigns of terrorist organizations around the globe, the right to worship according to the dictates of one's own conscience is under relentless attack.

With a fuller understanding of the threats facing religious liberty, the question now becomes: What is to be done? If religious liberty is under attack abroad, what can our Nation do to protect this precious freedom now and in the future?

First, we must recognize that protecting religious freedom abroad is not just a question of moral principle; it is a matter of national security. Often,

violations of religious liberty abroad threaten our own safety at home. As a case in point, consider the role of religious intolerance in the Syrian civil war. Bashar al-Assad quickly disposed of religious freedom when he began deliberately targeting Sunni Muslims, murdering thousands of citizens on the basis of their religion. His brutal actions precipitated the formation of ISIS—an organization hell-bent on destroying other religions and entire civilizations in the name of Islam.

As ISIS gained in strength, it began to export its extreme ideology abroad, triggering several attacks throughout the world, including last week's coordinated assaults in Paris. Now, ISIS poses a formidable threat to the United States and all of our allies. Assad's blatant disregard for religious liberty not only escalated violence in the region but also catalyzed the formation of ISIS. As a result, the world is less safe.

Given the obvious nexus between protecting religious liberty and strengthening global security, I agree with the following assessment from the U.S. Commission on International Freedom:

In the long run, there is only one permanent guarantor of the safety, security, and survival of the persecuted and the vulnerable. It is the full recognition of religious freedom as a sacred human right which every nation, government, and individual must fully support and no nation, government, or individual must ever violate.

If we are committed to bolstering the security of other nations, then we must be equally devoted to strengthening religious liberty abroad. At the forefront of foreign policy should be a commitment to defend and advance religious liberty in countries where it is under attack. We should also be prepared to reevaluate our relationship with governments that fail to make religious liberty protections a priority.

Congress took concrete steps to prioritize religious freedom as a foreign policy objective when it passed the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. This law established the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. The Ambassador oversees the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, which monitors discrimination against people of faith and publishes an annual country-by-country report on the status of religious freedom abroad.

This historic legislation also created the U.S. Commission on International Freedom—an independent, bipartisan organization that closely follows religious persecution in other countries and offers recommendations to the executive branch and Congress on how best to promote religious freedom overseas.

As one of the only countries in the world to make religious liberty an explicit foreign policy objective, our nation is unique in its commitment to this preeminent freedom. As a legislative body, Congress can renew that commitment by continuing to support

the provisions of the International Religious Freedom Act. The future of religious liberty overseas depends on our willingness to strengthen it here in Congress.

Lastly, if we are committed to protecting religious liberty abroad, we must be ready to defend it here at home.

At the beginning of my remarks, I recalled the imagery of John Winthrop's "City on a Hill." Throughout our Nation's history, several public figures have invoked Winthrop's allusion to capture a simple truth: America's special freedoms make her a light to other nations.

Through our robust exercise of religious liberty, we offer hope to people beyond our borders—men and women suffering under the yoke of oppression who look to our country for sanctuary. As our nation strives to be an example of religious freedom, we can offer greater hope to those persecuted for their religious beliefs, and by addressing threats to freedom of conscience here at home—including the attacks on religious liberty that I detailed in previous remarks—we can strengthen and beautify our City on a Hill, building upon the foundation laid for us by our Pilgrim forbears, so that the light of our Nation might shine before all mankind.

With this call to action, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in morning business for such time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 2303

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, over the last month, in a series of terrorist attacks around the globe that have killed hundreds of people, ISIL has commenced a new phase in its war on the civilized world. We have seen attacks in Ankara, Beirut, and Baghdad, the bombing of a Russian airliner over Egypt, and, of course, the horrific scenes last Friday in Paris, where ISIL gunmen wearing suicide belts attacked innocent civilians at restaurants, bars, a soccer stadium, and a concert hall, killing, as we know, 129 people and wounding 352 others.

This evolution in ISIL operations further highlights the threat that they pose to countries beyond the Middle East, including the United States of America. We cannot and should not wait for ISIL to attack the United States before we finally, finally, finally acknowledge that we are a nation at war and that we must adopt a new strategy to destroy ISIL.

What we must also acknowledge is that while the threat posed by ISIL and our other adversaries is growing,

our national security budgets are increasingly disconnected from our national security requirements. Regardless of what ISIL will do next or how the United States will decide to act, our national security budgets through fiscal year 2021 have been arbitrarily—I emphasize "arbitrarily"—capped by the Budget Control Act.

To be sure, the recently passed Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 provides important relief from the sequester-level budget caps for fiscal year 2016 and 2017, and I am grateful to the Republican majority leader for leading that effort. Our national defense would be in far worse shape without that legislation. At the same time, that agreement is less optimal for next year and obviously does not seek to address the budget caps that continue for the next 4 years. Indeed, under the revised Budget Control Act, in constant dollars, we are actually on track to spend less on defense next year than this year. It has not taken long for world events, yet again, to show the inadequacy of this exercise. At roughly the same time we were locking in next year's defense budget caps, ISIL began demonstrating its capability to strike targets outside of Iraq and Syria and now at the very center of the western world.

Indeed, since the Budget Control Act of 2011 capped defense and other discretionary spending for the subsequent 10 years, absent any consideration of changing global threats or national requirements, let's consider what has transpired since 2011. Any semblance of order in the Middle East has collapsed. We are all tragically familiar with the carnage in Syria and Iraq, but Libya has also deteriorated into anarchy and safe havens for ISIL and its affiliates. Yemen has become the scene of a proxy war between Iran and the gulf Arab nations. General David Petraeus testified to the Armed Services Committee: "Almost every Middle Eastern country is now a battleground or a combatant in one or more wars."

From the outset, the Obama administration's policy was to withdraw from the Middle East. The President pulled all U.S. troops out of Iraq and put us on the path to do the same in Afghanistan, but as we expected, and as I predicted, evil forces have moved in to fill the vacuums that we have left behind. ISIL has captured large swaths of territories in Syria and Iraq and has spread across the region to Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt, and other countries.

As a result, we now have thousands of troops back in Iraq. The U.S. military has conducted over 6,000 airstrikes in Syria and Iraq to combat ISIL. We are increasing counterterrorism operations in North Africa and providing military assistance to Saudi Arabia and our gulf partners fighting in Yemen. The situation in Afghanistan has driven the President to further delay the drawdown of U.S. troops. The effectiveness of these policies is questionable, but their cost is not.

In Europe, we have seen Russian forces invade Crimea and intervene militarily in Ukraine. This is the first time since World War II that one government has invaded and sought to annex the territory of another sovereign territory in Europe. Since then, Vladimir Putin has grown bolder. He continues to modernize Russia's military. And most recently, of course, he has deployed Russian forces into Syria to prop up the Assad regime, even firing cruise missiles into the region from outside of it, as far away as nearly 1,000 miles.

Russia's actions have now forced the administration to bring back to Europe on a rotational basis one of the two brigade combat teams that it withdrew. As Russia continues its aggression in Europe and increases its involvement in the Middle East, the Secretary of Defense acknowledges that we need an entirely new strategy to counter Russia. All of this requires proper funding—all of it. All of it requires proper funding levels, but our defense agencies have not gotten that, even as they have been asked to do more to counter Russia.

The situation isn't limited to Russia and Europe. China is growing more assertive as well. It has built several land features in the South China Sea, equipped with military buildings, fort facilities, and even runways, all in an effort to expand Chinese territorial claims in the area. In addition to harassing other regional states, five Chinese navy ships were spotted in the Bering Sea off of Alaska during President Obama's recent trip to Alaska. Meanwhile, hackers in China continue to conduct cyber espionage and cyber attacks against our government and critical sectors of our economy. Russia, Iran, and North Korea are doing so as well, all in the past year.

Again and again, national security requirements have materialized after the Budget Control Act was passed, but we forced our military to tackle a growing set of missions with arbitrary and insufficient budget levels, revised periodically with whatever additional resources the Congress is able to scare up. The results speak for themselves. Since 2011, as worldwide threats have been increasing, we have cut our defense spending by almost 25 percent in annual spending. Not only has annual spending decreased, but so have the long-term budget plans of the Department of Defense. Each year the Department releases a 5-year budget. However, each year it has reduced its 5-year plan in an effort to closer align its spending to the Budget Control Act. As a result, while the short-term effects of these arbitrary budget caps are bad enough, the long-term harm they are doing is arguably worse. Our military is raiding its own future readiness, modernization, and research and development spending to pay its present bills and meet present needs. We are not making the kinds of investments in

our future warfighting capability to remain technologically superior to adversaries that are closing the gap with us.

What is even more troubling is that even as we made these reductions, our national security and defense strategies have stayed essentially the same. Day-to-day requirements for the military have not been reduced to match declining budgets. Independent analysis by defense experts at places such as the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments and the RAND Corporation have all pointed out that current budget levels and even the President's budget are insufficient to pay for our national security strategy given the current threat environment.

All of this applies equally to our other national security agencies beyond the Department of Defense. Protecting our Nation is not just the job of the U.S. military; it also depends on a strong and properly resourced intelligence community, Federal law enforcement, and homeland security agencies, and a diplomatic presence overseas that can project American leadership and resolve problems before they become threats to our people and our interests. Yet these other national security agencies have been dealing with the same fiscal challenges under the same worsening threat environment and with the same effects as our military. Not just our military, but the NSA, the CIA, the State Department, FBI—all of these agencies are unable to function effectively because of the effects of these budget cuts.

To continue on this way, especially after Paris, is not only absurd, it is dangerous. If we are serious about national security, if we are serious about meeting our highest constitutional responsibility of providing for the common defense, and if we are serious about heeding the frequent and urgent warnings of our Nation's most respected national security and foreign policy leaders, then we must change course immediately. We cannot continue to prioritize deficit reduction over national defense, allowing arbitrary budget caps to determine our national security needs.

This process ought to be simple. We must identify what we need to be safe, define those requirements clearly, and provide budgets to resource them. The two can't be disconnected. If we choose not to fight ISIL or deter Russian aggression in Europe or uphold freedom of the seas in Asia, then we can justify the cuts to the budget. But neither the Congress nor the administration wants to do that, nor should we. The only responsible thing to do, then, is to spend the money that is necessary to meet the national security requirements we have set for ourselves. And with the threats to our homeland growing closer, we can't afford to delay any longer.

That is why I have introduced commonsense legislation that is long overdue. Its goal is simple: to exempt national security spending from seques-

tration under the Budget Control Act. This exemption would not just apply to the Department of Defense; it would also include the security-related functions of our intelligence agencies, the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, and the National Nuclear Security Administration. By doing so, we will enable the President and Congress to build national security budgets based on national security requirements instead of arbitrary caps that entail greater risk to our Nation.

I know that some will express concern about the impact of this legislation on national deficits and the debt. I will match my record as a fiscal conservative with anybody's. I have spent decades targeting wasteful government spending, and I believe we must tackle our debt problem before it overwhelms generations. But we cannot afford to put the lives of our men and women in uniform as well as those of our citizens at greater risk, which everyone—all of our senior military leaders—has said we are doing. By holding to these budget caps, we are putting the lives of the men and women serving in the military today at greater risk. Don't we have an obligation to these young men and women who are serving in the military in uniform? Just because of arbitrary caps, are we going to put their lives in greater danger? Of course the world has become more dangerous. Of course there have been tremendous upheavals. And we are asking them to do the job with less than they need in order to do it most effectively and at the very risk of their own lives. This is disgraceful. This is disgraceful, that we should neglect the view of every national security expert and every one of our uniformed leaders. They have all said the same thing in testimony before the Armed Services Committee.

I have asked them: Does sequestration and the effects of sequestration put the lives of our young men and women in uniform at greater risk?

Answer: Yes.

History does not repeat itself, but I do remember in the 1970s when we slashed defense spending and the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army came over and said we had a hollow Army. We are now not approaching the hollow Army, but we certainly are approaching a point where we are unable to meet the new challenges that I just articulated in these comments, and we are putting the lives of the men and women in the military in greater danger. That is not what we are supposed to be all about.

We can't persist with the illusion that we will somehow balance the Federal budget and meaningfully cut the debt on the back of discretionary spending alone. Our defense and national security budgets are not the root of our spending problem. The real problem is rising entitlement costs and mandatory spending.

A Heritage Foundation report found that 85 percent of projected growth and spending is due to entitlement programs and interest on the debt. Reduc-

ing our debt will only be possible with real entitlement reform. Cuts to discretionary spending will not have a major long-term impact, but for years we have gone to that well because it is politically easier than reforming entitlement programs.

So the major sources of the debt are three: Medicare, Social Security, and interest on the debt. That is the problem we face. So we enacted arbitrary cuts on our Nation's national security capabilities in somehow trying to convince people that therefore we will reduce the debt. That is a lie. We don't have the guts to stand up here and do the right thing, which is entitlement reform. Instead, we continue on this mindless sequestration—mindless because it is a meat ax.

I am happy to say that we have identified \$11 billion in this National Defense Authorization Act. As chairman of the committee, I have worked with Members on both sides of the aisle. We have identified \$11 billion in savings and lots more to come. We can trim from the defense budget a lot of the waste and inefficiencies that are there, but to do it with a meat ax is the wrong way to do it. I encourage other committees to use their authorization processes to reform government and eliminate wasteful spending. However, to purposefully shortchange our national security agencies is obviously penny-wise and pound-foolish.

Just last week, all of us went home and celebrated Veterans Day. There is probably not an event that is quite like it in all of the things we do in this Nation. To spend time with our veterans and to see our Nation honor them is a remarkable experience and incredibly uplifting. It seems to me that year after year, there are more and more Americans who are applauding and appreciating the service and sacrifice of our veterans. We are reminded that what makes America great is the men and women who serve it, and those who have served we honor. These volunteers sacrifice their personal comfort, their families, and sometimes their lives for this country. They always put the mission first, and it is time we do the same. We must fully resource national security so that those who work to keep us safe day in and day out have what they need to accomplish what we have asked of them. If their mission is worth the ultimate sacrifice, what other policy agenda could be more important?

These young men and women are putting their lives on the line as we speak, and what are we doing? We are mindlessly cutting defense and their ability to defend this Nation and themselves. It is a shameful chapter. It is a shameful chapter and an abrogation of our responsibilities to these men and women.

So the next time Members are home in their home States and they meet these men and women in uniform and they support the sequestration, look the other way because they are not taking care of those men and women who are willing to sacrifice.

I am sorry if my words sound harsh, but in this world we are in today, to continue this mindless sequestration is an abrogation of our responsibility as their elected leaders.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Budget be discharged from further consideration of S. 2303 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; I further ask consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

What this is, for the benefit of my colleagues, is the elimination of sequestration for not only defense but all of our national security requirements and agencies of government that are suffering under this mindless sequestration.

I see my colleague from Rhode Island is going to object. All I can say to my colleague from Rhode Island is I am deeply, deeply, deeply disappointed in his objecting to doing the right thing for the men and women who are serving in the military.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REED. Madam President, reserving my right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I think Chairman MCCAIN is headed in exactly the right direction, which is trying to eliminate sequestration. The real answer is to repeal the Budget Control Act because the scope of relief offered by the chairman is certainly broader than just the Department of Defense, but it doesn't include all the agencies that actually protect us and interfere with our opponents. For example, the Department of Treasury, in terms of trying to suppress terrorist financing, would be subject to sequestration in this legislation; the CDC would be subject to sequestration, even if there were a biological attack—and unfortunately our opponents, particularly terrorists, have talked about such an attack.

It is not really the issue of sequestration; it is limiting the scope of relief. I think we should, as my colleague suggests, stand up and say we can repeal the BCA. Then we can talk about budgeting according to the demands, according to our total national security picture.

Longer term, national security in this country is certainly bolstered immediately by the Department of Defense, Department of Treasury, State Department, et cetera; but without education, without many other efforts in our government, we will not be able to truly defend the Nation. So for that reason, Mr. President, I with great reluctance object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Objection is heard.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Peter William Bodde, of Maryland, 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 Libya; Elisabeth I. Millard, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Tajikistan; Marc Jonathan Sievers, of Maryland, 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 Sultanate of Oman; Deborah R. Malac, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Uganda; Lisa J. Peterson, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Swaziland; and H. Dean Pittman, 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 Republic of Mozambique.

VOTE ON BODDE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Bodde nomination?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 95, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 309 Ex.]

YEAS—95

Alexander	Feinstein	Murkowski
Ayotte	Fischer	Murphy
Baldwin	Flake	Murray
Barrasso	Franken	Paul
Bennet	Gardner	Perdue
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Peters
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Booker	Hatch	Reed
Boozman	Heinrich	Reid
Boxer	Heitkamp	Risch
Brown	Heller	Roberts
Burr	Hirono	Rounds
Cantwell	Hoeben	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Isakson	Schumer
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Cassidy	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	Manchin	Tillis
Cotton	Markey	Toomey
Crapo	McCain	Udall
Cruz	McCaskill	Warner
Daines	McConnell	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wicker
Enzi	Mikulski	Wyden
Ernst	Moran	

NOT VOTING—5

Graham	Rubio	Vitter
Nelson	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON MILLARD NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Millard nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SIEVERS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sievers nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON MALAC NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Malac nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON PETERSON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Peterson nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON PITTMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pittman nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The Senator from Mississippi.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with

Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and I be able to utilize up to 20 minutes for speaking in a colloquy.

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

(The remarks of Mr. WICKER and Mrs. SHAHEEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2307 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DODD-FRANK LEGISLATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, 7 years ago, Wall Street came closer to imploding than at any other time since the Great Depression. Wall Street had stacked the deck for themselves and against consumers by turning a banking system that in the past had helped families and businesses build their prosperity into a casino for Wall Street's own big bets. When things went badly, taxpayers were left holding the bag.

While our economy has slowly returned, the memory of the crisis is fresh in the minds of American families—millions of families who lost their jobs, millions of families who lost their homes, millions of families who lost their retirement savings.

For this reason, there is broad bipartisan support across America for not allowing the return of the Wall Street casino, with 9 in 10 likely voters saying it is important to ensure they are safe and fair for consumers and that they are designed to build the success of consumers.

Through the Wall Street reform bill, we ended predatory home lending practices. We stopped teaser rates that then had exploding interest loans. These loans went from 3 or 4 percent in the beginning, and then, after 2 years, would turn into 9 percent or 10 percent, ensuring that the family was unable to make their payments. We stopped the kickbacks that went to loan originators to steer their unsuspecting homebuyer clients into high-cost loans. We stopped the liar loans designed to fail just after originators got their commissions. In short, we restored home ownership and home loans as a powerful, wealth-building tool for the middle class in America. Indeed, over the course of the post-World War II history, home ownership has been the

most significant wealth builder for the middle class. Wall Street turned it into a predatory, wealth-stripping experience, and we restored it to ensure the financial success of working families.

We ensured that banks and financial institutions have skin in the game, mandating they retain risk in the products they sell. We established the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, or CFPB, to prevent scams from stripping wealth from our working families.

Before we established the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, consumer protection was handled by the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve also handled monetary policy. Monetary policy was much more exciting, and perhaps they thought it was more up to their sophisticated educations. They took consumer protection and put it in the basement of the Federal Reserve, and they locked it up and then threw away the key. They never honored their responsibilities for consumer protection, allowing all of these predatory practices that we had to end through the Dodd-Frank legislation.

To date, the CFPB has returned more than \$11 billion to 25 million wronged consumers. That is a pretty impressive record. Show me something else that has brought a little bit of justice and a lot of financial restitution to 25 million wronged American citizens.

The commonsense reforms we established laid the groundwork for a financial system that is not premised on elevating quarterly profit margins on Wall Street. It is not about the size of bonuses on Wall Street but is instead about providing a foundation for our businesses and families to thrive financially. That is building the future prosperity of America.

Nobody wants to repeat the financial collapse, the bailouts, and the economic recession. We spent 6 years digging out of the hole that was created. But despite the fact that to return to this model would be so destructive to American families, there are at this very moment colleagues of mine gathering in rooms in the Senate and in the House who are preparing policy riders to return us back to those dark days. They want to add policy riders to the financial year 2016 appropriations bills designed to turn back these improvements that restored home ownership for American families, that restored financial systems for small businesses. I wholeheartedly oppose attaching these policy riders to the spending bills. And the American people don't like it either.

So what is going on? One conversation is to design policy riders to reverse the improvements we made in mortgage guidelines, to ensure that mortgages did build the wealth of the middle class instead of preying on the middle class.

Second, there are conversations going on about policy riders designed to weaken the tools and authorities of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, or FSOC. During 2002, 2007,

2008, we didn't have anyone systematically looking at weaknesses in the system. I remember looking at a chart that laid out the vast growth in predatory teaser rate loans that started in 2003. As that chart surged upwards for those loans as a percent of all loans done in America, the number of prime loans came down just as dramatically. We now understand why. The originators were telling their customers: You don't want this prime loan—this low-interest rate locked in for 30 years. You want this teaser rate loan. You get a little bit of a lower rate in the beginning.

They never explained to their customer that their interest rate was going to go up dramatically just 2 years later to a level they wouldn't be able to afford, and yet that originator was getting undisclosed kickbacks.

I say this because had there been an FSOC in place, we would have been reviewing that chart and saying: Wait; what is going wrong? From 2003 to 2005, we have this huge surge in predatory lending. Why do we have this huge collapse of prime lending?

They would have talked to the Wall Street Journal. The Wall Street Journal ran an article, an analysis, a study that looked at this and virtually said that all those folks who are being steered into these subprime loans qualified for prime loans. This is the essence of a predatory practice. An FSOC would have seen that and said that something needs to be done. That is why we have it—to look at bubbles or possible bubbles in our economy or practices in our economy that are going to cause a future collapse and to remedy these problems before they happen. Despite that, we have folks right now trying to undo the creation of the FSOC or disable it from being able to do its job.

There is another group that is gathering to try to undermine the success or ability of having a watchdog—the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—on the beat, ending predatory loan practices from here forward.

They can't just go through statute, because as soon as they outlaw this practice over here, another one develops over here. There are newly invented strategies to continuously find new ways to turn solid, successful financial products into predatory products—misleading products, gouging products, products that explode in a couple years that consumers are not fully informed on. So we have to have a commission to be able to stop those practices.

It is the same thing we have in consumer products. We don't have detailed legislation that says: You can't design a toaster with this, this, this, and this. Instead, we have a Consumer Product Safety Commission that looks at it and says: These new products are unsafe, and for these reasons they can't be allowed. New products come in, they get examined, and they make sure we continue to have safe products. It should be the same for our financial products.

The CFPB has done an extraordinary job ending predatory practices and returning funds to ordinary working families. If you want working families to fail, then allow predatory products. If you want them to succeed, if you have a vision for America that involves the success of families, then let's end these financial wealth-stripping predatory practices. That means the CFPB has to be able to do its job. So it would be 100 percent the wrong direction to put these policy riders in the dark of night to dismantle the Dodd-Frank protections on these spending bills.

The Senate Democratic caucus is going to keep fighting for our American families. We are going to keep fighting for our American consumers. We are going to keep fighting for the success of individuals across this country and to ensure that the Wall Street casino stays closed.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BUDGET AGREEMENT

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, 3 short weeks ago, many of us, many of my colleagues enthusiastically welcomed the budget agreement reached between the White House and congressional leaders of both parties. It was a budget agreement that put aside the short-term shutdown politics and gave us the opportunity to finally give American families and businesses the longer term economic certainty they need and deserve. It was a budget agreement that made balanced increases in both defense and nondefense discretionary spending—increases that were fully paid for. It was a budget agreement that was negotiated in good faith by Republican and Democratic leadership and the White House. It was a preview of what we might be able to accomplish if we put the politics of the moment, the partisan politics of the 2016 campaign, and other issues aside and actually focus on getting some things done.

Barely 3 weeks later, barely 3 weeks since bipartisan majorities approved the agreement in both letter and spirit, here we are again staring down a potential government shutdown we all thought we had avoided because there was some insistence here—some colleagues who are insisting on poisoning the appropriations bills with policy riders which they know are opposed and which would undermine the ability of the Federal Government to function.

Let's be clear. The policy riders we are discussing, the policy riders I am objecting to don't represent a good-faith policy debate. These are predominantly partisan political priorities that

Republicans are otherwise unwilling to bring to the floor of this Chamber because they know they aren't popular with the American people. For example, in my view, we shouldn't be using the appropriations process to try to dismantle or sideline the Environmental Protection Agency and put clean air, clean water, and climate action at risk. If the majority chooses to make divesting cuts to Planned Parenthood, which more than 8,000 residents of my home State of Delaware rely on for health care and family planning, I think my colleagues should bring it to the floor in a separate bill so the American people know that is the focus of the legislation.

I join my colleagues today to make it clear that we are not going to use the appropriations process to pass narrow ideological riders that would not otherwise have been considered on this floor and have not made it through the appropriate process.

As the ranking member of the Appropriations financial services subcommittee, I want to be clear that it is particularly unacceptable to me to use the appropriations process to roll back many of the critical Wall Street reforms put in place over 5 years ago in response to the financial crisis that was devastating to the economy, to families, and to businesses throughout Delaware and the country. If the majority wants to bring a bill to the floor that rolls back some of the key consumer protections put in place in the Dodd-Frank bill, then let's have that debate. Frankly, it is a debate we at times have been engaged in on large- and small-scale issues.

The problem for my colleagues is that they don't have enough support in the Senate to pass these changes in a stand-alone bill. That is why they have taken the troubling step of jamming a 200-page bill—an entire banking bill loaded with controversial riders—right into a must-pass, last-minute government funding bill.

I ask my colleagues—it is my hope and my expectation that many of my Republican colleagues would say that I give honest and thorough consideration to new policy proposals, even ones I am disinclined to agree with. I am open to discussing ways to improve existing reforms so we don't unfairly burden, for example, small community banks that weren't responsible for the financial crisis. No legislation is perfect, but compromising and improving is what authorizing bills and policymaking bills are all about. But the examples I referenced are a few of many areas that should not be jammed into an appropriations bill at the last minute without being fully and carefully vetted by the authorizing committee.

It would be difficult for me today to address all the different policy riders that are in the various pieces of the appropriations bills currently under consideration. They range from education, to health, labor, natural resources, environment, civil rights, justice, hous-

ing, immigration, voting rights, telecommunications, to name just a few.

Our budgets—how we spend the taxpayers' dollars—are a reflection of our priorities. But there is a substantial difference between using the appropriations process to support a specific program, department, or Federal activity and using it to sneak around the legislative process and to jam new, big changes into last-minute appropriations bills.

Instead of manufacturing another crisis here in the days ahead, instead of having to look over the cliff of a government shutdown, let's get back to regular order, fulfill our responsibility to responsibly fund the government, and separately engage in positive discussions about how we can make the policy changes we need to ensure that our economy is competitive, that our country is innovative, and that our society continues to benefit from the work we all do here together.

PAUL RYAN has barely had time to set up his new office and settle into his new role and we are already back in crisis mode, walking back an agreement that, as I said at the outset, a majority of this Congress supported and a majority of America cheered.

I urge my colleagues to put the middle class and the stability and future of our economy ahead of partisan politics. Let's negotiate a clean and honest, a clear omnibus spending bill that is free of poison pill policy riders that only serve to divide this body and to unite special interests who at times work against us.

With that, I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AQUADVANTAGE SALMON

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this afternoon to speak on an energy-related topic—one that I think the Presiding Officer and many will have interest in—and that is the issue of innovation within the energy sector.

Before I speak on energy, I wish to bring up an issue that has come about today with the announcement coming out of the Food and Drug Administration that they have approved an application for what they have called AquAdvantage salmon.

This is actually quite disturbing news to any of us who care about our wild species of salmon, our healthy wild stocks, and who are proponents of good amounts of fresh seafood in our diets, knowing that nutritionally it is a pretty extraordinary source of omega-3 fatty acids and good-for-you nutrients.

We have been trying to get the FDA to make good on their commitment to make sure that pregnant women and nursing mothers know and understand the guidelines out there in terms of what is safe to consume when it comes to fish because, again, when we are looking for that good, nutritious food source, it is pretty tough to beat Mother Nature. Yet, that is exactly what this approval from the FDA is trying to do, which is, effectively, not only trying to beat Mother Nature but messing with Mother Nature.

Again, as one who believes that the real thing is the best thing for our families, the best thing to serve at the dinner table, I find it very troubling. In fact, I am spitting mad today. I have calmed down a lot since I received this news this morning, but I can tell my colleagues that people back home are going to be mad about this for a long time.

For about 5 years now, the FDA has been considering this application for this genetically engineered salmon. Again, they are giving it a pretty nice name, calling it the AquAdvantage, that somehow or another this gives an advantage to the salmon. Well, it does. What it does is allow this genetically engineered fish—I don't even know that I want to call it a fish—this genetically engineered organism to grow twice as fast as any other salmon in the water.

So how does it get to grow twice as fast? Well, it doesn't happen naturally. It is not the way Mother Nature orders it. What they do is they start messing with it. This process, which has now been approved by the FDA, is a process that splices genetic material from a Chinook salmon, a king salmon, and it takes that genetic material and it integrates it with a pout fish and an Atlantic salmon. People might know about an Atlantic salmon, a farmed salmon. What is an ocean pout? Let me show my colleagues what an ocean pout is. An ocean pout is basically this eel-type of bottom fish. Those of my colleagues who know their salmon know about the Chinooks, the sockeyes, and the chums, and they know that this isn't anything close to a salmon, whether it is a wild Alaskan salmon or whether it is a farmed salmon. This is an eel. We are taking a splice from this, and we are taking a splice from an Atlantic salmon, and we are basically splicing this with a Chinook salmon. The resulting organism, this company claims, is going to grow to the size of an Alaskan king salmon in a shorter period of time than that found in nature. Freaky.

We call this combination "Frankenfish" because it is just not right. It is just not right. It disturbs me, quite honestly, that the FDA would sign off on the approval of a genetically engineered animal designed for human consumption. This is the first time ever.

The FDA is saying this is going to be safe: We are going to make sure it is

safe. We are going to make sure that it doesn't interbreed with the wild stocks, and thus perhaps destroy them. We are going to make sure that it doesn't mix with them so that it doesn't transmit disease. We are going to make sure that it is separated so that it doesn't eat up all of the wild sources available for our Alaskan salmon.

They are going to make sure, apparently by doing this, because they are saying that with this approval, these AquAdvantage salmon can only be raised in land-based, contained hatchery tanks in two specific facilities in Canada and in Panama. We should all feel safer, I guess, because it is all going to be in Canada and Panama. There are no other locations under this application in the United States or elsewhere that are authorized to do this. Somehow or other, the FDA says they are going to maintain regulatory oversight over the production and the facilities, and they are going to conduct inspections to confirm that adequate physical containment measures remain in place. They will be working with the Canadian and Panamanian governments to be conducting inspections. Really? Do I feel safer about making sure that our wild and healthy stocks are going to be not infiltrated by the Frankenfish, by these genetically engineered organisms designed for human consumption, designed to grow twice as fast to get to the size of a king salmon, so that a company can derive the benefit of selling more of this fish.

Well, I am saying FDA should never have approved this—never have approved this. The fact is that the Alaska delegation, as well as members of other delegations in this body and on the other side, have pounded their fists for quite some time against this measure through the FDA. They know full well how much we object to it. At 7:55 last night my assistant got an email from the FDA saying that commissioner would like to talk to me about some imminent news. By the time the morning came around, the imminent news was already made public. Alaskans were already aware that this approval from FDA had come forth. It was not only me; it is my understanding that the head of the agriculture appropriations subcommittee—I met with him yesterday—didn't get a heads-up about it. The nominee was before us yesterday in the HELP Committee, and I actually put two questions to him about seafood. There was no heads-up that this was coming our way, just kind of, boom, lay it on the table.

I have to tell my colleagues, we have made no bones about the fact that this is wrong not only for Alaska and our wild stocks, it is wrong for our salmon stocks around the country, and it is something I am going to continue to fight.

I am not sure as we deal with this news today if we can get the FDA to reverse this. I am going to keep working

on it. But at a bare minimum, people around this country need to know what they are serving their families when it comes to seafood. If this is going to be allowed into the markets, if it is going to be allowed on restaurant menus, then it needs to be labeled as such.

The FDA has said there will be draft guidance on voluntary labeling indicating whether food has or has not been derived from GE Atlantic salmon. So, basically, if you want to put a label on that says this is a fake fish, a fake salmon, you can go ahead, but you don't have to. It is only voluntary.

That is not good enough for this mom. That is not good enough for most who care about what their families are eating. So we are going to continue to press for mandatory labeling if the FDA is going to approve—wrongheadedly, in my mind—this genetically engineered fake fish for human consumption. They darn well better agree that labeling will be required because I am not going to eat it.

ENERGY INNOVATION

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, let me switch to a better topic, and that is one I know the Presiding Officer cares a great deal about; that is, the issue of energy and the importance of energy to our Nation's economy and to our overall health.

I have come to this floor many times to highlight what I believe are the shortsighted, anti-energy decisions that we have seen come from this administration. Whether we are talking about the Keystone XL Pipeline, more than 7 years of delay and the eventual rejection of that infrastructure, whether it is the burdensome rules coming out of the EPA that raise the energy costs or whether it is the actions from the Department of Interior that seek to halt resource development in Federal areas, this administration has rarely ever worked with us to promote responsible energy, mineral, and timber development.

In Alaska this ever-shifting Federal regulatory environment played a very key role in the recent decision by Shell to abandon 7 years of work and \$7 billion of investment in the offshore Arctic. It was just this week we received word that another company, looking again at low oil prices but seeing this same deteriorating regulatory environment, decided to follow suit, and they are seeking to return their leases in the offshore.

The Obama administration has also canceled offshore lease sales in the State. It has hamstrung projects in our National Petroleum Reserve, which we absolutely need if we are ever going to refill our Trans-Alaska Pipeline. It has placed half of the National Petroleum Reserve off-limits, even though it was specifically designated for development. Of course we all know the situation in ANWR. This administration is trying to lock away 10 billion barrels of oil in the nonwilderness portion of

ANWR, which could be safely produced with development of just 0.01 percent of its surface area. The list goes on and on.

I told you I was going to move to more promising and more uplifting subjects than Frankenfish and what the administration has done to suppress our ability to access our energy resources. I do want to move to another area because I think this is an area and a focus that I would like to believe we can find support, not only working with the administration but working with colleagues and building some partnerships on both the public and the private side. This is in the area of energy innovation, where I believe there is greater hope for working together with this administration to make a real difference for our Nation. Innovation holds tremendous promise, not just for us as policymakers but also in terms of long-lasting benefits that it can deliver for not only the United States but around the world.

Innovation doesn't require more complex and costly regulations. It doesn't need to choose winners or losers in the energy sector. Instead, innovation offers a chance at common ground that will deliver results and help power our Nation for decades to come. No matter your motivation for seeking cleaner and more affordable energy, we should all be able to agree that without innovation—without pushing every day for that greater technology—our energy future and our economic prosperity are hardly secure.

The good news for us in this country is that the United States is the global leader in innovation. We hear this is a race and that America is falling behind, but I would contend that our strength and skill are unmatched. Our innovation, ideas, inventions and our products and processes have changed history and in turn changed the world.

The United States has led the way in research and development that has changed our lives and lives across the world for the better. Among Federal agencies, the Department of Energy, in particular, has played an important role in these efforts, and I think they can make even greater contributions, especially when it comes to vital basic research.

The DOE is hardly perfect. Many of us would make changes to the scope of its mission and improve its priorities if we were given the chance, but given that, the Department has also sparked innovation that has helped transform the global energy landscape. The most successful innovations give us more energy, reduce the amount of energy we use, as well as lower the cost we pay for energy. I think as we move forward we should keep those goals in focus and we will improve. Increasing access to energy, making it more affordable, and improving its environmental performance are the key factors that drive our innovation policy.

Those of us on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee are always

talking about innovation and how best to promote it through reasonable Federal policies. We understand how critical it is to our Nation's future. That is why energy and the innovation part of energy is a key part of our broad bipartisan Energy bill that we reported through the energy committee by a vote of 18 to 4 back in July.

The bill also includes legislation that is authored by Senator ALEXANDER to renew some of the energy-related portions of the America COMPETES Act. We have agreed to authorize a 4-percent increase in funding for basic energy research each year, which I think puts us on a responsible path to double our Nation's commitment to it.

It is basic research that is at the heart of the mission of our system of national labs and also many of our research universities. The men and women in the research sector are pushing to make that fundamental discovery—to conduct the basic research that could find the next big thing for energy. This type of research should be a priority for us, and the Department of Energy should be committed to helping new discoveries transition to market viability.

Within this bipartisan bill we also reauthorize the ARPA-E Program, which solicits ideas that are too early for private sector investment but with bridge funding has the opportunity to transform the energy sector. ARPA-E is a true hands-on program that ensures awardees meet milestones toward the goal of market viability. ARPA-E hasn't been around that long, but it has been promoting some good ideas, strong ideas, and producing some good results.

Our bill also supports innovation in a number of other areas; specifically, energy efficiency, energy storage, and distribution; in vehicles it provides for hybrid microgrid systems; and for recycling, for geothermal power, for marine hydrokinetic, and for many other developing technologies.

Recently, we have also seen more reports of private individuals and companies who plan to invest in energy technologies with the potential to transform the way energy is produced, delivered, and consumed. This, too, will help drive energy innovation in this country.

Back in July, Bill Gates announced his personal commitment to invest \$1 billion over 5 years to advance new energy technologies. He made that commitment based on his recognition that currently available energy options will not allow the world to achieve its much discussed climate goals in a way that also works to reduce the costs for people using energy. It is one thing to be working toward climate goals, but in doing so if all that we do is increase the cost to the consumer, that doesn't help us. His focus is as much on clean air and clean water as it is on lifting people around the world out of poverty.

I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Gates several weeks ago and look

forward to seeing what comes out of his commitment. I am also following the possibilities that are coming out of venture capital and other private investments. I think these efforts augment the Federal research and development dollars, in many cases ensuring that promising technologies are not just set up on a shelf somewhere but are pursued to a successful and productive result.

Now you have heard me say it on the floor many times, but we in the State of Alaska are desperate to see energy innovation. Energy prices in many parts of Alaska are much higher than the prices paid by our friends in the lower 48. In some communities in Alaska it costs 40 to 50 cents a kilowatt hour for electricity. In certain parts of the State, over half of a family's budget goes just toward energy to keep warm and keep the lights on. Can you imagine what that means when over half of your family's budget—half of your income—is used just to keep your lights on and keep yourself warm? It doesn't leave a lot for anything else, such as educating your kids, feeding them or for health care. It is a huge issue for us. There are so many things that contribute to the high cost of energy. It is the big geography and the lack of a comprehensive and interconnected energy delivery system. We have tremendous energy potential in the State of Alaska, and unfortunately many of our communities are just not powered by it. We have natural gas in abundance, and yet our second largest community in Alaska doesn't have access to natural gas. We are trying to get it there, but that is our current reality.

Many communities in rural Alaska still rely on diesel to generate their power. Delivering the diesel, whether it is moving it up river by barge or flying it in by plane is hugely expensive. It is not sustainable. Innovation is essential to moving these rural communities—and even the not so rural communities—off diesel and onto more sustainable, locally generated, and less expensive energy systems.

What we are doing in Alaska is bringing some very innovative technologies to communities around the State through a variety of State-run programs that are largely financed by the revenues that are derived from our oil production. Think about that. We are a State that derives most of our revenues and income from oil. We are taking a nonrenewable energy source, taking the revenues from that and helping to facilitate our renewable resources—our resources that will be there for well into the future. These programs need to be financed. We are doing so much of it from our oil production. Responsible development of Alaska's resources has enabled our State to take the necessary steps to improve energy delivery in our remote communities. In many ways this is almost like a virtuous cycle, where current energy production helps fund the next generation of energy production and where we harness

today's energy to significantly improve the lives of our people.

What we are seeing in the State are several communities working with various State agencies to integrate wind, solar, and geothermal into their electricity delivery system in an effort to displace the power that is normally generated from expensive diesel. It is the microgrids that we are seeing that are coming to be found as the solution. We are home to more microgrids in the State of Alaska than any other State out there. That is largely because they are the only option for us. They are the only option for many of our communities that lie far outside any regional transmission grid. We have transmission grids in what we call the Railbelt area. But it is difficult when you have large geography and small population numbers. So you are going to have to figure out how you can literally power one village at a time or maybe you get lucky and you are able to cluster a few.

But knowing what, for instance, the island of Kodiak has done with being able to power a major seafood-producing port through wind, combined with their hydro resources and also utilizing batteries—that area in Kodiak is almost 100 percent powered by renewable resources. This, again, is one of the major seafood-producing ports not only in the State but in the country. So the energy that is needed for those processes is coming to us by renewable energy sources—almost 100 percent. The irony—and we were able to talk about this briefly in the energy committee this morning—is that in order to meet increased demand in Kodiak, they are going to need to expand one of their hydro facilities, Terror Lake, and so they have asked for assistance with that. If they cannot get the expansion, which some are objecting to because they don't want to see an expansion of that dam, what will happen? You go back to diesel. You go back to diesel. That is not the answer here.

So what we have been doing with pioneering of our microgrids is something that I think provides States and the Federal Government with ample opportunities to conduct research and develop solutions to better integrate renewable technologies into these microgrids. In order for renewable technologies to be effective in the State, innovative research and development is required, and I think the result of those efforts has made a dramatic difference in many communities.

Bringing renewables online in remote communities like Kodiak has displaced hundreds of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel, not only saving the people who live there hundreds of thousands of dollars but resulting in a cleaner environment overall.

I do think it is exciting to think about what a difference future innovations in renewable technologies and energy storage could mean for communities not only in a place like Alaska

but really around our country and around the world. Whether it is through Federal research and development, whether it is through our State programs that are assisting our private capital, promoting innovation is a clear path to lower energy costs and a future with cleaner water and cleaner air.

We might not agree on every energy policy that comes to this Chamber, but I hope we can all agree that energy innovation is one key to ensuring our economic growth, our national security, as well as our international competitiveness. I look forward to working with colleagues in all of these areas.

With that, I see that my friend and colleague from Kansas—a gentleman who is always filled with thanksgiving and who has shared that with many of us today—is here on the floor, and so I will yield at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Alaska for her kind comments, her advice, and her help on several important issues we have worked on together. I hope she enjoyed the Thanksgiving meal we had—I guess it is called the Thursday lunch bunch.

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE AND GUANTANAMO BAY DETAINEES

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the French Government for taking aggressive and appropriate action to arrest and kill the terrorists responsible for last Friday's vicious attack in Paris that resulted in 129 killed and over 300 wounded. We all pray for the full recovery of those wounded and note that everywhere within our country we see the American flag at half staff, along with many displaying the flag of our ally France.

The good news today is that the mastermind of several terrorist plots and the plot that killed so many last Friday is dead. Abdelhamid Abaaoud is dead in the same fashion as his victims. So be it. Viva la France! Continuer le combat! Keep up the fight.

As our Nation memorializes those who perished in France, it is the absolute wrong time for President Obama and this administration to be putting forth a plan to relocate Guantanamo detainees to the U.S. mainland—the absolute wrong time.

Now we learn that the administration has delayed the much-publicized but secret plan to close Guantanamo and bring terrorists to the United States. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said, "I don't have any additional guidance for you but the plan will come relatively soon." He has been saying that for some time. Others think the plan could even be released while the President is gone for the G20 meeting in Turkey. As a personal aside, I might suggest he try to move the terrorists there. The reason Presi-

dent Obama delayed the plan is that we had a terrorist attack in France. France has gone to war. The United States is on high alert. Apparently he has tossed this decision and public announcement regarding the plan to the Department of Defense, which has stated there is nothing imminent. Thank goodness for that.

Now, beyond the security threat this poses to our communities in Kansas and in South Carolina or Colorado—the sites which this administration has surveyed for potential relocation—there has been no intelligence assessment regarding the danger of moving enemy combatants from Guantanamo to the United States. That is amazing. The question is, How can the administration ask Kansans or Coloradans or South Carolinians or any Americans to paint a bull's-eye on their community without providing assurances that moving detainees to the United States will not pose a threat to them or our national security? It seems unfathomable, yet this President is proposing to do just that.

This President's unending affinity for Executive orders risks overriding his Attorney General's view of the law, the advice of those at the Department of Defense, especially those close to Fort Leavenworth, and military law enforcement. It goes against the will of the Congress, which voted in this body 91 to 3 to maintain a prohibition on moving detainees to the mainland.

There is absolutely no intelligence to support the move—none. In short, the Senate, Congress, Department of Defense, the Attorney General, and the American people have spoken.

Yesterday I wrote Department of Defense Secretary Carter to ask whether an intelligence report has been done to support the administration's claims that Guantanamo Bay is a recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. Some people believe that. Common sense tells you, however, that moving detainees to the mainland would be a greater recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. I asked if an assessment showed detainement in the United States would decrease recruiting or did an intelligence product show that national security threats would decrease if any enemy combatants are held in the United States. From my discussions with Members of this body on the Senate Intelligence Committee, the answer is that they have no comprehensive intelligence assessment.

Simply put, an assessment regarding the transfers of detainees to the mainland has not been done. So I have asked Secretary Carter and the Department of Defense to ensure that an assessment is completed. To do otherwise would be irresponsible and reckless. How can the President of the United States allow ISIS to paint a target on those who live near what would become Gitmo North? No community in the United States wants that label.

Fort Leavenworth, in particular, is not a suitable replacement for Gitmo.

It is the intellectual center of the Army. It hosts our Nation's best and brightest warfighters at the Command and General Staff College, which also hosts 100 international officers every year.

I want to remind my colleagues just how important Fort Leavenworth's mission is to the Army and to our national security and of the risk that this entire mission would be endangered by making it a terrorist prison.

Fort Leavenworth is home to the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command Combined Arms Center. The Combined Arms Center oversees 13 schools, including the Command and General Staff College. Most recently, Fort Leavenworth was named the "Army University," giving our intellectual center of the Army an official title. Since 1881, the Command and General Staff College and the Combined Arms Center have been engaged in the primary mission of preparing the Army and its leaders for war.

In order to accomplish critical missions, Fort Leavenworth develops and integrates Army leader development, doctrine education, lessons learned, functional training, training support, training development, and proponent responsibilities in order to support mission command and to prepare the Army to successfully conduct unified land operations in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational environment—a lot of words. It is a big mission, an important mission. To degrade Fort Leavenworth to a terrorist prison would have ominous repercussions to our professional military and the value it serves every American and our national security.

In addition, we must consider how our allies will respond to having enemy combatants so close to their top military leaders training at Fort Leavenworth. In my effort to reach out to Embassies tied to the school, all have expressed their deep support for the International Military Officers Division, its value to their military and security, and the importance of maintaining the program at Fort Leavenworth. There is every possibility that the countries that participate in the Command and General Staff College would reconsider their participation given the relocation of terrorists. This would bring negative consequences and represent a terrible detriment to the partnership building that takes place during their course work. It would mean a loss of international cooperation for American military education and our national security.

There are so many imperative factors that must be examined at Fort Leavenworth, in Colorado, and in South Carolina, factors that we cannot ignore. The fact that the FBI has nearly 1,000 investigations into ISIS activity within the United States and all 50 States, that ISIS released a video right after the attacks in Paris stating that the United States was next, and, most important, the fact that we are not deal-

ing with everyday criminals—the detainees currently held at Guantanamo Bay are enemy combatants, terrorists, individuals with no remorse, and with a recidivism of 30 percent and a strong desire to return to the battlefield. The reality is, these individuals and the organizations they support pose the greatest risk to national security we face today.

This administration should not obstruct the will of Congress reflecting the voice of the American people, which has prohibited this White House from transferring detainees from Gitmo to the United States every year since 2009 when we first won this battle. We won the battle back then. Why do we have to repeat it now?

If the President believes he can act without consequences, he is wrong. Again, 91 Senators voted in favor of this prohibition just last week when we passed the National Defense Authorization Act. That is not just a majority, that is a veto-proof majority. Article II of the Constitution does not provide this President—any President—with the power to ignore the law.

Just the other night in a tele-town-hall meeting, caller after caller asked if the President's actions are constitutional. The question was, How can the President do this when Congress has prohibited funding? In my view and that of the President's own Attorney General, if the President acts by Executive order, he is acting unconstitutionally.

I agree with our Founding Fathers such as George Mason who said "When the same man, or set of men, holds the sword and the purse, there is an end of liberty" and James Madison who said it is "particularly dangerous to give the keys of the treasury and the command of the army, into the same hands."

I have mentioned the Congress, the merits of Ft. Leavenworth, the Constitution, but what I have not mentioned yet are our servicemembers. We have asked so much of our men and women in uniform over the past 14 years. We have asked them to go into harm's way before every bit of equipment was ready. We have asked them to deploy and redeploy with almost no dwell time. We have asked them to extend their stays, and we have put them in more places across the globe than any period in history. They have done it all without hesitation or complaint because we have the best fighting force in the history of the world.

I am unwilling to ask them to take on the challenge of guarding enemy combatants in the United States and put their families at risk for harassment, kidnapping, or other tactics homegrown terrorists and foreign fighters have used or will use. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines do not live anonymously when their families are stationed with them, as is the case at Ft. Leavenworth.

I believe, along with many who have worn the uniform, that the attacks in

Benghazi may have broken the Nation's promise to never leave a man in harm's way. On a personal note, when I signed up to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps, I was told that if I was in harm's way, I would never be left behind. That is what the Marine Corps could do for me. The Corps would have my back either by squad—if I got in harm's way—or they would send the platoon or the company or the battalion or the regiment or the division or the whole Marine Corps, and I believed that. I still believe it as the senior marine in the Congress. The Marines would have my back.

It has been the same for generations before me and hopefully generations after—that is, until now. If we are going to ask our men and women to fight ISIS or to put their families at risk, they have to know that we have their backs.

Until that bond is restored and we have a President who is willing to lead instead of following, our Nation remains vulnerable to every terrorist organization and cell in the world. We must put national security back as our top priority. It must be our first duty in Congress and by the Commander in Chief.

I stand on the floor because America's national security is my top priority. Bringing Guantanamo Bay detainees to the United States is not putting our Nation's security above politics, campaign promises, or anything else.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

FUNDING VETERANS PROGRAMS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the best way to fight this war on terrorism is to give the President of the United States the tools he has asked for and he needs. Part of that is fully funding support for veterans.

The Presiding Officer sits on the Veterans' Affairs Committee with me. He stood side by side with most of us on funding veterans programs.

Some of my colleagues haven't. They are happy to send people off to war and spend all the money we need but are not so generous when it comes to taking care of our men and women when they return. There are higher suicide rates, higher head injury rates, higher drug addiction rates, and higher unemployment than regular civilians. Yet people in this body, especially the tea party in the House of Representatives, sometimes don't seem to be able to find the money to spend to help veterans.

NOMINATION OF ADAM SZUBIN

Mr. BROWN. Another way to fight this war on terrorism and to help our efforts on fighting ISIS is to actually put the people in place in the U.S. Government who help us do that. I came to the floor today to join Senator CASEY—my friend from Pennsylvania who is

going to mention him too—and to support the nomination of Adam Szubin.

Adam Szubin has been delayed for more than 200 days by Republican obstruction in the Senate banking committee. Well, who is Adam Szubin? Adam Szubin has been nominated—listen to this job—to be the Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes at the Treasury Department. This isn't a low-level employee who has nothing to do with ISIS, fighting ISIS, and fighting terrorism; this is the No. 1 person in the Treasury Department—perhaps the No. 1 person in our whole government next to the Commander in Chief—who is in the position to fight terrorism and fight the kinds of financial crimes that ISIS depends on to fund its operations.

We had a hearing. Originally Mr. Szubin worked for the Bush administration for a number of years. He has been serving interim during the Obama administration, but my colleagues on the banking committee, my colleagues in the Senate, simply have refused to bring Mr. Szubin to a vote. He served Republican and Democratic administrations in senior positions. There is no question, zero question, that he is qualified for this position.

Let me tell you a little more about him. In 15 years he has distinguished himself as a tough, aggressive enforcer of our Nation's sanction laws—not against England or Germany—but against countries such as Iran, Russia, North Korea, against money launderers, against terrorists, against narcotraffickers, the source of a good bit of the money for terrorist groups such as ISIS.

Republicans say the administration is not doing enough; Barack Obama won't stand up. Well, the Republicans are blocking this appointment that would give the President the tools he needs to fight terrorism.

Again, more about Mr. Szubin, he earned his undergraduate and law degrees with high honors, he was a Fulbright scholar in Israel before joining the Department of Justice. As I said, he served with President Bush and with President Obama; he was counsel to the Deputy Attorney General. He worked as trial attorney on the Terrorism Litigation Task Force. He received the Department of Justice Special Commendation Award for his work countering terrorism. For 9 years he directed the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control. Many of us first came to know him then—in both parties—as a thoughtful policymaker and superb lawyer. Both parties respected him until Barack Obama nominated him; then Republicans seemed to forget how good he was and how qualified he was.

The Anti-Defamation League in this letter described him as an “intellectual heavyweight who has worked effectively with global partners to amplify the effects of U.S. sanctions.”

The United Against Nuclear Iran, a group that strongly opposed the Presi-

dent's deal with Iran, supports Mr. Szubin to be promoted, to be confirmed by the Senate.

Many of my colleagues on the banking committee said: We are not going to confirm Szubin because he was for the Iran nuclear deal. Well, he worked for the President of the United States, who was negotiating it. Of course, he was for it. But are they going to oppose him because they don't like what his boss did or are they opposing him because they don't like much of anything President Obama did?

The fact is that group after group, whether they are for the Iran nuclear agreement or against it—it really doesn't matter—supports Mr. Szubin.

His mentor, Bush Under Secretary Stuart Levy—his mentor and his predecessor, not immediate predecessor but predecessor—was confirmed by the Senate 3 weeks after his nomination. But you know what, both parties then with President Bush recognized that you confirm somebody who is central to the war on terrorism. Republicans then believed that.

Today, with a Democratic President, even though Adam Szubin is supported by darn near everybody—with his qualifications, with his support and work in two administrations—they don't want to bring him forward for a vote. I am not even sure why. I hear all kinds of reasons, none of them really on the record, none of them official, from my colleagues. Oh, they don't like President Obama or this guy must be a bad guy because President Obama appointed him or he was part of the government when the nuclear agreement with Iran was negotiated. All of these reasons simply don't pass a straight-face test. This is a critical national security post, and it needs to be filled permanently and quickly.

Mr. Szubin heads what is, in effect, Treasury's economic war room. It manages U.S. efforts to combat terrorist financing and fight financial crimes. Again, ISIS, ISIL, gets a good bit of its funding through illegal activities like that. If the U.S.—and if Mr. Szubin has the full range of powers that we have given him in the Congress, he can help us fight that kind of financing, stop that kind of financing for ISIS.

He is helping to lead the charge to choke off their funding sources to prevent them from developing additional capacity to strike more targets around the world. He is working to hold Iran to its commitments under the nuclear deal and to lead a campaign against the full range of Iran's other destructive activities. He is supported by the Global Jewish Advocacy and, as I said earlier, by the Anti-Defamation League and by United Against Nuclear Iran.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the documents from the organizations I just mentioned.

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

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, November 4, 2015.

AJC STATEMENT ON ADAM J. SZUBIN NOMINEE
FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF TREASURY FOR
TERRORISM AND FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Jason Isaacson, AJC Associate Executive Director for Policy, today issued the following statement on the organization's behalf:

AJC has worked with, and admired the dedication and effectiveness of, the Under Secretary-designee for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, Adam Szubin, whose nomination is now before the Senate Banking Committee.

At a time when Iran and its terrorist proxies are ever more active and empowered, and when other terrorist threats to the United States and its allies are escalating, it is urgent that Treasury have in this critical position an experienced, creative, tireless watchdog, who has the know-how and the authority to lead U.S. efforts to track and choke off the financial lifeblood of terror.

As Acting Under Secretary, Adam Szubin has demonstrated that resolve and that skill—to the benefit of America's security and that of our allies. We look forward to his continued public service.

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE,
New York, NY, September 9, 2015.

Hon. RICHARD SHELBY,
Chairman, Banking Committee, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SHERROD BROWN,
Ranking Member, Banking Committee, U.S.
Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHELBY AND RANKING MEMBER BROWN: On behalf of the Anti-Defamation League, we write in support of President Obama's nomination of Adam J. Szubin to serve as Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, Department of Treasury.

As director of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), Mr. Szubin has earned a reputation as an intellectual heavyweight who has worked effectively with global partners to amplify the effects of U.S. sanctions. OFAC has been dubbed America's war room, a front line for the United States and its allies against terrorists and tyrants. It is a critical part of the effort to engage global partners to amplify the impact of sanctions and to innovate in the way that the U.S. targets violators.

OFAC's effectiveness, under Mr. Szubin's leadership, has exemplified the balance between working quietly behind the scenes or through diplomatic channels and sending strong public messages around the world about America's robust commitment to crack down sponsors of terror like Iran.

But Mr. Szubin has done much more than simply ably administer and enforce U.S. sanction against terrorism, weapons proliferation and rogue states. He has continued to expand and innovate how sanctions are devised and implemented as he has done with respect to sanctions on Iran and Russia.

As Members of Congress have debated how to balance diplomacy and sanctions, leaders on all sides of the debate are unified in their assessment that the strong, vigorous enforcement efforts by committed professionals like Adam Szubin have been one of the most potent and effective tools against the funding of terror and the isolation of rogue regimes.

We urge the Committee to act promptly and favorably on Mr. Szubin's nomination.

Sincerely,
JONATHAN GREENBLATT,
National Director.

[From the United Against Nuclear Iran, Nov. 3, 2015]

UANI SUPPORTS SENATE CONFIRMATION OF ADAM SZUBIN AS UNDER SECRETARY FOR TERRORISM AND FINANCIAL CRIMES

AMBASSADOR WALLACE AND SENATOR LIEBERMAN EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR CONFIRMATION

NEW YORK, NY—United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI) CEO Ambassador Mark D. Wallace and UANI Chairman Senator Joseph I. Lieberman issued the following statement today regarding the Senate confirmation of Adam Szubin as Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes in the U.S. Department of the Treasury:

“UANI was a leading opponent of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear agreement with Iran. The administration’s success in blocking bipartisan and majority opposition to the JCPOA on Capitol Hill should not be the basis to oppose the confirmation of Director Szubin as Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Crimes. Simply put, he is the best person for the job, a true expert, a dedicated public servant and fully committed to serve his country. He has shown those traits over two successive administrations—a rare feat in Washington. On behalf of UANI, and in the strongest possible terms, we support Director Szubin’s confirmation. We respectfully call on all of our Senate friends who were rightfully frustrated by the administration’s tactics related to the JCPOA to put those concerns aside and support the confirmation of Director Szubin.”

Mr. BROWN. He has support across the political spectrum—or at least he did until he was nominated by this President.

I serve on the banking committee with Chairman SHELBY. I sit next to him as the ranking member. I like Senator SHELBY. I work with Mr. SHELBY day-by-day on many things. He has described Mr. Szubin as “eminently qualified.” He has served with distinction in senior national security roles—I will say it again—for 15 years under Presidents of both parties. He is well regarded around the world for his intellect, courage, and expertise. He deserves the strong backing of the Senate.

Republicans in Congress need to stop holding our national security apparatus hostage to political demands. They should allow—we should allow Adam Szubin and other national security nominees to be approved as soon as possible.

Again, strip the partisanship away. Do what is right: Confirm Adam Szubin; confirm these other national security people.

They aren’t controversial. The only thing controversial about these nominations is that Barack Obama made them. Well, the last time I checked, he was elected President of the United States twice, including my No. 1 swing State in the country—the hardest one to win, the one that both parties fight for in every election. He carried my State twice. He carried my State by over 100,000 votes.

He is the President of the United States. He appointed Adam Szubin, who is eminently qualified, who has had support from both parties. Why don’t my colleagues confirm him, giv-

ing him the full range of powers to fight ISIS, to keep ISIS from getting the resources and the financing they are getting now to launch these terrible terrorist crimes against innocent men and women all over the world?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is in morning business.

The Senator is recognized.

ISIS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the recent terrorist attacks around the world—including, of course, the horror of Paris—but also to talk about what undergirds that, and that is the threat posed by ISIS. Some use the acronym ISIL; Daesh is another phrase that has been used to describe this vicious terrorist group. But I think we need to—at the same time as we are trying to prevent terrorist attacks—focus on the broader policy to destroy ISIS.

We know it has been 4½ years since the people of Syria began protesting against the repressive regime of Bashar al-Assad. As we also know, that conflict escalated rapidly and was coupled with a dysfunctional and sectarian government in Iraq, especially starting from the capital of Baghdad. The fighting and unrest created space for extremism to grow and to take root.

About 1½ years ago, we saw the emergence of the group we now know as ISIS. This group poses a very serious threat to our national security as well as to the security of many parts of the world. There is no question that ISIS is a clear threat to the security of our partners in the region and—as we know most horrifically, in the last few days—in Europe.

They also have a desire to attack the U.S. homeland. We know that. We have to remember that this is a group that originated as an Al Qaeda offshoot. They share the same motivations or at least similar motivations, and they, of course, share the same brutality, if not worse.

In recent weeks, ISIS has claimed responsibility for horrific attacks outside of Syria and Iraq. They claim responsibility for the bombing of a Russian airliner that went down over Egypt in the Sinai, killing all of its passengers—Russian passengers. ISIS suicide bombers attacked a market in Beirut, Lebanon, last week, just before Paris. Then, of course, came Friday night, the 13th. This was, as has been reported, a coordinated, ruthless, and despicable attack in Paris that killed 129 innocent civilians.

So what this horror—and we could list other examples, but these most recent events remind us—what this horror reminds us, is what our job is in Congress and across our country, but

especially when it comes to the role of the U.S. Federal Government. We have at least two responsibilities in this area. No. 1 is to prevent terrorists from coming into the United States of America; and second, but related, is to destroy ISIS, without a doubt. To do both of these will continue to be difficult and challenging. Anyone who comes up with a simple proposal or a commentary that makes it seem simple really doesn’t know what they are talking about, really doesn’t understand the complexity of this. I even doubt their commitment to it when they give one-line answers to difficult challenging problems.

Last year, I was blessed, in June of 2014, to have the chance to go to Normandy. Senator LEAHY, the senior Senator from Vermont, organized a visit to Normandy on the 70th anniversary of D-day. For someone representing any State—in my case representing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, from where so many Pennsylvanians and, of course, so many Americans died on the beaches of Normandy or died within days of that battle—it was deeply moving to be in Normandy, to listen to presentations from those who had lived through the horror of Normandy and those who were coming back to celebrate the fact that they had served and were alive after these 70 years.

We were able to see the beaches. We saw the cemetery. I walked down to the cemetery, and the first grave I happened to look at was one of a Pennsylvania soldier, just fortuitously when I was looking at the first marker, the first grave.

One of the themes of that visit, of course, was France, the people of France thanking the United States, thanking allies and expressing gratitude in so many different ways, in heartfelt ways, at the leadership level, from President Hollande, all the way down. And one of the best images of that gratitude was displayed in this picture. I will put it up on the easel. This is an enlarged version of what was on a brochure. You can see it, and it is written in two languages, of course. The translation is “70th Anniversary of the Liberation of France,” in English and French, and the date—June 6, 2014, commemorating the 70th anniversary.

What you may not be able to make out from a distance is the image. It is, of course, a beach, and it is the image of a little girl. She has an orange plastic pail and a green plastic shovel—an image we all understand—a child going on to the beach to play in the sand. She is in a yellow dress, with her back towards us, and she is moving towards the beach.

What is so moving about this expression of gratitude by the people of France is that the shadow that emanates from that little girl is not her shadow. Rather, it is the shadow of an American GI, or what I believe to be an American GI, and I am not sure anyone could contest that. It is a profound and

very moving and very powerful expression of gratitude that all of us can understand; that this little girl would not be able to be on that beach to play in freedom—or any of the other places that were under attack during World War II—were it not for the bravery of American soldiers, the commitment of the American people, and the work that was done to undergird that effort by the allies against the axis powers.

It is a very powerful reminder of the contribution of that soldier depicted by the shadow and the freedom that little girl can enjoy because of that sacrifice—a profound sacrifice, a sacrifice you cannot even describe if you had volumes of books to write about it. I was moved because it was a wonderful expression of gratitude to the people of the United States by the French people.

I was thinking about that in the aftermath of this horror. Folks all over the United States and around the world were expressing solidarity with the people of Paris and the people of France, and it gave us the chance to try to give back to them in the aftermath of their tragedy, a year or so after they had expressed gratitude to us. This relationship between our two countries is very strong and goes back to the beginnings of our Republic, even back to the days of the Revolution.

That image of that little girl probably couldn't be expressed or presented were it not for what happened in World War II and what happened on the beaches of Normandy. Again, we were able to achieve that result by working with allies the world over. It would not have been possible were it not for the work of people around the country sacrificing—the soldiers and their families, the factories, the spouses who worked in the factories while soldiers were overseas. There was a lot of good work done then by the Congress to support the war effort. We have to figure out a way here to get back to that kind of sacrifice, that kind of commitment.

There was a reminder recently of what a Member of this body said around that time, about 1945. Senator Arthur Vandenberg from the State of Michigan delivered a seminal speech in January 1945 on this floor. Senator Vandenberg was a Republican, an avowed isolationist and a strong opponent of President Roosevelt. But on that day he said:

We cannot drift to victory. We must have maximum united effort on all fronts. . . . and we must deserve the continued united effort of our own people.

It is Vandenberg's example of setting aside partisan politics for the good of our Nation that gives us this expression: Politics stops at the water's edge. We have all heard that expression. If we haven't, we should educate ourselves, and if we have heard it, we should remind ourselves of it. But I am afraid when we debate foreign policy and security policy, there is often a dismissal of that basic lesson he taught us. I am afraid we have lost sight of his

legacy that politics must stop at the water's edge when it comes to our security, whether that is the fight against terrorism itself or whether that is a military campaign against ISIS.

This fight against ISIS demands our attention, but it also demands our unity. Unity is not just a nice expression, something we should hope for. The challenge demands it. If we are not unified, it is going to be very difficult to defeat ISIS or any other threat, frankly. We must not do oversight by sound bite when it comes to this policy. We can engage, as some have done—not everyone but enough to be concerned in both Houses of Congress—in categorical condemnation of the President's policy on virtually everything in the international arena. That doesn't move the ball down the field. It also doesn't absolve the President of accepting and incorporating critiques of the policy—specific critiques of what we should be doing or are not doing or might want to consider. But categorical condemnation doesn't help anyone. It doesn't solve the problem. It just divides people and prevents us from having that essential unity to make sure the strategy works.

I have been critical of a number of the President's policies on the international stage. I haven't always agreed with him. But if one is going to disagree with the President or disagree with a colleague about something as important as a strategy to defeat what most people believe is the biggest threat to the civilized world, you should be very specific. Unity demands that you be specific. We don't have time for just words and finger pointing. We need a bipartisan approach to this challenge.

So we do need bipartisanship. We need sober and serious deliberation, and we also need spirited debate. I am not advocating that someone doesn't criticize the policy or engage in a very heated exchange with someone who has a different point of view. But it has to be a debate, and it has to be an engagement that yields a result. And the result is a policy and a strategy that is going to be effective and that has some degree of substantial unity.

A lot of our allies look at the squabbles here in Washington and wonder how serious we are about this fight. If all we do is just comment and answer reporters' questions, maybe go to a hearing once in a while, that is OK, but this policy is going to take a lot more than that. Some of our allies look at our failure to unite behind a common strategy and wonder whether the United States will be an enduring partner for as long as it takes to eliminate ISIS from the planet—not just to defeat them on the battlefield but to destroy them. A lot of these allies, I am afraid, are wishing for more Senator Vandenberg or at least more Vandenberg-Roosevelt days, when someone could disagree almost violently about domestic policy or even an aspect of our security, but at some point you

came together and said: We are going to move forward with this strategy and work together.

In November of last year, the President outlined a multipart strategy to address the threat posed by ISIS. He spoke about the airstrike campaign in Iraq and Syria, which now involves 11 countries and has yielded more than 8,000 airstrikes as of last week. Those strikes have taken out ISIS leaders. They have taken out financiers, bomb makers, foreign fighters and foreign fighter recruiters.

Of course, most recently—just last week, just before the horrific news about Paris—we were told the man responsible for the beheadings of ISIS hostages had, in fact, been killed. That was a good result for the civilized world. We also heard from the President at that time—and since that time—of a 60-plus nation coalition.

Most recently, there have been hits on the tanker trucks bringing oil out of ISIS-held areas for sale on the black market, hits on communications equipment or weapons caches, and they have helped protect opposition fighters who cleared the way for significant territorial gains, especially by the Kurdish Peshmerga forces—great fighters in this battle. Reports now indicate that ISIS territorial holdings in Iraq and Syria have been diminished by as much as 25 percent in roughly the last year. CENTCOM's assessment—this isn't an assessment by a politician; this is CENTCOM—indicates that the refinery in the city of Tikrit has been largely retaken, as has been the city of Sinjar and a main road connecting ISIS strongholds in Raqqa and Mosul. These airstrikes are denying ISIS safe haven and significantly hindering their ability to move freely around areas where they operate.

So what have we heard over and over? Airstrikes alone will not win this. I agree with that. I get that. But airstrikes are moving the ball down the field in the sense that they are giving the opportunity to fighters on the ground and helping in other aspects of the strategy. So we have to continue the airstrikes. I hope people around here don't start saying: Well, airstrikes alone don't do the job; so let's stop the airstrikes. No, we have to continue them and, if necessary, for years—many years.

But this strategy is not just a military strategy. The President also outlined an effort to counter the financial networks that support ISIS, which gets funding from multiple sources. We know them: illicit oil sales, trafficking in antiquities and other goods, extortion of the local communities, and outside donations. The Department of Defense is targeting financiers for kinetic strikes, a fancy way of saying you are going to be taken out if you are a financier. Treasury has sanctioned a number of senior ISIS leaders and facilitators, cutting off access to the U.S. financial system. The strategy also includes measures to address foreign fighter recruitment and travel. We

are also working to expose ISIS's hypocritical propaganda which many Muslim leaders around the world have said is inconsistent with their religious values. It is clear there can be no enduring defeat of ISIS without remedies for the governance issues which created this space for extremism to fester.

In Iraq we are working to create an inclusive government that has a capability to counter ISIS. In Syria we need a negotiated political solution that ensures Bashar al-Assad—whose continued presence in Damascus has been a recruiting windfall for ISIS—has no role in the future of Syria and has to go. I have said that many times. I appreciate the fact that Secretary Kerry and his team have recognized these underlying problems and have worked to address them.

So while the administration has taken important steps, we know it is not enough. We know that. Recent events require an intensification of our efforts. I have critiqued this Syria policy for years and will continue to press the administration to do more on ISIS financing. We have to make sure ISIS can't pay their people's salaries. We have to cut off their financing so they can't operate, so they can't pay for propaganda, so they can't buy weapons, so they can't buy ammunition, and so they can't make the horrific IEDs that kill innocent civilians and soldiers. So we must continue this debate as Members of the Senate with the administration. Part of making sure we get the financing challenge in the right place is to confirm Mr. Adam Szubin, who would play a substantial determinative role in the Treasury Department.

So what do we do? It has been very difficult to get people focused on a bipartisan strategy. There is a lot more we can do. I believe the establishment of a bipartisan study group, comprised of experts and former government officials from both sides of the aisle, will be useful at this juncture. This group should be authorized by Congress, appropriated a modest amount of money for supporting its work, similar to the Iraq Study Group formed in 2006. The group should evaluate the nature of the ISIS threat as well as the conditions in Iraq and Syria that have allowed it to grow and evolve, and it should evaluate the military and nonmilitary options available to the United States to address this threat and the underlying conflicts and governance issues. There is a lot this group could do and contribute to what would be a stronger, bipartisan, unified policy. There are many outside experts whose careers of service in the Middle East, and civilian, military, and intelligence roles, offer a wealth of expertise. This group could conduct its work over a 6- to 9-month period and report back to Congress with its findings. If they could do it faster, we would certainly authorize and encourage them.

Initiating a bipartisan study doesn't mean we should press pause on our current efforts. Members of Congress need

to continue supporting our soldiers, bringing the fight to ISIS with intensity and focus. We need to continue our efforts to reach a negotiated political transition in Syria and to encourage inclusivity and good governance in Iraq. If a Sunni soldier doesn't feel a part of his own government, they have to support a unifying government. We need to continue to press the growing humanitarian crisis emanating from Iraq and Syria, but I believe our efforts to defeat ISIS and our long-term goal of countering violent extremism would benefit from a serious bipartisan expert study group.

In closing, I will once again invoke the words of Senator Vandenberg. In the speech he gave in the 1940s, he said: "Here in the Senate we do not have perpetual agreement between the two sides of the aisle, but we have never failed to have basic unity when crisis calls."

"We have never failed to have basic unity when crisis calls." Crisis has called, right now. We know that. The crisis is ISIS and terrorism. We have to destroy ISIS and prevent terrorism from coming to our shores. We don't have time for politics. We don't have time for people talking in sound bites and pretending they are doing oversight. We need bipartisan work that will bring people together on a unified strategy. I urge my colleagues to reflect on the spirit of Vandenberg's seminal speech and to find a unified path forward that supports our long-standing partners and protects the security of this great Nation.

I will conclude with a picture. This is a picture of a little girl who can walk on a beach in freedom because of the bravery and sacrifice of our soldiers in World War II. If we are worthy—worthy of that sacrifice—we had better get our act together, come together—both parties—and make sure we have a bipartisan policy. We don't have time for finger-pointing. We have to come together and make sure we do all we can to have a sound, serious, bipartisan effort against ISIS and against terrorists. I believe that is a mission worthy of a great nation and certainly worthy of the sacrifice of the people who are on the battlefield right now—our soldiers, our fighters, as well as soldiers from around the world—and certainly worthy of the sacrifice that led to the beautiful expression of gratitude that the French people gave us just last year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I look forward to working with my colleague from Pennsylvania on that sound bipartisan policy he is talking about, and I want to talk a little bit about that today. He mentioned Senator Vandenberg, who famously said that partisanship ends at the water's edge. I think he would have been surprised by President Obama's comments beyond the water's edge in Turkey yesterday,

where he attacked Republicans who dared to talk about the need for us to ensure that we know who is coming to our shores and specifically with regard to refugees and having a proper vetting process in place. In fact, the House of Representatives—with over 40 votes from Democrats—I understand just voted on legislation today, which is a veto-proof majority, to say we ought to tighten requirements for people who want to come to our shores.

So we do need to work together. We do need to ensure that partisanship does not get in the way of working together as Americans to solve these problems. The partisan speech from across the ocean, well beyond our shores, was an example of where we are not meeting the standards Mr. Vandenberg set out.

As we all know now, last weekend ISIS terrorists killed over 130 innocent people in a series of very well-coordinated attacks in Paris. I would say these attacks did not occur in isolation. They were one but a series of attacks that occurred within a 24-hour period. Sometimes we forget the context of these attacks. The series of attacks left 43 people dead in Beirut, 18 people dead in Baghdad, countless wounded—all ISIS attacks. In the preceding month, ISIS took credit for a downed Russian airplane, claiming the lives of 224 innocent civilians. In September, Islamic extremists murdered nearly 50 in Yemen.

In fact, if we look back over the period of last year, several hundred civilians have been killed in nearly 30 attacks—incidents spanning the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, Asia, and North America. It is impossible to deny the growing threat that this extremism poses to our Nation, our allies, and our shared values and global stability.

Despite all of its great qualities, technology has bridged the oceans that once separated us from foreign turmoil and brought this threat to our communities and to our homes, the places we feel most safe. These attacks must serve as a wake-up call, not only about the nature of the enemy we face in ISIS but about the chaotic and dangerous state of the world and the dire need for American leadership to address it.

The attacks in Paris were not a "set-back," as the President said. They were a continuation of terrorist acts. They were a tragedy and a warning—a warning that if we fail to take a leadership role in combatting extremist behavior everywhere it resides, we will confront another tragedy here, on our shores.

We cannot develop a successful strategy to defeat ISIS unless we understand its true nature. There has been a lot of talk this week about Syrian refugees and whether they should be properly vetted. Of course they should, but we need to take a broader look at this issue and have a broader discussion about the roots of the problem: Why are these refugees streaming into Europe and coming here? We need to look

at not just the roots of the problem but what is the comprehensive strategy to address that problem.

We can't develop a successful strategy to defeat ISIS unless we understand its true nature. The President's insistence on downplaying the extremist threat and viewing each act in isolation is a fundamental flaw in his national security policy, in my belief. Referring to ISIS as the "JV team," as it seized nearly one-third of Iraq, publicly stating that ISIS has been "contained" just hours before the attack in Paris, and then referring to those attacks as a mere "setback" are all symptomatic of this failed policy, in my view.

I think this is a time for moral and strategic clarity. I think of Roosevelt and Churchill in World War II. I think of Kennedy and Reagan in the Cold War. Times of crisis require seeing threats as they are and not as we might wish them to be. Nothing would make me happier than if the President of the United States would provide this clarity.

We now know that the Paris attacks were planned in Syria, organized in Belgium, and carried out in France. This revelation is yet another confirmation of a key fact many of us have been saying for years: ISIS is a global threat with global reach and ambitions. It is motivated by a radical Islamist ideology that while rejected by the majority of Muslims, nevertheless holds great appeal to too many Muslims around the world. This ideology rejects any form of government that is not based on a radical interpretation of Sunni Islamism and holds that it is the duty of all Muslims to wage jihad against those who do not share their views—including of course the United States, including of course Israel, including of course the apostate regimes, as they call them, like America's Arab allies all through the Middle East.

The President continues to insist that the limited scale and scope of the administration's strategy to counter ISIS is working, but ISIS is not just a nuisance to be managed. It is a global threat to be defeated. Rather than containing ISIS to a geographic region, the conflict in Syria and Iraq has served as an incubator for terrorism. The territory ISIS holds provides a safe haven for these terrorists to train, organize, gather resources, and project power. Tens of thousands of foreign fighters from Europe, the United States, and around the world have flocked to the frontlines of the global jihad, and many return home with the training and resources necessary to carry out monstrous attacks. Meanwhile, a flood of refugees fleeing atrocities and persecution in Syria have provided ISIS operatives a community in which they can easily hide. Indeed, it appears at least one of the Paris attackers was someone who disguised himself as a refugee to get into Europe.

This enemy is cunning and knows it cannot defeat us on a conventional

fight on the battlefield, so it is employing asymmetric warfare to attack our values and degrade the collective security of our nations. They know they have access into every home and are using modern media technologies to exploit a disenfranchised minority. Their audience spans the globe. Think about this: If they only reach 0.0001 percent of the global population, then they have an army of over half a million potential terrorist recruits.

More intelligence cooperation between the United States and our allies is absolutely necessary to track suspected ISIS terrorists and prevent them from hiding their presence and launching attacks. The United States should also increase the scale and intensity of military operations against ISIS targets. If we can give the French the intelligence to be able to attack key ISIS targets in Syria, then why haven't we used that intelligence ourselves to degrade the enemy? We must intensify the use of our military. We must intensify U.S. Special Operations forces and local allies. We must defeat ISIS forces on the ground and retake territory.

As I have argued for a couple of years now, we cannot ignore the broader conflict in Syria and must lead our allies in pursuing a comprehensive strategy to not just defeat ISIS but to also achieve a negotiated resolution of the Syrian conflict.

Over 4 million people have fled Syria. The Government of Syria has murdered over 200,000 of its own citizens. I saw an interview today where someone was asking one of the refugees from Syria what their preference was—to go to Europe or to go to the United States. The refugees said what most refugees said: I want to go home, but I need a safe haven there.

We should have a no-fly zone in Syria and provide for people the ability to stay in their own country. Military force alone will not solve this problem. Obviously, we need to do more and engage the Muslim world in this effort, but it can shape the parameters of an acceptable solution.

These measures are all important, but they all stem from the recognition of something far more fundamental. In the absence of U.S. leadership, chaos and instability ensues. It takes active American leadership to reassure our allies, to deter our enemies, and to uphold the international order upon which global stability and prosperity depend. We should not be the world's policemen; I agree with that. It is more like being the world's sheriff, where you bring together a posse of like-minded nations. Whether it is the NATO countries with regard to Ukraine or whether it is our Sunni allies with regard to what is happening in the Middle East, we must be the sheriff who pulls the posse together. In the absence of that, in the absence of that leadership, we will not meet this challenge.

In the Middle East, the chaos we see is not just contained in Syria, and it is

not just confined to ISIS. As the United States prepares to provide billions in sanctions relief agreed to in the Iran nuclear deal, Iran has been very busy. Iran has sent ground troops into Syria as part of a new joint offensive with Assad, Russia, and the terrorist group Hezbollah. Iran has tested a ballistic missile, they have arrested several American citizens living in Iran, and they have threatened to wipe Israel off the map of the Middle East. Ayatollah Khamenei has now banned any further negotiations with the United States of America.

Meanwhile, Russian forces are conducting combat operations in the Middle East for the first time since 1941. Russia has launched a sustained air campaign—not really against ISIS, as Putin claims, but almost entirely against U.S.-backed rebel groups and other moderate groups opposed to both ISIS and Assad. There is discussion of them targeting ISIS more. I hope that is true. In Europe, Russian forces continue to occupy portions of eastern Ukraine and continue to occupy Crimea. After a brief lull, violence is once again rising, as Russian efforts to undermine the democratic pro-Western government of Ukraine persist. Russia also continues to wage an unprecedented information war that leverages all elements of national power to confuse, demoralize, and mislead.

In the meantime, hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing conflict in the Middle East stream into Europe, threatening to overwhelm Europe's ability to vet and process them and create opportunities for terrorists to evade detection and conduct attacks like those we saw in Paris.

In the Pacific, China is building artificial islands in international waters to reinforce its claims in the South China Sea.

This is the world that unenforced redlines and leading from behind have created. It is a world where the very structure of international order is under siege and where the direction of our collective future is brought into question. Of course, this trend is not irreversible, but the United States must first step out of the shadows.

Ronald Reagan spoke memorably about peace through strength. We must be unambiguous in our support of our allies, and we must be clear-eyed and resolute in standing up to our foes. This is the path to peace and security for us and for the world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

PRESIDENT'S REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PLAN

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate very much the remarks of Senator PORTMAN. I think he is touching on some critically important issues that all of us need to fully understand. As always, his insights are valuable and worthy of serious consideration by all.

I would also briefly note that I do believe—and I spoke about this several weeks ago—there is a need for this country, as Senator CASEY noted, to develop a bipartisan strategy, particularly with regard to how we deal with the rising spasm of extremism in the Middle East. It is a fact. It is happening. We as a country have to be able to work together in a bipartisan way to decide what action we may choose to use—whether it is military force, whether it is technological advancement, whether it is working with allies—to do whatever we can to increase more stability, more peace and tranquility, and less terrorism and violence. It is a big matter, and I am not at all confident that we have a strategy. In fact, we don't have a strategy that anyone can recognize as effective in this region, as a number of witnesses before the Armed Services Committee have testified, including former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates, who served under both President Bush and President Obama.

This President seems to have his own plan. He refuses to listen. As he traveled around the world recently talking about the attacks in Paris, I think it stunned our allies. This is not a healthy situation. There are millions of refugees. Good leadership, responsible leadership, should have anticipated this danger, and when it developed, have a sound strategy that deals with it in a humane way. It cannot be the strategy of the United States and Europe that when instability occurs anywhere in the world, when instability occurs in Syria or other places in the Middle East, the solution is for everybody to come to Europe or the United States. This is not healthy for those countries, it is not part of the historical tradition, and for reasons I am going to touch on, it is very bad policy.

I think Senator PORTMAN is correct that we are not where we need to be militarily, strategically, and in other ways, to help bring about a situation in which people can return to their homes and be with their families and not have to be running all over the world, marching through Europe, not knowing where they are going to go, in countries that will not and cannot support them. It is not sound policy.

I want to address the economic and security threats imposed by the President's refugee resettlement plan and talk about it in some detail and explain why the more effective and compassionate solution is to resettle the region's refugees in safe zones in the region rather than flying them into the United States or Europe or other places around the globe.

Each and every year, the United States issues green cards to roughly 1 million immigrants. We admit approximately 500,000 foreign students. We distribute work visas to approximately 700,000 foreign workers and grant approximately 25,000 requests for asylum. Asylum is when a person arrives in our

country and says: I can't go home because I will be in danger. A refugee is when somebody is in a foreign country—not their own country—and comes to our Embassy or to the UN and says: I am threatened here. I am not safe. I want to be a refugee and go elsewhere. If they are accepted, they are a refugee. If the others are accepted after they come to our country—perhaps illegally—they are asylees. We have brought in another 70,000 refugees on top of that each year in recent years.

The fact is, refugees are among the most costly immigration programs for several reasons. Refugees are instantly eligible for all Federal welfare and entitlement programs. Most are low-skilled and frequently lack any formal education and many—most don't speak English.

There is great cost involved in this. One estimate from an expert is that for every 10,000 refugees admitted, there will be a lifetime cost to the U.S. Treasury of \$6.5 billion. This year, we are now going to accept 85,000. The President says he will accept 100,000 next year and maybe more. Now, 100,000 is 10 times \$6.5 billion added to the debt of the country, because no extra money is being appropriated for Medicaid and for food stamps. The money is going to be added to the debt. It is not healthy. It is very expensive.

There are enormous security concerns as well. We have seen a number of refugees implicated in terrorist activity inside the United States. We wish it weren't so, but it is a fact. Yet, in this environment of increasing Federal debt, wage stagnation driven by excess labor supply, and ISIS terrorists trying to infiltrate as refugees, President Obama has announced a unilateral expansion of the refugee program to begin admitting many more Syrian refugees. This is at a time when 83 percent of the voters say projected growth in immigration should be curbed, according to Pew polling.

The President persists in his plan even though his own officials, testifying before the Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, conceded there is no database in Syria with which to vet refugees.

The administration briefed us last night, and they publicly stated: We are going to use biometric techniques. In the United States, what does that mean? It means they take your fingerprint and run it against the NCIC—National Crime Information Center—and see if you have warrants for your arrest or if you have been convicted of anything. You can't do that in Syria. You can take their fingerprints, but there is no database to run it against. So that is just puffing. That is spin. You can't run fingerprints in Syria, because there is no database to run them against. As his officials further concluded, there is no way to prevent refugees from radicalizing after their entrance into the United States, as has happened, unfortunately, with Somali refugees.

It is an unpleasant but unavoidable fact that bringing in large

unassimilated flows of migrants from the Muslim world creates the conditions possible for radicalization and extremism to take hold. This is what they are seeing in Europe.

The FBI Director tells us there are now active ISIS investigations in all 50 States. They have a terrorist investigation involving ISIS in every State in the Union today. I think there are 900 open cases.

Our subcommittee has identified dozens of examples of foreign-born immigrants committing and attempting to commit acts of terror on U.S. soil. It is happening every day. Preventing and responding to these acts is an effort encompassing thousands of Federal agents, attorneys, and prosecutors and billions of dollars in costs. They are directing their efforts away from bank fraud and Medicare fraud and toward watching terrorists. Their ability has been limited by restrictions on their ability to conduct surveillance. In effect, we are voluntarily admitting individuals at risk for terrorism and then on the back end trying to stop them from carrying out bad, violent designs.

The former head of the Citizenship and Immigration Services union, which represents immigration workers who handle the casework on these evaluations for admission, issued this warning more than a year ago. This is important. This is the man who represents the individuals who do the work every day, and he got frustrated and he told the truth. This is what he said:

It is also essential to warn the public about the threat that ISIS will exploit our loose and lax visa policies to gain entry to the United States.

Indeed, as we know from the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, from the 9/11 terrorist attacks, from the Boston Bombing, from the recent plot to bomb a school and courthouse in Connecticut, and many other lesser-known terror incidents, we are letting terrorists into the United States right through our front door. . . . Applications for entry are rubber-stamped, the result of grading agents by speed rather than discretion. We've become the visa clearinghouse for the world.

We can't properly vet the people coming now. Yet we are still talking about adding more and more people to it.

Senator CRUZ and I sent the administration a list of 72 individuals charged with or convicted of terrorism-related offenses in just the last year. We wanted to know something. We asked for the immigration histories of each one of these individuals. Isn't that a good thing to know? We are policymakers. We are supposed to decide how to conduct immigration issues. As we evaluate how to improve our immigration situation, shouldn't we know how these terrorists—who have been arrested, charged, or convicted—got into the country?

Well, stunningly, the administration has just refused to respond. They didn't

respond because they don't want the public to know. They think if they can ignore these requests, then people will not know and will not begin to question how things are being conducted. Congress should not acquiesce to the President's refugee funding request when he refuses to even publicly disclose the immigration history of these 72 terrorists, many of whom are involved with and directly connected with Al Qaeda and ISIS.

An outright majority of the public opposes resettling Syrian refugees in the United States. In fact, voters across all parties wish to see a reduction of Middle Eastern refugee settlements. It is in the data. That is what people think. They are worried about this issue. Why shouldn't they be? We have had our own problems. We have had 9/11, we have had the Boston bombers, and many other instances, such as Chattanooga, and look at what is happening in Europe. I don't think the American people are mean or unkind. They are just rightly concerned. They want to protect their families, their Nation, and their interests, and I think we should consider their concerns.

The safe and proper course is to focus on regional resettlement. One report says that for the price of placing one refugee in the United States, 12 can be helped in their homeland. Our goal must be to help refugees find safety and help them return to their homes, not for us to depopulate the region.

How serious is this? Only this strategy will protect the security of the United States and the West, protect the finances of our country from further debt, and protect the long-term stability and safety of the Middle East itself. That is what our goal should be, and our President is not focused on this issue. It has been raised in committee after committee and nothing has been accomplished. He just sticks with the plan he has.

What then is Congress to do to stop the President from carrying out a plan the voters oppose and Congress has not approved? The answer lies in the power of the purse. Each and every year the President submits a request to Congress to fund his Refugee Admissions Program. Only with these funds can the President carry out his plans. Congress, which has been run over time and again by this President, must not write the blank check the President is asking for. He can also bring in more refugees than he has currently indicated. Secretary Kerry has told the Judiciary Committees of the House and Senate they just may well bring in more than this.

My colleague Senator SHELBY and I outlined in a joint statement that the answer is for Congress to include in the year-end funding bill a clear requirement that the President must submit his annual refugee plan to Congress for approval. Senator SHELBY is on that Appropriations Committee. Under this plan, Congress must approve how many refugees are brought in and from where.

Mr. President, is it time to wrap up?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Chair and ask for 1 additional minute to wrap up.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we are facing a humanitarian crisis of monumental proportions. In large part, it is because the President has mismanaged the situation in Syria. He is the Chief Executive, he is the Commander in Chief, the military does what he says, and this has not been good. It just has not been good. It has caused danger, it has caused innocent people to be killed, it has caused people to have to flee, and it has also allowed the surge of ISIS and Al Qaeda-type terrorist organizations in Syria to be able to create an entire state of their own and to export their terrorism.

We have to create safe zones in Syria and other places in the region where people can stay in their homes, and we need to work to end this fighting as soon as possible so people can go back home permanently. It cannot be the position of this country that we just bring in millions of people because of the dangers abroad. It just does not make common sense.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, as my colleague from Alabama prepares to leave, I want to wish him and his family a happy Thanksgiving holiday and I look forward to seeing him in 10 days.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, Senator CARPER is one of our most delightful colleagues. He is always gentlemanly and calls us to consider and think on the higher things. I thank my friend from Delaware for that and his service.

ISIS

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, it has been quite a week. I think we have all learned a bit about Syrian refugees, the challenges they face, and the potential challenges they create for us in this country. One of the things we have learned is that it is not easy to come here as a refugee to this country. In fact, it is pretty difficult. It is not something one can do easily. If you want to come over thinking that you might wait a couple of weeks or a couple of months—you might wait a couple of years. You have to go through a vetting process with the United Nations. You go through a vetting process overseas with the U.S. folks. You have to have your information go through any number of databanks to determine whether you are a person of special interest and could potentially be a problem. It is a long process.

I will be honest. If I were a bad guy over there, one of these ISIS folks trying to get into the United States and create mayhem, there is no way I

would want to wait 2 years, go through a refugee program, and probably get bounced out somewhere along the line through all these background checks and access to intelligence databanks and personal interviews. I think I would find another way to get here, and there are other ways to get here. We have been talking about that more recently today and yesterday.

One of the potential ways to get here is through what is called the Visa Waiver Program. It is an agreement we have with 38 different nations. The Visa Waiver Program started a number of years ago, and it has now grown to include 38 countries. It started off as a travel facilitation program, kind of like the TSA precheck or the global entries we have at the airports here in the United States. It started off as a travel facilitation program, and over time it has turned into an information sharing partnership with 38 different foreign countries. The idea is to make it a little easier for folks who we believe are trusted travelers to get into this country from several dozen nations. One of the things we don't focus on very much in this program is we believe it is to our economic advantage to facilitate travel and tourism for those visiting our country. That is hard to argue with. It also facilitates tourism and traveling to the other 38 countries.

We didn't just enter willy-nilly into this agreement with these other 38 other countries. There are certain requirements we have in terms of access about the people who would like to come to this country under the Visa Waiver Program. We have any number of different kinds of access to intelligence data files and databases, and we insist on that before we allow these countries to participate. If they don't want to do that, they are not part of the Visa Waiver Program.

If they change their mind during the course of our relationship with them as part of the Visa Waiver Program and become not very good partners in this, we bounce them out, they are no longer part of the Visa Waiver Program, and then those people have to go through the regular visa process.

Anyway, that would provide another option. It is probably a more favored option for somebody who is anxious to get over here from Syria or for anybody who wants to do mayhem. That might be an option if they live in one of those 38 countries. People can go to U.S. consulates all the time in other countries. They ask to come here. Sometimes they ask to come here on a visa. It could be a tourism visa. A lot of people want to come to the United States as a tourist. It could be that they want to come here to study. Those may be perfectly legitimate, but in some cases they may not be. Folks come here in many other ways.

We had an interesting hearing today in the Senate's Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. We had two witnesses from the Federal

Government, and then we had five witnesses from a variety of different backgrounds. One of the things we asked were: Where do the real threats lie for our country? It could be Syria. It could be ISIS people from Iraq. It could be folks who have been radicalized from other countries who have gone to Syria to fight and have become jihadists and want to somehow get into our country and create not just mischief but mayhem. Everybody who testified said the primary concern should not be the Refugee Resettlement Program. Why would anybody want to go through that? It wastes 2 years. Maybe they will get through it, maybe not. If you are lucky, you get through it 2 years later.

The 2,000 people or so who have come through that program from Syria this year, I am told they were mostly women and children, older men—very old men. Out of the 2,000, in terms of the folks who are male and of fighting age, only about 2 percent fall into that category. They all have to provide family connections of the people they are related to and will be reunited with over here. That is part of the deal for getting in. It is not like every refugee who comes here would even be someone who would be expected to be of fighting age.

One of the other things most of the folks agreed on was that one of the greatest concerns we ought to have for folks getting into our country and doing mischief here would not necessarily be folks from other countries. The concern is about the folks who are already here and may be natives to the United States who have become radicalized. We heard that again and again and again. That is a major concern, and that is something we have to be serious about.

One of the best ways we can reduce the likelihood that folks living here would be radicalized and want to be a part of the ISIS army overseas or right here is to do what we are trying to do as a country; that is, to degrade and destroy ISIS militarily. And that would be not just us by ourselves—us using our air superiority, us using our ability to gather and disseminate intelligence, with direct strikes, and to provide help to the people on the ground, to the boots on the ground—not us—but to help other countries that are doing that sort of thing.

My guess is—and this was confirmed by most of our witnesses today—that the folks who most likely want to be a homegrown jihadist, be affiliated with ISIS, and do their job here in this country as opposed to over in Syria want to be on the winning side. They are not interested in affiliating with a loser. So the question is, What can we do to make sure that ISIS is degraded and destroyed?

I will mention a couple of things that happened in the last couple of weeks that would suggest to me that at long last the coalition of 60 nations is beginning to get its act together and make

progress on the ground. Over the past year ISIS has lost 25 percent of its safe haven in Syria and Iraq. Our coalition has conducted more than 8,000 airstrikes against ISIS. We have killed ISIS fighters at a rate of 1,000 fighters a month.

The Iraqi Security Forces have now liberated Tikrit, which is a city in Iraq that is Saddam Hussein's old hometown. It has been liberated from ISIS now. About 70 percent of Tikrit's pre-ISIS citizens have been returned to the city.

With Syrian Kurdish forces on the ground and the United States in the air, the Syrian town of Kobane was kept from falling to ISIS, despite the fact that most analysts thought the town would fall within days earlier this year.

Just last week in Iraq, Kurdish forces supported by the United States in the air took back the key town of Sinjar from ISIS. That strategic town sits on the top of a key roadway that connects ISIS's stronghold in Mosul with ISIS's capital in a place called Raqqa.

Now these Iraqi Kurds are working with the Syrian Kurds, an Arab coalition, and the United States to fully sever that key supply line and isolate Mosul and Raqqa.

In August, a U.S. drone strike killed a fellow named Junaid Hussain, one of ISIS's online propagandists who had helped to direct the homegrown attack at Garland, TX, last May.

Just last week, a U.S. drone strike also killed Jihadi John, ISIS's chief executioner. Jihadi John has publicly executed dozens of people, including at least three Americans—James Foley, Steven Sotloff, and Peter Kassig.

Last week, an American airstrike took ISIS's leader in Libya, a guy named Abu Nabil.

Now, is that the ball game? No, it is not. Is that encouraging? Yes, it is. It has to be discouraging to folks with ISIS, and it has to be discouraging to fans here in the United States. The idea is to degrade them and ultimately destroy them, and I am encouraged that we finally seem to be on the right track to accomplishing that.

The other thing we heard from our witnesses today is that there is a Federal program run by the Department of Homeland Security called the Office of Community Partnerships Countering Violent Terrorism. The idea there is to work with the Muslim communities throughout the country—and there are a number of them—to counter the social media message that some find so alluring that is put up by ISIS. Part of the ability to compete with that and to degrade that message is to degrade ISIS on the ground.

The other way to do it is to do what the Department of Homeland Security is doing in conjunction with Arab communities and Muslim communities throughout our country and in conjunction with, for example, the district attorney in Minneapolis, to develop a good partnership in saying: Let's see if

we can't convince our young people living there not to want to go to Syria, not to want to go to fight, not to want to go anywhere, but just to live their lives and not to be jihadists in this country. It is a good program. It seems to be bearing fruit. It has been well accepted, I am told, by many in the Muslim community. We are being asked to help fund that through the appropriations process, and it is very important that we do.

I will close where I started. It has been a bit of a wild and crazy ride this week. Every now and then I feel—when I was raising my kids, my boys, I would just say, why don't we just take a deep breath and chill for a little bit, and then figure out what to do. Given everything that has come across in the media and the scare that has been visited on so many people, it is probably a good time for us to just take a deep breath and to think about some of the things that I have said, some of what we learned in our hearing today.

There are threats to this country that are real. They are probably not posed by the refugee problem. We are reminded by the Pope that we have an obligation to follow the Golden Rule and treat other people the way we wanted to be treated. We have an obligation, as we were reminded just two months ago by the Pope on the other side of the Capitol when he addressed a joint session of Congress. He told us to remember Matthew 25: When I was hungry, did you feed me? When I was thirsty, did you give me a drink? When I was naked, did you clothe me? When I was a stranger in your land, did you take me in?

He posed to us sort of a moral dilemma and certainly reminded us that we have a moral obligation to the least of these in our society. We also have a moral obligation as leaders here in the Congress to make sure that we are not only trying to be true to that moral obligation to the least of these but the obligation that we have to protect the people of this country.

The question for us as we approach Thanksgiving—maybe in the spirit of Thanksgiving—is that it possible for us to be true to both of the moral imperatives, to the least of those in our society and, frankly, outside this country, and the moral imperative to our country men and women to protect them. I think we can do both.

As we leave here today to head for our homes and for Thanksgiving, I am encouraged we can do both, and that if we are smart about it, we will do that.

I wish the Presiding Officer and all of our pages and all of the staff here a blessed Thanksgiving holiday. Thank you all for your service. I will see you in about 10 days. God bless you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO BONNIE CARROLL

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, the Presidential Medal of Freedom is our Nation's highest civilian honor, presented to men and women who have made "an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant endeavors."

It is the highest honor a civilian of the United States can achieve. In all, the recipients have included seven Presidents, nine Supreme Court Justices, countless Members of Congress, First Ladies, military leaders, lawyers, artists, athletes, civil rights leaders, and doctors. It is the list of the best of America. It is a diverse list. The recipients come from all backgrounds and all walks of life. They all have one thing in common. They have dedicated their lives to achieving excellence in serving causes greater than themselves.

On November 24, next week, Bonnie Carroll, a proud Alaskan, will join this honor roll when she is presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom at a White House ceremony. It is certainly an exciting time for all of us in Alaska. We are so proud of Bonnie, who just happens to be here tonight in the Gallery.

Let me tell you a little bit about Bonnie Carroll, a woman of determination, perseverance, honor, and strength. You can't talk about Bonnie without talking first about how she met her husband Tom, which in many ways—in tragic ways I will get to—led to the great work she has done for a grateful nation.

In 1988, Bonnie was working at the White House when news broke that three whales were trapped in the ice off the coast of Alaska. Now I know this doesn't happen in the Presiding Officer's State that often, but in Alaska we have certain challenges that other States don't. She picked up the phone to see what could be done, and on the other line was her future husband, Alaska Army National Guard COL Tom Carroll, who worked with many others to help rescue the whales. This was part of the love story between Bonnie and Tom and part of a story so unique that what happened up in Alaska actually caught the attention of Hollywood. You can see their love story portrayed in the film "The Great Miracle."

For the Carrolls, the story didn't end with the saving of the whales. Unfortunately, their story is in many ways happy but also did not have a so-called Hollywood ending—unfortunately, far from it. After they were married in 1992, COL Tom Carroll of the Alaska National Guard died in an Army C-12 plane crash in the mountains of Alaska. Seven other top Alaska National Guard members were tragically lost

that day. It was a horrible tragedy for America, for Alaska, for the Carroll family, and for all the other families who suffered tragic loss that day in Alaska.

After the crash Bonnie realized there were no organizations established in this country to help people like her who had lost loved ones—military members and family members who had lost military members in tragedies such as the day of that crash. What she did after that was amazing. What she did was heroic. She took her deep grief and put it to use for the rest of us.

Just 2 years after her husband's tragic death, Bonnie founded the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, also known as TAPS. The idea for TAPS came in part as a result of her consultations with former Senator Ted Stevens, another great Alaskan and great American, who would also tragically die in a plane crash in Alaska. This is why Bonnie is being honored by the President next week. Since 1994, her organization, TAPS, has offered support to 50,000 surviving families of our military members whom we have lost. Fifty thousand surviving family members and caregivers have benefitted from the services of TAPS, which Bonnie founded. Think of the grief and think of what she has done across America to soothe grieving families.

TAPS provides a variety of grief and trauma resources, including seminars for adults and a summer camp for children in Alaska to help families heal and to help them work through their grief. I heard many of these stories, and you can't help but be touched and moved by the power of what TAPS does to help Americans, family members of our military, work through some of the most difficult times. For years those of us in the military and those of us in Alaska have known how Bonnie's work and the work of TAPS has been healing families throughout this country, for those we have lost—our heroes who have been defending this country. We have known in the military, we have known in Alaska, and as of Tuesday the world will know when Bonnie is presented with this incredible honor at the White House.

As she puts it: "Out of an Alaskan tragedy came hope and healing for tens of thousands of our military families."

For the work that she does with the families of our heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice for all of us, Bonnie Carroll is utmost deserving of this great honor. She is a great Alaskan, a Great American, and she has made us all very proud.

Congratulations, Bonnie.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ACTION ON IMMIGRATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, a year ago today, in a nationwide address, President Obama announced a series of measures to improve our broken immigration system. He outlined efforts to focus scarce resources on identifying and deporting those people who pose a danger to our communities, to modernize our legal immigration system, and to provide temporary relief from the threat of deportation for hard-working, law-abiding members of our communities. For many, the President's announcement offered at last a hope for stability. It acknowledged the longstanding presence and contributions of immigrants to our country.

But the President's announcement also underscored the real human consequences of the House of Representatives failing to allow a vote to reform our immigration laws. Importantly, it highlighted the impracticality of deporting 11 million undocumented immigrants. Many of them have strong family ties in the United States and a deep desire to become fully integrated in our country. They are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters. To suggest that we can simply remove them is unrealistic and it would conflict with fundamental American values.

The President's Executive action is no substitute for legislation. He reminded critics of that very fact during his address, pointing out that the commonsense, responsible solution to the problems in our immigration system is to pass a comprehensive reform bill. A year later, the Republican-led Senate has failed to debate, let alone pass meaningful immigration reform. Instead, it has repeatedly taken up divisive and partisan proposals that do not reflect a desire to fix what we all agree is a broken system.

These political gimmicks are not serious attempts to address an issue as important as immigration and could not be more different from what the Democratic-led Senate accomplished in 2013 when we passed a bipartisan immigration bill supported by 68 Senators. During the Senate Judiciary Committee's consideration of the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, I convened multiple hearings, and we heard from 42 witnesses. Government officials and individuals representing a range of perspectives—including law enforcement, civil rights, labor, faith, business, and State and local governments—testified about the challenges confronting our current immigration system.

We heard the powerful testimony of witnesses such as Jose Antonio Vargas and Gaby Pacheco who pressed the urgent need for immigration reform. The compelling stories of DREAMers, young immigrants brought to this country as children, who have grown up as Americans and have every desire to make meaningful contributions to their communities, continue to inspire.

Many of them have qualified for the temporary relief provided by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, program, which has established a path for them to become our next generation of teachers, engineers, public servants, and doctors. Our Senate-passed, comprehensive bill included the DREAM Act, an important measure that would have provided a long-lasting solution to the problems these courageous young individuals face, acknowledging that they deserve to be part of our Nation's future.

The Senate-passed bill would have addressed many of the injustices in our current immigration system. It was a remarkable example of all that we can accomplish when we actually focus on the hard job of legislating. But the Republican-led House of Representatives blocked that effort. It stubbornly refused to even allow a vote on that bill. Given that lack of action, I understand the President's frustration and motivation. His Executive action was a response to what we all acknowledge is a broken system, but it is no substitute for comprehensive immigration reform.

Following the President's announcement, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the Executive action program and heard the testimony of Astrid Silva. Hers is a fundamentally American story. It is similar in many ways to those of our parents and grandparents. It is a story of a family looking to find a better life. Astrid qualifies for the President's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, program. And her parents would be eligible for the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents, DAPA, program because her younger brother is a U.S. citizen. For more than 20 years, Astrid's family has been working hard and contributing to their local community. They are the kind of family we want to have as our neighbors and coworkers. Their stories remind us that their dreams, along with those of so many others affected by our dysfunctional immigration system, hang in the balance, and underscore the need for a permanent legislative solution.

Some in Congress claim that the President's executive action undermined the prospect of achieving comprehensive immigration reform. But I remind them that the President's action—prompted by congressional inaction—is not an excuse for continued congressional inaction. We must keep working to find a permanent legislative solution that provides today's immigrants with an opportunity to prosper and contribute to our country. As families across the Nation gather next week around the table to give thanks, we will all count our family members and their security among our greatest blessings. Our fight for comprehensive immigration reform is at its core a fight to help reunite families and provide the security that we all want for our loved ones. I urge Republicans to return to the cooperative and bipar-

tisan approach of 2013 and work on comprehensive immigration reform legislation. The American people support immigration reform. It is the right thing to do, and it should not be delayed any longer.

REFORMING THE EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAM

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have championed the EB-5 Regional Center Program for many years. I have done so because I have seen its ability to generate investment and create jobs in distressed communities. But the program is facing some pressing challenges. Reports of rampant fraud and abuse raise serious concerns and threaten to cripple the program's integrity. The incentives Congress established to invest in high unemployment and rural communities are also routinely abused, undermining a core objective of the program—to spur growth and create jobs in underserved areas. The Regional Center Program is set to expire on December 11. It should be reauthorized, but we should not extend it blindly. There is bipartisan consensus that the program is in dire need of reform, and we cannot squander this opportunity.

I have long sought reforms to the Regional Center Program. Last Congress, my EB-5 amendment to Comprehensive Immigration Reform provided the Department of Homeland Security additional authority to revoke suspect regional center designations or immigrant petitions. It also provided for increased reporting, background checks, and securities oversight. My amendment was unanimously approved in the Judiciary Committee, but unfortunately the improvements it contained have all had to wait, as the House of Representatives failed to allow a vote on the bipartisan immigration reform bill that passed the Senate last Congress.

In the past year, only more concerns have emerged. In January, I joined Senators GRASSLEY, CORKER, JOHNSON, and others in requesting that the Government Accountability Office, GAO, audit the EB-5 program. The GAO report released in August detailed fraud vulnerabilities within the program and questioned its economic impact. Separate reports from the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Intelligence and Analysis and Office of the Inspector General highlighted additional issues that need to be addressed.

I am also troubled by the fact that the incentives Congress created to promote EB-5 investment in rural and high unemployment areas have been rendered meaningless. Investors are provided a discount if they choose to invest in rural or high unemployment areas, known as targeted employment areas or TEAs. At present, however, the most affluent neighborhoods in the country routinely qualify as TEAs by selectively stitching together otherwise unrelated census tracts. Depart-

ment of Homeland Security Secretary Johnson rightly described this practice as gerrymandering. I do not suggest that affluent areas should not benefit from EB-5; they should. But they should not qualify for incentives intended to benefit high unemployment and rural areas. These areas typically do not have access to significant capital and often struggle to create jobs.

Secretary Johnson himself called for significant reforms to strengthen the Regional Center Program. In a letter to the Judiciary Committee last April, he asked for authority to quickly act on criminal and national security concerns, additional protections for investors, enhanced reporting and auditing, improved integrity of TEAs, increased minimum investment amounts, and more.

I have now worked for over 2 years to develop legislation that would provide a necessary overhaul of the Regional Center Program. In June, I was joined by Chairman GRASSLEY in introducing this reform-oriented legislation, S.1501. Since then, Chairman GRASSLEY and I have worked with House Judiciary Chairman GOODLATTE on a bicameral bill based on S.1501.

This bicameral bill would provide the Department with the authorities and investigative tools necessary to address national security concerns and fraud. The reforms include further expanding background checks, conducting a more thorough vetting of immigrant investors and proposed investments, and providing for the ability to proactively investigate fraud, both in the United States and abroad, using a dedicated fund paid for by certain program participants. The bill would provide greater protections for investors and clarity and shorter processing times for project developers. It would also raise minimum investment thresholds so more money goes to the communities that need it. And it would help to restore the program to its original intent, by ensuring that incentives to invest in distressed and undercapitalized areas are restored.

Such reforms would answer the concerns raised by Secretary Johnson, the Department's inspector general, the GAO, and others, instilling both confidence and transparency in the program. I believe these reforms would result in a secure EB-5 program that creates American jobs and promotes economic growth throughout our country. We cannot continue to leave the Department ill-equipped to administer this job creation program. We know what is needed to fix it. And we should fix it now.

NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request at the present time relating to the nomination of Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Ambassador, to be an

Under Secretary of State, Political Affairs.

I will object because the Department of State has still not responded to almost a dozen investigative letters dating back to 2013. In addition, on August 20, 2015, my staff met with Department officials in an effort to prioritize material for production. The Department has failed to comply with its commitments, producing material late, failing to provide all requested material, and even failing to provide material to the Senate Judiciary Committee contemporaneously with providing the same documents to Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, requestors. These are the same complaints that I raised on September 30, 2015, when I placed a hold on Brian James Egan of Maryland to be legal advisor of the Department of State. Apparently, the Department simply does not understand its obligation to respond to congressional inquiries in a timely and reasonable manner.

Two and a half years ago I began a broad inquiry into the government's use of special government employee programs. I did not single out the State Department on this issue. To the contrary, I wrote to 16 different government agencies.

Two and a half years have passed since I began my inquiry, and the State Department has still not produced the materials I have requested or certified they do not exist.

In addition to the investigation of the Department's special government employee program, I am also investigating the Department's compliance with the FOIA as it pertains to Secretary Clinton's private server that was used to transit and store government information.

The Minority Leader has questioned whether the Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction extends to these matters. I would note that the special government employee designation is an exception to Federal criminal conflict-of-interest laws. Those laws are within the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee, as is FOIA.

During the course of my investigation, a former State Department employee—Mr. Bryan Pagliano—declined to speak to the Judiciary Committee about his work on Secretary Clinton's email server.

He pled the Fifth Amendment.

We keep hearing that the FBI's inquiry is just a security review and not a criminal inquiry; yet this witness cited his Constitutional right against self-incrimination to avoid talking about his work on the email server. And he is relying on the Fifth Amendment to withhold his personal emails as well.

So naturally we are searching for other ways to get information before deciding whether it might be appropriate to seek an immunity order for his testimony. The most likely source of information without forcing the witness to testify would be his emails.

Yet the Department has failed to produce any in response to my request

and the request of Chairman JOHNSON of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

As a further example of the Department's continued intransigence, I requested all SF-312 "Classified Non-Disclosure Agreements" for Secretary Clinton, Ms. Huma Abedin, and Ms. Cheryl Mills on August 5, 2015. My staff met with Department personnel three times since that letter and participated in dozens of emails and phone calls in an effort to acquire these documents. In addition, after the Department complained that it had received too many requests from me, my staff produced a prioritized list of requests to assist the Department in producing responses. At number three on that list were the SF-312 forms, and at number one are the official emails of Mr. Pagliano.

Notably, during conversations with my staff on the subject, Department personnel stated that they could not locate those forms with the exception of only page 2 of Ms. Abedin's SF-312 exit form. On November 5, 2015, the Department produced SF-312 entrance forms for Secretary Clinton, Ms. Abedin, and Ms. Mills to a FOIA requestor but failed to provide the same to the Committee. Clearly, the documents exist.

In addition, I am also looking into several State Department inspector general and whistleblower reports that suggest that the State Department does not hold its own employees accountable for human-trafficking and prostitution violations.

Earlier this year, the Judiciary Committee led the effort to pass the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and I have sent letters to DOJ and DHS—and not just the State Department—to ensure that Federal employees are held accountable for soliciting prostitutes.

Last week, the minority leader questioned my use of Judiciary Committee resources to conduct these investigations, suggesting that my work in this area is somehow taking away from the committee's other work.

Back in September, the Justice Department sent me a letter complaining that I have sent them almost 100 oversight letters containing more than 825 questions and document requests—in 2015 alone.

Since then, my office has sent 11 additional oversight letters to the Justice Department, containing more than 65 questions and document requests. So perhaps the minority leader should ask the assistant attorney general for legislative affairs at DOJ whether my committee is not doing enough DOJ oversight.

The continued intransigence and lack of cooperation make it clear that the Department did not care enough about their Foreign Service officer candidates to "get in gear" and begin to produce responses to my oversight letters. Accordingly, I have released my hold on these officer candidates and have escalated to Mr. Shannon.

The Department of State's refusal to fully cooperate with my investigations is unacceptable.

As I have noted before on the floor of the Senate, the Department continues to promise results, but there has been very little or no follow-through. The Department's good faith will be measured in documents delivered and witnesses provided.

My objection is not intended to question the credentials of Mr. Shannon in any way. However, the Department must recognize that it has an ongoing obligation to respond to congressional inquiries in a timely and reasonable manner.

REMEMBERING NOHEMI GONZALEZ AND THE VICTIMS OF THE PARIS TERRORIST ATTACKS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Nohemi Gonzalez, a 23-year-old senior at California State University, Long Beach who was tragically killed during the recent terrorist attacks in Paris.

Nohemi grew up in Whittier, CA with her mother, Beatriz, who described her as "very strong and independent," even graduating high school early because she couldn't wait to go to college. At Cal State, she chose to study industrial design—recently taking home a second place prize in an international design competition. She was thrilled to be achieving one of her dreams of studying at the Strate School of Design in Paris this semester.

Nohemi's professors laud her as a very gifted student—curious, determined, and incredibly caring. She took on a leadership role as a teacher's aide and shop technician for the department of design. Classmates remember Nohemi as a mentor and tutor, someone who encouraged everyone around her to strive to be the best versions of themselves. Friends say she was a blessing and always had an upbeat, cheerful attitude. She always looked on the bright side.

I want to send my deepest, heartfelt condolences to Nohemi's mother, Beatriz, her stepfather, Jose Hernandez, and to all who loved her. While there are no words to express how sorry I am at this tragic loss, I hope they can take comfort knowing that Nohemi's beautiful legacy will serve as an inspiration for us all.

I also want to send my thoughts and prayers to the members of the Palm Desert-based band, Eagles of Death Metal, who were playing at the Bataclan concert hall the night of the attacks. As they grieve the death of their British merchandise manager, Nick Alexander, and representatives from their record company, Thomas Ayad, Marie Mosser, and Manu Perez, I know there has been an outpouring of love and strength from the caring Desert community. I hope that brings them some comfort in this very difficult time.

The people of France have suffered tremendously, and I want them to know that Americans mourn with them. They stood by our sides after the attacks on September 11, 2001, and we stand with them now in the face of these horrific attacks.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to bring attention today to the 108,000 foster children in our country who right now are waiting to be adopted. Of these, more than 14,000 are in California.

These are children who cannot safely be reunited with their biological families and are without a permanent place to call home through absolutely no fault of their own. These are children who are waiting for a family, wanting to belong, and needing our help. Of these children, more than 20,000 age out of the foster care system every year. They are sent on their way and expected to make it on their own. This is unacceptable.

What do we know about their outcomes? It isn't good. Around half of foster youth graduate high school, and less than three percent earn a college degree. Around a quarter will become homeless after aging out of the foster system. Many will find their way into the justice system.

Now, imagine a different outcome. Children are meant to be in a family. All children deserve love, safety, and permanency. No child is unadoptable.

November marks National Adoption Month, and November 21st is National Adoption Day. This highlights not only the need to find loving homes for children who are waiting, but celebrates those who have opened their hearts and chosen to build their families through adoption. Children in foster care are not just in need, they are waiting for a family to give their love and to share their joy.

In 2014, more than 50,000 children were adopted from foster care. What adoption means to youth who have been through foster care is best said in their own words.

From Athena, a young lady in Pasadena, CA, who was adopted from foster care: "Adoption is very dear and important to me. As an older youth in the system, you expect to have no support, let alone adoption as an option. But being a part of a family was all I ever wanted and deep down it is what most foster youth want because it means love, stability and a place for one to grow and excel in."

And from Cassidy, an adopted teenager in California: "If you take a chance on a foster child by adopting them, you give them a chance to be who they were born to be. Let's make 'aging-out' a term no longer needed in the English language."

Darnell, an older teen adopted in California, explains what finding a permanent family means to him: "Adoption means I have a second chance at

life, I know I am loved and have a safe place to call home. When strangers take you into their home and love you just for who you are; you can relax and live a regular life."

All children in foster care deserve this second chance at having their forever family and a safe and loving home. I encourage those who are interested in learning more about adoption from foster care to visit www.adoptuskids.org.

This is also a time to celebrate the many volunteers and mentors who provide a positive, stable relationship for a child going through a time of vast uncertainty. There may not be a simple solution, but we do know what gets us closer.

Programs that provide comprehensive resources—tutoring, mentoring, mental health services, and adults that build meaningful relationships with youth leads to improved outcomes, including higher rates of permanency.

Focused family finding efforts that reach out to extended family members and others who have played a role in the life of the child gets results. That means fewer youth who age out of the system.

We can and must do better because 20,000 of our Nation's foster children aging out of the system each year is simply unacceptable. These are our most vulnerable, the ones recovering from trauma, abuse, and neglect. The ones who are at high risk of being sold into child sex trafficking and a number of other terrible outcomes.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure a better future for foster youth in our country and, as Cassidy, a teenager who was adopted from foster care in California says, make the term "aging out" one that we no longer need to use. Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO JAY S. FISHMAN

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a distinguished and outstanding business leader, Mr. Jay S. Fishman, as he steps down as chief executive officer of The Travelers Companies on December 1, 2015.

I met Jay during my first term as chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Jay reached out to the committee in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. After handling claims and helping people rebuild their homes and businesses, Jay was interested in shaping public policy for how this country handles natural catastrophes. He proposed many innovative and thoughtful ideas on how to protect policyholders and taxpayers from what he called "the next big one." I then watched as Jay deftly managed his company during the financial crisis, not merely weathering the storm, but thriving while many of his competitors were seeking help from the government in the form of taxpayer bailouts. Jay never asked what the government could do to help Travelers; he always asked how Travelers could help us to develop better public

policy based on the expertise that he and his colleagues could provide.

Jay will continue to serve Travelers as executive chairman as he contends with the challenges that come with the diagnosis of ALS. He has handled the diagnosis with great dignity and a steadfast resolve to engage, which will surprise no one who knows him. I know he will work relentlessly to promote research that will extend and eventually save lives of people who are stricken with this terrible disease.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this exceptional man, a man who passionately engaged in business and public policy, who has led a truly remarkable career and left an indelible impact on those people who were lucky enough to work for him and with him during his long career.

NOMINATION OF DR. ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

NOMINATION OF DR. ROBERT CALIFF

Today we are reviewing the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to serve as Commissioner of Food and Drugs. Dr. Califf, congratulations on your nomination. Welcome to you and to your family members who are here. I enjoyed having the opportunity to visit with you in my office.

If confirmed to lead the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as its Commissioner, you will be in charge of steering the agency responsible for assuring the safety and effectiveness of our nation's medical products and protecting our country's food supply. That is a huge job. The FDA affects nearly every single American and regulates about a quarter of all consumer spending in the United States—over \$4 trillion annually. It is responsible for product areas as diverse as prescription drugs for humans and animals, medical devices, biologics, cosmetics, over-the-counter medications, food, and tobacco. That is a vital mission, and we all want to make sure that the right person is leading it.

The president has nominated you to do that job, and like every full-time nominee, you've been through an exhaustive process to make sure that you do not have any conflicts of interest or other problems in your background.

Before the president even announced your nomination, there was an extensive vetting process by the White House and the FBI. You also submitted paperwork to the Office of Government Ethics, which carefully reviewed your financial information and found that, with several recusals which you have committed to do, there would not be any remaining conflicts of interest that would prevent you from doing your job. The form you submitted is public and includes every source of income over \$200 and every asset worth more than \$1,000, and every potential conflict that the Office of Government Ethics determined would require a recusal.

You answered 37 pages of questions from our committee, including some confidential questions on financial information, and responded to written follow-up questions. Your responses included over 3,000 pages of articles and lectures my staff reviewed and that any member of the committee could review.

You were nominated on September 17. My staff has spent two months carefully reviewing everything you submitted and has not found anything that would call into doubt your ability to lead the FDA fairly and impartially.

You come here today with impressive qualifications. You are one of the nation's leading cardiologists and have been a professor at one of the nation's top medical schools for over 30 years. You are an expert on clinical research and have been recognized by the Institute for Scientific Information as one of the top 10 most cited medical authors, with more than 1,200 peer-reviewed publications. You have experience managing large organizations, including in your current position supervising all of the FDA's work on medical products and tobacco, and in your past work as the founding director of the Duke Clinical Research Institute.

Moreover, you have conducted scores of important clinical trials, and you have advised and worked on research with some of the nation's leading pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies. So you understand how research gets done in the real world, where there are opportunities for the FDA to help address challenges, and where the FDA needs to get out of the way.

I'm eager to hear about your priorities, and how you intend to manage an organization as large and diverse as the FDA. I also think everyone on this committee will have some questions for you. Here are a few of mine.

First, I would like to hear what you will do to help ensure that affordable drugs are available to American patients. The FDA's job, of course, is not to set drug prices. It is to make sure that drugs are safe and effective. And I hope you'll agree with me on that. But FDA can help the market lower drug prices by approving generic drugs and other products as quickly as it possibly can, so there is more choice and competition in the market.

There are thousands of applications for generic drugs sitting at the FDA, awaiting approval. Addressing this backlog will allow lower-cost drugs to be available for patients. Approval times have gotten worse instead of better. In 2011, the FDA published the median approval time on its website, and it was 30 months. Since then, the FDA has stopped publishing the statistics online, but the Generic Pharmaceutical Association surveyed its members and estimates that the median approval time is now about 48 months. This is despite generic drugmakers agreeing in 2012 to give the FDA approximately \$1.6 billion in user fees over 5 years, nearly \$1 billion of which the FDA has already collected. I'm eager to hear what you think the FDA can do to improve.

Second, there has never been a more exciting time to lead the agency. We know more about biology and medicine than ever before, and that's not likely to stop anytime soon given advancement of regenerative cell therapies, 3D printing, and the president's Precision Medicine Initiative—which is aimed at developing our knowledge so that medical treatments and devices can be tailored to individual patients. For example, Smith & Nephew, a device company I toured in Memphis a few weeks ago, uses 3D printing to make tools that doctors use in approximately 25% of knee replacements.

Your job, if confirmed, will be to make sure that FDA regulation is appropriate. Too much regulation could reduce investment in these areas in its track, and not enough regulation could lead to patients getting therapies that are not safe or effective.

Your job also will be to make sure the FDA keeps up with science and relies on the expertise outside the FDA when appropriate.

Doing that will require you to manage a large and complex organization—not just on the big policies that make headlines, but on the less flashy stuff like hiring and training scientists on the agency's core mission, and integrating information technology in the right ways.

There is work to be done. Medical products take more time and money to discover, develop, and reach American patients than ever before, and we hear stories about drugs and devices that are available to patients outside the U.S. before they become available here, often because it is difficult for manufacturers to navigate the FDA's often unclear approval requirements. It often takes over a decade to develop a drug that gains marketing approval in the U.S., and, according to one recent study, the costs have nearly tripled in the last ten years. In 2003, it cost an inflation-adjusted \$1 million in capital and out-of-pocket expenses; in 2014, it cost over \$2.5 billion.

In this Committee, we are working on legislation to help get safe cutting-edge drugs, medical devices and treatments into Americans' medicine cabinets and doctors' offices more quickly, and we hope to move on that by the end of the year. I want to hear what you think the FDA can do to build its capacity and fix the impact of its regulations so that the FDA is a partner in innovation, rather than a barrier.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing your testimony on these important issues.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the University of California, Santa Cruz on its 50th anniversary and recognizing the outstanding faculty and staff for their immense contributions.

For 50 years, UC Santa Cruz has educated, inspired, and helped shape the futures of generations of young people, fostering an environment to produce not only good scholars but also good citizens.

Modeled after historic institutions like Oxford, from its earliest days, students have been encouraged to ask questions—to learn how to think for themselves and debate the status quo inside and outside the classroom. Today the university counts among its alumni some of the world's most prolific and influential leaders on everything from organic farming to ocean health, from women's rights and medical research.

A half century after its founding, UC Santa Cruz is a world-renowned research facility at the center of many critical scientific breakthroughs, such as producing the first working draft of the human genome, helping global researchers develop a vaccine for the Ebola virus, and playing a leading role in cancer genome research. The university is also home to one of the world's top marine mammal research centers. Its internationally recognized faculty includes 14 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 26 fellows of the American Academy of Arts and

Sciences, and recipients of the Presidential National Medal of Science and the Benjamin Franklin Medal from the Franklin Institute, one of the oldest and most prestigious science awards in the world.

Anyone who is lucky enough to have visited the UC Santa Cruz campus is immediately struck by its beauty. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and redwood forests, the campus offers students a spectacular backdrop to their education. Students hike trails to class, elephant seals can be heard in the background, and stunning sunsets can be seen from university grounds. These breathtaking surroundings have attracted a creative and passionate student body that has proudly embraced environmental, social, and political causes—and a sense of humor. In 1986, the students selected their now-famous official mascot—the Banana Slugs.

Since 1965, UC Santa Cruz has created an atmosphere of discovery and activism, shaping minds, pushing the frontiers of knowledge, and making our world a better place. I congratulate Chancellor George Blumenthal and the faculty, staff, alumni, and students of UC Santa Cruz on this 50th anniversary and wish this extraordinary institution continued success in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO MARY CRAWFORD

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, in honor of National Adoption Month, I want to recognize one member of Montana's community who has opened her home and heart to be an adoptive parent. Mrs. Mary Crawford is what I believe one of the best Montana has to offer.

As an original cosponsor of a resolution to designate November as National Adoption Month and November 21 as National Adoption Day that passed the Senate unanimously this week, I could find no better time than this to honor Mary. This month we honor selfless individuals like Mary who have dedicated themselves toward comforting, protecting, and improving the lives of children they have welcomed into their homes.

Like most foster parents who later become adoptive parents, the process isn't easy, but the resolve of both Mary and husband to continue to provide a loving home for nine children is nothing short of admirable. Mary has provided a family which has made a huge difference in these children's lives—giving them a family for life, beyond just their childhood years. These children are safe today in the arms of loving, adopting parents because of Mary.

Montana has kids who are ready and waiting to be adopted. In fact, there are 415,000 children currently in the U.S. Foster Care System, and 108,000 of those are waiting to be adopted. Mary has taken tremendous steps in providing six children with a forever home to give them the stability and love that she and her husband could provide.

I am unbelievably proud to have a citizen like Mary Crawford in the great State of Montana. I am thankful for the love and support she has shown these children.●

RECOGNIZING THE NEVADA INDIAN COMMISSION

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 50th anniversary of an important entity to our great State—the Nevada Indian Commission. I am pleased to see this commission, which contributes so much in support of Nevada's Native American community, reach this significant milestone.

The Nevada Indian Commission has been a positive force in communities across our State. The commission continues to serve as a forum for Nevada's Native American population, bringing important issues affecting this community to light. I am grateful to have the Nevada Indian Commission serving as an important liaison between Nevada's 27 tribal communities and our State's government.

The Nevada Indian Commission was established in 1965 as a means to maintain a positive quality of life for our State's Native Americans. Those that serve on the commission work to bring greater awareness of Nevada's many tribes' cultures, values, and customs. The commission devotes countless hours to improving education, employment, health, well-being, and socioeconomic status by advocating on behalf of Nevada's Native Americans, while communicating with local officials. The commission has five board members working to strengthen economic opportunity and community development. I am thankful for their leadership and for the great things they are doing for this community.

The Federal Government has unique and important responsibilities to tribes and their people. That responsibility is something I take seriously as one of Nevada's Senators, which is why I have supported policies in Congress focused on promoting tribal self-governance and self-determination. Just recently, the Senate passed a resolution recognizing November as National Native American Heritage Month. As a proud original cosponsor of this resolution, I was pleased to see it pass to celebrate the heritages and cultures of Native Americans and their contributions to the United States and Nevada.

For the past 50 years, the Nevada Indian Commission has proven its unwavering dedication to our state. The hard work of those that have served this Commission has greatly contributed to the positive impact the Native American community has had across Nevada. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Nevada Indian Commission on its 50th anniversary and thanking the commission for all it does for the Silver State.●

CONGRATULATING PROFESSOR ANA DOUGLASS

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Professor Ana Douglass on receiving the 2015 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Nevada Professor of the Year award. This accolade is truly prestigious, attained by only the most influential of Nevada's educators. The Silver State is truly fortunate to have Professor Douglass working at Truckee Meadows Community College, TMCC.

The State Professors of the Year Awards Program, sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation, recognizes educators who go above and beyond in their career. These professors have an extraordinary dedication to undergraduate teaching as proven through their relationships with students, approach in helping their students learn, contributions to undergraduate education, and support from students and colleagues at their institutions. These educators' unwavering commitment to their students is unparalleled and has not gone unnoticed.

Professor Douglass is the first faculty member of a Nevada community college to receive this prestigious award. She has served at TMCC for 19 years, working not only as an English professor, but also as a leader among her peers. As a teacher, Professor Douglass is dedicated to motivating her students to be the best they can be by challenging them in their studies. She is also a mentor to many hard-working students, serving as an example of excellence in education for the TMCC community.

As the father of four children and as the husband of a teacher, I understand the important role educators play in enriching the lives of Nevadans. Ensuring students throughout the Silver State are prepared to compete in the 21st century is critical for the future of our country. The State of Nevada is fortunate to be home to educators like Professor Douglass.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Professor Douglass for her dedication to enriching the lives of Nevada's students and congratulating her on receiving this award. I wish her well in all of her future endeavors and in creating success for all students who enter her classroom.●

CONGRATULATING THE LEWISTON HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' SOCCER TEAM

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, at the end of the fall season, we see the culmination of youth athletics across the country. In each sport, whether it is field hockey, football, soccer, or the like, we as parents and spectators see the aggregation of hard work, sportsmanship, and perseverance come together to produce outstanding championship athletes. Today I wish to draw attention to all of the talented Maine youths who won athletic championships across the

State this year. In particular, I would like to congratulate the members of the Lewiston High School Blue Devils boys' soccer team, who on the path to their undefeated regular season and recent state championship victory have demonstrated remarkable levels of teamwork and sportsmanship.

The Blue Devils' achieved victory through an impressive display of talent and teamwork. Throughout their regular season the team scored a total of 114 goals, consistently demonstrated their strong defense, and earned recognition when USA Today ranked them 22nd in the country. The team's display of unity, patience, and determination in the state final against Scarborough High School was a fitting conclusion to a stunning season of hard work.

During two prior seasons, the Blue Devils earned their way to the State finals but each time returned home without the win. Following their defeat last November, Lewiston High School coach Mike McGraw vowed to his team that they would return and they would win. This year, that promise was fulfilled.

But the story of the Blue Devils' win is not solely one of raw athletic talent and training. This is a team with a long history and deep friendships that have spanned many years and continents. A number of the players originally hail from Somalia and have known each other and played soccer together since they were children in a refugee camp in Kenya. Others—native Mainers and immigrants alike—have bonded and shared their passion for the sport since grade school. This fraternal bond between the players and the supportiveness of the Lewiston community is a fine example of Maine citizens from diverse ethnic, religious, and experiential backgrounds coming together to achieve victory while championing Maine's spirit and America's highest ideals of inclusiveness and unity.

I wish to join the city of Lewiston and the entire Maine community in congratulating the Lewiston High School boys' soccer team for their well-earned success. They demonstrated impressive athletic ability, incredible determination, loyalty to their coach and one another, and have highlighted the richness that multiculturalism brings to our communities. The Blue Devils have earned their title as champions in more ways than one.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL BOB HARTER

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I acknowledge COL Bob Harter of the United States Army Reserve as he is promoted to brigadier general, effective November 8, 2015. The Harter family has long roots in Alaska; Bob's grandparents moved to Fairbanks in the early 1940s, and Bob's father, LTC Robert Harter, retired, was raised in Fairbanks, leaving Alaska to attend

the United States Military Academy in 1961. Bob lived in Alaska in the mid-1970s, when Bob's father was stationed at Fort Wainwright. While Bob has spent the last 27 years serving his country both at home and abroad, he has always maintained his Alaskan residence and remains the son of a proud Alaska family. In fact, both Bob and his father travel to Cordova, AK, every summer to spend time on the family boat, fishing and enjoying "the last frontier."

BG Bob Harter is the incoming director of the Office, Chief Army Reserve, OCAR, Staff. He was previously assigned to the Army's chief of staff transition team, where he provided a total force perspective for GEN Mark Milley, the newly assigned chief of staff of the Army. As the director of the OCAR Staff, Brigadier General Harter will be responsible for synchronizing the actions of the 400-person Army Reserve headquarters based out of Fort Belvoir, VA, in support of the chief of Army Reserve's priorities.

A graduate of Virginia Tech, Brigadier General Harter began his military career in 1988 as an artillery officer, assigned to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, ACR, in Bad Hersfeld, Germany.

While assigned to the 11th ACR, Brigadier General Harter participated in multiple border security missions prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification. Colonel Harter also deployed with the regiment to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in support of Operation Desert Storm.

Upon returning from Desert Storm, Colonel Harter transferred to the Ordnance Corps and was reassigned to Fort Campbell, KY, where he served as a group maintenance officer; battalion operations officer, S3; and as commander, 584th Direct Support, DS, Maintenance Company.

In 1999, Brigadier General Harter transferred from the Active component to the Reserve component, entered the Active Guard and Reserve program, and was assigned to the 99th Regional Readiness Command in Pittsburgh, PA, as a training chief for a readiness team, with a follow on assignment to the 55th Sustainment Brigade, Fort Belvoir, as the brigade support operations officer.

In 2006, Brigadier General Harter transferred to the 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command and, in 2007, deployed to Balad, Iraq, for one year. While in Iraq, Brigadier General Harter served as the 316th's distribution management chief, responsible for synchronizing logistics support to the more than 150,000 military members operating in Iraq.

Upon redeployment from Iraq, Brigadier General Harter attended the National War College at Fort McNair, Washington, DC, and was subsequently assigned as branch chief in the Force Protection Division, J8, of the Joint Staff. While in the J8, Brigadier General Harter was responsible for vetting

the mine-resistant ambush protected, MRAP, and counter improvised explosive device requirements in support of Central Command, CENTCOM, operations.

In 2011, Brigadier General Harter became the executive officer for the chief, Army Reserve, and, in 2013, assumed duties as the Office, Chief Army Reserve assistant chief of staff.

Brigadier General Harter's awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and the parachutist and air assault badges. Brigadier General Harter is a graduate of the National War College. He lives in Stafford, VA, with his wife, Erin, also a Virginia Tech graduate, and his three children: Anna, 20, currently a sophomore at the University of Virginia; Bobby, 16; and Jack, 14.

It is only fair and proper to acknowledge the unwavering support of his wife, Erin, and their three children, as they enabled him to work tirelessly on his assigned duties throughout his career and will undoubtedly continue to do so for many years to come. Let us thank them all for their sacrifices and wish them continued success in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND SCOTT FISHER

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, this weekend the interior Alaska community will honor the Rev. Scott Fisher, the rector and senior pastor of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in downtown Fairbanks on the occasion of his retirement. St. Matthew's is not just any church. It is one of the three oldest churches in Fairbanks, a beautiful log building overlooking the Chena River. It is a diverse congregation, the spiritual home of the Athabascan community of interior Alaska. And Scott Fisher is not just any pastor. All who know Scott would agree that he reflects all that is good and all that is holy. Easy to talk to and calming in manner, Scott is respected by people of all faiths for his strength, compassion, and humanity.

There is an old plaque on the door of St. Matthew's that reads: "To all who are joyful and thankful—to all who mourn and need comfort—to all who are weary and need rest—to all who are friendless and wish friendship—to all who pray and to all who do not but ought—to all who sin and need a Savior and to whosoever will—this church opens wide the door and in the name of Christ the Lord says welcome." And under Scott Fisher's leadership, that was so. This is a church where newcomers feel welcome immediately.

The Rev. Scott Fisher has served as rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church since June 1991. He arrived in Alaska, through the legendary Bishop William Jones Gordon, Jr., as a volunteer layworker in October 1970 and lived in the interior villages of Chalkyitsik, Stevens Village, and Bea-

ver before leaving for seminary under Bishop Gordon's direction in the summer of 1973. Receiving his M.Div. from the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, in Austin, TX, he returned to the interior of Alaska, working for the church in Fort Yukon and Beaver before moving into the diocesan office. He was an assistant to the bishop, traveling and working extensively throughout the interior and Arctic coast, before coming to St. Matthew's in the summer of 1991.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Scott Fisher for the powerful contribution he has made to life in interior Alaska and to wish him well in retirement. I know that I speak for the entire community in telling you that your departure leaves a large hole in our hearts, and we shall miss you.●

CONGRATULATING BEATRIZ R. PEREZ

● Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I would like to offer congratulations to Ms. Beatriz R. Perez, chief sustainability officer and vice president of the Coca-Cola Company and the winner of the Canadian-American Business Achievement Award. For more than 20 years, the Canadian American Business Achievement award has highlighted the deep relationship between the United States and Canada, the importance of free trade between the countries, and recognized individuals who have been leaders in their fields of enterprise.

Ms. Perez has served in her current role at Coca-Cola since 2011. Previously, she helped direct major marketing operations for the Atlanta-based beverage giant. In addition to her work at Coke, Ms. Perez spends a great deal of time giving back to the Atlanta community as a trustee for the Save the Children Foundation and a board member for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

At Coca-Cola, working with the company's top leaders and nonprofits from around the world, Ms. Perez directs efforts that seek to build cooperation in the "golden triangle of government, business and civil society." Ms. Perez is working with local governments around the world to continue the company's stewardship of natural resources through the development of water projects in nearly 100 countries, working with communities to advance and empower economic opportunities for women, and continuing the company's efforts in the distribution of more than 10 billion fully recyclable PlantBottle™ packages across 24 countries, which eliminates the need for the equivalent of more than 200,000 barrels of oil.

In 2014, Ms. Perez was named as one of the 10 Most Powerful Women in Sustainability by Green Building & Design magazine. She has been featured as one of the 25 Most Powerful Latinas on CNN en Espanol and in People en Espanol, and is a member of the American Advertising Hall of Achievement

and the Sports Business Journal's Hall of Fame. Ms. Perez earned her bachelor's degree in Marketing from the University of Maryland and currently resides in Atlanta, GA.

I applaud Ms. Perez's efforts and am proud to have her and the Coca-Cola Company call Georgia home.●

TRIBUTE TO BETTY RUSSELL VANDIVER

● Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I am pleased today to recognize Betty Russell Vandiver, wife of former Gov. Ernest Vandiver, who served as first lady of Georgia from 1959 to 1963. When Mrs. Vandiver became first lady, Central State Hospital in Milledgeville served as Georgia's only State hospital for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled. In the late 1950s, Central State Hospital was home to more than 12,000 clients, many of whom had been abandoned by their families at an early age.

Upon visiting the hospital, Mrs. Vandiver became very concerned about the plight of the clients and their living conditions. She determined that she would devote much of her time and energy as first lady to raise public awareness of the needs of Georgia's mentally ill and developmentally disabled.

One of Mrs. Vandiver's initiatives to show care and concern for the clients at Central State Hospital was to work with the Georgia Municipal Association to create a statewide Christmas gift collection drive known as the Mayors' Motorcade, which was established in 1959 and expanded years later to support the clients of the State's regional hospitals. Each year, caring Georgians support the Mayors' Motorcade by donating gifts to cities participating in the program.

Through Mrs. Vandiver's efforts, thousands of clients residing at Georgia's State hospitals have received Christmas gifts and visits from city officials at special Motorcade events.

Today it is my pleasure to honor Mrs. Vandiver for having the vision to create the program as a way of providing not only gifts but also raising public awareness about the needs of Georgia's mentally ill and developmentally disabled.●

REMEMBERING CHIEF VERNON ASHLEY

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate and reflect on the life and legacy of Vernon Ashley who passed away on November 10, 2015.

Vernon Ashley was born on January 15, 1916, at the mouth of Wolf Creek along the banks of the Missouri River near present day Fort Thompson, SD. In 1946, after serving in the Army Air Corps during World War II, Vernon was elected tribal chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. As chairman, he was credited both with helping to author the tribe's first constitution and bylaws and for working to preserve

tribal lands for his people during the Federal Government's flood control projects of the 1940s and 50s. He was a servant to his people of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe and to his fellow South Dakotans. After nearly 10 years of working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Vernon went to work for South Dakota as the first Indian Affairs coordinator, serving in that role under three different Governors. He was a fluent Dakota speaker whose Dakota name was Sinkpe, which means muskrat. This past July, the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe honored him by making him a chief.

The eagle bone whistle was traditionally used by some Plains Indian warrior societies. When Vernon and his fellow veterans were honored at his memorial services, several people heard the sound of the eagle bone whistle even though no one was playing one. Therefore, may the sound of the eagle bone whistle be with us, too, when we need to be inspired to be brave and do what is right for the people we serve.

Chief Vernon Ashley will be remembered by all for his humility, for being a man of faith, and for his friendship to so many. With this, I welcome the opportunity to recognize and commemorate the life and legacy of this good friend of mine, a great leader, Chief Vernon Ashley. Thank you.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:45 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2262. An act to facilitate a pro-growth environment for the developing commercial space industry by encouraging private sector investment and creating more stable and predictable regulatory conditions, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 12:05 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, 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. 1210. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to provide a safe harbor from certain requirements related to qualified mortgages for residential mortgage loans held on an originating depository institution's portfolio, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1737. An act to nullify certain guidance of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection and to provide requirements for guidance issued by the Bureau with respect to indirect auto lending.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 12:18 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 2036. An act to suspend the current compensation packages for the chief executive officers of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, and for other purposes.

H.R. 208. An act to improve the disaster assistance programs of the Small Business Administration.

H.R. 639. An act to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 2:22 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3996. An act to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 2:33 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4038. An act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

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

S. 799. An act to address problems related to prenatal opioid use.

At 2:45 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 95. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1210. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to provide a safe harbor from certain requirements related to qualified mortgages for residential mortgage loans held on an originating depository institution's portfolio, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 1737. An act to nullify certain guidance of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection and to provide requirements for guidance issued by the Bureau with respect to indirect auto lending; 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:

H.R. 3762. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

The following bill was deemed read the second time, pursuant to the order of November 19, 2015, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 4038. An act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 4038. An act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

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

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, November 19, 2015, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 799. An act to address problems related to prenatal opioid use.

S. 2036. An act to suspend the current compensation packages for the chief executive officers of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, 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-3612. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Flutriafof; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9933-61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3613. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2-Propenoic Acid, Polymer with Ethenylbenzene and (1-methylethenyl)benzene; Tolerance Exemption" (FRL No. 9936-48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3614. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Protection of Military Installations"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3615. 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: Photovoltaic Devices From the United States" ((RIN0750-A141) (DFARS Case 2015-D007)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3616. 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: Eliminate Data Collection Requirement" ((RIN0750-A173) (DFARS Case 2015-D031)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3617. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Commencement of Assessment of Annual Charges" (Docket No. RM15-18-000) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3618. A communication from the Administrator and Chief Executive Officer, Bonneville Power Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Annual Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3619. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances; Withdrawal" ((RIN2070-AB27) (FRL No. 9936-98)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3620. 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; Virginia; Prevention Significant Deterioration; Plantwide Applicability Limits for Greenhouse Gases" (FRL No. 9937-25-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3621. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Algal Toxin Risk Assessment and Management Strategic Plan for Drinking Water"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3622. 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 "Final Rules for Grandfathered Plans, Preexisting Condition

Exclusion, Lifetime and Annual Limits, Rescissions, Dependent Coverage, Appeals, and Patient Protections under the Affordable Care Act" (TD 9744) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3623. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement Payment Model for Acute Care Hospitals Furnishing Lower Extremity Joint Replacement Services" (RIN0938-AS64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3624. 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 "Transitional Amendments to Satisfy the Market Rate of Return Rules for Hybrid Retirement Plans" ((RIN1545-BL62) (TD 9743)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3625. 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 "Qualified Student Loan Bonds" (Notice 2015-78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3626. 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 "Extension of Guidance in Notice 2013-7 for Participants in the HFA Hardest Hit Fund" (Notice 2015-77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3627. 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 "Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates" (Notice 2015-80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3628. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2015-0134—2015-0149); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3629. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Rules for Grandfathered Plans, Preexisting Condition Exclusions, Lifetime and Annual Limits, Rescissions, Dependent Coverage, Appeals, and Patient Protections" (RIN0938-AS56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3630. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Agency Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3631. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations

Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Freedom of Information Act Procedures" ((CBP Dec. 15-16) (RIN1651-AB05)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3632. A communication from the Chairman, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's consolidated report addressing the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA or Integrity Act) and the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3633. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Housing Improvement Program" (RIN1076-AF22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-3634. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Secretarial Election Procedures" (RIN1076-AE93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-3635. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Exempting Mental Health Peer Support Services from Copayments" (RIN2900-AP11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-3636. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expanded Access to Non-VA Care through the Veterans Choice Program" (RIN2900-AP24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-3637. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3638. A communication from the Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3639. A communication from the Chief of the Policy and Rules Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions; Office of Engineering and Technology Releases and Seeks Comment on Updated OET-69 Software; Office of Engineering and Technology Seeks to Supplement the Incentive Auction Proceeding Record Regarding Potential Interference Between Broadcast Television and Wireless Services" ((ET Doc. No. 13-26) (ET Doc. No. 14-14) (GN Doc. No. 12-268) (FCC 15-141)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3640. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursu-

ant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; 2015 Management Area 1A Seasonal Annual Catch Limit Harvested" (RIN0648-XE292) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-107. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to propose an amendment to the United States Constitution which would clarify that a declaration of martial law, or a suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, does not prevent presidential and congressional elections from proceeding as scheduled and does not perpetuate a term-limited or a defeated presidential or congressional incumbent in office beyond the expiration of the term to which that incumbent was last elected; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

Air Force nomination of Col. Robert J. Becklund, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Frank D. Emanuel, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Arlen R. Royalty, to be Major General.

Navy nomination of Capt. Michelle C. Skubic, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Mr. MCCAIN. 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 Donnette A. Boyd and ending with Paul D. Sutter, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Maria J. Belmonte and ending with Deveril A. Wint, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2015.

Air Force nomination of Alan D. Murdock, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of David M. Jackson, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Tarnjit S. Saini, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Olga M. Anderson and ending with Eric W. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 28, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with Jimmy C. Davis, Jr. and ending with Robert E. Wichman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 28, 2015.

Army nomination of Spencer T. Price, to be Colonel.

Navy nomination of Jessica L. Morera, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Kari J. Tereick, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Joshua C. Andres and ending with Bethany R. Zmitrovich, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 28, 2015.

Navy nomination of Calvin M. Foster, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Tara A. Feher, to be Lieutenant Commander.

By Mr. THUNE for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Peter J. Brown and ending with Joseph M. Vojvodich, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 14, 2015.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

*Suzette M. Kimball, of West Virginia, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey.

*Victoria Marie Baecher Wassmer, of Illinois, to be Under Secretary of Energy.

*Cherry Ann Murray, of Kansas, to be Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy.

*John Francis Kotek, of Idaho, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Nuclear Energy).

*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. BENNET (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2305. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the issuance of exempt facility bonds for qualified carbon dioxide capture facilities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2306. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to undertake remediation oversight of the West Lake Landfill located in Bridgeton, Missouri; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2307. A bill to promote the strengthening of the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2308. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of church pension plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 2309. A bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the U.S. Civil Rights Network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEE, Mr.

RUBIO, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2310. A bill to allow a State to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2311. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. KING, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2312. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to make improvements to payments for durable medical equipment under the Medicare and Medicaid programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2313. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate program-related investments by private foundations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. NELSON, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2314. A bill to provide for the conversion of temporary judgeships to permanent judgeships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2315. A bill to provide protection for consumers who have prepaid cards and mobile accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2316. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the requirements for reissuance of veterans benefits in cases of misuse of benefits by certain fiduciaries to include misuse by all fiduciaries, and to improve oversight of fiduciaries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2317. A bill to amend title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to strengthen minority-serving institutions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 2318. A bill to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund for 10 years, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 2319. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 2320. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create Universal Savings Accounts; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2321. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 regarding reasonable break time for nursing mothers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2322. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide that over-the-road bus drivers are covered under the maximum hours requirements; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2323. A bill to clarify the definition of nonimmigrant for purposes of chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

S. 2324. A bill to provide for transparency, accountability, and reform of the National Flood Insurance Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2325. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 2326. A bill to designate the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, located in the State of Washington, as the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, to establish the Medicine Creek Treaty National Memorial within the wildlife refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2327. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Act of 1986 to strengthen the earned income tax credit and expand eligibility for childless individuals and youth formerly in foster care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2328. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

By Mr. PAUL:

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

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 2330. A bill to allow the Attorney General additional time to process background checks for alien firearm purchases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2331. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to make invalid and unenforceable predispute arbitration agreements with respect to controversies arising under provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 319. A resolution designating November 29, 2015, as "Drive Safer Sunday"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 320. A resolution congratulating the people of Burma on their commitment to peaceful elections; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. Res. 321. A resolution honoring the 70th anniversary of the founding of CARE; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. COATS, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SASSE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PAUL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. Con. Res. 25. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should submit the Paris climate change agreement to the Senate for its advice and consent; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 108

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 108, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve access for students to Federal grants and loans to help pay for postsecondary, graduate, and professional educational opportunities, and for other purposes.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 551

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 551, a bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms or the issuance of firearms and explosives licenses to known or suspected dangerous terrorists.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S.

578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 667

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 667, a bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 927

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) were added as cosponsors of S. 927, a bill to provide regulatory relief for certain financial institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 954

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 954, a bill to establish procedures regarding the approval of opioid drugs by the Food and Drug Administration.

S. 993

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 993, a bill to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems.

S. 1133

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1133, a bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration.

S. 1392

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1392, a bill to require certain practitioners authorized to prescribe controlled substances to complete continuing education.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1431, a bill to provide for increased Federal oversight of prescription opioid treatment and assistance to States in reducing opioid abuse, diversion, and deaths.

S. 1455

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

KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 1513

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1513, a bill to reauthorize the Second Chance Act of 2007.

S. 1719

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1719, a bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a National Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes.

S. 1849

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1849, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare payment option for patients and eligible professionals to freely contract, without penalty, for Medicare fee-for-service items and services, while allowing Medicare beneficiaries to use their Medicare benefits.

S. 1855

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1855, a bill to provide special foreign military sales status to the Philippines.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1893

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1893, a bill to reauthorize and improve programs related to mental health and substance use disorders.

S. 1913

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1913, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1926

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1926, a bill to ensure access to screening mammography services.

S. 1944

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Sen-

ator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISC), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1944, a bill to require each agency to repeal or amend 1 or more rules before issuing or amending a rule.

S. 2021

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes.

S. 2035

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2035, a bill to provide for the compensation of Federal employees affected by a lapse in appropriations.

S. 2045

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2045, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

S. 2055

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2055, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security.

S. 2097

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2097, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for payment for Medicaid services furnished by Ryan White part C grantees under a cost-based prospective payment system.

S. 2099

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2099, a bill to provide for the establishment of a mechanism to allow borrowers of Federal student loans to refinance their loans, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided educational assistance to employer payment of interest on certain refinanced student loans, and for other purposes.

S. 2145

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr.

BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2145, a bill to make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2016.

S. 2152

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2152, a bill to establish a comprehensive United States Government policy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to develop an appropriate mix of power solutions, including renewable energy, for more broadly distributed electricity access in order to support poverty reduction, promote development outcomes, and drive economic growth, and for other purposes.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2196

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2196, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the non-application of Medicare competitive acquisition rates to complex rehabilitative wheelchairs and accessories.

S. 2200

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2200, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to strengthen equal pay requirements.

S. 2240

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2240, a bill to improve the control and management of invasive species that threaten and harm Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes.

S. 2284

At the request of Mr. DAINES, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2284, a bill to suspend the admission and resettlement of aliens seeking refugee status because of the conflict in Syria until adequate protocols are established to protect the national security of the United States and for other purposes.

S. 2295

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from North

Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2295, a bill to extend the termination date for the authority to collect certain record and make permanent the authority for roving surveillance and to treat individual terrorist as agents of foreign powers under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 and for other purposes.

S. RES. 310

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 310, a resolution condemning the ongoing sexual violence against women and children from Yezidi, Christian, Shabak, Turkmen, and other religious communities by Islamic State of Iraq and Syria militants and urging the prosecution of the perpetrators and those complicit in these crimes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2818

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2818 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2819

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2819 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2822

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2822 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2825

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2825 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2826

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jer-

sey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2826 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2852

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2852 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2307. A bill to promote the strengthening of the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, on November 21, the world will mark the 20th anniversary of the Dayton Agreement, which ended the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina that began in April 1992.

Last July, the Senator from New Hampshire and I had the privilege and distinct honor of being part of a delegation of House and Senate Members to visit Srebrenica as part of the official U.S. delegation to remember the genocide in Srebrenica on its 20th anniversary. So a few months later in November, we commemorate a happy occasion, a positive development in the history of Europe and in international relations, the Dayton Accords.

I commend a bipartisan duo for securing approval within the United States. President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, and Speaker Newt Gingrich, a Republican, were both instrumental—along with a host of others—in persuading on a nonpartisan basis Americans and American Congressmen to support this agreement, which involved a bit of risk for the United States. It involved troops of the United States going into this area and risking their safety in order to make this accord work. So I appreciate this, and on the 20th anniversary of that agreement and their leadership, I commend them.

The Dayton Agreement was part of a response to a conflict that helped the international community transition from a world divided between East and West in order to meet post-Cold War challenges.

I wish to mention three accomplishments of the Dayton Accords and then Senator SHAHEEN will speak for a few monuments about that aspect. Then we will talk about some legislation that she and I have had the honor and privilege of working on together as a result of this trip that she and I took, along with others, to commemorate this tragedy in Srebrenica.

Back to the Dayton Accords, among the accomplishments is a successful and robust peacekeeping force under NATO, which actually replaced the U.N. peacekeeping group with a NATO command group. It was deployed for the first time, and NATO also intervened out of area for the first time to make peace.

Secondly, persons were held accountable for war crimes on an international basis—crimes against humanity and genocide. This is the first time this had happened since World War II.

Third, international cooperation on demining and a concerted search for missing persons became essential parts of post-conflict recovery.

Dayton also put the OSCE on center stage—the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, of which I am a committee chair representing the United States of America. The Accord mandated that the OSCE oversee arms control efforts and develop confidence-building measures within Bosnia and regionally and make it possible for a country divided and almost destroyed by war to hold elections in a reasonably Democratic manner.

So let's celebrate that accomplishment, and I am sure the Senator from New Hampshire will have some more important insights to offer at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am very pleased to be on the floor with my friend and colleague from Mississippi to talk about Bosnia-Herzegovina and about our trip to commemorate the horrible massacre in Srebrenica that occurred in 1995. As Senator WICKER has said, that was a very moving trip for us.

One of the things that was very particular to New Hampshire that I found hopeful was listening to the very young mayor from Srebrenica, the current mayor, whose name is Camil Durakovic. He had actually spent a number of years in New Hampshire and had gone to Southern New Hampshire University. His family had fled after the massacre in Bosnia and came to New Hampshire. He went back in 2005 and was elected mayor. One of the things he talked about was the need to work with Serbia, to work across the ethnic and religious lines in Bosnia to achieve peace. It was, as Senator WICKER said, so heartening to think that we were actually able to get these Dayton Accords that ended that long conflict in Bosnia—very bitter and bloody—and see some real progress.

One of the things we talked about on the flight back with President Clinton and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was what we could do to help Bosnia continue to progress and move forward, because one of their challenges is economic. This is a country that has a very high level of education, and it has a lot of young people who need opportunities for the future. So we talked about whether there was

a way that we in Congress could look at trying to provide some economic help for Bosnia in the future.

We came back and looked at how we could work together to come up with an idea that might be successful. What we came up with—and it was another tremendous bipartisan effort—was to look at the enterprise funds that were done after the fall of the Soviet Union and some of the Eastern European countries. Enterprise funds were funds passed by Congress with bipartisan support that helped those fledgling private sector economies begin to recover after the fall of the Soviet Union.

So we took that model—a U.S. enterprise fund—and focused on Bosnia-Herzegovina, and this is the legislation that we are going to be introducing. I don't know how Senator WICKER feels about it, but I think this offers real opportunity to Bosnia because we can leverage a very small amount of public resources through the private sector, through other local funds that might be available in Bosnia, and see real progress on the economic front that will help create jobs that will help those young people stay in the country and build a strong country.

So for my friend from Mississippi, I think this is a very good way to provide some of the assistance they are going to need. Would the Senator agree?

Mr. WICKER. I certainly agree with my colleague from New Hampshire, and I commend her for her leadership in getting this legislation drafted.

It is an opportunity to provide a very meaningful chance for Bosnians and Herzegovinians to live the good life and remain in the area, but it is also in the absolute national security interests of the United States of America. We can't tend to everything, but we saw 20 years ago—25 years ago and forward—with the war in the Balkans what could happen and what almost happened to security in all of Europe. We know this has been a flash point down through the decades and even the centuries. To the extent that we can address some things that we didn't get done at Dayton, this will help people in the region and the former Yugoslavia and also help the United States of America.

The Dayton Agreement was a crowning achievement, but it didn't provide Bosnia with a constitutional framework and political structures that could effectively govern on into the 21st century. And the Senator from New Hampshire and I certainly saw that. We were meeting with the tripartite head of the government after the ceremony we attended.

Dan Serwer of Johns Hopkins University recently observed:

We imposed the Dayton Accords, but we imposed what the ethnic nationalist warring parties told us they could live with. It is therefore unsurprising that one way or another, ethnic nationalists have dominated Bosnia almost continuously, making it ungovernable, since 1995.

So we are hoping the Bosnians and Herzegovinians can address this issue,

and while they are doing that, our legislation would establish an enterprise fund directed by a board of American investment professionals capable of leveraging both public and private funding to provide entrepreneurs access to the same kinds of loans and investment opportunities afforded to small- and medium-sized businesses here in the United States.

By strengthening the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this legislation would help create space to continue moving forward on the political reforms I just alluded to. As the Senator said, it would establish an enterprise fund modeled after U.S. programs that supported central and eastern European economies after the fall of the Berlin Wall, with approximately \$10 billion of public and private funding.

I would also point out that this legislation doesn't score as an expense. I think we are being very frugal with the authorization we are providing to the Congress to build on this, if our legislation passes.

Per capita income in Bosnia and Herzegovina averages less than \$5,000 annually. And that is a shame 20 years after the Dayton Accords. Compare this \$5,000-a-year per capita to \$13,000 a year right across the border in neighboring Croatia. The unemployment rate stands at 40 percent.

Things are at a critical juncture in this country, and that is why I think our trip over there with former President Clinton and with former Secretary Albright and Members from the House of Representatives came at such an important time and prompted us to work together on legislation to help make the situation better for individuals over there but also help make our national security stronger and more reliable here in America.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, as my colleague from Mississippi points out, this really is critical not just to Bosnia and its future, but this is also about the national security of the United States.

My colleague talked about the Balkans. We know World War I began in the Balkans. We know it has continued to be a part of Europe where Russian aggression and Russian efforts to subvert the governments there continue, they continue their activity. It is a place where we have a number of different ethnic groups and where different religions converge. So it is a place we need to keep supporting—Bosnia and Herzegovina. We need to look at how we can help them ensure their continued progress toward the West and Europe and also toward economic prosperity.

I traveled there in 2010 with former Senator Voinovich from Ohio, who had done a lot of work on the Balkans when he was in the Senate. I will never forget a lunch we had with a number of young people there, mostly college students or recent graduates. We talked to them about what they saw for the future of the country, and there was so

much hopelessness in that conversation because they didn't see the kinds of opportunities we want young people to see as they are thinking about their futures and their children and what is going to happen in their country. So I think this is a partial answer to how we can help them provide that economic prosperity they are looking forward to.

Finally, I think what has happened in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Dayton Accords—for all of its flaws, it is a model we can look to as we are looking at the challenges we face in Syria. The Bosniaks, the Serbs, the Croats, the Muslims, the Orthodox Christians, and the Roman Catholics all came together and they agreed to end the conflict in Bosnia. They agreed to try to build a successful democracy and a strong economy to create a successful multiethnic, multisectarian state under very difficult circumstances. And while we need to continue to look at how the Dayton Accords should change, it is still a milestone in what happened with that conflict and I think serves as a model for so many other regions in the world where there is conflict.

Mr. WICKER. The Senator from New Hampshire makes two very salient points I do want to underscore. And it pains me that we have to be on the floor of the Senate this afternoon talking about an aggressive Russia. Russia was trying to help 20 years ago in the Dayton Accords. They were trying to be part of getting things done. This is no longer the case. Russia and some of the few countries aligned with their interests now seem to be trying more to block effective responses to the international problems.

In addition, some of the aggression of Russia in Ukraine, for example, is eerily, troublingly reminiscent of some language in previous decades—talk of violating a neighbor's sovereignty, territory, and claiming they are doing nothing more than defending a threatened local ethnic population. That is troubling and familiar rhetoric from a very dangerous past time. So I would underscore the Senator's point there about Russia.

Before I toss this back to her to close, I would simply say this about her comments about American leadership. No one could have made this work except the United States of America in the early 1990s and in the mid-1990s. There was one people on the face of the Earth, and that was the Americans. The world turned to us, and we stopped a conflagration in Europe that was about to get out of hand.

With regard to Syria, I am so glad my friend mentioned this. The United States is being looked to internationally for leadership. No one else can provide that leadership. Again, it is incumbent on us to help people who are suffering in other locations, and we want to do that if we can, to the extent we can afford it. But we need to act with leadership on behalf of the United

States of America, on behalf of our own citizens, on behalf of our own national defense interests and the interest of every American to live in the absence of fear from terrorism and the attacks and ill wishes of those who would cause us injury, if they possibly could.

I very much appreciate her point about American leadership, and I know this will not be done unless we do it across the aisle. It is why it means so much to me to take the floor this afternoon in this colloquy, with a Democratic Senator from New Hampshire and I, a Republican Senator from Mississippi, pushing in the same direction and asking for American leadership.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I thank my colleague. As you point out, we represent two very different parts of the country.

Mr. WICKER. Although we both are Ole Miss graduates.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. We are. We share that. The fact is, this is a bipartisan issue. As my colleague points out, the United States brokered that historic agreement in Dayton. We were the only country that could really take that leadership, and we need to continue that role in the world.

I look forward to working with Senator WICKER as we try to move this bipartisan bill to support Bosnia and Herzegovina and continuing to be vigilant on efforts to undermine democratic values wherever they exist in the world, and certainly this is one place where we can provide help in a way that is very important.

I thank my colleague.

Mr. WICKER. And I thank the Senator from New Hampshire.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2310. A bill to allow a State to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, as a fifth-generation Montanan and product of Montana public schools, I understand how important a first rate education is to our kids' future. By increasing local control of our schools and lessening the influence Washington bureaucrats, we can provide States with the flexibility needed to meet the unique needs of our students and communities. That is why I am introducing the Academic Partnerships Lead Us to Success, or A-PLUS, Act. By shifting control back to the states, individual and effective solutions can be created to address the multitude of unique challenges facing schools across the country. Through these "laboratories of democracy," Americans can watch and learn how students can benefit when innovative reforms are implemented on the local level. The A-PLUS

Act would give states greater flexibility in allocating federal education funding and ensuring academic achievement in their schools. With A-PLUS, States would be freed from unworkable teacher standards, Washington-knows-best performance metrics, and onerous Federal testing requirements that have failed to bring about promised improvements in academic achievement. States would be held accountable by parents and teachers because a bright light would shine directly on the decisions made by State capitals and local school districts. With freedom from Federal mandates comes more responsibility, transparency, and accountability on States. States would need to adhere to all civil rights laws and work towards advancing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children as well. This legislation would go a long ways towards returning the responsibility for our kids' education closer to home and reduces the influence of the Federal Government over our classrooms. I want to thank Senators GRASSLEY, CRUZ, LEE, RUBIO, LANKFORD, and PERDUE for being original cosponsors of this bill and I ask my other Senate colleagues to join us in support of this legislation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2323. A bill to clarify the definition of nonimmigrant for purposes of chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 2323

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 "Visa Waiver Program Firearms Clarification Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. NONIMMIGRANT CLARIFICATION.

Section 922 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)(5)(B), by inserting "or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)" before the semicolon at the end;

(2) in subsection (g)(5)(B), by inserting "or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)" before the semicolon at the end; and

(3) in subsection (y)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting "OR PURSUANT TO THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM" after "VISAS";

(B) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting "or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)" after "visa"; and

(C) in paragraph (3)(A), in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting "or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)" after "visa".

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 2326. A bill to designate the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, located in the State of Washington, as the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, to establish the Medicine Creek Treaty National Memorial within the wildlife refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, last year the Pacific Northwest, and the Nation lost one of our greatest civil rights heroes with the passing of Billy Frank, Jr. It is clear a great leader has been lost when an entire community shows up to commemorate his life and celebrate his spirit. I attended Billy's memorial, along with Senator MURRAY and 6,000 others, and was honored to have the chance to pay tribute to the man who fought for the civil rights of Native Americans, the principles of environmental stewardship, and the importance of salmon recovery and preservation in the Pacific Northwest.

Today, I am introducing the Billy Frank Jr. Tell Your Story Act, which would change the name of the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge to the "Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge." In addition, this legislation would create a national memorial to commemorate the signing of the Medicine Creek Treaty, the treaty that Billy Frank fought so hard to enforce, within the refuge. The wildlife refuge sits adjacent to the Nisqually Reservation where Billy grew up and lived, and contains the estuary and salmon that Billy devoted his life to protecting.

Billy Frank, Jr. just wanted to fish. He was a fisherman to his core, and that's how he wanted history to remember him. Everyone who knew Billy would want us to remember him as the legend that walked and fished among us. Given his life, his legacy, and the way he changed Washington State and the Nation, it is only right that we honor his legacy by forever linking his name to the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.

Along with his advocacy for protecting Tribal treaty rights, Billy Frank changed the way we look at the environment. Because of his advocacy, we now have environmental restoration efforts throughout the Puget Sound, including at the Nisqually River Delta, the largest tidal marsh rehabilitation in the Northwest. Additionally, we have the Puget Sound Partnership, a Tribal and public-private partnership dedicated to improve the health of our Puget Sound. Billy understood that we have a sacred responsibility to be stewards of our environment, and that we must leave it for future generations in better condition than it was left to us.

The Billy Frank Jr. Tell Your Story Act has the support of the Nisqually Tribe and the neighboring Puyallup Tribe, along with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, the National Congress of American Indians, and the

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. A companion bill introduced by Congressman Denny Heck has been approved by the House Natural Resources Committee and is awaiting consideration by the House. I urge its passage in the Senate, especially given the recent decision by President Obama to posthumously award Billy the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Billy grew up listening to the stories of his father and others belonging to the Nisqually and other tribes. Routinely harassed for fishing his tribe's namesake Nisqually River with nets, Willie Frank, Sr. recalled a warden telling him, "Your treaty isn't worth the paper it's printed on." Billy's father always told him, "Just keep fishing. Even if they arrested you, just keep fishing. Even if they beat you just keep fishing. Keep fishing and claim what was promised in the in the Medicine Creek Treaty." By changing the name of the Nisqually wildlife refuge, we will not only honor the fisherman that fought to protect the land and its people, but we will make this land better than it was left to us, just like Billy Frank, Jr. would have wanted.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2331. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to make invalid and unenforceable predispute arbitration agreements with respect to controversies arising under provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, our Nation has a strong tradition of ensuring that our service members are protected while they serve to keep us safe. As the challenges facing our service members change, we must work to ensure that our laws continue to keep pace. In this regard, I have worked with my colleagues over the years to strengthen the protections for service members and their families under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, SCRA.

Today, I am joined by Senator GRAHAM in introducing on a bipartisan basis legislation to further enhance SCRA protections. The SCRA Rights Protection Act seeks to protect service members from being forced to accept mandatory arbitration clauses as part of everyday transactions, such as those relating to mortgage origination, automobile leases, and student loans. Often service members sign contracts that include arbitration clauses buried in the fine print, and this eliminates their access to the courts, which can limit their ability to assert their rights and reach a fair resolution. In disputes involving SCRA rights, this bill would make arbitration clauses unenforceable unless all parties consent to arbitration after the dispute arises, and would also ensure that service members retain their right to join with other service members to file a case together as a class.

I urge our colleagues to join us in supporting this improvement to the SCRA, which will better protect our military families while the men and women of our Armed Forces protect our nation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 319—DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 29, 2015, AS "DRIVE SAFER SUNDAY"

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 319

Whereas motor vehicle travel is the primary means of transportation in the United States;

Whereas every individual traveling on the roads and highways needs to drive in a safer manner to reduce deaths and injuries that result from motor vehicle accidents;

Whereas according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, wearing a seat belt saves as many as 15,000 lives each year; and

Whereas the Sunday after Thanksgiving is the busiest highway traffic day of the year: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) encourages—

(A) high schools, colleges, universities, administrators, teachers, primary schools, and secondary schools to launch campus-wide educational campaigns to urge students to focus on safety when driving;

(B) national trucking firms to alert their drivers to be especially focused on driving safely on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and to publicize the importance of the day through use of the Citizens Band Radio Service and at truck stops across the United States;

(C) clergies to remind their congregations to travel safely when attending services and gatherings;

(D) law enforcement personnel to remind drivers and passengers to drive safely, particularly on the Sunday after Thanksgiving;

(E) motorists to drive safely, not just during the holiday season, but every time they get behind the wheel; and

(F) all people of the United States to understand the life-saving importance of wearing a seat belt and to use the Sunday after Thanksgiving as an opportunity to educate themselves about highway safety; and

(2) designates November 29, 2015, as "Drive Safer Sunday".

SENATE RESOLUTION 320—CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE OF BURMA ON THEIR COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL ELECTIONS

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. McCONNELL, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 320

Whereas Burma conducted general elections on November 8 2015, the country's first national vote since a civilian government was introduced in 2011 that ended nearly 50 years of military rule;

Whereas the people of Burma have, by their vigorous participation in electoral campaigning and public debate, strengthened

the foundations of a free and democratic way of life;

Whereas preliminary reports indicate that voter turnout exceeded 80 percent;

Whereas international observers have reported that election day was largely free and fair and conducted in an orderly and peaceful fashion despite broader structural concerns such as the disenfranchisement of the Rohingya;

Whereas the ruling military-backed Union Solidarity Development Party suffered a dramatic loss at the polls, and the National League for Democracy won a sizable majority in both chambers of Burma's Union Parliament, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, and will select Burma's next President;

Whereas Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has symbolized the struggle for freedom and democracy in Burma and has actively supported democratic reform through her leadership of the National League for Democracy;

Whereas the National League for Democracy espouses a policy of nonviolent movement towards multi-party democracy in Burma, supports national reconciliation, and endorses strengthening democratic institutions, protecting human rights, implementing free market economic reforms, and reinforcing rule of law;

Whereas President Thein Sein and Commander-in-Chief Min Aug Hlaing made public commitments to respect the election results and vowed to abide by the law to ensure an orderly and prompt transition to a new government;

Whereas the continued democratic development of Burma is a matter of fundamental importance to the advancement of United States interests in Southeast Asia and is supported by the United States Senate:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the people of Burma for embracing democracy through their participation in the November 8, 2015 general elections and for their continuing efforts in developing a free, democratic society that respects internationally-recognized human rights;

(2) recognizes the National League for Democracy's victory as a reflection of the will of the Burmese people;

(3) calls on the Union Solidarity Development Party to undertake a peaceful transfer of power and abide by the law to ensure an orderly and prompt transition to a new government;

(4) encourages all parties to pursue national reconciliation talks and work together in the spirit of national unity to seek what is best for the country;

(5) recognizes that while the Government of Burma has made important progress towards democratization, there remain important impediments to the realization of full democratic and civilian government, including the reservation of unelected seats for the military and the disenfranchisement of groups of people including the Rohingya;

(6) expresses hope that newly elected members of parliament and a prompt and orderly transition to a new government will herald a new generation of responsible leadership in Burma;

(7) calls on the Government of Burma to support meaningful efforts to reform the 2008 Constitution of Burma, with the full and unfettered participation of the people of Burma and in a manner that promotes and protects democratic development of Burma and safeguards against arbitrary interference by the military;

(8) supports negotiations between the Government of Burma and ethnic-based peoples and organizations;

(9) encourages the President of the United States to take further steps toward normalization of relations with Burma and consider the potential relaxation of restrictions should the Union Solidarity Development Party respect the election results and proceed with a prompt and orderly transition in power; and

(10) reaffirms that the people of the United States will continue to stand with the people of Burma in support of democracy, partnership, and peace.

SENATE RESOLUTION 321—HONORING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF CARE

Ms. MIKULSKI submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 321

Whereas CARE is 1 of the largest and most respected international development and emergency aid organizations in the world;

Whereas CARE was officially founded on November 27, 1945, which is 70 years prior to the month of adoption of this resolution;

Whereas the United States sent 100,000,000 CARE packages to Europe during World War II, which—

(1) delivered canned meats, powdered milk, dried fruits, chocolate, and coffee to brave soldiers of the United States; and

(2) each cost only \$10 but provided 10 soldiers each 1 meal;

Whereas President Harry Truman purchased the first CARE package;

Whereas CARE was originally intended to be a temporary organization, but CARE—

(1) continued as the need for global relief continued; and

(2) grew into an international organization working in 87 countries;

Whereas CARE—

(1) has significantly broadened the scope of its relief work;

(2) provides assistance in the wake of devastating natural disasters;

(3) combats hunger; and

(4) comes to the assistance of refugees, including refugees of the current refugee crisis in Syria;

Whereas CARE also works—

(1) to empower women and girls;

(2) to reduce the incidence of child marriage;

(3) to prevent and respond to gender-based violence; and

(4) to promote gender equality internationally; and

Whereas the words of President John F. Kennedy, that the work of CARE “expresses America's concern and friendship in a language that all peoples understand” are still true today: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes the 70th anniversary of the founding of CARE, which serves as a symbol of hope and humanity throughout the world.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 25—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SUBMIT THE PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE AGREEMENT TO THE SENATE FOR ITS ADVICE AND CONSENT

Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. ROBERTS,

Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. COATS, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SASSE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PAUL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 25

Whereas the United States is party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with annexes, done at New York May 9, 1992, and entered into force March 21, 1994 (in this resolution referred to as the “Convention”);

Whereas the Convention requires the United States to “adopt national policies and take corresponding measures on the mitigation of climate change, by limiting its anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases,” but does not require the United States to commit to specific targets or timetables for emissions reductions;

Whereas, during the Convention's advice and consent process in the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate (in this resolution referred to as the “Foreign Relations Committee”) a question arose whether future protocols made pursuant to the Convention “containing targets and timetables” for emissions reductions should be submitted to the Senate for advice and consent;

Whereas the Foreign Relations Committee submitted a written question, “Would a protocol containing targets and timetables be submitted to the Senate?” to which the Executive Branch responded, “If such a protocol were negotiated and adopted, and the United States wished to become a party, we would expect such a protocol to be submitted to the Senate.”;

Whereas the Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Senator Claiborne Pell, issued Executive Report 102-55 regarding the Convention in which it noted “that a decision by the Conference of the Parties to adopt targets and timetables would have to be submitted to the Senate for its advice and consent before the United States could deposit its instruments of ratification for such an agreement”;

Whereas Executive Report 102-55 further noted “that a decision by the executive branch to reinterpret the Convention to apply legally binding targets and timetables for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases to the United States would alter the ‘shared understanding’ of the Convention between the Senate and the executive branch and would therefore require the Senate's advice and consent”;

Whereas, under the auspices given by the Executive Branch that future agreements made pursuant to the Convention containing targets and timetables for emissions reductions would be submitted to the Senate, the Senate gave its consent to ratification of the Convention on October 7, 1992;

Whereas, in December 2011, at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-17) in Durban, South Africa, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action was established, inter alia, “to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force” under the Convention to be completed no later than 2015 and adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-21);

Whereas, subsequent to COP-17, representatives of President Barack Obama, including the Special Envoy for Climate Change, have made public statements indicating that the United States intends to finalize a climate change agreement at COP-21 that contains

targets and timetables for emissions reductions;

Whereas the Executive Branch has made clear through its public statements that it intends to negotiate a climate change agreement at COP-21 that contains legally binding provisions as well as non-binding provisions—including targets and timetables for emissions reductions—attached as an addendum or schedule to the legally-binding agreement;

Whereas the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, who will host COP-21, has stated, “We must find a formula which is valuable for everybody and valuable for the U.S. without going to the Congress.”;

Whereas the Department of State developed guidelines known as the Circular 175 Procedure (C-175) to facilitate “the application of orderly and uniform measures to the negotiation, conclusion, reporting, publication, and registration of U.S. treaties and international agreements”;

Whereas C-175, *inter alia*, set forth eight factors for determining “whether any international agreement should be brought into force as a treaty or as an international agreement other than a treaty”;

Whereas the Executive Branch must give “due consideration” to the eight factors outlined in C-175, and “the utmost care is to be exercised to avoid any invasion or compromise of the constitutional powers of the President, the Senate, and the Congress as a whole”;

Whereas the eight factors are as follows: (1) the extent to which the agreement involves commitments or risks affecting the Nation as a whole; (2) whether the agreement is intended to affect State laws; (3) whether the agreement can be given effect without the enactment of subsequent legislation by the Congress; (4) past United States practice as to similar agreements; (5) the preference of the Congress as to a particular type of agreement; (6) the degree of formality desired for an agreement; (7) the proposed duration of the agreement, the need for prompt conclusion of an agreement, and the desirability of concluding a routine or short-term agreement; and (8) the general international practice as to similar agreements;

Whereas COP-21 will be held in Paris, France from November 30 to December 11, 2015;

Whereas, at COP-21, the United States will be expected, *inter alia*, to commit billions of dollars in taxpayer money to fund the Green Climate Fund and other financial mechanisms to fund mitigation and adaptation projects in developing countries;

Whereas the Paris climate change agreement, either in the form contemplated by the President or in its current draft form released on October 5, 2015, by the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform, reflects the characteristics of a treaty as set forth in C-175, and does not reflect the characteristics of an international agreement other than a treaty; and

Whereas, pursuant to commitments made by the Executive Branch to the Senate during the advice and consent process for the Convention the Executive Branch stated that any protocol containing targets and timetables would be submitted to the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the statements made by the Executive Branch to the Senate during Senate consideration of the Convention and set forth in Executive Report 102-55 remain valid and in force and, accordingly, any agreement adopted at COP-21 containing targets and timetables, whether deemed “legally binding” or not, must be submitted to the Senate for ad-

vice and consent pursuant to Article II, section 2 of the Constitution;

(2) any agreement or decision made at COP-21 that contains targets and timetables—whether they are contained within a legally-binding instrument or attached as a non-binding schedule or addendum to a legally-binding instrument—shall be considered by the Congress to be an agreement “containing targets and timetables”;

(3) a decision by the Executive Branch made at COP-21 or any other venue to apply targets and timetables for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases to the United States would alter the “shared understanding” of the Convention between the Executive Branch and the Senate and would therefore require the Senate’s advice and consent;

(4) the Department of State developed the “Circular 175 Procedure” to determine how international agreements would be negotiated, and the eight factors contained in the Procedure strongly support the conclusion that any agreement made under the Convention that contains targets and timetables for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases must be submitted to the Senate for advice and consent;

(5) until all commitments on emissions targets and timetables made at COP-21 are submitted to the Senate for advice and consent and subsequently ratified by the Executive Branch, such commitments shall have no effect on the interpretation of United States law or the international obligations of the United States; and

(6) Congress should refuse to consider any budget resolutions and appropriations language that include funding for the Green Climate Fund or any affiliated body or financing mechanism unless and until all agreements on emissions targets and timetables reached at COP-21 are submitted to the Senate for advice and consent.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2855. Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2856. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2857. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2858. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2859. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2860. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2861. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2862. Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2863. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2864. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2865. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2866. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2867. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2868. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2869. Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2870. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2871. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2872. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2873. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mrs. ERNST) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1550, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish entities tasked with improving program and project management in certain Federal agencies, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2855. Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R.

2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:
SEC. 416. INTERSTATE TRANSPORT OF KNIVES.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Knife Owners’ Protection Act of 2015”.

(b) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “transport”—

(1) includes staying in temporary lodging overnight, common carrier misrouting or delays, stops for food, fuel, vehicle maintenance, emergencies, medical treatment, and any other activity related to the journey of an individual; and

(2) does not include transport of a knife with the intent to commit an offense punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding 1 year involving the use or threatened use of force against another person, or with knowledge, or reasonable cause to believe, that such an offense is to be committed in the course of, or arising from, the journey.

(c) **TRANSPORT OF KNIVES.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, rule, or regulation of the United States, or of a State or political subdivision of a State, an individual who is not otherwise prohibited by Federal law from possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving a knife may transport a knife from any State or place where the individual may lawfully possess, carry, or transport the knife to any other State or place where the individual may lawfully possess, carry, or transport the knife if—

(1) in the case of transport by motor vehicle—

(A) the knife is not directly accessible from the passenger compartment of the motor vehicle; or

(B) in the case of a motor vehicle without a compartment separate from the passenger compartment, the knife is contained in a closed—

- (i) container;
- (ii) glove compartment; or
- (iii) console; or

(2) in the case of transport by means other than a motor vehicle, including any transport over land, on or through water, or through the air, the knife is contained in a closed container.

(d) **EMERGENCY KNIVES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—An individual—

(A) may carry in the passenger compartment of a motor vehicle a knife or tool designed for enabling escape in an emergency that incorporates a blunt tipped safety blade or a guarded blade or both for cutting safety belts; and

(B) shall not be required to secure a knife or tool described in subparagraph (A) in a closed—

- (i) container;
- (ii) glove compartment; or
- (iii) console.

(2) **LIMITATION.**—This subsection shall not apply to the transport of a knife or tool in the passenger cabin of an aircraft whose passengers are subject to airport screening procedures of the Transportation Security Administration.

(e) **NO ARREST OR DETENTION.**—An individual who is transporting a knife in compliance with this section may not be arrested or otherwise detained for violation of any law, rule, or regulation of a State or political subdivision of a State related to the possession, transport, or carrying of a knife, unless there is probable cause to believe that the individual is not in compliance with subsection (c).

(f) **CLAIM OR DEFENSE.**—An individual may assert this section as a claim or defense in any civil or criminal action or proceeding. When an individual asserts this section as a claim or defense in a criminal proceeding, the State or political subdivision shall have the burden of proving, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the individual was not in compliance with subsection (c).

(g) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit any right to possess, carry, or transport a knife under applicable State law.

SA 2856. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 146, line 8, strike “and”.

On page 146, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

(7) is not a youth who left foster care at age 14 or older and is at risk of becoming homeless; and

On page 146, line 9, strike “(7)” and insert “(8)”.

SA 2857. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 163, line 23, insert “and under the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), as applicable” after “(PHAS)”.

SA 2858. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for high-speed rail in the State of California or for the California High-Speed Rail Authority, nor may any such funds be used by the Federal Railroad Administration to administer a grant agreement with the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

SA 2859. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act shall be used to carry out the rule entitled “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” (80 Fed. Reg. 42272 (July 16, 2015)).

SA 2860. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to terminate the Federal Aviation Administration’s Contract Weather Observation Services Program until after the completion of a comprehensive study, incorporating stakeholder input and public comment, of the safety risks and hazardous effects that may result from such loss of such program.

SA 2861. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the general provisions of title I, add the following:

SEC. ____. Any bridge eligible for assistance under title 23, United States Code, that is structurally deficient and requires construction, reconstruction, or maintenance—

(1) may be reconstructed in the same location with the same capacity and dimensions as in existence on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) shall be exempt from any environmental reviews, approvals, licensing, and permit requirements under—

(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(B) sections 402 and 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342, 1344);

(C) division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code;

(D) the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.);

(E) the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.);

(F) the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.);

(G) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), except when the reconstruction occurs in designated critical habitat for threatened and endangered species;

(H) Executive Order 11990 (42 U.S.C. 4321 note; relating to the protection of wetland); and

(I) any Federal law (including regulations) requiring no net loss of wetland.

SA 2862. Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and

Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. With respect to grants awarded using amounts in the appropriations account appropriated under the heading "HOMELESS ASSISTANCE GRANTS" under the heading "COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT" made available for either of fiscal years 2015 or 2016 for the Continuum of Care Program, as authorized under subtitle C of title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11381 et seq.), costs paid through program income of a grant recipient may count toward meeting the matching requirements of the recipient, if the costs are eligible continuum of care costs that supplement the continuum of care program of the recipient.

SA 2863. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. _____. From amounts made available by this Act, such sums as may be necessary may be used to carry out the following activities:

(1) The Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, shall review policies and guidance to identify ways in which the Department of Transportation can encourage State departments of transportation, transit agencies, and other direct recipients of Federal-Aid Highway and Federal Transit funding to encourage and expand the use of innovative mobility technologies, including car sharing, bike sharing, carpool, vanpool, transportation network companies, multimodal fare payment systems, application-based mobility programs, and other innovative projects that can make the transportation system more safe and efficient.

(2) The Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, shall—

(A) review existing guidance and revise such guidance, as necessary, to encourage the use and expansion of innovative technologies, as appropriate; and

(B) develop specific guidance and circulars on how recipients of Federal-Aid Highway funding can and should be utilizing such technologies.

(3) Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to Congress that includes—

(A) a plan describing how the Department of Transportation will identify and provide technical assistance to recipients of Federal-Aid Highway funding on integrating and utilizing innovative mobility technologies;

(B) a plan for addressing current and potential guidance documents;

(C) the identification of legislative barriers that prevent expansion and utilization of innovative mobility technologies, including mobility services provided by private providers of public transportation; and

(D) recommendations on policies that the Department of Transportation should imple-

ment and legislation that Congress should enact to expand innovative mobility technologies.

(4) To assist with the development of the report under paragraph (3), the Secretary of Transportation shall create a task force composed of representatives of—

(A) national stakeholders representing—
(i) city officials;
(ii) State departments of transportation;
(iii) transit agencies;
(iv) transportation demand management professionals;
(v) rural transportation agencies;
(vi) shared use mobility providers;
(vii) intelligent transportation system professionals; and
(viii) additional private sector technology professionals, as appropriate;

(B) university transportation centers engaged in research regarding urban mobility and shared use mobility;

(C) private companies that provide, promote, and operate digital mobility technologies and information technologies; and

(D) other entities that the Secretary determines could contribute to the development of the report.

SA 2864. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. Section 8(x)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(x)(2)) is amended by striking "not more than 21 years of age" and inserting "not more than 24 years of age".

SA 2865. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 169, line 13, insert "(a)" before "Section".

On page 169, between lines 15 and 16, insert the following:

(b) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall issue final regulations to implement the amendment made by subsection (a).

SA 2866. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 119C, insert the following:

SEC. 119D. It is the sense of Congress that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration continue evaluating the operational benefits of technologies, including an all-digital cylindrical technology and a panel technology as part of the multi-function phased array radar program. Further, NOAA and the FAA should jointly formulate key requirements for development and eventual acquisition strategy of such a radar system to meet the needs of the respective agencies.

SA 2867. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. _____. (a) In this section, the term "covered agency" means—

(1) the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
(2) the Department of Transportation;
(3) the Federal Maritime Commission;
(4) the National Railroad Passenger Corporation;
(5) the National Transportation Safety Board;
(6) the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation; and
(7) the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness.

(b) Not later than September 30, 2016, the head of each covered agency shall submit to Congress and post on the website of the covered agency a report on projects funded by the covered agency.

(c) Each report submitted and posted under subsection (b) shall include, for each project included in the report—

(1) a brief description of the project, including—
(A) the purpose of the project;
(B) each location in which the project is carried out;
(C) the year in which the project was initiated; and
(D) each primary contractor and grant recipient for the project;
(2) the original expected date for completion of the project;
(3) the current expected date for completion of the project;
(4) the original cost estimate for the project;
(5) the current cost estimate for the project; and
(6) if known, an explanation for a delay in completion or increase in the original cost estimate for the project.

SA 2868. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to

implement changes to the Indian Housing Block Grant allocation formula until all changes to data sources are fully evaluated by the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee established under section 106(b) of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4116(b)) at a publicly noticed, in-person session as part of the official, regular meeting process of the Committee.

SA 2869. Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 54, line 11, strike “\$1,101,500,000” and insert “\$1,711,500,000”.

SA 2870. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 105.

SA 2871. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

SEC. _____. None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act may be used to provide or administer assistance to aliens admitted, on or after November 13, 2015, as refugees or asylees under section 1157 or 1158 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157 and 1158) who were nationals of any of the following countries or territories:

- (1) Afghanistan.
- (2) Algeria.
- (3) Bahrain.
- (4) Bangladesh.
- (5) Egypt.
- (6) Eritrea.
- (7) Indonesia.
- (8) Iran.
- (9) Iraq.
- (10) Jordan.
- (11) Kazakhstan.
- (12) Kuwait.
- (13) Kyrgyzstan.
- (14) Lebanon.
- (15) Libya.
- (16) Mali.
- (17) Morocco.
- (18) Nigeria.
- (19) North Korea.
- (20) Oman.

- (21) Pakistan.
- (22) Qatar.
- (23) Russia.
- (24) Saudi Arabia.
- (25) Somalia.
- (26) Sudan.
- (27) Syria.
- (28) Tajikistan.
- (29) Tunisia.
- (30) Turkey.
- (31) United Arab Emirates.
- (32) Uzbekistan.
- (33) Yemen.
- (34) Palestinian Territories.

SA 2872. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. _____. It is the sense of the Senate that bridges classified as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete should receive priority funding under the national highway performance program under section 119 of title 23, United States Code.

SA 2873. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mrs. ERNST) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1550, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish entities tasked with improving program and project management in certain Federal agencies, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 11, line 22, strike “in accordance” and insert “consistent”.

On page 12, lines 18 and 19, strike “the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016” and insert “chapter 87 of title 10”.

On page 15, lines 16 and 17, strike “the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016” and insert “chapter 87 of title 10”.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of Thomas A. Shannon, Jr. to be Undersecretary of State (Political Affairs), dated November 19, 2015.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. COLLINS. 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 November 19, 2015, at 2 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “ISIS’s Impacts on the Homeland and Refugee Resettlement.”

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, “Human Trafficking Investigation.”

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC, AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Democratic Transitions in Southeast Asia.”

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

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to Public Law 96-114, as amended, appoints the following individual to the Congressional Award Board: Karlos R. LaSane II of Nevada.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the

consideration of Calendar Nos. 379 through 382 and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Coast Guard; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order, that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment to serve as Director of the Coast Guard Reserve pursuant to Title 14, U.S.C., section 53(b) in the grade indicated:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. Kurt B. Hinrichs

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Derek Tai-Ching Kan, of California, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Coast Guard Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203(a):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Andrew S. McKinley

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

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Captain Matthew T. Bell
Captain Melissa Bert
Captain David M. Dermanelian
Captain Robert P. Hayes
Captain Andrew J. Tjongson
Captain Anthony J. Vogt

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

COAST GUARD

PN919 COAST GUARD nominations (56) beginning Ladonn A. Allen, and ending Jeffrey V. Yarosh, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

PN920 COAST GUARD nominations (13) beginning Sharif A. Abdrabbo, and ending Wilbur A. Velarde, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 136, 194, 195, 321, 322, 323, 324, 338, 344, 376, and 377; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that following disposition of the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Shelly Colleen Lowe, of Arizona, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2018; Steven M. Wellner, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years; William Ward Nooter, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years; Juan Carlos Iturregui, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation for a term expiring June 26, 2020; Luis A. Viada, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation for a term expiring September 20, 2018; Diane Helen Rodriguez, of California, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2018; Francine Berman, of New York, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2020; Patricia Nelson Limerick, of Colorado, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2018; Ann Calvaresi Barr, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, United States Agency for International Development; Victoria A. Lipnic, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2020; and Michael Herman Michaud, of Maine, to be Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 288, S. 1550.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1550) to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish entities tasked with improving program and project management in certain Federal agencies, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 1550

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Program Management Improvement Accountability Act".

SEC. 2. DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR MANAGEMENT.

(a) *ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS.*—Section 503 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) *PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.*—“(1) *REQUIREMENT.*—Subject to the direction and approval of the Director, the Deputy Director for Management or a designee shall—

“(A) adopt governmentwide standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management for executive agencies;

“(B) oversee implementation of program and project management for the standards, policies, and guidelines established under subparagraph (A);

“(C) chair the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b);

“(D) establish standards and policies for executive agencies, in accordance with widely accepted standards for program and project management planning and delivery;

“(E) engage with the private sector to identify best practices in program and project management that would improve Federal program and project management;

“(F) conduct portfolio reviews to address programs identified as high risk by the Government Accountability Office;

“(G) not less than annually, conduct portfolio reviews of agency programs in coordination with Project Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) to assess the quality and effectiveness of program management; and

“(H) establish a 5-year strategic plan for program and project management.

“(2) *APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.*—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of that paragraph are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016.”.

(b) *DEADLINE FOR STANDARDS, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES.*—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue the standards, policies, and guidelines required under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(c) *REGULATIONS.*—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under subsection (b), the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a), and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue any regulations as are necessary to implement the requirements of section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OFFICERS AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.

(a) *AMENDMENT.*—Chapter 11 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 1126. Program Management Improvement Officers and Program Management Policy Council

“(a) *PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OFFICERS.*—

“(1) *DESIGNATION.*—The head of each agency described in section 901(b) shall designate a senior executive of the agency as the Program Management Improvement Officer of the agency.

“(2) *FUNCTIONS.*—The Program Management Improvement Officer of an agency designated under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) implement program management policies established by the agency under section 503(c); and

“(B) develop a strategy for enhancing the role of program managers within the agency that includes the following:

“(i) Enhanced training and educational opportunities for program managers that shall include—

“(I) training in the relevant competencies encompassed with program and project manager within the private sector for program managers; and

“(II) training that emphasizes cost containment for large projects and programs.

“(ii) Mentoring of current and future program managers by experienced senior executives and program managers within the agency.

“(iii) Improved career paths and career opportunities for program managers.

“(iv) A plan to encourage the recruitment and retention of highly qualified individuals to serve as program managers.

“(v) Improved means of collecting and disseminating best practices and lessons learned to enhance program management across the agency.

“(vi) Common templates and tools to support improved data gathering and analysis for program management and oversight purposes.

“(3) APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—This subsection shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of this subsection are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016.

“(b) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Office of Management and Budget a council to be known as the ‘Program Management Policy Council’ (in this subsection referred to as the ‘Council’).

“(2) PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS.—The Council shall act as the principal interagency forum for improving agency practices related to program and project management. The Council shall—

“(A) advise and assist the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget;

“(B) review programs identified as high risk by the General Accountability Office and make recommendations for actions to be taken by the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget or a designee;

“(C) discuss topics of importance to the workforce, including—

“(i) career development and workforce development needs;

“(ii) policy to support continuous improvement in program and project management; and

“(iii) major challenges across agencies in managing programs;

“(D) advise on the development and applicability of standards governmentwide for program management transparency; and

“(E) review the information published on the website of the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to section 1122.

“(3) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(A) COMPOSITION.—The Council shall be composed of the following members:

“(i) Five members from the Office of Management and Budget as follows:

“(I) The Deputy Director for Management.

“(II) The Administrator of the Office of Electronic Government.

“(III) The Administrator of Federal Procurement Policy.

“(IV) The Controller of the Office of Federal Financial Management.

“(V) The Director of the Office of Performance and Personnel Management.

“(ii) The Program Management Improvement Officer from each agency described in section 901(b).

“(iii) Other individuals as determined appropriate by the Chairperson.

“(B) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall be the Chairperson of the Council. A Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the mem-

bers and shall serve a term of not more than 1 year.

“(ii) DUTIES.—The Chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the Council, determine the agenda of the Council, direct the work of the Council, and establish and direct subgroups of the Council as appropriate.

“(4) MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet not less than twice per fiscal year and may meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of the members of the Council.

“(5) SUPPORT.—The head of each agency with a Project Management Improvement Officer serving on the Council shall provide administrative support to the Council, as appropriate, at the request of the Chairperson.

“(6) COMMITTEE DURATION.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Council.”

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with each Program Management Improvement Officer designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, shall submit to Congress a report containing the strategy developed under section 1126(a)(2)(B) of such title, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 4. PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL STANDARDS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “agency” means each agency described in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue regulations that—

(1) identify key skills and competencies needed for a program and project manager in an agency;

(2) establish a new job series, or update and improve an existing job series, for program and project management within an agency; and

(3) establish a new career path for program and project managers within an agency.

SEC. 5. GAO REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICIES ON PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Government Accountability Office shall issue, in conjunction with the High Risk list of the Government Accountability Office, a report examining the effectiveness of the following on improving Federal program and project management:

(1) The standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(2) The 5-year strategic plan established under section 503(c)(1)(H) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(3) Program Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

(4) The Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Ernst amendment be agreed to, the committee-reported substitute, as amended, be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The amendment (No. 2873) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

On page 11, line 22, strike “in accordance” and insert “consistent”.

On page 12, lines 18 and 19, strike “the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016” and insert “chapter 87 of title 10”.

On page 15, lines 16 and 17, strike “the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016” and insert “chapter 87 of title 10”.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1550), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1550

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 “Program Management Improvement Accountability Act”.

SEC. 2. DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR MANAGEMENT.

(a) ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS.—Section 503 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.—

“(1) REQUIREMENT.—Subject to the direction and approval of the Director, the Deputy Director for Management or a designee shall—

“(A) adopt governmentwide standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management for executive agencies;

“(B) oversee implementation of program and project management for the standards, policies, and guidelines established under subparagraph (A);

“(C) chair the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b);

“(D) establish standards and policies for executive agencies, consistent with widely accepted standards for program and project management planning and delivery;

“(E) engage with the private sector to identify best practices in program and project management that would improve Federal program and project management;

“(F) conduct portfolio reviews to address programs identified as high risk by the Government Accountability Office;

“(G) not less than annually, conduct portfolio reviews of agency programs in coordination with Project Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) to assess the quality and effectiveness of program management; and

“(H) establish a 5-year strategic plan for program and project management.

“(2) APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of that paragraph are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of chapter 87 of title 10.”

(b) DEADLINE FOR STANDARDS, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue the standards, policies, and guidelines required under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under subsection (b), the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a), and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue any regulations as are necessary to implement the requirements of section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OFFICERS AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 11 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

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“(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Program Management Improvement Officer of an agency designated under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) implement program management policies established by the agency under section 503(c); and

“(B) develop a strategy for enhancing the role of program managers within the agency that includes the following:

“(i) Enhanced training and educational opportunities for program managers that shall include—

“(I) training in the relevant competencies encompassed with program and project manager within the private sector for program managers; and

“(II) training that emphasizes cost containment for large projects and programs.

“(ii) Mentoring of current and future program managers by experienced senior executives and program managers within the agency.

“(iii) Improved career paths and career opportunities for program managers.

“(iv) A plan to encourage the recruitment and retention of highly qualified individuals to serve as program managers.

“(v) Improved means of collecting and disseminating best practices and lessons learned to enhance program management across the agency.

“(vi) Common templates and tools to support improved data gathering and analysis for program management and oversight purposes.

“(3) APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—This subsection shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of this subsection are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of chapter 87 of title 10.

“(b) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Office of Management and Budget a council to be known as the ‘Program Management Policy Council’ (in this subsection referred to as the ‘Council’).

“(2) PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS.—The Council shall act as the principal interagency forum for improving agency practices related to program and project management. The Council shall—

“(A) advise and assist the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget;

“(B) review programs identified as high risk by the General Accountability Office and make recommendations for actions to be taken by the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget or a designee;

“(C) discuss topics of importance to the workforce, including—

“(i) career development and workforce development needs;

“(ii) policy to support continuous improvement in program and project management; and

“(iii) major challenges across agencies in managing programs;

“(D) advise on the development and applicability of standards governmentwide for program management transparency; and

“(E) review the information published on the website of the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to section 1122.

“(3) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(A) COMPOSITION.—The Council shall be composed of the following members:

“(i) Five members from the Office of Management and Budget as follows:

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“(III) The Administrator of Federal Procurement Policy.

“(IV) The Controller of the Office of Federal Financial Management.

“(V) The Director of the Office of Performance and Personnel Management.

“(ii) The Program Management Improvement Officer from each agency described in section 901(b).

“(iii) Other individuals as determined appropriate by the Chairperson.

“(B) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall be the Chairperson of the Council. A Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the members and shall serve a term of not more than 1 year.

“(ii) DUTIES.—The Chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the Council, determine the agenda of the Council, direct the work of the Council, and establish and direct subgroups of the Council as appropriate.

“(4) MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet not less than twice per fiscal year and may meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of the members of the Council.

“(5) SUPPORT.—The head of each agency with a Project Management Improvement Officer serving on the Council shall provide administrative support to the Council, as appropriate, at the request of the Chairperson.

“(6) COMMITTEE DURATION.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Council.”.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with each Program Management Improvement Officer designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, shall submit to Congress a report containing the strategy developed under section 1126(a)(2)(B) of such title, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 4. PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL STANDARDS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “agency” means each agency described in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue regulations that—

(1) identify key skills and competencies needed for a program and project manager in an agency;

(2) establish a new job series, or update and improve an existing job series, for program and project management within an agency; and

(3) establish a new career path for program and project managers within an agency.

SEC. 5. GAO REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICIES ON PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Government Accountability Office shall issue, in conjunc-

tion with the High Risk list of the Government Accountability Office, a report examining the effectiveness of the following on improving Federal program and project management:

(1) The standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(2) The 5-year strategic plan established under section 503(c)(1)(H) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(3) Program Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

(4) The Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2328, introduced earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2328) to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2328) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2328

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 “National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO THE NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM ACT.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq.).

SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF DEAN JOHN A. KNAUSS MARINE POLICY FELLOWSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 208(b) (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)) is amended by striking “may” and inserting “shall”.

(b) PLACEMENTS IN CONGRESS.—Such section is further amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”; and

(2) in paragraph (1), as designated by paragraph (1), in the second sentence, by striking “A fellowship” and inserting the following:

“(2) PLACEMENT PRIORITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In each year in which the Secretary awards a legislative fellowship under this subsection, when considering the

placement of fellows, the Secretary shall prioritize placement of fellows in the following:

“(i) Positions in offices of, or with members on, committees of Congress that have jurisdiction over the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

“(ii) Positions in offices of members of Congress that have a demonstrated interest in ocean, coastal, or Great Lakes resources.

“(B) **EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.**—In placing fellows in offices described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall ensure, to the maximum degree practicable, that placements are equitably distributed among the political parties.

“(3) **DURATION.**—A fellowship”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (b) shall apply with respect to the first calendar year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) **SENSE OF CONGRESS CONCERNING FEDERAL HIRING OF FORMER FELLOWS.**—It is the sense of Congress that in recognition of the competitive nature of the fellowship under section 208(b) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)), and of the exceptional qualifications of fellowship awardees, the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, should encourage participating Federal agencies to consider opportunities for fellowship awardees at the conclusion of their fellowship for workforce positions appropriate for their education and experience.

SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF COMMERCE TO ACCEPT DONATIONS FOR NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 204(c)(4)(E) (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(E)) is amended to read as follows:

“(E) accept donations of money and, notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, of voluntary and uncompensated services;”.

(b) **PRIORITIES.**—The Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, shall establish priorities for the use of donations accepted under section 204(c)(4)(E) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(E)), and shall consider among those priorities the possibility of expanding the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship's placement of additional fellows in relevant legislative offices under section 208(b) of that Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)), in accordance with the recommendations under subsection (c) of this section.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the National Sea Grant College Program, in consultation with the National Sea Grant Advisory Board and the Sea Grant Association, shall—

(1) develop recommendations for the optimal use of any donations accepted under section 204(c)(4)(E) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(E)); and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the recommendations developed under paragraph (1).

(d) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or otherwise affect any other amounts available for marine policy fellowships under section 208(b) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)), including amounts—

(1) accepted under section 204(c)(4)(F) of that Act (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(F)); or

(2) appropriated under section 212 of that Act (33 U.S.C. 1131).

SEC. 5. REPEAL OF REQUIREMENT FOR REPORT ON COORDINATION OF OCEANS AND COASTAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.

Section 9 of the National Sea Grant College Program Act Amendments of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 857–20) is repealed.

SEC. 6. REDUCTION IN FREQUENCY REQUIRED FOR NATIONAL SEA GRANT ADVISORY BOARD REPORT.

Section 209(b)(2) (33 U.S.C. 1128(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking “BIENNIAL” and inserting “PERIODIC”; and

(2) in the first sentence, by striking “The Board shall report to the Congress every two years” and inserting “Not less frequently than once every 3 years, the Board shall submit to Congress a report”.

SEC. 7. MODIFICATION OF ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM.

Section 204(b) (33 U.S.C. 1123(b)) is amended, in the matter before paragraph (1), by inserting “for research, education, extension, training, technology transfer, and public service” after “financial assistance”.

SEC. 8. DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY; DEAN JOHN A. KNAUSS MARINE POLICY FELLOWSHIP.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—During fiscal year 2016 and thereafter, the head of any Federal agency may appoint, without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, other than sections 3303 and 3328 of that title, a qualified candidate described in subsection (b) directly to a position with the Federal agency for which the candidate meets Office of Personnel Management qualification standards.

(b) **DEAN JOHN A. KNAUSS MARINE POLICY FELLOWSHIP.**—Subsection (a) applies with respect to a former recipient of a Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship under section 208(b) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)) who—

(1) earned a graduate or post-graduate degree in a field related to ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources or policy from an accredited institution of higher education; and

(2) successfully fulfilled the requirements of the fellowship within the executive or legislative branch of the United States Government.

(c) **LIMITATION.**—The direct hire authority under this section shall be exercised with respect to a specific qualified candidate not later than 2 years after the date that the candidate completed the fellowship.

SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 212(a) (33 U.S.C. 1131(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (E), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (F), by striking the period at the end and inserting “;”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(G) \$72,000,000 for fiscal year 2015;

“(H) \$75,600,000 for fiscal year 2016;

“(I) \$79,380,000 for fiscal year 2017;

“(J) \$83,350,000 for fiscal year 2018;

“(K) \$87,520,000 for fiscal year 2019;

“(L) \$91,900,000 for fiscal year 2020; and

“(M) \$96,500,000 for fiscal year 2021.”;

(2) in the heading for paragraph (2), by inserting “FOR FISCAL YEARS 2009 THROUGH 2014” after “PRIORITY ACTIVITIES”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR FISCAL YEARS 2015 THROUGH 2020.**—In addition to the amounts authorized under paragraph (1), there is authorized to be appropriated \$6,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2020 for competitive grants for the following:

“(A) University research on the biology, prevention, and control of aquatic nonnative species.

“(B) University research on oyster diseases, oyster restoration, and oyster-related human health risks.

“(C) University research on the biology, prevention, and forecasting of harmful algal blooms.

“(D) University research, education, training, and extension services and activities focused on coastal resilience and U.S. working waterfronts and other regional or national priority issues identified in the strategic plan under section 204(c)(1).

“(E) University research on sustainable aquaculture techniques and technologies.

“(F) Fishery extension activities conducted by sea grant colleges or sea grant institutes to enhance, and not supplant, existing core program funding.”.

(b) **MODIFICATION OF LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNTS FOR ADMINISTRATION.**—Paragraph (1) of section 212(b) (33 U.S.C. 1131(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(1) **ADMINISTRATION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—There may not be used for administration of programs under this title in a fiscal year more than 5.5 percent of the lesser of—

“(i) the amount authorized to be appropriated under this title for the fiscal year; or

“(ii) the amount appropriated under this title for the fiscal year.

“(B) **CRITICAL STAFFING REQUIREMENTS.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall use the authority under subchapter VI of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, to meet any critical staffing requirement while carrying out the activities authorized in this title.

“(ii) **EXCEPTION FROM CAP.**—For purposes of subparagraph (A), any costs incurred as a result of an exercise of authority as described in clause (i) shall not be considered an amount used for administration of programs under this title in a fiscal year.”.

(c) **ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 204(d)(3) (33 U.S.C. 1123(d)(3)) is amended—

(A) in the matter before subparagraph (A), by striking “With respect to sea grant colleges and sea grant institutes” and inserting “With respect to sea grant colleges, sea grant institutes, sea grant programs, and sea grant projects”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), in the matter before clause (i), by striking “funding among sea grant colleges and sea grant institutes” and inserting “funding among sea grant colleges, sea grant institutes, sea grant programs, and sea grant projects”.

(2) **REPEAL OF REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING DISTRIBUTION OF EXCESS AMOUNTS.**—Section 212 (33 U.S.C. 1131) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (c); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

SEC. 10. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

The National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 204(d)(3)(B) (33 U.S.C. 1123(d)(3)(B)), by moving clause (vi) two ems to the right; and

(2) in section 209(b)(2) (33 U.S.C. 1128(b)(2)), as amended by section 6, in the third sentence, by striking “The Secretary shall” and inserting the following:

“(3) **AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.**—The Secretary shall”.

DRIVE SAFER SUNDAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 319, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 319) designating November 29, 2015, as "Drive Safer Sunday."

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 319) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND A CONDITIONAL RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Chair lay before the Senate H. Con. Res. 95, which was received from the House.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements related to the concurrent resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) was agreed to, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 95

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Thursday, November 19, 2015, through Wednesday, November 25, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, November 30, 2015, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Thursday, November 19, 2015, through Tuesday, November 24, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, November 30, 2015, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 3 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time

as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3. (a) The Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, after concurrence with the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the Senate adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the Senate shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO EMERGENCY PSYCHIATRIC CARE ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the House message to accompany S. 599.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 599) entitled "An Act to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project," do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment, and I ask unanimous consent that the motion be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATING THE THIRD TUESDAY IN NOVEMBER AS NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURS' DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 314.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 314) expressing support for the designation of the third Tuesday in November as "National Entrepreneurs' Day."

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 314) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of November 17, 2015, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 4038

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk from the House, and I ask for its first reading.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4038) to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDER FOR MEASURE TO BE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 4038

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the adjournment of the Senate, the bill be placed on the calendar as if read for a second time.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2329

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill 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 legislative clerk read as follows:

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn under the provisions of H. Con. Res. 95 until 3 p.m., Monday, November 30; 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; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, until 5 p.m.; finally, that at 5 p.m. the Senate then proceed to executive session as under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2015, AT 3 P.M.

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:34 p.m., adjourned until Monday, November 30, 2015, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

GEORGETTE MOSBACHER, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2018, VICE LEZLEE J. WESTINE, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

PHILLIP H. CULLOM, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE SHARON E. BURKE, RESIGNED.

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

DANIEL B. MAFFEL, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSIONER FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2017, VICE RICHARD A. LIDINSKY, JR., RESIGNED.

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

SWATI A. DANDEKAR, OF IOWA, TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, VICE ROBERT M. ORR, RESIGNING.

NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD

HARRY R. HOGLANDER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2017. (REAPPOINTMENT)

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

PATRICK PIZZELLA, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 1, 2020. (REAPPOINTMENT)

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

JAMES F. ENTWISTLE, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN A. NICHOLS, OF CALIFORNIA
RICHARD GUSTAVE OLSON, JR., OF NEW MEXICO
DANIEL R. RUSSEL, OF CALIFORNIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER-MINISTER:

CHERYL L. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM R. BRANDS, OF ARIZONA
THOMAS R. DELANEY, OF PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL T. HARVEY, OF TEXAS
BROOKE ANDREA ISHAM, OF WASHINGTON
JANINA ANNE JARUZELSKI, OF NEW JERSEY
CHARLES E. NORTH, OF VIRGINIA
BETH S. PAIGE, OF TEXAS
THOMAS H. STAAL, OF MARYLAND
DENNIS J. WELLER, OF ILLINOIS
MELISSA A. WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

JENNIFER M. ADAMS, OF VIRGINIA
REBECCA R. W. BLACK, OF NEW MEXICO
SHERRY FAITH CARLIN, OF FLORIDA
NANCY L. ESTES, OF FLORIDA
ERIN ELIZABETH MCKEE, OF VIRGINIA
LESLIE K. REED, OF CALIFORNIA
JOHN MARK WINFIELD, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

KATHY E. BODY, OF MARYLAND
DAVID G. BROWN, OF MARYLAND
BEVERLY A. BUSA, OF CALIFORNIA
JOHN J. CARDENAS, OF CALIFORNIA
SHARON THAMS CARTER, OF FLORIDA
KATHERINE ASHTON CRAWFORD, OF MARYLAND
CHRISTOPHER M. CUSHING, OF FLORIDA
RAMONA M. EL HAMZAOU, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
HOLLY L. FERRETTE, OF MARYLAND
CRAIG K. HART, OF VIRGINIA
MARY MELINDA HOBBS, OF MISSOURI
EDITH I. HOUSTON, OF VIRGINIA
BARBARA W. HUGHES, OF CONNECTICUT
ELISE M. JENSEN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
KAREN D. KLIMOWSKI, OF CALIFORNIA
JULIE A. KOENEN, OF CALIFORNIA
GARY LINDEN, OF VIRGINIA
MARCIA MUSISI-NKAMBE, OF ARIZONA
ANNE ELIZABETH PATTERSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

LESLIE A. PERRY, OF COLORADO
PATRICK L. ROBINSON, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
EVELYN RODRIGUEZ PEREZ, OF FLORIDA
LAWRENCE J. SACKS, OF MISSOURI
SHERYL A. STUMBRAS, OF FLORIDA
AYE AYE THWIN, OF MARYLAND
CHRISTOPHE ANDRE TOCCO, OF CALIFORNIA
AMY C. TOHILL-STULL, OF VIRGINIA
THERESA G. TUANO, OF MARYLAND
PETER A. WIEBLER, OF VIRGINIA
SUNIL SEBASTIAN XAVIER, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CHRISTOPHER VOLCIAK, OF PENNSYLVANIA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

ELIZABETH A. ORLANDO, OF NEW YORK

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CAROLYN W. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
STACEY A. BA, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN C. BEDSWORTH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH L. BIERMANN DE LANCIE, OF ALABAMA
IAN M. BILLARD, OF MISSOURI
MARK A. BLAND, OF FLORIDA
MICHAEL D. BREWER, OF NEW YORK
KEVIN J. BROSNAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TANYA W. BROTHEN, OF ARIZONA
BRIAN W. CAMPBELL, OF NEW YORK
DAVID S. CAMPBELL, OF NEW MEXICO
GEOFFREY D. CHANIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL C. COKER, OF ARIZONA
ERIC C. CONCHA, OF FLORIDA
DAVID B. CORBY, JR., OF ARIZONA
SANDRA P. CORTINA, OF VIRGINIA
DIANA L. COSTA, OF MISSOURI
EDWARD E. DAIZOVI, OF INDIANA
JANE L. DENHAM, OF TEXAS
AIMEE M. DOWL, OF CALIFORNIA
CARMEN W. DOWLING, OF FLORIDA
PHILIP M. DREWRY, OF CALIFORNIA
JAMES S. DRISCOLL, OF WASHINGTON
ANDREW J. ELLIS, JR., OF MARYLAND
OMAR I. FAROOQ, OF VIRGINIA
TERRENCE FINNERAN, OF FLORIDA
CATHERINE D. C. FISCHER, OF CALIFORNIA
BON E. FLEMING, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BRYAN M. GIBLIN, OF MARYLAND
BENJAMIN J. GIBSON, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM C. GILBERT, OF MISSOURI
KAREN A. GLOBER, OF FLORIDA
PAUL G. GRADDON, OF WASHINGTON
JULIE R. GRIER-VILLATTE, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT E. GROSSMAN, OF NEW YORK
ALEXIS H. HAFTVANI, OF CALIFORNIA
TRAVIS J. HALL, OF COLORADO
JERROD E. HANSEN, OF WASHINGTON
JONATHAN P. HERZOG, OF VIRGINIA
JASON A. HUGHES, OF MISSOURI
OGIANA V. IVANOVA-SRIRAM, OF NEW YORK
HEATHER L. JOHNSTON, OF WASHINGTON
EARNEST C. JONES, OF CALIFORNIA
KHULOOD M. KANDIL, OF FLORIDA
JOHN T. S. KENNEDY, OF FLORIDA
SALMAN KHAN, OF MISSOURI
DAE G. KIM, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIEL D. KOHANSKI, OF CALIFORNIA

MICAH K. LEBSON, OF MARYLAND
JACOB J. LEVIN, OF ILLINOIS
HOLLY MARIE MACKEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ERICA MAGALLON, OF CALIFORNIA
SPENCER A. MAGUIRE, OF RHODE ISLAND
OLIVER S. MAINS, OF CALIFORNIA
REBECCA E. MARQUEZ, OF MINNESOTA
PAUL E. MASTIN, OF COLORADO
FRISCO J. MCDONALD, OF ARKANSAS
DIMITRY MEDVEDEV, OF NEW YORK
KELLY R. MERRICK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS R. A. MONTGOMERY, OF CALIFORNIA
DAVID D. MOO, OF MISSOURI
JACQUELINE D. MOUROT, OF TEXAS
ANDREW NELSON, OF CALIFORNIA
JAMES P. NUSSBAUMER, OF OREGON
JEAN T. OLSON, OF WISCONSIN
BRENDAN D. OWEN, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH R. PALOMBO, JR., OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
MELISSA PAULSEN, OF GEORGIA
JEREMY R. PETERSON, OF WASHINGTON
GAVIN D. PIERCY, OF ALASKA
LEAH H. PILLSBURY, OF CALIFORNIA
LAWRENCE D. PIXA, OF WASHINGTON
ROBYN M. REMEIK, OF TEXAS
THERESA A. REPEDE, OF VIRGINIA
NATHANIEL D. RETTENMAYER, OF ARIZONA
INNA ROTENBERG, OF VIRGINIA
MARTIN P. RYAN, OF WISCONSIN
YOULIANA P. SADOWSKI, OF NEW YORK
FELIX P. SANCHEZ, OF TEXAS
SARAH E. SAPERSTEIN, OF VIRGINIA
MARK J. SCHLINK, OF MISSOURI
MERLYN SCHULTZ, OF CALIFORNIA
ROBERT L. SCHWARTZ, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SAMUEL D. SIPES, OF TEXAS
DAMIAN J. STAFFORD, OF NEW YORK
ELIZABETH M. STICKNEY, OF MARYLAND
KATHERINE L. SUPPLICK, OF VIRGINIA
MARY G. SWARTZ, OF MARYLAND
SARAH J. TALALAY, OF FLORIDA
EDWARD C. THOMPSON, OF ILLINOIS
JAMES C. THORN, OF MISSOURI
HALIMA K. VOYLES, OF INDIANA
HAN A. WANG, OF NEW YORK
CAROLEE A. WILLIAMSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WARREN M. WILSON, OF TENNESSEE
ABRAHAM D. WISE, OF WASHINGTON
DEREK H. WRIGHT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SETH F. YEAGER, OF VIRGINIA
MICHELLE L. ZJHRA, OF WASHINGTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF THE CLASS STATED:

FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2015:

EDWARD L. ROBINSON III, OF HAWAII

IN THE AIR FORCE

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

To be brigadier general

COL. BLAKE A. GETTYS
COL. KAREN E. MANSPIEL

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

To be brigadier general

COL. TODD M. BRANDEN
COL. MARK A. CROSBY
COL. FERMIN A. RUBIO

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

To be brigadier general

COL. DAVID M. BAKOS
COL. VANCE C. BATEMAN
COL. SANDRA L. BEST
COL. JEFFREY C. BOZARD
COL. WILLIAM D. BUNCH
COL. RAFAEL CARRERO
COL. LARRY K. CLARK
COL. KEVIN D. CLOTFELTER
COL. MARSHALL C. COLLINS
COL. JAMES N. COX
COL. JASON R. CRIPPS
COL. CHRISTOPHER S. CROXTON
COL. FRANCIS N. DETORIE
COL. RUBEN FERNANDEZ-VERA
COL. JOHN T. FERRY
COL. JOHN E. FLOWERS
COL. MICHAEL J. FRANCIS
COL. VINCENT R. FRANKLIN
COL. CLAY L. GARRISON
COL. KEVIN J. HEER
COL. DANA A. HESSHEIMER
COL. GENE W. HUGHES, JR.
COL. CLIFFORD N. JAMES
COL. JAMES T. JOHNSON
COL. GREGORY F. JONES
COL. MARSHALL L. KJELVIK
COL. JAMES R. KRIESEL
COL. RONALD S. LAMBE
COL. ANDREW J. MACDONALD

COL. STEPHEN J. MAHER
COL. MATTHEW J. MANIFOLD
COL. MAREN MCAVOY
COL. GREGORY S. MCCREARY
COL. STEPHEN B. MEHRING
COL. JESSICA MEYERAAN
COL. BILLY M. NABORS
COL. JEFFREY L. NEWTON
COL. PETER NEZAMIS
COL. PATRICK R. RENWICK
COL. STEPHEN M. RYAN
COL. PETER R. SCHNEIDER
COL. GREGORY N. SCHNULO
COL. GREG A. SEMMEL
COL. RAY M. SHEPARD
COL. MARC A. SICARD
COL. PAUL R. SILVESTRI
COL. CHRISTOPHER A. STRATMANN
COL. PETER F. SULLIVAN, JR.
COL. TAMI S. THOMPSON
COL. JOSEPH B. WILSON
COL. GREGORY S. WOODROW

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

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. EDWARD P. MAXWELL

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

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ROBERT C. BOLTON
BRIG. GEN. CHARLES W. CHAPPUIS, JR.
BRIG. GEN. DAWNE L. DESKINS
BRIG. GEN. TIMOTHY L. FRYE
BRIG. GEN. PAUL D. JACOBS
BRIG. GEN. MARK E. JANNITTO
BRIG. GEN. RONALD W. SOLBERG
BRIG. GEN. JAMES K. VOGEL
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM L. WELSH
BRIG. GEN. WAYNE A. ZIMMET

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

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES H. DIENST

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

To be brigadier general

COL. JOHN J. DEGOES
COL. MARK A. KOENIGER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOHN D. BANSEMER

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

To be brigadier general

COL. RUSSELL A. MUNCY

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

To be brigadier general

COL. PATRICIA N. BEYER

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

To be brigadier general

COL. CHRISTOPHER W. LENTZ

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

To be brigadier general

COL. SCOTT M. LOCKWOOD

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

To be brigadier general

COL. LEE ANN T. BENNETT
COL. RICHARD M. CASTO
COL. JONATHAN M. ELLIS
COL. JAMES J. FONTANELLA
COL. JOHN P. HEALY
COL. DANIEL J. HEIRES
COL. ROBERT A. HUSTON
COL. WILLIAM R. KOUNITZ, JR.
COL. ALBERT V. LUPENSKI
COL. TYLER D. OTTEN
COL. RUSSELL P. REIMER
COL. HAROLD E. ROGERS, JR.
COL. TRACY A. SIEMS

IN THE ARMY

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

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JOHN C. THOMSON III

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. SYLVIA R. CROCKETT

IN THE AIR FORCE

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

To be colonel

BRYAN K. ALLEN
KATHLEEN C. AMYOT
MICHAEL MEITEH ARMIJO
DOUGLAS B. BAKER
PATRICIA L. BARR
DAVID JOHN BARTCZAK
ROBERT C. BELWOOD
WILBUR C. BIGGIN III
WILLIAM T. BLADEN
THOMAS A. BOLIN
ROBERT THOMAS BOTKIN
RICHARD N. BRADLEY
JASON MICHAEL BROCK
STUART W. BROWN
MICHAEL JOSEPH BRUNO
EDWIN B. BUTLER
DONALD KENT CARPENTER
DONALD LAWRENCE CLARK
REGINALD LAMONT CLARK
THOMAS C. COLE
GREGORY BRANDON COLEMAN
NICHOLAS D. COLEMAN
MICHAEL ALAN COMSTOCK
RICHARD CARROLL COOK
MARLON E. CROOK
CHRISTIAN P. CUNNINGHAM
JAMES THOMAS DEMAREST
JOHAN A. DEUTSCHER
SEAN PETER DOUGHTY
KEVIN V. DOYLE
PAUL DRAKE IV
THOMAS JOSEPH DUGGAN III
THOMAS A. DUKES, JR.
KEVIN S. ECHTERLING
MARK EDWARD ESMHWILLER
BRENT B. ETHRIDGE
ROBERT FEHER
ROBERT A. FORINO
AKSHAI M. GANDHI
GREGORY C. GOFORTH
BERLINDA GOODSON
MICHAEL A. GUCH
CHARLES CAMERON GUTHRIE
DANIEL WEBSTER HARLOW
CHRISTOPHER E. HOWELL
VERNETTA PATRICE HUGHES
CHRISTOPHER BRANDT JONES
JON J. KALBERER
DONNE H. KANG
DANIEL EL-DARIN KELLY
CHRISTOPHER S. KILCULLEN
MICHELE LEIGH KILGORE
ROBERT A. KING
BRADFORD ULRICH LARSON
DARIN P. LIEUX
CHRISTINE LORRAINE LENNARD
JOSH LIN D. LEWIS
JAMES P. MARREN
GLEN ALLEN MARTEL
DEAN BRYAN MARTIN, JR.
STANLEY A. MARTIN
CHRISTOPHER C. McDONALD
JOYCE A. MERL
STEVEN D. MICHAUD
DOLLY C. MITCHELL
DANIEL MARC MITOLA
GRADY O. MORTON, JR.
MARK ANDREW MUCKEY
RICK LEE MUTCHLER
ALICE A. NIEDERGALL
WILLIAM P. O'BRIEN
RYAN J. OGAN
RANDALL STEVEN ORTIZ
STEPHAN K. OTTO
MATTHEW PATERNOSTRO
ROBIN M. POLLOCK
PAUL JOSEPH QUIGLEY
JERRY PAUL REEDY
JOHN K. RICHARDSON
CARLA D. RINER
NASHID A. SALAHUDDIN
SCOTT J. SALOIS
ROBERT JEFFREY SCHELL
SUEELLEN SCHUERMAN
LEMUEL JOSEPH SHAFFER
RICHARD K. SHARP
CHRISTOPHER JAMES SHEPPARD
KURT S. SHIGETA
JOSEPH CALLIE SMITH
ROSEMARY MARIA SMITH
TIMOTHY J. SMITH
CHRIS A. SNYDER

RICHARD ARTHUR TAITO
LAURIE ANN TIDEMANN
MARTIN E. TIMKO
WALTER K. TOWNSON
MARK W. TUCCILLO
TRENT J. VANHULZEN
JOHN EMILIO VARGAS, JR.
BRIAN EARL VAUGHN
DODD DOUGLAS WAMBERG
JEFFREY M. WILLIAMS
BERNARD L. WILLIS II
SANDRA LYNN WILSON
GARRICK H. YOKOE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

JAMES D. FERGUSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

KELVIN L. BROWN
ROBERT D. FERGUSON
JOEL T. GILBERT
SEAN A. M. KLAHN
DOUGLAS A. MITCHELL
CORY S. W. SCHULZ
PAUL L. WAGNER II

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

To be colonel

DAESOO LEE
MARK S. NUCKOLS
BRIAN D. RAY

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

To be colonel

WAYNE W. SANTOS

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

To be colonel

ANTHONY J. FADELL

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

To be colonel

RICARDO ALONSO JOURNET

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

To be colonel

JEFFREY M. SLOAN

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

To be colonel

ANDREW C. DILLON
ANDRE R. HOLDER

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

To be colonel

REBECCA R. TOMSYCK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS PERMANENT PROFESSOR AT THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 4333(B) AND 4336(A):

To be colonel

EVERETT S. P. SPAIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS PERMANENT PROFESSOR AT THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 4333(B) AND 4336(A):

To be lieutenant colonel

SHANE R. REEVES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY VETERINARY CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

DAVID E. BENTZEL
JENNIFER L. CHAPMAN
REBECCA I. EVANS
CHRISTOPHER E. KELLER
BRIAN U. T. KIM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY

MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

TERESA L. BRININGER
DAVID H. DUPLESSIS
LARRY O. FRANCE
RICHARD A. VILLARREAL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

KEVIN R. BASS
JOHN D. BELEW
TIMOTHY N. BERGERON
BRANDON M. BOWLINE
KATHERINE A. BRUCH
JONATHAN B. BUTLER
ROBERTO CARDENAS
STACEY L. CAUSEY
PATRICK A. DONAHUE
CURTIS W. DOUGLASS
CHRISTOPHER F. DRUM
MICHAEL A. ELLIOTT
MARLA J. FERGUSON
JAMES T. FLANAGAN, JR.
RICHARD G. FORNILI
MARK D. GRAY
JORDAN V. HENDERSON
DIRK D. LAFLEUR
EDWARD F. MANDRIL
JENNIFER J. MCDANNALD
SCOTT A. MOWER
ERIC J. NEWLAND
ENRIQUE ORTIZ, JR.
TANYA A. PEACOCK
JAMES L. REYNOLDS
DAVID W. SEED
DAVID L. SLONIKER
JOHN P. STALEY
MARK A. STEVENS
YOLONDA R. SUMMONS
CHRISTOPHER M. TODD
CHARLES L. UNRUH
ROY L. VERNON, JR.
JOSEPH K. WEAVER
JONATHAN R. WEBB
EDWARD J. WEINBERG
RICHARD A. WILSON
D002416
D003940

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

KIMBERLIE A. BIEVER
AMAL CHATILA
LASHANDA C. COBBS
CARLA M. DICKINSON
AMANDA R. FORRISTAL
KATHI J. HILL
SUSAN G. HOPKINSON
CRYSTAL L. HOUSE
ANGELA S. ICAZA
MARK A. MACDOUGALL
ELIZABETH A. MANNSALINAS
JOHN J. MELVIN
LISA E. MILLER
ANN M. NAYBACKBEEBE
DOUGLAS A. PHILLIPS
MELAINA E. SHARPE
MARY J. SHAW
ANGELA M. SIMMONS
PAMELA M. WULF

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

To be colonel

DAVID BARRETT
GREGORY R. BOCKIN
PAUL J. CUCUZZELLA
CHERYL A. P. EMERY
JOHN T. HARRYMAN
KIMBERLY J. HUHTA
ADAM SIEGLER
RONALD D. SULLIVAN
JENNIFER S. ZUCKER

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

To be colonel

DAVID W. LAWS
JOHN E. SWANBERG

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

To be colonel

WILLIAM A. ALTMIRE

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

To be colonel

JESUS J. T. NUFABLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO

THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

RUBEN BERMUDEZPAGAN
CARLOS R. CAEZSIERRA
KEVIN T. HAMM
LANCE A. OKAMURA
CHRISTOPHER S. SANDISON
TODD W. SCHAFER

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

To be lieutenant colonel

JOSHUA A. CARLISLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

WILLIAM C. MOORHOUSE

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

To be lieutenant colonel

GREGG T. OLSOWY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

ROGER S. GIRAUD

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

To be colonel

STEVEN M. WILKE

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 6221:

To be captain

KENNETH C. COLLINS II

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS OF THE COAST GUARD PERMANENT COMMISSIONED TEACHING STAFF FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTIONS 189 AND 276:

To be commander

CORINNA M. FLEISCHMANN
ROYCE W. JAMES

To be lieutenant commander

KIMBERLY C. YOUNG-MCLEAR

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

To be lieutenant commander

MICHAEL S. ADAMS, JR.
JOHN C. ADAMS
RYAN F. ADAMS
MARK P. AGUILAR
BRIAN J. AHEARN, JR.
DAVID A. ALBRIGHT
PAUL R. ALEXANDER
NICHOLAS M. ANDERSON
LILLY A. ANDREWS
MICHAEL J. ANGELI
HUNTER T. ATHERTON
HOWARD B. BAKER, JR.
KRISTEN N. BAKER
STEVEN J. BALDOVSKY
JESSICA A. BARBEAU
SIMON P. BARR
YAMARIS D. BARRIL
STEVEN J. BARRY
GREG M. BATCHELDER
PHILIP S. BAXA
DANIEL BELL
JEREMY A. BELL
MARY K. BENDER
ALEX J. BERNSTEIN
ARIEL BERRIOS
DAVID A. BIRKY
SAMUEL A. BLASE
TREVOR A. BLOUNT
TIMOTHY E. BOETTNER
HERBERT A. BOGGS
ROLLA T. BOGGS
STEPHEN BOR
COREY R. BOUDREAU
JOSHUA D. BOYLE
STEPHEN W. BRICKEY
MATTHEW P. BRINKLEY
ANTONIO D. ERINO
DOMINIC N. BUCCIARELLI
LYNN A. BUCHANAN
JOSHUA W. BUCK
ERIN S. BUSTIN

JEFF B. BYBEE
REGINA R. CAFFREY
ANDREW R. CAMPBELL
AUSTIN E. CAMPBELL
MATTHEW A. CARLTON
RAYMOND CARO
CHRISTOPHER D. CART
JOHNNY J. CARTER, JR.
DANIEL B. CATHELL
MICHAEL J. CAVANAGH
JAMES E. CEPA
LESLIE R. CLARK
JOSEPH R. COFFMAN
SHELLEY M. COLBERT
THOMAS M. CONDIT
DAVID J. CONNOR
CHAD M. CONRAD
KEVIN J. COOPER
DAVID C. COREY
ROBERT D. CRAIGHEAD
JAMES A. CROCKETT
RYAN T. CROSE
MICHAEL D. CROWE
THOMAS S. CROWLEY
NOLAN J. CUEVAS
GREGORY T. DAHL
AARON P. DAHLEN
JON-PAUL M. DEL GAUDIO
MEGAN A. DENNELLY
JOHN Z. DOWNING
MATHEW J. DOYLE
KRISTIN P. DRISCOLL
MARK C. DUKTI
JARED W. ENGLAND
CHRISTOPHER E. ENOKSEN, SR.
KYLE L. ENSLEY
JAMES J. ERICKSON
SARAH E. ERNST
MICHAEL P. FELTOVIC
BRIAN D. FITZPATRICK
TRAVIS R. GAGNON
JASON L. GALE
DIANNA D. GARFIELD
LUDWIG B. GARZODA
ANGELIQUE M. GEYER
WESLEY M. GEYER
BRIAN C. GISMERVIK
PHILIP J. GRANATI
LUKE J. GRANT
RONALD R. GREEN
KARIMA A. GREENAWAY
JEANNETTE M. GREENE
AMY J. HAAS
GEORGE F. HALL
BRYAN K. HARRELL
ADRIAN P. HARRIS
JOSEPH H. HART
RYAN D. HAWN
JASON L. HAYES
BRIAN J. HEDGES
TYLER K. HEFFNER
RYAN P. HENEBERY
MARLON L. HERON
PRESTON J. HIEB
KELLY L. HIGGINS
KRIS K. HINDERS
THOMAS E. HOLLINBERGER
JEFFREY S. HOLM
JARED H. HOOD
JACOB H. HOPPER
JESSE L. HOUC
SCOTT W. HYATT, JR.
TRISHA A. JANTZEN
JOSEPH K. JOHNSON
NOEL H. JOHNSON
FRANCES S. JOHNSON-GILLION
CHRISTINA M. JONES
DAN N. KAHN
MICHAEL W. KENALEY
DANIEL P. KILCULLEN
JAY F. KIRCHER
CHRISTOPHER J. KLEIN
JASON M. KLING
MICHAEL F. KOEHLER
BENJAMIN J. KREBS
WALTER C. KROLMAN
KEVIN L. KUTKIEWICZ
KEVIN B. LAUBENHEIMER
DANIEL W. LAVINDER
DEREK W. LEHR
JACOB S. LONDON
JOSEPHINE A. LONG
GEORGE G. MACDONNELL
ARTHUR P. MAHAR
ERIC R. MAJESKA
PETER E. MALONEY
MICHAEL H. MANUEL
LUCAS C. MARINO
MATTHEW L. MARKOS
SIMONE B. MAUSZ
CHARLES S. MCANDREWS
DAVID P. MCCARTHY
CORY J. MCCOLLLOW
JENNIFER A. MCKAY
MATTHEW B. MCKEOWN
BRENDAN J. MCKINNON
DANIEL J. MCQUATE
PEDRO L. MENDOZA
CHRISTOPHER J. MILLER
STEPHEN R. MIROS
CHRISTIAN G. MIURA
KIRA M. MOODY
CHRISTOPHER G. MORRIS
LANE M. MUNROE
ERICK M. NEUSSL
ELIZABETH J. NEWTON
CHRISTOPHER R. NORTON

JOHN E. NOTO
ELIZABETH A. OLIVEIRA
BENJAMIN K. O'LOUGHLIN
EDWIN ORTIZ
THOMAS R. OSBORN, JR.
JULIE E. PADGETT
TODD J. PAQUETTE
ADAM A. PAUL
JONATHAN C. PERRY
MICHAEL PIVATO
JEFFREY R. PLATT
EDWARD L. PORTER
JEFFREY C. PURKEY
EDWARD J. QUINN
DAVID W. RATNER
GREGORY M. REHLENDER
CORY A. RIESTERER
ERIC RIVERA
JOSEPH E. RIZZO
KEITH V. ROBERTS
NATHANIEL L. ROBINSON
CHRISTOPHER C. ROSEN
MORGAN J. ROY
ROBERT C. RUE
GEOFFREY A. SAHLIN
JORDAN C. SAMSON
JAY T. SANDUSKY
GARRETT B. SANTOS
RICHARD W. SANZO
AMANDA G. SARDONE
BRIAN G. SATTTLER
KENNETH R. SAUERBRUNN
JENNIFER S. SAVIANO
LINDSEY E. SENIUK
RYAN B. SEYMOUR
DAVID A. SHOOK
JAMES C. SHULL
GREGORY S. SICKELS
BRIAN E. SIEMIATKOWSKI
STEPHEN M. SIMPSON
DAVID A. SMITH
HILARY N. SMITH
JEFF J. SMOLIK
BENJAMIN J. SPARACIN
JASON R. STANKO
IAN M. STARR
SCOTT R. STECHSCHULTE
ANNA E. STEEL
MATTHEW T. STEVICK
FRANK A. STROM III
DAVID W. STUTT
BRENDAN SULLIVAN
CONOR J. SULLIVAN
KIRSTIN E. SULLIVAN
CHRISTOPHER E. SVENCER
DANIEL L. TAVERNIER
ERIC S. TAYLOR
NICOLE M. TESONIERO
FELICIA S. THOMAS
STEPHANIE K. THOMAS
TRACEY L. TORBA
LAWRENCE E. TORMEY
WILLIAM A. TOWERS
DONALD S. TROUTMAN
JONATHAN P. TSCHUDY
JOHN W. VELASCO
PETER E. VERMEER II
ADOLFO E. VIEZCA
JOSHUA M. VINCI
REBECCA P. VINLOVE
RYAN T. WAITT
JOHN H. WALTERS
MATTHEW E. WARANIUS
BRIAN L. WARD
JORELL R. WEBB
CHRISTOPHER C. WEISER
KRISTA L. WELCH
GERARD M. WENK
JEFFREY D. WEST
TAMARA B. WHALEN
JONATHAN D. WHITE
ADAM R. WOLFE
DEWEY W. WORKER
JAKOB C. WRIEDEN
RONNY C. WRIGHT
MICHAEL A. WURSTER
GRANT C. WYMAN
JEREMY L. YANDELL
JAMES R. ZOLL, JR.

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

To be commander

JASON C. ALEKSAS
NAHSHON I. ALMANDMOSS
JONATHAN A. ANDRECHIK
JOHN H. AXTELL
RENE RAEZ
TIMOTHY G. BALUNIS, JR.
KEVIN M. BARKLAGE
JASON P. BARRETT
JESSICA B. BEHERA
CHRISTOPHER J. BELMONT
ANDREW R. BENDER
KENNETH E. BETHEA
BRIAN R. BETZ
BRIAN P. BREGUET
JOHN W. BRIGGS
PEGGY M. BRITTON
DANIEL J. BROADHURST
DARKEIM L. BROWN
WILLIAM A. BUDOVEC
CHRISTOPHER G. BURRUS
DERREK W. BURRUS
JERRY D. BUTWID

MARCUS A. CANADY
CATHERINE T. CARABINE
STEVEN E. CERVENY
STEVEN J. CHARNON
MATTHEW M. CHONG
JOHN J. CHRISTENSEN
WALTER CHUBBRICK, JR.
MICHAEL A. CINTRON
AUSTIN H. COHOON
ANGELA A. COOK
KEVIN A. CRECY
DEREK L. CROMWELL
MICHAEL V. DANISH
WILLIAM L. DAVIS
RULA F. DEISHER
ETIENNE DE LA RIVA
AARON W. DEMO
JOYCE M. DIETRICH
PATRICK C. DILL
SARA E. DILUNA
DAVID D. DIXON
ROBERT J. DONNELL
TAD F. DROZDOWSKI
SHAUN L. EDWARDS
JOHN T. EGAN
KENNETH W. ELLER
RYAN S. ENGEL
DAVID T. FEENEY
MATHEW S. FINE
ZACHARY R. FORD
MICHAEL R. FRANKLIN
WILLIAM A. FRIDAY
ELISA M. GARRITY
DAVID R. GATES
MARCUS G. GHERARDI
THOMAS A. GILL
MEREDITH S. GILLMAN
ZACHARY N. GLASS
TROY P. GLENDYE
CARY G. GODWIN
RYAN C. HAMEL
LUSHAN A. HANNAH
AMANDA D. HARDGRAVE
DAVID W. HATCHETT, JR.
ERIC A. HELGEN
ANGELINA HIDALGO
KATE F. HIGGINS-BLOOM
KEVIN S. HILL
BRENDAN J. HILLEARY
TIMOTHY C. HOLT
JASON D. INGRAM
JUSTIN W. JACOBS
DARWIN A. JENSEN
STEVEN F. JENSEN
ERIC D. JOHNSON
MAUREN D. JOHNSON
MICHAEL P. KAHL
NICHOLAS A. KALIN
BENJAMIN G. KARPINSKI
CHRISTOPHER M. KEENE
NATHAN P. KENDRICK
TERRI J. KINDNESS
ROBERT J. KINSEY
DANIEL P. LANIGAN
JOHN M. LEACH
JOHN-DAVID A. LENTINE
EDDIE LESANE, JR.
RACHEL L. LEWIS
PATRICK M. LINEBERRY
THOMAS S. LOWRY
SCOTT E. LUGO
PATRICK J. LYSAGHT
SCOTT M. MACCUMBBE
GREGORY J. MADALENA
BRIAN J. MAGGI
JILLIAN C. MALZONE
MATTHEW C. MANOFFSKY
CARYN A. MARGITA
TIMOTHY J. MARGITA
ZACHARY S. MATHEWS
HEATHER R. MATTERN
ERIC S. MAY
LAIN L. MCCONNELL
KEVIN J. MCCORMACK
MARK A. MCDONNELL
SHAWN C. MCMILLAN
BRIAN K. MCNAMARA
ADAM C. MERRILL
MATTHEW A. MICHAELIS
CAROLYN L. MOBERLEY
ROBERT S. MOHR
YOUNGMEER MOON
KEVIN T. MORGAN
PETER M. MORISSEAU, JR.
MATTHEW A. MOYER
CHARLOTTE MUNDY
BRIAN J. MURPHY
CRAIG E. MURRAY
NICHOLAS E. NEELY
DAVID NEGRO-ALICEA
MARSHALL E. NEWBERRY
NEIL ORLICH
AARON J. ORTENZIO
MARK S. PALMER
BRANDY N. PARKER
ARTURO S. PEREZ
BRIAN A. POTTER
HAROLD PRICE
SCOTT A. RAE
TOBIAS C. REID
RODNEY RIOS
NICOLE D. RODRIGUEZ
AARON J. ROE
DANIEL P. ROGERS
JESSICA A. ROZZI-OCES
MICHELE L. SCHALLIP
SHADRACK L. SCHEIRMAN

TYSON J. SCOFIELD
MARC R. SENNICK
KRISTEN L. SERUMGARD
THOMAS A. SHULER
JAMES H. SILCOX III
EMMA E. SILCOX
NICHOLAS R. SIMMONS
JAMES S. SMALL
BRIAN A. SMICKLAS
MARC H. SMITH
TIMOTHY C. SOMMELLA
BRYSON T. SPANGLER
WILLIAM R. SPORTSMAN
ERICH V. STEIN
RICHARD W. STICKLEY, JR.
HEATHER E. STRATTON
MICHAEL R. STRUTHERS
CHRISTOPHER W. SWEENEY
KRIS J. SZCZECZOWICZ
MICHAEL A. TEIXEIRA
DONALD M. TERKANIAN, JR.
KELLY A. THORKILSON
LEE D. TTUS
CHARTER B. TSCHIRGI
ROBERT C. TUCKER
PATRICIA J. TUTALO
NICOLETTE A. VAUGHAN
XAIMARA VICENCIO-ROLDAN
WILLIAM C. WALSH
ROBERT D. WEBB
WINSTON D. WOOD
JESSICA S. WORST
ANDREW W. WRIGHT
YAMASHEKA Z. YOUNG-MCLEAR

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 19, 2015:

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

SHELLY COLLEEN LOWE, OF ARIZONA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2018.

THE JUDICIARY

STEVEN M. WELLNER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS.

WILLIAM WARD NOOTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS.

INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

JUAN CARLOS ITURREGUI, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2020.

LUIS A. VIADA, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2018.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

DIANE HELEN RODRIGUEZ, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 3, 2018.

FRANCINE BERMAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2020.

PATRICIA NELSON LIMERICK, OF COLORADO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2018.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANN CALVARESI BARR, OF MARYLAND, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PETER WILLIAM BODDE, OF MARYLAND, 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 LIBYA.

ELISABETH I. LILLARD, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN.

MARC JONATHAN SIEVERS, OF MARYLAND, 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 SULTANATE OF OMAN.

DEBORAH R. MALAC, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA.

LISA J. PETERSON, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND.

H. DEAN PITTMAN, 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 REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

VICTORIA A. LIPNIC, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2020.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

MICHAEL HERMAN MICHAUD, OF MAINE, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO SERVE AS DIRECTOR OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE PURSUANT TO TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 53(B) IN THE GRADE INDICATED:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. KURT B. HINRICHS

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEREK TAI-CHING KAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

IN THE COAST GUARD

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

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. ANDREW S. MCKINLEY

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

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPTAIN MATTHEW T. BELL
CAPTAIN MELISSA BERT
CAPTAIN DAVID M. DERMANELIAN
CAPTAIN ROBERT P. HAYES
CAPTAIN ANDREW J. TIONGSON
CAPTAIN ANTHONY J. VOGT

COAST GUARD NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LADONN A. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH JEFFREY V. YAROSH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 28, 2015.

COAST GUARD NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SHARIF A. ABDRAHBO AND ENDING WITH WILBUR A. VELARDE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 28, 2015.