United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2014 *No. 26*

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, February 14, 2014, at 2 p.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2014

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, to whom we must give an account for all our powers and privileges, guide the Members of this body so that they will be faithful stewards of Your will. Open their minds and hearts to know and do Your bidding. Teach them to rely on Your strength and to serve You with honor. Lord, help them to discover in their daily work the joy of a partnership with You. As they learn to find delight in Your presence, plant within the soil of their hearts a desire to glorify You. May they rest and wait patiently for You, the author and finisher of their faith, embracing Your precepts and walking in Your path.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2014.

To the Senate:

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

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, we will be in a period of morning business until 11 o'clock this morning. Republicans will control the first half and Democrats the final half.

At 11 a.m. this morning the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar Nos. 525, 595, 527, and 529. These are all extremely important nominations. At 11:30 this morning there will be up to four rollcall votes on the confirmation of these nominations.

We also hope to consider the debt limit legislation, military retirement pay, and, hopefully, additional nominations today.

RESTORING EARNED PENSIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as I just mentioned, today we hope we can act on two vital pieces of legislation. On this side of the aisle, as we say, we are ready to move. We want to move to a measure to restore earned retirement pay to our Nation's heroes—retirees of the U.S. armed services. Dozens of major veterans organizations have written us in support of this legislation which was passed by the House of Representatives yesterday.

I commend the sponsors of the Senate bill to restore veterans' pensions—Senators PRYOR, SHAHEEN, HAGAN, and BEGICH, among others—forcing Republicans in the House and the Senate to take this issue very seriously and take it seriously now. Without their leadership we would never have reached a compromise that protects our Nation's heroic veterans and reached it so quickly. The Senate's unanimous vote on Monday to move forward with the bill to restore veterans' pensions forced the House to understand that we are serious about this and secured a resolution that protects veterans.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is encouraging that some of my Republican colleagues seem to be regaining their grip on sanity this week. Republicans have shown a willingness to compromise to restore veterans' hard-

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

earned pensions. A few reasonable Republicans were willing to join Democrats to avert a catastrophic default on our Nation's obligations—a default that would have thrown our economy into a tailspin and damaged this Nation's standing in the world.

I commend Speaker BOEHNER for doing the right thing. He voted for this, and he had enough Republican votes to get it done. I have said often that he has a difficult job—if not the most difficult, certainly one of the most difficult jobs in Washington, especially when we look at the caucus he has to deal with. I am pleased he has come to the realization that the full faith and credit of this country is not a hostage to be held for political gain.

Unfortunately, Republicans on this side of the Capitol are forcing us to jump through procedural hoops to alleviate the threat of a default. I can't imagine that they are doing that, but they are.

Every reputable economist acknowledges that defaulting on our bills would devastate the economy and waste the past 5 years of recovery. The recovery is good, but it is not great. We can do a lot better.

According to a report by the nonpartisan Peterson Institute, when Republicans forced us to the brink of default 2 years ago, it cost our economy $150 billion in productivity and 750,000 jobs. This is not some leftwing blog that is saying this; this is a nonpartisan institute that is well respected—it will cost our economy $150 billion in productivity and 750,000 jobs. Scary.

The reason I am a little concerned is because it was just a few months ago that Republicans in the House, by a two-thirds majority, voted to keep the government closed after having been closed for 16 days and voted to default on our Nation's debt. So I hope the Senate is not going to follow that tea party-driven action that was done in the House just a short time ago.

Financial industry leaders have warned Congress again and again that even the threat of default ripples through the economy, and today there is the threat of a default. We have Republican Senators saying they are going to filibuster the debt ceiling. We can't default on our obligations. It is too bad that a few Senate Republicans would threaten a filibuster on this critical legislation. It is critical, and it is crucial. However, I am hopeful Senate Republicans won't force the economy to wait for weeks or even days for a resolution. We should wrap this up today.

So I hope we can vote and vote soon. The markets all over the world are watching to see what we do in the Senate. The House did the right thing. I believe many of my Republican colleagues would like to be reasonable—I really do believe that—if they weren't so beholden and afraid of the tea party overlords. I am hopeful that a more bipartisan, commonsense approach—one that favors collaboration over hostage taking—will prevail this year.

Congress should be striding from accomplishment to accomplishment, not staggering from crisis to crisis as they force us to do. If we spent more time working together and less time running out the clock on procedural hurdles and Republican filibusters, we might actually get legislation done in the Senate.

So I hope we can continue to cooperate and collaborate this year and to deliver results for Americans looking for action instead of the constant gridlock we have had.

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

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in morning business, and pending the arrival of the Republican leader, I will pause and then ask unanimous consent to return to my statement at that time.

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

MASS ATROCITIES IN SYRIA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to appeal to the conscience of my colleagues and my fellow citizens about the mass atrocities that the Assad regime is perpetrating in Syria. When the images and horrors of this conflict occasionally show up on our television screens, the impulse of many Americans is to change the channel. But we must not look away. We must not divert our eyes from the suffering of the Syrian people, for if we do, we ignore, we sacrifice that which is most precious in ourselves—our ability to empathize with the suffering of others, to share it, to acknowledge through our own sense of revulsion that what is happening in Syria is a stain on the collective conscience of moral peoples everywhere.

I appeal to my colleagues not to look away from the images I will show. I want to warn all who are watching these are graphic and disturbing pictures, but they are the real face of war and human suffering in Syria today—a war our Nation has the power to help end but which we are failing to do.

These images are drawn from a cache of more than 55,000 photographs that were taken between March 2011 and August 2013 by a Syrian military policeman, whose job it was to document the horrors the Assad regime committed against political prisoners in its jails. This individual eventually defected to the opposition along with his photographs, which were meticulously reviewed and verified by three renowned international war crimes prosecutors and a team of independent forensic experts. They compiled their findings in a report late last month that provides direct evidence that the Assad regime was responsible for the systematic abuse, torture, starvation, and killing of approximately 11,000 detainees in what amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity. These are just a few of those pictures and far from the most disturbing.

I urge every Member of Congress and the American people to read the full report, which can be found on both cnn.com and theguardian.com. Although only a handful of these gruesome images have been released publicly, the authors have provided their own startling commentary on what they reveal.

David Crane, the first chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the man responsible for indicting former Liberian President Charles Taylor for crimes against humanity, stated that many of the photographs show groupings of bodies in ways that ''looked like a slaughterhouse.'' Crane characterized the Syrian Government as a ''callous, industrial machine grinding its citizens'' that is guilty of ''industrial-age mass killing.''

Professor Sir Geoffrey Nice, lead prosecutor in the case against former Yugoslav President Milosevic at The Hague, reported that the systematic way the bodies were cataloged and the effort given to obscure the true causes of death leads one to ''reasonably infer that this is a pattern of behavior'' for Assad's forces.

But perhaps most chilling of all, Sir Desmond de Silva, who also served as a chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, stated that the emaciated bodies revealed in these pictures are ''reminiscent of the pictures of those who were found still alive in the Nazi death camps after World War II.''

Yesterday, in a hearing of the Committee on Armed Services, I asked the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, whether these photographs, which clearly depict ghastly

crimes against humanity, are authentic. The Director said he has ''no reason to doubt'' their authenticity. The United Nations is now doing its own assessment of these images, and all of us should fully support that. It is important to have the broadest possible validation of these images, and I am confident the U.N. team will validate them. After all, does anyone seriously believe the Assad regime does not have the means, motive, and opportunity to murder 11,000 people in its prisons?

Indeed, this kind of inhumane cruelty is a pattern of behavior within the Syrian Government. According to a detailed U.N. report issued at the end of January, Assad's forces have systematically, as part of their doctrine, used children as human shields and threatened to kill the children of opposition members if they did not surrender. The U.N. also detailed the arrest, detention, torture, and sexual abuse of thousands of children by government forces. I will spare you the remaining details, as they are unspeakable, but again I urge you to read the entire report which can be found on the Web site of the United Nations.

I also recommend that my colleagues read of the war crimes that Human Rights Watch has been documenting. They have reported, for example, on how Syrian authorities have deliberately used explosives and bulldozers to demolish thousands of residential buildings, and in some cases entire neighborhoods, for no military reason whatsoever, just as a form of collective punishment of Syrian civilians.

Human Rights Watch researchers have also documented the toll of the Syrian Government's airstrike campaign against Aleppo and Damascus and, in particular, the regime's use over the past few months of what has become known as ''barrel bombs.'' For my colleagues who are not aware of them, barrel bombs are oil drums or other large containers packed with explosives, fuel, shrapnel, glass, and all manner of crude lethal material. Their sole purpose is to maim, kill, and terrorize as many people as possible when they are indiscriminately dropped from Syrian Government aircraft on schools and bakeries and mosques and other civilian areas. In one stark video of a barrel bomb's aftermath, a man stands in front of a child's body and cries out: Oh God, we have had enough. Please help us.

These are just some of the many reasons our Director of National Intelligence referred to the Syrian crisis yesterday as ''an apocalyptic disaster.'' With more than 130,000 people dead, after more than one-third of the Syrian population has been driven from their homes, no truer words were ever spoken.

But this apocalyptic disaster in Syria is no longer just a humanitarian tragedy for one country, it is a regional conflict and an emerging national security threat to us. The regime's war crimes are being aided and abetted by thousands of Hezbollah fighters and Iranian agents on the ground, as well as Russian weaponry that continues to flow into the Assad government, even as Russia works with us to remove the Assad regime's chemical weapons, a truly Orwellian situation.

The conflict in Syria is devastating its neighbors. Lebanon is suffering from increasing bombings and cross-border attacks by both the Syrian government and opposition fighters in response to Hezbollah's role in the fighting. Unofficial estimates suggest that half of Lebanon's population will soon be Syrian refugees. Similar estimates suggest that Syrian refugees now represent 15 percent of the population in Jordan, which is straining to manage the social instability this entails. Turkey has been destabilized. Perhaps most worrisome of all, the conflict in Syria is largely to blame for the resurgence of Al Qaeda in Iraq, which has grown into the larger and more lethal Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, which now possesses a safe haven that spans large portions of both countries. Nowhere is this more threatening or more heartbreaking than in Fallujah, the Iraqi city where hundreds of U.S. troops were killed and wounded fighting to rid it of the terrorists and extremists, but where the black flags of Al Qaeda now hang above the city.

The sanctuary that Al Qaeda now enjoys, thanks to the crisis in Syria, increasingly poses a direct threat to U.S. national security and that of our closest allies and partners. The Secretary of Homeland Security, Mr. Jeh Johnson said, ''Syria is now a matter of homeland security.'' The Director of National Intelligence has referred to the Al Qaeda sanctuary in Syria and Iraq as ''a new FATA''—the tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan where Al Qaeda planned the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Indeed, Director Clapper has warned that Al Qaeda affiliated terrorists in Syria now aspire to attack the homeland. If the September 11 attacks should have taught us anything, it is that global terrorists who occupy ungoverned spaces and seek to plot and plan attacks against us can pose a direct threat to our national security.

This was Afghanistan, September 10, 2001. That is what top officials in this administration are now warning us that Syria is becoming today. The conflict in Syria is a threat to our national interest, but it is more than that. It is and should be an affront to our conscience.

Images such as these should not be just a source of heartbreak and sympathy, they should be a call to action. It was not too long ago, just a few months after the revolution in Syria began, that President Obama issued his Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities. In it he stated, ''Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States.''

He went on to say:

> Our security is affected when masses of civilians are slaughtered, refugees flow across borders, and murderers wreak havoc on regional stability and livelihoods.

Last year, speaking at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the President said:

> Too often, the world has failed to prevent the killing of innocents on a massive scale. And we are haunted by the atrocities that we did not stop and the lives we did not save.

Just last September in his address to the U.N. General Assembly, President Obama said this:

> [T]he principle of sovereignty is at the center of our international order. But sovereignty cannot be a shield for tyrants to commit wanton murder, or an excuse for the international community to turn a blind eye. While we need to be modest in our belief that we can remedy every evil, while we need to be mindful that the world is full of unintended consequences, should we really accept the notion that the world is powerless in the face of a Rwanda, or Srebrenica? If that's the world that people want to live in, they should say so, and reckon with the cold logic of mass graves.

That was our President. That was the President of the United States. I agree with every word of what he said. But how are we to reconcile these stirring words with the reality of these images from Syria? How do we explain how the leader of the free world, who says that it is the moral obligation of the United States to do what we can to prevent the worst atrocities in our world, is not doing more to stop the atrocities that are occurring every single day in Syria?

Where is that President Obama today? Where is the President Obama who spoke so movingly of the moral responsibilities that great power confers? Where is the President Obama who has said he refuses to accept that brutal tyrants can slaughter their people with impunity, while the most powerful nation in the history of the world looks on and stands by? Where is the recognition that the ''cold logic of mass graves'' is right there, right in front of us, Syria, today?

Yet our government is doing what we have sadly done too often in the past. We are diverting our eyes. We try to comfort our guilty consciences by telling ourselves that we are not doing nothing, but it is a claim made in bad faith, for everyone concedes that nothing we are doing is equal to the horrors we face.

We are telling ourselves that we are too tired and weary to get more involved; that Syria is not our problem; that helping to resolve it is not our responsibility. We are telling ourselves that we have no good options, as if there are ever good options when it comes to foreign policy in the real world. We are telling ourselves that we might have been able to do something at one point, but that it is too late now, as if such words from a leader of the world's only global power will be any comfort to the Syrian mother who will lose her child tomorrow.

We are telling ourselves what Neville Chamberlain once told himself about a different problem from hell in an earlier time; that is, and I quote Neville Chamberlain, ''a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing.'' Where is our outrage? Where is our shame?

It is true that our options to help in the conflict in Syria were never good, and they certainly are worse and fewer now. But no one should believe that we are without options, even now, and no one should believe that doing something meaningful to help in Syria requires us to rerun the war in Iraq. That is an excuse for inaction. That is not a question of options or capabilities; it is a question of will.

These images of the human disaster in Syria haunt me. They should haunt all of my colleagues and all Americans. But what haunts me even more than the terror unfolding before our eyes in Syria is the thought that we will continue to do nothing meaningful about it, and how that deadens our national conscience, how it calls into question the moral sources of our great power and the foundations of our global leadership, and how many years from now an American President will stand before the world and the people of Syria, as previous Presidents have done after previous inaction in the face of mass atrocities in far away lands, and say what all of us know to be true right now: That we could have done more to stop the suffering of others. We could have used the power we possess, limited though it may be; we could have exercised the options at our disposal, imperfect though they may be, and we could have done something. It is to our everlasting embarrassment that we did not.

That future President will apologize for our current failure. Shame on us if we let history repeat itself that way.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I very much appreciate Senator MCCAIN's stunning delivery on this horrible situation going on in Syria.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a unanimous consent request just to get us through the day. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding lack of receipt of the papers if they have not arrived from the House, it be in order for the majority leader or his designee to move to concur in the House amendment to S. 25 at 1:30 p.m. today; if the message has arrived prior to 1:30 p.m., then the Chair lay before the body the message from the House at 1:30 p.m. and I then be recognized to move to concur in the House amendment to S. 25; that there be up to 30 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with all of the above occurring with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are going to have up to four votes starting at 11:30 a.m., and then at 1:30 p.m. we will come back and finish some other business today. We hope to have a lot of votes today. I am aware, as I mentioned last night, we are following the storm on an hourly basis, and we should know within the next few hours how accurate the reports of the snowstorm—good or bad—will be.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

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

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, fairly recently, the President of the United States nominated a candidate to lead the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. His name is Debo Adegbile. I am here this morning to explain to my colleagues why I believe that Mr. Adegbile is a very bad choice to run the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department.

To make my case clear, I need to start with a story of a slain Philadelphia police officer. His name was Daniel Faulkner. This is a picture of Daniel Faulkner. It is important to tell his story. It is a story that begins 32 years ago. Many people have never heard this story, others have perhaps forgotten, since it was some time ago.

But the fact is that Danny Faulkner can no longer speak for himself and those who have tried to speak for him have often been drowned out by some powerful and wealthy voices that have had a political agenda and that have perversely defended his killer rather than the memory of Daniel Faulkner.

The story begins late at night on December 9, 1981. It was actually in the early morning hours that 25-year-old Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner stopped a car that was driving in Philadelphia. The driver got out of the car and began to assault Officer Faulkner. The driver's brother Mumia Abu-Jamal was watching the incident from across the street. When he saw what was happening and as Officer Faulkner attempted to handcuff the driver of the car, Abu-Jamal ran up to the car and shot Officer Faulkner in the back. As Officer Faulkner was falling, he got off a shot, but the shot did not seriously wound Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Officer Faulkner then collapsed on the ground. While he was lying on the ground, helpless, defenseless, and severely wounded, Mumia Abu-Jamal stood over him and pumped four more bullets into him, including five bullets to the face, which killed Danny Faulkner on the spot.

Abu-Jamal himself was quickly apprehended. There were police who were on the next block over, and they got there almost immediately. They arrested Mumia Abu-Jamal. They took him to the hospital because he had been wounded, and while he was at the hospital he bragged about the fact that he had just shot a police officer and stated that he hoped the police officer would die.

Given these facts, Mumia Abu-Jamal's guilt was never in any serious question. There was a trial. There were four eyewitnesses to the shooting. There were three other witnesses who heard Mumia Abu-Jamal brag about the murder he had committed while he was in the hospital. In addition, there was ballistic and forensic evidence that made his guilt completely obvious to everyone. So it was not surprising that a jury took only 3 hours to convict Mumia Abu-Jamal after the trial occurred. It took them a further 2 hours to sentence him to death.

Then, instead of allowing Daniel Faulkner's young 24-year-old widow and his extended family to grieve in peace, a group of political opportunists decided this would be the case they would use to launch a campaign to further their political agenda. They fabricated a whole set of claims that Mumia Abu-Jamal was somehow framed. They spread lies about the trial. They organized a rally. Amazingly, what they were doing was portraying Mumia Abu-Jamal as a victim when, in fact, he was unquestionably a cold-blooded murderer.

It was part of a bigger campaign to turn Abu-Jamal into a celebrity and use him by those who had an agenda to attack America's criminal justice system. Unfortunately, to a large extent it worked. Abu-Jamal the murderer became somewhat of a celebrity in certain Hollywood circles. In Paris, they even named a street after him, and there were plenty of high-priced lawyers who lined up to volunteer their time to jump on this cause and to file endless series of appeals in a case that was an open-and-shut case. This, of course, among other things, had the effect of forcing Danny Faulkner's widow to relive this tragedy, this disaster for her, time after time, for decade after decade.

This gross abuse of justice, this travesty of justice had been going on for nearly three decades when in 2009 the

NAACP Legal Defense Fund, or the LDF, decided to volunteer its time, considerable resources, and its donor funds to join in this fray, to join in this travesty, initially as an amicus to the trial and then as co-counsel.

The President's nominee to run the Civil Rights Division, Mr. Debo Adegbile, was the person responsible for the LDF's decision and its behavior in this outrageous set of circumstances. At the time, he was the LDF's director of litigation, and, as Mr. Adegbile told our own Senate Judiciary Committee during his testimony, he ''supervised the entire legal staff'' at LDF. That was 18 lawyers. He was also, if one looks at the LDF's site, responsible for ''providing leadership and coordination regarding both litigation and non-litigation legal advocacy'' and was also, according to the LDF's own description, ''responsible for LDF's advocacy both in the courts of law and in the court of political opinion.'' So all of the legal, public, and political actions LDF was taking, it was taking under the direction, the supervision, and the authority of Mr. Adegbile.

It is important to understand this. There is a very clear legal principle that a supervising lawyer has the responsibility for the actions undertaken by the lawyers who report to him. That is the case in these circumstances, as well as the fact that the LDF openly acknowledges this.

What is it that the LDF lawyers then did in the circumstances of this case? When they should have been pursuing their historic role of providing the truth and justice for American people, they were advancing neither cause.

It is also important to point out that this was never a case of a criminal deserving a legal defense. Criminals do deserve appropriate legal counsel in their defense. The fact is that the trial had occurred decades ago. Abu-Jamal had multiple high-cost lawyers volunteering their time. He had plenty of lawyers. He didn't need more lawyers. What Mr. Adegbile did was he decided to join a political cause. That is what he decided to do. That is what this was all about. In my view, by doing so he demonstrated his own contempt for and, frankly, a willingness to undermine the criminal justice system of the United States.

Under Mr. Adegbile's oversight, the LDF spread misinformation about the trial, about the circumstances, and about the jury. He promoted division and strife among the American people and blocked justice for Danny Faulkner and Danny Faulkner's family. These LDF lawyers promoted the myth that Mumia Abu-Jamal was somehow a heroic political prisoner and that he was framed. In fact, he was a coward and an unrepentant murderer.

Under Mr. Adegbile's oversight, in January 2011 the LDF issued a press release decrying what I quote as the ''grave injustices embodied'' in Abu-Jamal's case.

In May 2011 two of the lawyers reporting to Mr. Adegbile traveled to France for a rally on behalf of this murderer Mumia Abu-Jamal. One of these LDF lawyers said she was ''overjoyed'' that Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence was suspended but bemoaned the fact that he would not have a new trial so he could be set free.

Another LDF lawyer described Abu-Jamal as ''people who are innocent'' but ''will continue to be put to death in America.'' Later, the same lawyer would falsely state that there was an absence of forensic evidence tying Abu-Jamal to Officer Faulkner's death. The fact is that there was forensic evidence. There were four eyewitnesses to the murder, and there were three witnesses to the subsequent bragging by Abu-Jamal about the murder.

At another rally again celebrating this murderer, one of the LDF lawyers supervised by Mr. Adegbile gushed: ''It is absolutely my honor to represent Mumia Abu-Jamal.'' This attorney went on to say: ''And there is no question in my mind, there is no question in the mind of anyone at the Legal Defense Fund, that the justice system has completely and utterly failed Mumia Abu-Jamal.''

I have to say I agree the justice system failed, but the justice system failed Danny Faulkner, not Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Now we are faced with a situation where an individual who was directly responsible for some of these terrible injustices that have been done in the wake of Danny Faulkner's murder has been nominated to a high-ranking position in the Justice Department. The Civil Rights Division is an extremely important division in the Justice Department. The head of this division plays a very important role. And what is his responsibility? According to the division's Web site, the Civil Rights Division ''fulfills a critical mission in upholding the civil and constitutional rights of all individuals.'' Of course, this requires that the head of the Civil Rights Division have an absolute commitment to truth and to justice.

I do not believe Mr. Adegbile's nomination is consistent with the goal of promoting truth and justice in America. I do not believe Mr. Adegbile's nomination is consistent with respect for America's legal system and rule of law. I do not believe Mr. Adegbile's nomination is consistent with justice for the family of Officer Danny Faulkner or for anyone else who cares about the law enforcement community across this country. For these reasons, I will oppose Mr. Adegbile's nomination to head the Civil Rights Division, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent to proceed on my leader time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has that right.

The Senator is recognized.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Yesterday President Obama was asked about the administration's latest ObamaCare delay. Instead of finally explaining to the American people why he believes certain employers would get ObamaCare exemptions while the middle class should not, he just doubled down again on the same old talking points. It is truly disappointing.

I wish he would finally agree to work with Republicans on a way to replace ObamaCare with bipartisan reforms that could help the middle class and those who are hurting the most because this much is now perfectly clear: ObamaCare is not working the way the administration promised. It is hurting the middle class, it is eliminating incentives to work in the middle of a jobs crisis, and it will lower overall compensation—things such as salaries, wages, and benefits for the American people—with those who earn the least potentially the most negatively impacted of all.

ObamaCare is a law that is not fair, and this is essentially true for many of those it purports to help. For all the disruption and pain, it is a law that will still leave 31 million Americans uninsured at the end of the day. That is why it is not surprising when we hear that nearly 90 percent—9 out of 10—of the new enrollees in ObamaCare exchange plans are actually folks who were already insured, many of them simply shifting from plans they liked to more expensive plans the government thinks they should have. This leads so many Americans to ask: What was the point? What was the point of ObamaCare?

For months the folks in my State have watched the administration hand out exemption after exemption to its friends and waiver after waiver to the politically connected. They are left to think, how is that fair? More than one-quarter of a million Kentuckians received notice last year that their health insurance plans would be canceled because of ObamaCare. Kentuckians lost plans they liked and wanted to keep. Many realized that they wouldn't be able to afford new coverage or that new plans wouldn't cover the doctors and hospitals they have come to know and trust or that massively increased premiums and deductibles would radically alter the ways they lived and worked.

So while I am sure the folks who conceived the law meant well, this much seems perfectly clear by now: Trying to run folks' lives from hundreds of miles away is not the way to help. It is often the way to make things worse.

Kentuckians are capable of making the decisions that worked best for them, for their own medical needs and financial situations. I am sure there is some think-tank report that might disagree. I know there is no end to well-

paid Washington bureaucrats with ''better ideas,'' but people do not want Washington's enlightened judgment ruling over their lies.

ObamaCare is what you get when you put decisions that belong in the hands of the middle class in the hands of the government class. You get 2,700 pages of law that lead to 20,000 pages of rules and regulations. You get a Web site that doesn't work as a symbol of a law that won't work. You get a maze of bureaucracies and government contractors with indecipherable acronyms—CMS, CCIIO, CGI, QSSI—that seem to exist to obscure accountability when things go wrong. You get decisions that are based upon the needs of a political calendar rather than what it will take to get the job done.

Worst of all, we hear stories from Kentuckians such as this one from a woman who was about to lose her plan and was shopping on the exchange. She said:

> I can't afford the options that have been made available to me. I make too much money to qualify for any ''help'' from the ACA but I don't make enough to afford paying double what my premium is now. To get a plan that is ''comparable'' to what I have now, I will have to pay about $12,000 a year in premiums alone.

You hear stories like the one Rebecca Stuart recently shared with President Obama himself. She told the President that she had to change health insurance plans even though she liked her old plan—and that she was having ''a panicked experience'' trying to get consistent answers about whether her 10-year-old son would continue being able to see his specialist under ObamaCare.

This isn't right. I know the President can't be unmoved by these stories, so I am calling on President Obama to move to the center. I am saying it is time to start over on health care—to replace ObamaCare with real bipartisan reforms that can actually help the people who need it, because a plan such as ObamaCare that costs this much, that hurts this many Americans, and that still fails to achieve its principal goal at the end of the day just won't work.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

PROTECTING SCHOOLCHILDREN

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak briefly about a bill I have introduced. This is a bill that is about protecting our kids in schools. As the father of three young kids, I share the feeling I suspect every parent has: There is no higher priority than making sure our children are safe. We can't personally provide that security all day everywhere at all times, and so we want to make sure the places our kids go are as safe as they can be. Our kids obviously spend a great deal of time at school, and so we want our schools to be the safest environment they can be. And it turns out there is more we can do.

I have a bill—it is a bill I have introduced with Senator JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia—a bipartisan bill that is going to help provide greater security for kids in our schools. My immediate inspiration for introducing this bill came from a tragic story that originated in Pennsylvania. It is a story that begins at a school in Delaware County. One of the schoolteachers, it turns out, had molested several boys and had raped one. The prosecutors never felt they had enough evidence to actually mount a case against him, but the school knew what had happened so they dismissed the teacher. But unbelievably, to me, although they dismissed him, they also gave him a letter of recommendation he could take with him as he applied—where do you think—to other schools. Because that is what these predators do—they look to be in an environment where they can find more victims. That is exactly what this guy did, and he managed to get another teaching job in West Virginia.

This episode ends in 1997, when that teacher—who by then was a school principal—raped and murdered a 12-year-old boy named Jeremy Bell. So justice has caught up with that teacher. He has since been apprehended, charged, tried, and convicted, and he is now serving a jail sentence for murder. But that was all too late for Jeremy Bell.

Unfortunately, Jeremy Bell's story is not unique. I was at a YMCA in Chester County, PA, a few weeks ago. Our district attorney there, Tom Hogan—the district attorney for Chester County—told me a very disturbing story. They are doing an investigation of the Coatesville School District for alleged financial mismanagement. That is what the investigation was about. But in the course of the investigation, they discovered there are numerous school employees who are felons.

He couldn't reveal many details because it is an ongoing investigation even now, but he was able to share one story. It is a story of a Victor Ford, who was an employee. He had been convicted three times for felony drug dealing. In 2009 he was hired as a special education classroom aide and a seventh grade boys basketball coach. In 2010 he raped a young girl—not at this school. Later, he resigned from the school and has since pled guilty to corruption of minors.

This is appalling, and it is so completely unacceptable anywhere in America. So I have introduced a bill that has broad bipartisan support. In fact, it is a bill that has passed the House unanimously. This should not be controversial.

This bill would insist that schools conduct proper criminal background checks for both existing and prospective employees and that these background checks be repeated periodically. There are five States that don't require any check at all, according to a GAO report, and my State of Pennsylvania requires it only for new hires but never relooks at people who may have been working for the school for many years.

This bill also requires the background check for a criminal history be done for any employee who is going to come into contact with kids, so not just teachers. It could be a coach, a contractor, or anybody who is going to interact with children. There are 12 States that have no such provisions.

The bill would also require a more thorough background check. Some States check their own State's database for criminal activity but they do not look at the FBI's database or a national record of criminality. Our bill would require that.

The bill would forbid knowingly passing on a letter of recommendation to a predator. It is shocking that even has to be contemplated, but it has occurred. Sometimes there is this feeling of, well, let's just make the problem someone else's problem. So it does happen, but it is outrageous and appalling, and it needs to be forbidden. Our bill would do that.

The bill would preclude the possibility of hiring people ever convicted of a violent sexual crime against a child, whether that is a misdemeanor or a felony and a number of other violent felonies, including homicide, child abuse, neglect, crimes against children, including pornography and other serious crimes, and other felonies if they have been committed within the previous 5 years.

The enforcement mechanism basically is to withhold Federal funding for schools in States that refuse to do an appropriate check to make sure our kids are safe. This is just common sense and it has broad bipartisan support.

Again, I thank Senator JOE MANCHIN for being my cosponsor on this legislation. It is called the Protecting Students from Sexual and Violent Predators Act. It is S. 1596. Again, it passed the House unanimously. But this is more than just a piece of legislation. This is a moral imperative. This is something we know we can do to make our schools safer for our kids, and I think we should do just that.

I am engaged in discussions with some of my colleagues. I hope this will not be controversial and that we will soon get to the point where we can pass this by unanimous consent or hotline this so we get this done. As I said, it has already passed the House. As soon as we pass this bill, it will go to the President and it will be signed into law. I hope my colleagues will join me in this effort and we will be able to get it done soon.

I yield the floor.

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. JOHANNS. Madam President, I rise today to speak again about the

President's health care bill—ObamaCare. Monday of this week was another milestone for ObamaCare. It marked yet another admission by the President that the health care law is unworkable as written.

So what happened? On Monday, unilaterally, the administration decided to delay the employer mandate for 1 year once again. This time around the delay is for employers with 50 to 99 employees. It is amazing to me, and it is completely contradictory, that one day the President is behind the podium talking about how great this law is and the next day he is erasing the very text he supports.

The administration had nearly 4 years to implement the major provisions of the law, yet the President finds it necessary to literally rewrite the law with delay after delay after delay. On one hand, I am pleased the President recognizes the grievous harm being done by this legislation. I appreciate that he recognizes the harm is too great to leave it in place. But all he is doing is delaying the pain until after the elections, which is unfair to American families.

The truth is further delays don't solve the problem; they extend the pain. Reports certainly indicate we have only seen the tip of this iceberg.

Last week, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office dealt yet another blow to ObamaCare. The CBO estimates there will be about 2½ million fewer full-time workers in 10 years than if this law had not passed. These new figures are nearly three times greater than the CBO's already dismal analysis back in the day when the law was being debated before its passage.

I found it remarkable back when we were debating this law—when unemployment was hovering around 10 percent—that any of my colleagues would support any bill that would cost hundreds of thousands of jobs. Now we are learning the truth and it is even worse. It is three times as bad. CBO says the law's subsidies and taxes reduce incentives to work. Is that what this Congress should be about? And their report asserts the cost of the employer mandate penalty will be passed on to workers in the form of lower wages or other compensation.

A number of Nebraskans have reached out to me. An individual from eastern Nebraska shared this:

> I work part time and I have had my hours cut from 30 to 28 hours due to ObamaCare last April. My employer implemented it early to be sure I did not exceed 30 hours in the year 2013. Even with the delay in the mandate, they have stuck to the 28 hours for part time help. The loss to me is about $150 a month and it sure has hurt our budget. My employer's hands are tied as they would have to pay health care for employees with 30 hours or more or pay a fine if not offering health care. This ObamaCare is a job killer. I keep hoping I will wake up and this will all have been a bad dream.

Another Nebraskan from the northeast corner of the State wrote to me and said:

> My wife just left my office in tears. She worked for the city for over 10 years. She is, or rather was, a 34 hour a week employee who was informed that she is having her hours cut back to 29 as a result of the Affordable Care Act. To many those 5 hours per week may not seem like much but to our family it will result in a huge loss. We currently have 3 children, including one daughter who is a senior getting ready to graduate and go to college. As a family we pretty much live ''hand to mouth'' with our income and this reduction in hours, which I'm sure seems ''minor'' to a lot of folks, is a huge blow to my family. The thing that pains me most is the impact it is going to have on our daughter's decision about college, that one thing alone is so unfair. She should not, on the cusp of choosing her path in life, have to be put in the position—over 5 hours of work—of delaying or altering her life plans. In a world where we tend to be futurists—always talking about the importance of education and the next generation being the future—it just doesn't seem right that I have to look my daughter in the eyes tonight and have a discussion about how 5 hours may alter her future.

These are heartbreaking stories about Americans who want to work but their government has gotten in their way. We are seeing smaller paychecks and 2.5 million fewer full-time equivalent jobs.

We all remember this law's primary marketing pitch was that it would provide coverage for tens of millions of uninsured Americans, but CBO now estimates 31 million Americans will likely be without health insurance in 2024—roughly 1 of 9 Americans—and 6 to 7 million Americans won't get coverage through their employers who otherwise would have. This is according to CBO.

Let me say that again. Six million to 7 million fewer Americans will not get health insurance from their employer under ObamaCare compared to no bill at all.

So ObamaCare has been counterproductive, to say the least. It is hardly a good return on investment, considering this law cost over $2 trillion and raised taxes by about $1 trillion.

I appreciate and support goals to help our most vulnerable Americans receive access to health care, and I support reforms which will increase competition and lower costs, such as expanding health savings accounts and not reducing them. I appreciate the opportunity to work on reforms which allow insurers to compete across State lines and allowing small businesses to pool together to create a broader pool to be insured at lower rates. These solutions would produce results.

But a 2,700-page bill packed full of perverse incentives and negative consequences which hurt workers, increase taxes, and costs trillions is not what Americans want. That is why I am committed to shielding Americans from the harmful effects of ObamaCare. We must repeal this law and build on the alternative solutions which have been proposed by Republicans to help our American families.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

ASKING CONFIRMATION

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I have a quick notification.

We have two judges on the calendar from Arkansas, Calendar No. 565 and 570. I just alert the Senate that, at the proper time, I plan to ask unanimous consent to confirm these en bloc, and I have very strong reasons why they need to get done before we go to recess.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 11:15 a.m. be equally divided between myself and the Senators from Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, and both Senators from Connecticut; that at the conclusion of these remarks I be recognized to speak for an additional 3 minutes; and then following my remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session under the previous order.

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

STUDENT LOAN DEBT

Mr. REED. Madam President, what has made America strong is we have provided opportunities for individuals to develop their talents. Previous generations of Americans have recognized this, and invested in higher education accordingly.

During President Lincoln's time, the Federal Government invested in establishing a system of public colleges throughout the Nation. After World War II, we opened the doors of postsecondary education to our returning veterans under the GI bill. As part of the War on Poverty, we enacted the Higher Education Act with the idea that no American should be denied the ability to go to college because their family lacked the ability to pay for college.

Senator Pell, my predecessor, with the creation of the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant—later named the Pell grant in his honor—made the promise of a college education real for millions of Americans.

As part of the student aid programs, we invested in offering low-cost loans to create opportunity, spur innovation, and grow our economy. Our student loan programs were originally seen as an investment, not a profit center or even a cost-neutral proposition.

Today, our student aid investment aid has been stood on its head. The Congressional Budget Office estimates we will be generating revenue from student loans through 2024. Student loan debt has become a serious threat to our ladder of opportunity—our pathway to progress for this generation.

That is what brings me and my colleagues to the floor today. We must turn the tide because too many students are drowning in debt, and it has threatened to hold back a new generation of young Americans just when

they would be forming a household, buying cars or starting a business.

As student loan repayment plans stretch out over 20 years or more, this generation will still be paying off student loans when it comes time to send their own children to college and perhaps while also taking care of their parents in their senior years.

The bottom line is we know borrowers are struggling. We know the government could play a more constructive role in helping them and enacting reforms to increase fairness and transparency in this process.

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York recently reported that delinquency rates on student loan debt are increasing even as we see decreases in delinquency rates for other types of household debt.

The cohort default rates for student loans have been increasing. For borrowers who entered repayment in 2010, 14.7 percent had defaulted by 2013, up from 13.4 percent for those who began repayments in 2009. It is essential borrowers know about their repayment options. That is why Senator DURBIN's Student Loan Borrower Bill of Rights Act is so important and why I am proud to be a cosponsor of his legislation.

But changing the trend of growing debt and rising defaults is more than a student loan servicing issue. We have to provide a real avenue to allow individuals straining under the weight of the estimated $1.2 trillion in student loan debt—many with loans carrying an interest rate of 6.8 percent or higher—an opportunity to refinance those loans at a lower interest rate. The GAO just reported that on loans made between 2007 and 2012, the Federal Government is estimated to make $66 billion. Clearly, borrowers are paying more than they should, and we have to address these college costs.

But we also have to deal with the issue of giving colleges and universities their incentive, their skin in the game, to ensure they carefully review their students' loans; that they direct students to the lowest cost and the lowest possible amount of loans; that they do this in a way which will make them truly responsible and conscious of the debt which is accumulated by students. I have been working on legislation to require that.

So I commend Senators DURBIN, WARREN, and others for what they are doing to deal with this issue.

Madam President, I yield the floor for my other colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I thank Senators DURBIN and REED for their extraordinary leadership on this important issue. I also rise today to talk about the crushing burden which student debt places on our college students and on our economy, and I call on Congress to address it.

The core facts are well known to every family in America. In recent decades, college costs have skyrocketed. Adjusted for inflation, a young person today pays 300 percent of what their parents paid just 30 years ago. For millions of young people, the only way to cover this tuition cost is to take on huge debt. The average student loan balance among 25-year-olds who borrow has grown by 91 percent in just 10 years. Total outstanding student loan debt stands at a staggering $1.2 trillion, and it is getting bigger every single day.

The problem is made worse by the Federal student loan program, with high interest rates which will produce obscene profits for the government. The GAO recently projected the government will bring in $66 billion in profits on its Federal student loans made between 2007 and 2012—profits which would make a Fortune 500 CEO proud.

This exploding debt is crushing our young people. More than one third of borrowers under the age of 30 have been delinquent for more than 90 days.

This exploding debt is also dragging down our economy. With monthly loan bills which can easily exceed a mortgage payment, it is no surprise that home ownership among 30-year-olds has declined steeply. Last spring the Federal Reserve raised concerns that rising student debt could threaten our overall economic growth.

Tying students to a lifetime of financial servitude as a condition of getting an education does not reflect our values. These students didn't go to the mall and run up charges on a credit card. They worked hard, and they learned new skills which will benefit this country, help us build a stronger middle class, and help us build a stronger America. They deserve our support. They don't deserve to be buried in debt.

To reverse this trend of student borrowing, we need to bring down the cost of college. That will not be easy, and it will require everyone—the government, higher education institutions, and the students themselves—to do far more than they do now.

I am committed to working with Chairman HARKIN and my colleagues on the Senate HELP Committee to find ways to meaningfully reduce college tuition, and I am working closely with many of my colleagues, including Senators DURBIN, REED, SCHUMER, GILLIBRAND, MURPHY, and BROWN, who are all intensely focused on this issue.

But our need to reduce the cost of college must not blind us to the urgency of addressing the massive debt already crushing our young people. The pressure is building, and we must act to provide real relief to our students and young graduates now.

In the coming weeks I will join with my colleagues to introduce legislation to do just that—legislation which will allow eligible borrowers with high-interest loans to refinance at interest rates which are at least as low as those currently being offered to new borrowers in the Federal student loan program.

The idea is pretty simple. When interest rates are low, homeowners can refinance their mortgages and big corporations can swap more expensive debt for cheaper debt. Even State and local governments have refinanced their debts. But a graduate who took out an unsubsidized loan before July 1 of this year is locked into an interest rate of nearly 7 percent. Older loans run 8 percent, 9 percent, and even more.

Last year Congress agreed those interest rates were much too high, so they lowered them significantly for this year's borrowers. But that change does nothing for the millions who are trapped under the old high-interest-rate loans. Refinancing those old loans would lower interest rates to 3.8 percent for undergraduate loans. The savings would vary, of course. For a recent graduate who borrowed the maximum, payments would drop by as much as $1,000 a year, and total interest could be cut nearly in half. For those who have even older loans, those with graduate school loans, and those with loans from private lenders, the savings would be even higher.

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

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I agree with my colleague from Massachusetts. She said it exactly right, as will the other Senators who are going to speak on this issue today. I urge Congress to work immediately to tackle the mountain of student debt which is crippling the lives of young people and weighing down an entire generation.

The Federal Student Loan Refinancing Act, which I wrote to address the growing economic burden facing our graduates and their families, basically affords a graduate the same right to refinance their loans as already provided to homeowners, corporations, and even governments. This legislation would lower interest rates on refinancing student loans to 4 percent, saving borrowers thousands of dollars which would otherwise be spent purchasing a home or a car or even starting a new business.

In New York State and across the Nation, we are facing a student loan debt crisis. Student loan debt is at $1.2 trillion nationwide. Americans now owe more on their student loans than they do on their credit cards or car loans, holding back our economy and our economy's growth. Tens of millions of young people who graduated college and are securing their first job are not starting their careers on even ground. They are starting them under water, and they have a hard time staying afloat when juggling all their bills.

A New York student who borrows to pay for college now graduates with an

average of more than $27,000 in student loan debt, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. When someone owes upwards of $30,000 in debt before even earning the first paycheck, it is no wonder young people are falling further behind on their payments.

Providing graduates with the ability to refinance their student debt—Federal loans particularly—would lead to the personal savings of $14.5 billion nationwide in the first year alone, according to the Center for American Progress report. A higher education remains the clearest path to our middle class. When we price young people out of college, we all pay the price. Keeping a high-quality education in New York affordable is simply the right thing to do. That is why refinancing Federal student loans should be one of Congress's top priorities for college students.

The magnitude of the problem requires leadership and the solution is right in front of us. Now is the time to act. Our Nation's students, graduates, and families cannot afford further delay.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I thank my colleagues Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island, Senator ELIZABETH WARREN of Massachusetts, and Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND of New York for joining us on the floor this morning to talk about the student debt crisis and college affordability.

I don't think this is just another issue. I think this is a defining issue. Imagine, if you will, what has happened to America since we have called into question the intrinsic value of owning a home. That used to be built into our culture, the notion that if you could get beyond the rental stage and actually buy a home was a smart and good investment in terms of your neighborhood, your community, and your State.

The mortgage crisis that we went through was a shock to many people. They paid too much for their homes. They found themselves facing foreclosure and short sales, and the basic premise has been challenged. There is more rental property now. People are hedging their bets on the issue of home ownership.

Now take one of the other pillars of our basic American values, and that pillar is: You will never go wrong with more education. I learned that at an early age, and luckily my mom and dad—with limited educational experience on their own part—pushed me forward into college and into law school and to finish. They believed that at the end of the day, I would be better off. Of course, statistics bear that out.

Now comes the new challenge. The increasing cost of higher education has driven many families and students deeply into debt. In many cases, it is impossible for them to pay back their debt.

Senator REED says it is transformative. There are young people who have literally had their lives dramatically changed because of debt. The basic premise is called into question: Is higher education worth the money? I didn't think I would ever see that as a legitimate topic for debate in America, but it turned out to be a cover on Time magazine.

This is not just a matter of the pundits and politicians talking about it. Average people, working families are talking about it. That is why we are coming to the floor. We hope to expand our numbers more and more, and I hope some of the Republicans will join in this conversation about what to do when it comes to student debt and the crisis it is creating.

Millions of Americans pursue a college education hoping they will realize the American dream, but as college tuition, textbooks, and fees skyrocket students are paying more and more for education and taking on greater debt to pay for it. Sixty-eight percent of the class of 2012 graduated with some debt. For those students the average debt was $27,850 a year. For students who attended for-profit schools, the average debt was close to $40,000, which deserves a special part of this topic of conversation when we talk about the cost of higher education.

Americans now collectively hold more than $1.2 trillion in student debt—more than Americans hold in credit card debt. This has surpassed credit card debt in America. It goes way beyond higher education. It goes into a question about personal credit, chances for mobility, and the future of students who sign for these bone-crushing debt loans.

In his recent State of the Union Address, President Obama said he wants to work with Congress to see how we can help Americans who feel trapped by this crushing debt. Several of us are stepping forward and accepting the President's challenge. I hope more Members will do so as well.

Late last year Senators REED, WARREN, BOXER, and myself introduced the student loan borrower bill of rights to spell out in basic terms the rights of student borrowers and their families in interacting with Federal and private lenders, loan servicers, and schools. It is amazing to me that when it comes to mortgage debt there are laws dictating what you need to be told. When it comes to student debt, there are not nearly the protections. Younger people who are making these life-changing decisions about debt deserve to know everything they face and what they are getting into.

I met a young woman in Chicago recently named Hannah Moore. She thought she did the right thing. She started off her higher education by going to community college. She was told that was affordable and close to home. Do that first. She did it and then she made a fatal error.

After 2 years at a community college, she enrolled at the Harrington College of Design in Chicago. If you go to their Web site, you will be dazzled with the beauty of this school, the faculty, and all the opportunities. Hannah Moore was dazzled, but this for-profit school ended up becoming a debt pit for her life.

After she had exhausted all of her Federal loans and started taking out private loans at the Harrington College of Design, she graduated with a debt of $124,000, and she could not find a job. At one point she was working three part-time jobs to pay $800 a month on this debt from this for-profit school.

Her Federal loan payments are manageable because the Federal program at least allows her to make payments based on income, but the private loans this school lured her into—thanks to interest and fees—now amount to $110,000. Her servicer on these loans refuses to work with her to find repayment alternatives. She sinks deeper and deeper every day into debt.

This poor young woman thought she was doing the right thing by going to school. Today she is so deeply in debt she can't even dream of buying a house or a car. Her father had to come out of retirement to help her pay off the loans at this for-profit school, the Harrington College of Design.

Unfortunately, she wasn't protected with the bill of rights, which I have introduced and is being cosponsored by my colleagues who have spoken today, which would have told her don't apply for a private loan until you have exhausted your government loans.

Government loans have lower interest rates and are more manageable. Government loans can be consolidated and in some cases forgiven, depending on the job you take. She was not told that. She was lured into a debt trap by a school that just wanted to rake in Federal dollars at her expense. This is going to standardize policies, such as how payments are applied to principal and interest so borrowers benefit instead of banks.

Under the current situation, many students paying back their loans find that the money is going to the higher interest loans and not to the lower interest loans; it is not being transferred to their benefit.

The bill requires servicers to have a servicemember and veteran liaison. Veterans are often victims of these notorious for-profit schools and other lenders. We also require students to be told of all of their options, including Federal loans which have better terms and repayments. Students often have no other choice but to take out loans to pay for their college education, but this bill says borrowing money for college doesn't mean you give up your power over your money and your debt.

I also want to mention something most people don't know. In bankruptcy court in America today there are only a handful of debts that cannot be discharged in bankruptcy court: taxes, child support, alimony, and government and student loans.

A few years ago, the for-profit industry and private loan industry engineered into these bankruptcy discharge laws protection for their own debt. What does it mean? It means if you go to a for-profit school and take out a private loan, you are literally burdened with that for a lifetime. The grounds for discharging a student loan debt are some of the strictest and toughest in America. Students who sign up for this debt ought to know they are in it until it is paid and that can mean for a lifetime.

The Wall Street Journal reported some time ago on a grandmother cosigning a student loan for her granddaughter. The granddaughter defaulted, and the lender decided to levy on the grandmother's Social Security payments. That is how outrageous this has become. Sadly, these students don't realize when they sign on the dotted line at ages 19, 20, and 21, they are signing on for a debt that can trail them for a lifetime.

That has to change. We have to follow Senator REED's lead. Senator JACK REED has said: These colleges have to have some skin in the game. If they are going to lure students into student loans well beyond their ability to repay, let that college and university bear some of the responsibility for repayment too. I think that is only reasonable.

I thank my colleagues for bringing forth this issue. I thank Senator WARREN. Her partnership in this effort is especially important. Because of her background in law and finance she is an important part of this conversation.

We are not going to end with this speech on the floor today by each of us. Once a week we are going to continue to bring together those in our caucus—and I hope in the Republican caucus—who believe we have to address the student debt crisis and come up with a reasonable way for students to pay for an education that is reasonably priced.

To have these students burdened with the student loan debtor prison is unacceptable in America today. It is time for us, as a Congress, to address this issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I would like to speak for another minute about the issue of refinancing student loans. This is real money back in the pockets of people who invested in their education; real money will help young people find a little more financial stability as they work hard to build their futures, real money that says America invests in those who get an education.

We don't need to add a single dime to our deficit to pay for this plan. Right now this country essentially taxes students by charging high interest rates that bring money into the government while at the same time we give away far more money through a Tax Code riddled with loopholes and let the wealthiest individuals and corporations avoid paying a fair share. We can close those loopholes and put the money directly into refinancing student loans.

We can start with the Buffett rule, a rule that would limit tax loopholes for the wealthy and ensure that billionaires pay at least as much as their secretaries. For every new dollar we bring in by stitching this loophole, it can go directly into reducing the cost of student loans for our students. Dollar for dollar we can invest in billionaires or we can invest in our students. This is about opportunity.

Our country should offer a helping hand to young people who are working hard to try to build a future, not a handout to billionaires who have already made it. Refinancing student loans will not fix everything that is broken in the higher education system, but it is a huge step forward.

I was the first person in my family to graduate from college. I went to a commuter college where the tuition was $50 a semester. I went to a public law school where I got a great education. I was able to do that because I grew up in a country that chose investing in kids over investing in billionaires. I believe in that America, and I believe in what we can do when we work together to build opportunities for everyone who busted their tail to get an education.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, again I compliment my colleagues Senator DURBIN, Senator WARREN, and Senator GILLIBRAND on their commitment to reinvigorating our higher education policy and doing it in an efficient and cost-effective way so the future generation of students are not so burdened that they cannot essentially rise up, buy a home, start a family, and do the things that my generation took for granted because there was strong support for higher education at every level of government.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Mr. REED. Madam President, before I leave the floor, I wish to turn to another key issue that requires urgent action; that is, the renewal of unemployment benefits for millions of people. It has now been 46 days since unemployment insurance expired for many job seekers. Today their ranks have swollen to about 1.8 million Americans, including 20,000 veterans who have lost their emergency unemployment insurance benefits.

Getting Americans back to work and accelerating job growth should be Congress's top priority—our No. 1 job. We all understand the answer to this is having a situation where there are not three applicants for each job, but there is a good job for each applicant, and we have more to do.

In the meantime we have to address the crisis for these families who have worked hard all of their lives. They only qualify for unemployment insurance if they lost a job through no fault of their own and are looking for work. But in that search, it is difficult. And it is certainly difficult to get by, pay the rent, put gas in the car, keep a cell phone operating, to take a call from a potential employer when we cut off the modest benefits of roughly $350 a week.

Doing this has historically been a bipartisan endeavor. We have all recognized in our communities, regardless of where they are located in this country, people who have worked hard, who are struggling and need assistance to make the transition from unemployment back to reemployment. I am particularly troubled today by the way some people are commenting about the unemployed, suggesting they don't have the backbone, the character to work; that this is a great deal for them, getting $300 a week. When, in fact, one of the obvious points, to me, at least, of this crisis of unemployment is it is not just young, entry-level workers; too often, it is middle-aged individuals who have done extremely well in their lives and now, for the first time, are coming into unemployment situations because of technology, because of changes in the workforce. They are good people, and they deserve our support. But, instead, they are being mischaracterized, dismissed, and ignored—perhaps the most dangerous aspect of this attitude.

We were only one Republican vote short of breaking a filibuster that would allow us, at least temporarily, to help out these people. I thank all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have worked very conscientiously, consistently, and thoughtfully on this critical matter. If one more of our colleagues can recognize the need to do this, then we can do it, and we should do it.

We are, I believe, on the verge of addressing the issue of military COLA reductions. That is something important we have to do, but let me point out, that does not go into effect until December 2015. There is no veteran who has lost his or her COLA yet, but there are 1.8 million Americans, and growing, who have already lost their extended unemployment insurance benefits. So the immediacy of this problem is compelling, and we have to deal with it.

We have never turned our back when long-term unemployment was so significant. We have always stood up and said, we will help you. We have also been willing to make changes to the program. In fact, in 2012, I was part of a conference committee that made significant reforms in the unemployment system. One reform was to cut back the weeks from 99 to 73. We provided to States the ability to have innovative programs in terms of putting people in jobs, in terms of making sure a job search was being thoroughly conducted by recipients. These reforms have been made. What we have asked for is a short extension of the program, and I think that is what we should be asking for at this juncture. But as we progress and as we get close to the point where

the 3 months has expired, I think we have to think more about what are we going to do in the long run, because we are still going to have millions of people who do not have work.

We have, I think—and it has been demonstrated by these folks—Members on both sides who want to get this done. We need one more vote to procedurally move forward. I hope we can get that vote.

With that, I yield back the remainder of our time. I believe, under the prevailing UC, that we will now go into executive session.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 7 minutes.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you. I will yield the floor if some people wish to speak in executive session on the nominations.

THE DEFICIT

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, in the Budget Committee yesterday, on which I am the ranking Republican, Director Elmendorf of the Congressional Budget Office gave us the report and his projections for next year and what the consequences and financial situation will be for our country as he projects it. When I asked him about his projections for economic growth, he acknowledged they have been way too high over the last several years, and that has been disappointing. Our growth has not reached the level we want to it reach. He projects now a lower growth rate than he had been projecting for the next 10 years.

Let me share with my colleagues, as we vote on these matters on which we want to help veterans and we want to help the unemployed—and we can do that but we have to remember who we are, what we are doing, and how we got here. We virtually doubled the deficit in the last 10 years in the United States of America—added to the total debt of the United States of America. Deficits are going down over the last couple of years, and will for 1 more year, according to Mr. Elmendorf, but then will begin an inexorable rise to nearly a $1 trillion deficit at the end of 10 years from today. The interest we paid—and he testified to this; it is in his report—the interest we paid last year on the total debt of the United States, even with the extraordinarily low interest rates, was $230 billion—an amazing amount of money.

We have a group testifying right now about the highway bill. They would like to see more money spent on our infrastructure and highways. From the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Donohue, and Mr. Trump, to the top union leader, they all agree we need to spend more on highways.

Last year, the interest we paid on the debt, according to Dr. Elmendorf, was $230 billion. That is a stunning figure. It is half the total of the budget for the Defense Department. But let me tell my colleagues what he said that is most troubling. Projecting a modest increase in interest rates over the next 10 years and the increased deficits we will see, Mr. Elmendorf predicted last year that 10 years from now, the 1-year interest payment will be $830 billion.

We are having a dispute to try to get—not cut—the veterans retirement, and we should not cut veterans retirement, the way this was done. It would cost $6 billion over 10 years. Do we see the difference? We are paying $230 billion. If we pay at that rate for 10 years, that would be $2.3 trillion. But we are not going to be paying at $230 billion a year. By the time we get to the tenth year, according to Mr. Elmendorf, we will be spending $890 billion on the interest on the debt we have accumulated in the United States of America through reckless spending, so much of it producing very little benefit for anybody in the long term, and we cannot continue this. He testified that if interest rates go up 1 percent, we will pay $1.5 trillion more on interest over 10 years than if it didn't go up 1 percent. Who knows—he acknowledged he is no seer. Interest rates, many people predict right now, would surge dramatically and may go up to some of the levels we had in 1970. If it did, this country would probably be financially destitute.

So I have to say we are not playing games here. The money of the United States needs to be managed by the elected representatives. They expect us to manage our money wisely. They expect us not to put this country at financial risk, and they have every right. They have a responsibility, actually, as citizens of this country to be angry with their Congress, to be angry with their President for running up this kind of a debt. It is not a good thing.

Earlier this year there was deep concern that the Budget Control Act that was passed on a bipartisan basis, signed by President Obama, that limited the growth in spending—didn't cut spending, but over 10 years spending would increase $8 trillion—increase $8 trillion instead of increasing $10 trillion. So we ''saved'' $2 trillion. That was deemed too tough this year. So we had the Ryan-Murray bill that said we are going to fix some of the tight places, and we are going to avoid spending—we are going to put more money in. We are going to spend more than we agreed to, but we are not going to break the total debt situation because we are going to raise taxes some and we are going to cut spending some. One of the cuts they came up with, in secret, without any public hearings or debate, was to cut the veterans retirement plan, and it blew up. It meant $70- to $150,000 for retired veterans, how much they would lose in their retirement cost of living.

I opposed that. They passed it anyway. The Democratic majority here blocked proposal after proposal, and one was to more than pay for it by reducing fraudulent income tax credit checks being illegally sent out to people who don't qualify for it. That was blocked too. So what did we have just a few days ago? We had—we have a bill that saved the veterans so they don't have to have their pensions reduced. And how would they pay for this $6 billion in costs? Why, they wouldn't pay for it at all. There is no payment whatsoever. Actually, by voting and supporting that provision—the Pryor amendment, cosponsored by a number of Democrats—it would increase the spending of the United States above the agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have one additional minute to wrap up.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. It would have added to the debt of the United States directly above the agreement we just voted on in Ryan-Murray. It set the cap on how much spending. So less than two months later, we are in here directly having to defend against a proposal that would have broken the spending agreement that was in the Ryan-Murray legislation. It is unthinkable. I can't imagine this would happen. There are so many places we could pay for this kind of restoration of veterans' retirement benefits without raising taxes and without adding to the debt.

I guess I am saying I am frustrated about the mindset of this Congress. I don't think we are focused on the threat this debt poses to America. Dr. Elmendorf told us we are on an unsustainable path and he began to discuss the danger of a fiscal crisis such as we had in 2007 because we are in such a red zone, a marginal zone of debt.

I see the majority leader and I know he is busy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 540 AND S. 25

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that following the series of votes scheduled for 11:30 this morning and the resumption of legislative session, notwithstanding the previous order, the time until 1:45 be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that at 1:45 this afternoon the Chair lay before the body the message from the House to accompany S. 540; that following reporting of that message the majority leader or his designee be recognized to move to concur in the House amendment to S. 540; that if a cloture motion is filed on the motion to concur, the Senate immediately proceed to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the

motion to concur; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540; that upon disposition of the House message to accompany S. 540, the Chair lay before the body the House message to accompany S. 25, with the remaining provisions of the previous order remaining in effect, with the debate time modified to be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to the vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 25; that if cloture is not invoked on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540, the Chair lay before the body the House message to accompany S. 25, with the remaining provisions of the previous order remaining in effect with the exception of the debate time which will now be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to the vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 25.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF TINA S. KAIDANOW TO BE COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERTERRORISM, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR AT LARGE

NOMINATION OF DANIEL BENNETT SMITH TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH)

NOMINATION OF CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

NOMINATION OF CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT)

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

The assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Tina S. Kaidanow, of the District of Columbia, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large; Daniel Bennett Smith, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research); Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be United States Alternate Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; United States Alternate Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank; and Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes for debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, it is my hope that we do not have to use 30 minutes. But let me start off by saying I am very pleased we have three highly qualified nominees for posts at the State Department that are critical to America's national security and economic diplomacy. These nominees were voted out favorably by the Foreign Relations Committee.

Ambassador Tina Kaidanow is well qualified to serve as Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the Department of State. In a long career, most recently she served as the Deputy Ambassador at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. In Kabul she worked on some of the most difficult and pressing terrorism issues the United States faces. She previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

Ambassador Kaidanow has shown the ability to forge the types of partnerships necessary to advance the counterterrorism objectives and national security of the United States. I hope all of my colleagues will join me in supporting her nomination.

Next is Daniel Bennett Smith, the President's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research. This is an incredibly important position as the State Department thinks about our advocacy abroad in terms of foreign policy. Having the best information on intelligence and research is critically important, and certainly playing a role as it relates to embassy security across the globe is very important.

Ambassador Smith served as the U.S. Ambassador to Greece from 2010 to 2013. He has been a career officer in the Senior Foreign Service, with the rank of Career Minister. He has served as Executive Secretary of the State Department and as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs and Deputy Executive Secretary.

If confirmed, he will advise State Department officials on the many intelligence issues the Department faces—issues that are critical to policymakers' decisions as they relate to U.S. foreign policy efforts. I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

Finally, Catherine Ann Novelli is in a unique opportunity to help us, particularly with our economic diplomacy abroad. With over three decades of experience in the public and private sectors, including at senior levels at Apple and in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Ms. Novelli has shown a deep personal commitment to public service. She will bring tremendous private sector skills, understanding of the interagency process, and knowledge of international economic issues to her role as the most senior economic official at the State Department and as an Alternate Governor to the important multilateral development banks that are a big part of our efforts abroad.

Ms. Novelli's experience at the USTR coordinating trade and investment policy for Europe, the Middle East, and northern Africa and the leading role she played in many of the most important U.S. trade negotiations of the last 25 years make her an ideal candidate to lead the State Department's engagement in our country's most ambitious trade agenda in generations.

One thing I find particularly important—as I always advocate questions on international intellectual property rights and other elements that are important to the United States, which leads the world in innovation—our private sector is facing tougher international competition. The world's serious environmental threats and a changing energy landscape are also elements of those challenges.

We are fortunate to have someone with Ms. Novelli's expertise in promoting trade and investment and her intimate knowledge of the support needed to ensure our private sector remains globally competitive. She is the right person to oversee the State Department's efforts to increase commerce, open markets, and support the rights of workers. I urge my colleagues to support her nomination.

These are three very important, critical positions, and I look forward to the Senate confirming these individuals.

With that, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time on both sides, including the 2 minutes prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON KAIDANOW NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Tina S. Kaidanow, of the District of Columbia, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

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

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 30 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Ayotte	Graham	Murphy
Baldwin	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Paul
Bennet	Hatch	Portman
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Pryor
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Heller	Reid
Boozman	Hirono	Risch
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Landrieu	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Fischer	Merkley	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden
Franken	Moran	

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn	Rockefeller

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SMITH NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Smith nomination.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise to support the nomination of Ambassador Daniel Bennett Smith to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research.

I am not aware of any opposition to this nominee and so look forward to a strong vote of confirmation by my colleagues. I am also pleased that the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, known as INR, will continue to have strong leadership by a respected senior member of the foreign service.

The INR Bureau is a small, but effective entity within the U.S. intelligence community. In fact, it only has approximately 200 analysts, but it has a very strong reputation for independent and unbiased analysis. Its intelligence professionals include those from the foreign service and the civil service, including many who have decades of experience in the topics they cover.

These analysts are prized for the intelligence value they provide to senior State Department officials, to include the Secretary and his team, ambassadors, and the men and women who work the country desks.

INR also brings the State Department's knowledge and viewpoint to discussions and debates within the intelligence community, helping to ensure that intelligence decisions are informed by diplomatic requirements and information gained by our embassies around the world.

In the past several years, INR has perhaps become best known for its dissents from some of the main points in the flawed intelligence reports that led to the war in Iraq. Unfortunately, those dissents were marginalized in key intelligence products and not provided adequate scrutiny. As a result, I can tell my colleagues that members of the intelligence committee pay special attention to dissenting voices in the intelligence community, and always to the views of INR.

The primary mission of this Bureau is to provide intelligence to policymakers at the State Department. INR is one of the three all-source analytic agencies within the intelligence community, along with the CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency.

INR also ensures that intelligence operations and sensitive intelligence-related law enforcement activities are consistent with U.S. foreign policy. The Assistant Secretary for INR is therefore the conduit between the intelligence community and the State Department to ensure that our intelligence activities and the conduct of our foreign policy are coordinated and aligned.

In sum, the Assistant Secretary for INR is both an independent leader of an intelligence community agency and the Secretary of State's point person on intelligence matters.

Ambassador Smith is well-qualified to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research. He has served for 30 years as a Foreign Service officer and in a variety of positions at the State Department. Most recently he was Ambassador to Greece (from 2010 to 2013).

Ambassador Smith has also served as Executive Secretary of the State Department, Principal Deputy Secretary for Consular Affairs, and in overseas posts in Bern, Istanbul, Ottawa, and Stockholm. He is a career officer in the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Career Minister.

The Intelligence Committee approved Ambassador Smith by voice vote on January 16, with unanimous support. A month earlier, on December 17, 2013, the committee held an open hearing on his nomination. After Ambassador Smith was voted out of our committee, the Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on his nomination on January 28.

Ambassador Smith has had a long and distinguished career at the State Department that will serve him well in this position. I urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Ambassador Daniel Bennett Smith to be Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. COATS. We yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Shall the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Daniel Bennett Smith, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research)?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

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

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 31 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Ayotte	Graham	Murphy
Baldwin	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Paul
Bennet	Hatch	Portman
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Pryor
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Heller	Reid
Boozman	Hirono	Risch
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Landrieu	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Fischer	Merkley	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden
Franken	Moran	

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn	Rockefeller

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. The next vote will be the last in this series of votes. The next one we will do by voice vote, and then we will start a series of votes at 1:45. There could be as many as 11 votes, so everybody cinch up their vests, and we will see what happens.

VOTE ON NOVELLI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the first Novelli nomination.

Who yields time? Who yields time?

Mr. VITTER. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

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

Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be United States Alternate Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of five years; United States Alternate Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank for a term of five years?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necesarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 32 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Ayotte	Graham	Murphy
Baldwin	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Paul
Bennet	Hatch	Portman
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Pryor
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Heller	Reid
Boozman	Hirono	Risch
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Sanders
Burr	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Johanns	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Chambliss	King	Shelby
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Cruz	Markey	Walsh
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Enzi	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	
Franken	Moran	

NOT VOTING—3

Coburn	Rockefeller	Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON NOVELLI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the second Novelli nomination.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment)?

The nomination was confirmed.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 1:45 is equally divided.

The Senator from Arkansas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 565 and 570; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; 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 any of the nominations; that any related statements 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?

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Reserving the right to object—and I will object—I wish to remind my colleagues of a couple important points.

First, over the last several weeks some of my colleagues in the majority have expressed frustration because some of the nominees they support haven't been brought up for a final vote. I must say this is quite surprising to me.

As everyone knows, late last year the Senate Democrats invoked the so-called nuclear option. The stated reason for doing so of course was to strip the minority of our ability to stop any judicial or executive nominees on the floor. In fact, just before invoking the so-called nuclear option, here is what the majority leader said about it:

> The change we propose today would ensure executive and judicial nominations an up or down vote on confirmation—yes or no.
>
> The rule change will make cloture for all nominations other than the Supreme Court a majority threshold vote—yes or no.

Of course, 52 Democrats voted to take this unprecedented step, which tossed aside two centuries of Senate history and tradition, even though this President has an outstanding record of getting his nominations confirmed. In fact, prior to the President's attempt to fill the DC Circuit with judges they didn't need, the Senate had confirmed 215 of the President's judicial nominees, rejecting only 2. That is more than a 99-percent approval rating of the President's nominees.

Notwithstanding that record, however, the majority voted to cut the minority out of the process on the floor. I note there was bipartisan opposition to what the majority leader tried to accomplish. Three Democrats voted against it. I have to give credit to the Senator from Arkansas who has made this unanimous consent to be one of those who thought the minority should not be cut out of the process.

The bottom line is that under the precedent 52 Democrats voted to establish, the majority leader now can bring up at any time these nominations for a vote on the floor whenever he decides to do it. If he did, the nominees would be confirmed within no more than 2 hours of debate.

So the minority simply has no ability to stop anyone from getting a vote. There is no filibuster of any nominees anymore, which is the whole point of what the majority chose to do in November.

I object to this unanimous consent and respectfully suggest that any Senator—including the Senator from Arkansas—discuss the matter with the one individual who has the ability to bypass the minority in that matter, and that happens to be the one Senator who is the majority leader of the Senate.

I do object, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I wish to respond and further explain.

We have two judges pending on the calendar right now. In the sequence of judges to be considered, they are No. 2 and No. 7; one is Timothy Brooks and the other is James Moody.

Tim Brooks was nominated by the White House in June and came out of the Judiciary Committee in October. Jay Moody was nominated by the White House in July and came out of the Judiciary Committee in November.

On the Federal bench in Arkansas district court level, we have eight judges. We now have two vacancies. I don't wish to be dramatic and declare a judicial emergency, but certainly people should understand we are only working at 75 percent horsepower right now and we need to get these judges confirmed forthwith.

Yesterday, I stood at my desk and notified the Senate I was going to make this request. I did not receive an objection, as far as I know—unless maybe a staff person talked to a staff person. But I never heard of any objection.

It is bad enough to have 25 percent of our judiciary in Arkansas which needs to be filled, but the real urgency for this is a matter of State law. James Moody is an elected State court judge. He is an elected trial court judge. Under Arkansas law, this is a nonpartisan position. Our filing deadline for the 2014 election cycle opens on the 24th of February and it goes to March 3.

So here is the problem: Today is February 12. We are about to have a snowstorm tonight and the next few days and next week we are on recess. We come back on February 24. The filing period will already be open in Arkansas. I wish I could tell Judge Moody:

Don't worry about it; you are going to be confirmed when we get back. The way things have worked around here recently, I can't give him that guarantee. I can't give him my word. I can't tell him: Judge, don't file for reelection. Just go ahead and wait and trust that this is going to happen. I can't do that under the circumstances. So he is in limbo.

There are other lawyers and judges in Arkansas who want to run for his position. There is a domino effect in the local judiciary and local bar about this.

Under Arkansas State law, once he files, he cannot get his name off the ballot. These are nonpartisan elections. If they were party elections, he could go to the State party and they could handle it through their primary process or through their rules or whatever. But that is not the case here. There is no party to go to. Once he files and his name is on the ballot, he is on the ballot, and that is a big problem. This is causing a lot of problems back home.

There is no principle involved here. There is no reason why these two judges should be held over. They should have been done at the end of last year. I asked my colleagues to help me do that; I was told no.

We need to get these judges done now so we don't create this problem in Arkansas. Both of these judges are very well qualified. They have all the credentials the American Bar Association looks at. As far as I know, every lawyer in Arkansas is unanimously for both. In fact, I heard my colleague Senator BOOZMAN of Arkansas tell the Republican leader last week: MITCH, if you were picking these judges yourself, you couldn't pick any two better judges.

That is a paraphrase, but that is in effect what he said, and it is true. These are noncontroversial judges. Both these judges should be confirmed now so we don't cause this problem in Arkansas.

I yield the floor, but I will continue to push for these nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask to speak as if in morning business.

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

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I see the good Senator from New Mexico is here. I am willing to defer to the Senator if time is an issue for him. If it is not, I will proceed.

MILITARY COLA

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise to speak on the issue of the military COLA. This is a cost-of-living adjustment for our military retirees. In the budget agreement, the COLA was reduced for military retirees by 1 percent until they reached age 62, and then the COLA is restored. I am opposed to this provision in the budget, and I have since cosponsored legislation to fix it, meaning fully reinstating the COLA for our military retired.

The bill we are considering and voting on later today fixes the COLA problem. It reinstates the COLA in full, and that is good. That is what I want to do, and that is what I believe the vast majority of Members in this body on both sides of the aisle want to do. We should pass the bill, and I believe this afternoon we will.

The bill we have been considering this week fixed the COLA problem and restored the cost-of-living adjustment for our military retirees, but it did not cover the cost of doing so. The cost of the legislation is about $6.8 billion over a 10-year period, which, of course, is the Congressional Budget Office's scoring period. We can cover that cost, and we should. We have the deficit and the debt. We have to address our deficit and debt. We have to make sure we are paying for things, and we can absolutely do that in this case. In fact, we put forward amendments to do just that.

The first amendment I joined in putting forward was one led by Senator KELLY AYOTTE, the Senator from New Hampshire. Her amendment fully covers the cost of fixing the COLA. The way it works is it covers the cost by simply requiring that the additional child tax credit statute is properly enforced. I will explain that.

This amendment will require families with children who apply for the additional child tax credit must have Social Security numbers for those children. This is a simple straightforward enforcement provision to ensure the law is followed. Why wouldn't we make sure the law is enforced? After all, I believe that is an important part of our job.

In fact, I also believe the Treasury Department supports this enforcement provision as well, and I would wish to cite from a recent inspector general's report.

> In 2011, the Treasury Department's Inspector General reported that individuals who were not authorized to work in the U.S. received billions by claiming the ACTC, and several news investigations found troubling instances of abuse of this tax credit. In just one example, according to a 2012 news report, an undocumented worker in Indiana admitted that his address was used to file tax returns by four other undocumented workers who fraudulently claimed 20 children in total—resulting in tax refunds totaling nearly $30,000.

The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates this change would save approximately $20 billion over 10 years. That is $20 billion in savings over 10 years, which obviously far more than covers the $6.8 billion cost of the COLA fix we are putting forward. Clearly that works.

I understand we have not been able to get bipartisan agreement on this pay-for, so we need to find something we can agree on because we need both Republicans and Democrats to pass this legislation to fix the COLA, and that is why I have since offered another pay-for. It is a simple 1-page amendment that provides a pay-for for restoring the cost-of-living adjustment for our military retirees. What it does is it simply extends the provisions of the Budget Control Act—the budget we passed—for one more year, from 2023 to 2024.

I am pleased to say we will be voting on my amendment this afternoon—not because I have offered the amendment but, rather, because the leadership has agreed to offer the House version of the COLA fix. The legislation we will be voting on this afternoon has the pay-for I have just outlined. It is not identical to the amendment I have submitted, but it is very close to it. It ensures our military retirees will receive their much-deserved retirement.

I have urged my Republican colleagues in our caucus to fix this problem, and I have urged my Democratic colleagues on the Senate floor to fix this problem. I believe we will fix the cost-of-living adjustment in a bipartisan way today and restore it for our military retirees. This amendment will make sure we pay for it so we are not increasing the deficit or the debt.

As a former Governor and now as a Senator, I have had the honor and privilege to work with our military men and women. I have been to Iraq and Afghanistan. I have gotten the calls when one of our heroes makes the ultimate sacrifice. I know they put it all on the line for us.

Today I ask my fellow Senators to join with me and vote for our men and women in uniform. We need to fix the COLA for our military retired. We should support those great men and women who wear the uniform and honor and protect us and serve this Nation in the cause of liberty and freedom with their dedicated service.

Join with me and support them and vote for this legislation.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I rise today to talk about health care for veterans. This is a critical issue for many veterans who have been left behind and to the many who are not getting the care they need.

First, I want to say how important it is that we have reached an agreement to restore the cut to pensions for working-age military retirees. This cut in the cost-of-living adjustment for military retirees should never have been included in the budget bill.

Let's be clear. The bipartisan budget agreement was critical to New Mexico and our Nation because it rolled back damaging sequestration cuts—cuts that hurt our military and military families.

Working-age military retirees should not have to bear the burden. Many of these men and women have given decades of service to our Nation. They

were willing to give everything for us. They should get the benefits they have earned. From the beginning I have been working to restore this cut to their COLA benefits. I have been very happy we have a bipartisan agreement to move forward and ensure we keep our promise to them.

I come to the floor today to also talk about rural veterans and a rural veterans improvement act. I was proud to introduce this bill with Senator HELLER from Nevada earlier this week. When it comes to veterans' health care, we know there are challenges. We know we can do better, and we know we have to do better.

Over 6 million veterans live in rural areas, including approximately one-third who fought in Afghanistan and Iraq. Three million of those rural veterans receive health care through the VA. Our veterans have fought halfway around the world for our freedom. We should go the extra mile for them.

Senator HELLER and I both come from rural western States. We know the difficulties veterans face when distances are too far and choices are too few. Our legislation would do four things: improve access to mental health services, expand transportation grants, hire and retain more medical professionals in rural areas, and give Congress and the VA tools to improve the quality of rural facilities.

First, let me start with mental health care. This is crucial. Veterans are struggling when the help they need is not available or is very far away.

One of my constituents lives in a rural area in northern New Mexico. He fought in Vietnam and was diagnosed with post-traumatic distress disorder. He required therapy 2 full days a week for 2 years. This vital care probably saved his life. The VA was there for him, and he is grateful, but he had to drive to Albuquerque, over 3 hours away, to get that essential care.

The veterans in my State are clear: They need better access to treatment and more mental health options. One size does not fit all. Conventional therapy does not work for everyone. Veterans groups, such as the Wounded Warrior Project, have long supported alternative treatments and more holistic methods. Tribal governments are also working with the VA to use traditional Native American healing techniques, helping their veterans with PTSD and other diagnoses.

These veterans are in pain. They are at increased risk of suicide. Help has to be there when they need it. Our bill would enable the VA to work with non-VA fee-for-service providers for veterans with service-connected mental health issues when conventional treatment is not available or where alternative treatment is not an option.

Second, even the best health care is useless if you cannot get to it. I have talked with many veterans in my State about this issue, and it is a big problem across New Mexico. Veterans in Carlsbad face a 6-hour drive to the VA hospital in Albuquerque, 300 miles away one way. One such veteran fought bravely in World War II. He is now in his eighties. He has to get up at 5 a.m. and make the trip to Albuquerque to see medical specialists. Sometimes he doesn't get home until midnight. Thanks to the great volunteer drivers at Southeast New Mexico Veterans Transportation Network, he is able to get there, but it is an exhausting day.

Another of my constituents recently retired to Chama, NM, a rural community in the north. He and his wife built a home there, looking forward to retirement. The VA outreach clinic was nearby, but its contract was not renewed and it closed. His only option now is the VA clinic in Espanola, 80 miles each way through the southern Rockies. When winter storms come, as they do in northern New Mexico, he may not be able to get there at all.

The VA offers transportation grants to help, but only for veterans in what they call highly rural areas with fewer than seven people per square mile, not for those in rural areas and small towns such as Chama, and the small towns in Nevada and so many other States. They need help too. The miles are just as long and the journey is just as hard.

Our bill will help by expanding VA transportation grants to include rural communities, and it will not require matching funds for grants up to $100,000, making it easier for these communities to apply for assistance.

Third, rural VA clinics, as their private counterparts, have trouble getting staff and keeping staff. This is not news to veterans who see constant turnover of doctors and nurses and other health care professionals or who have to travel long distances to see anyone at all.

Our bill will establish a VA training program, working with university medical centers to train health care professionals, serving rural veterans at outpatient clinics. Those who complete the program and a 3-year assignment will receive a hiring preference for jobs with the Veterans Health Administration.

We also propose a pilot program for housing incentives for health care professionals to work in rural VA facilities. We are proposing that the VA streamline the hiring of military medical professionals, transitioning to the civilian world into the VA system.

Rural VA health centers have a big job. They do their best. We have to do all we can to help them to get and keep staff with incentives, training, and innovation. It is not easy, but it is essential.

Fourth, we call for a full review of VA community-based outpatient clinics in rural and highly rural areas so we can prioritize expansions and improvements, making sure dollars are well spent and resources go as far as possible. We also call for a report to Congress on whether to add polytrauma centers in rural areas to help veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan recover from multiple major injuries such as serious burns and traumatic brain injuries.

Every day, American servicemembers wake up far from home, and every day, they stand watch. They do the job they promised to do—and not only if it is easy or only if it is convenient. We owe them the same promise. Rural veterans should not be left behind. They should get the care they need and deserve.

Again, I thank Senator HELLER for working with me on this bill. He understands the problem. He is committed to finding solutions.

Our bill is a step forward for the health and well-being of our veterans. This is about essential care, about access, about honoring our commitment to the men and women who have sacrificed so much for our community. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator DURBIN be recognized to speak immediately after me.

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

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I see Senator DURBIN on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from New Mexico.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2023 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I want to talk a little bit about the letters I have received and the messages we have received in the office in the last week regarding the changes we see going on in health care. There was quite a bit of discussion last week about how health care impacts the workplace, and I think a lot of misinformation is out. The Congressional Budget Office projection, as some people have alleged, does not say that 2 million more people are going to have part-time jobs. It says the equivalent job loss because of the Affordable Health Care Act is the equivalent of 2.3 million people losing full-time jobs. That may mean that 10 million people who otherwise would have had full-time jobs have part-time jobs.

The other thing is, it is three times as big as the number that was on the table when people voted for the Affordable Care Act. At that time, the Congressional Budget Office said: If this

law passes, there will be 800,000 fewer jobs than if this law does not pass. The collective impact on the economy is 800,000 fewer jobs.

Last week they said there would be 2.3 million fewer jobs—roughly three times the amount that the earlier estimate was. Similar to so many other estimates in this law, the reality of the law turns out to be different than the estimates. Surely that was an estimate that nobody wanted. I cannot imagine anybody who voted for this bill—and I did not vote for it—but I cannot imagine anybody who voted for this bill thought: That is a really great thing. We are going to lose 800,000 jobs if this bill passes. I assume they thought: The good this bill will do will offset losing 800,000 jobs.

Now we find out it is 2.3 million jobs and all kinds of information that the good that was supposedly going to be done is not what people had hoped for.

While we are talking about the workplace, I have a letter from a person who is the president of one of our community colleges in the State of Missouri. He says because of the Affordable Care Act ''we have reviewed all part-time employment to ensure compliance with the Affordable Care Act . . . which defines full-time as 30 hours or more per week. Without specific guidance in converting credit hours to clock hours, we have reduced part-time faculty's teaching loads to ensure'' nobody works more than 30 hours.

This is not the only letter or contact all of us have had on this topic. We know the unintended consequence of this law on the workplace is that people are now told whom they do not have to insure. State governments, community colleges, big companies all looking at a law for the first time that supposedly says whom you have to insure—though the President certainly feels he has the authority that none of us can find anywhere in the law to decide when the law is going to go into effect and when it is not—but the law says whom you have to insure, and suddenly people who for a long time have provided health care benefits because they thought it was the right thing to do or the competitive thing to do now respond to this directive from the Federal Government that says what you have to do, and that means that is all you have to do.

So all of these employees who may have worked 25 hours, 28 hours, 32 hours in the past who all got insurance now are suddenly working less than 30 hours. I have talked to enough of these employees to know this is not because they do not want to work more; this is not because they want to make less money; this is not because they want to teach one less class; it is because the law has had that kind of impact on the workplace.

The other promises—we are going to get better coverage for less cost—surely, somebody is getting better coverage for less cost. But my guess is that is a much smaller group than the people who are losing their insurance and because of the so-called broader and better coverage have more costs.

Here is a letter from Kathy in Wentzville, MO. She says:

> I carry insurance through a large corporation and my premium increased this year because the minimum standards [in the law] affect my plan.
>
> Premiums increased by 25 percent.

She goes on, in no uncertain terms, to suggest that she does not like the Affordable Care Act or think it is affordable.

Jeff from St. Joseph said:

> Thank you for the opportunity to share my family's opinion on ObamaCare. First off I would like to state that we have experienced increases in our health insurance. My employer's insurance has doubled of which I pay ½. My family's separate insurance policy has risen as well with a cancellation due in December. I have considered canceling my [own] health insurance through my employer so that I could provide for my family's [health insurance at their new rates].

This is a family that a few months ago thought they were going to be able to continue to keep what they had. They liked what they had. They thought they could afford what they had. Now they are deciding who is going to go without insurance so other people can have insurance in the family at the higher rate.

William from St. Louis, MO, says:

> My insurance was canceled in December.

He says:

> . . . my insurance rates have been drastically increasing each year since the law was passed.
>
> Four years ago, I had a policy for my family with a $500 deductible and the ability to go to any hospital/doctor in St. Louis for $1,000 per month. Now I have a policy with a $2,000 deductible and I can't go to [the doctor I used to go to].

He says his policy now—that does not allow him to go to the doctor he used to go to—does not cost $1,000 a month any longer; it costs $1,500 a month.

Ted in St. Joseph said his doctor has changed the way he does business. He says his doctor has downsized the types of plans he accepts and is moving to a customer base with higher incomes.

So Ted's doctor, according to Ted in St. Joseph, has stopped taking patients with Blue Cross/Blue Shield because of increased costs, and Ted, who by the way liked the doctor he had, now has to find another doctor who will take the coverage he can get.

Steve, in St. Joseph, and his wife are raising their 14-year-old grandson, and all three have seen their insurance costs increase—they think because of the Affordable Care Act. His grandson's policy went up $50 a month, from $104 to $154. His wife's deductible went from $1,000 per year to $5,000 per year and her insurance costs over $800 a month.

He goes on to say—and I thought about whether I should read this; I assume they have talked about this too. He said: ''If we were to get divorced, her premium would be less than $200 per month.'' I think Steve is not suggesting that he and his wife should get divorced, but he is just talking about, again, the unintended consequences. A family who is together cannot afford to have the coverage they had. Her coverage is $800 a month, but as a substitute teacher—I believe that is what this letter says she does—her income would qualify her for a $200-a-month policy instead of the $800 they are paying now.

Sandy from Armstrong, MO, says she received a letter from her insurance company notifying her that her premiums were about to increase. She went on healthcare.gov to find plans she and her husband could qualify for, and the plans she found were double the premiums she had been paying.

Kelly from Farmington, MO, works in the HR department, the human resources department, at a bank. She feels healthy groups will be paying more for insurance because of the ACA and because of the expanded coverage.

Her department has received many questions, she says, about health care coverage but feels limited in how much they can tell anybody because they do not know how the new law is going to apply.

The law of unintended consequences continues to be the law that applies here. Missourians and people all over the country are contacting us and asking how much damage we are willing to do to the health care system that was working to get more people included in that system. There were ways to do this, every one of which I believe was legislatively proposed in 2009—small changes that would have made a big difference in a health care system that was working for people who were in that system. We needed to figure out the few ways to get more people in that system. Instead, we have had a dramatic impact on the best health care system in the world, and people are beginning to figure that out.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of the House message with respect to S. 25, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 497, 498, 493, 494, 495, 496, 531, and 534; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the

RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual manner prior to each vote and all votes after the first be 10 minutes in length.

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

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 5 minutes.

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

VOTER SUPPRESSION

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, with what we went through in the State of Florida in the attempts to suppress voters, you would think that with the experience of people having stood in line in order to vote for 5 to 7 hours, it would have put this issue to rest. But they are back at it again, this time in a very subtle way.

The Governor's office, through his appointed secretary of state, who is the chief elections officer, has now interpreted a statute that in a municipal election students at the University of Florida cannot early vote on campus at their student center prior to the election. The interpretation was made that it is an educational facility and does not qualify, according to the statute, on a technical reason: that it is not a government-owned conference facility, when, indeed, it is owned by the State of Florida through the university, and it is a conference facility for many conferences for outside groups as well as student groups.

No, what it is is an attempt, in the runup to the November election, to try to make it more difficult and less convenient for students to vote.

As it turns out, in this particular municipal election coming up shortly, students would have to go across town to some other location some 3 miles away, and, of course, as busy as students are, that is going to discourage them.

If they end up doing this for this special election in March, a municipal election, they are, of course, going to try to do it for the November election when we have a statewide election for the Governor and the cabinet. Why? Well, an attempt to suppress student voters who may not be voting for the people in power who are trying to suppress their votes.

It is all the more of interest because on the ballot there will be a proposed constitutional amendment to change the State constitution to allow, by doctors, the prescription of medical marijuana, which is something that has generated interest in all sectors of society but particularly among students—another reason they want to come out to vote.

The whole idea of early voting is to try to make it more convenient for people to be able to vote, that they might not be able to vote because of a babysitter problem or a work problem on election day. But early voting, as we saw in the experience of the 2012 election—the days were shortened from 14 to 8. They cut out the Sunday before the Tuesday election. Professor Dan Smith, in doing a study at the University of Florida, found that those who availed themselves of Sunday voting were primarily Hispanics and African Americans. Indeed, attempts were made to limit the number of early voting locations within a county, and then, of those early vote locations, having a facility that was small so that you could not get in a lot of voting machines. This was another way—very subtle—of trying to suppress the vote.

So the people of Florida, naturally, were outraged, particularly when they heard stories of the 101-year-old lady who had to stay 3½ hours in order to cast her vote and the others who stayed 5 and 7 hours. They were not going to have their vote taken away from them. They stood in line. So the people were outraged.

There was an attempt to pass a new law. I will close with this. With this new law now as being interpreted, the very same suppression efforts are occurring again. We are simply not going to let this happen even if we have to call in the Justice Department.

MILITARY RETIREMENT COLA

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, while I will cast my vote this afternoon for the legislation which would replace the cost of living adjustment, COLA, reduction for military retirees, I disagree strongly with the provision to extend the arbitrary sequester cuts included with this legislation.

It is frustrating to me that Congress will fix one provision which unfairly singled out one group by singling out another.

I am pleased that we can fix the COLA adjustment that would have affected the men and women who serve in the military prior to it taking effect. However, I would have preferred that we find a responsible way to offset the cost by identifying savings elsewhere.

I joined Senator SHAHEEN and Senator KAINE in December in introducing legislation that identified a way to pay for this fix: our proposal would close a loophole that some companies use to avoid paying U.S. taxes. Our approach would generate $6.6 billion over 10 years to pay for the cost of un-doing the proposed cut in military pensions.

The extension of the sequester on mandatory spending for another year, which primarily hits Medicare providers such as hospitals with a two-percent across-the-board cut in payments, is a blunt and arbitrary way to find savings in Federal health care programs. It does not reward health care value, or support health care quality, nor differentiate among different geographic areas.

The across-the-board cut does nothing to reform the real long-term fiscal challenges facing our entitlement programs. Instead, it just compounds on the multitude of other cuts that hospitals and other providers are facing, creating a situation where access to care potentially will be threatened.

The vote before the Senate this afternoon shows yet again how we need to have a broader conversation on how to get a better handle on our long-term fiscal challenges. By ignoring that larger conversation, we instead are reduced to playing a game of Whac-A-Mole.

The provision which singled out military servicemembers and veterans was included in a bipartisan package which was the least we could do to ensure that we didn't repeat the stupidity of last fall's government shutdown. The overall package, the Bipartisan Budget Act, which I supported, did not touch the major levers available to fix our balance sheet. By common agreement, revenue and entitlement reforms were not part of the discussion.

This package fixed the arbitrary sequester cuts—though only on the discretionary side, and only for 2 years.

For the last 3 years, Congress—and both chambers, and both parties, bear some responsibility for this—have repeatedly taken the path of least resistance. All of us recognize that we have an enormous fiscal challenge, but there's not the collective will to make the hard decisions which will put us on a path of solvency.

Instead, we punt and we play on the margins. We continually make deep cuts in the type of programs that power economic growth—programs that train our workforce, educate our children, and support those who serve and protect our nation. We choose to put off the broader discussion about reforms which would be easier now—easier because they create a glide path toward enactment—allowing individuals, families, businesses and our state and local government partners to make responsible plans for future changes. We have avoided a conversation about our complex, bloated tax code, which promotes inefficiency and too often inhibits its economic growth. By putting off the hard choices, we allow these fiscal challenges to get worse. The choices do not get any easier.

Decisions like the vote before us today are incredibly frustrating. These decisions ask us to support the repeal of a provision, which hurt one specific group, by replacing it with another provision which just places the burden on a separate group. I believe that we can do better for our military personnel, for our Medicare providers, the patients who rely on them, and for our country overall. While I will cast my vote for this bill, I remain committed to finding a way to reverse the sequester cuts we have just extended through 2024.

• Mr. COBURN. Madam President, regardless of which side one falls on the Ryan-Murray budget deal reduction in the annual COLA increase for working

age military retirees, the sad fact is with the passage of this legislation we are breaking our previous promise to taxpayers to reduce the deficit. Instead of coming up with a real offset for a mere $6.2 billion in spending, the Senate has chosen to resort to budgetary gimmicks to disguise the true cost of our politically expedient decisions, and has yet again punted the hard decisions that must be made to future generations.

By offsetting real and immediate spending with a promise of future spending reductions with the extension of sequestration cuts to Medicare through 2024, beyond the 10-year budget window, the savings from this budget trick will not materialize and taxpayers will not be made whole. By passing this legislation, we are sending a signal that this body does not have the fortitude to lead as our constituents have chosen us to do—to take on the sacred cows like military compensation that must be part of the national conversation about our spending and reform.

As we prepare to pass this legislation, every Member of this body would do well to consider these words by former Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen: ''The most significant threat to our national security is our debt.'' We best honor the sacrifice of our military veterans and realize a more safe and secure future by keeping our promise to reduce the national debt. By refusing to come up with a real offset to pay for the repeal of the COLA cut, the Senate is undermining our veterans, our country, and our future.●

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

DEFICIT REDUCTION

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I rise today to talk for a short period of time about the magnitude of our budget, debt, and deficit. Against the backdrop of a debt ceiling increase, Members of both parties are going to today, likely, repeal one of the deficit reduction measures included in the bipartisan budget agreement that was approved less than 2 months ago. How do we convey to the Nation the seriousness about solving the debt crisis when at the first sign of political pressure we repeal one of the deficit reduction measures?

As we all know, the Ryan-Murray budget deal included modest reductions in some spending programs over the next 10 years in order to increase discretionary spending caps in fiscal years 2014 and 2015. I voted against this agreement because I thought the spending cuts did not go far enough. I do not think we are treating our debt and deficit seriously enough.

Second, I have been down that road of trading spending increases today for spending cuts later many times. It does not work. We have seen that play before. We know how it ends. Year after year Members of Congress simply refuse to stick to the budget discipline we said we would stick to. Exhibit 1 is before us today. The Congress is about to undo—in fact, repeal—one of those provisions, as I mentioned.

It is important to note that the cost-of-living adjustment that will be repealed—or the reform that will be repealed was a cost-of-living adjustment—a COLA—for military retirees resulting in less than a 1-percent reduction for working-age military retirees. That is 1 percent. It stopped far short of the elimination of COLA requirements for retirees under the age of 62 that the Simpson-Bowles Commission recommended.

Certainly our veterans deserve the utmost respect and generous retirement pay. However, it has been reported that regardless of age, members of our armed services could easily, in some instances, receive retirement and health benefits for 40 years or more.

Some of my colleagues have suggested that failing to support measures to repeal the COLA reduction is tantamount to turning our backs on veterans. This is untrue. This is a mischaracterization of the issue at hand. I think we all know that. The U.S. military is at a crossroads. Fast-growing retirement pay and health benefits are threatening to displace investments in the readiness of our Armed Forces.

I encourage my colleagues to take a hard look at the fiscal mess we face before we vote to roll back one of the few deficit reduction measures the President and Congress have agreed to. Our fiscal situation is serious. We cannot ignore that forever.

This problem will continue to get worse. Yes, we ought to be reforming entitlement programs so they will be around for future beneficiaries, veterans and others, but for goodness' sake, when deficit reduction measures get signed into law, surely at some point we need to stand by them.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TEMPORARY DEBT LIMIT EXTENSION ACT

Mr. REID. I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate a message from the House with respect to S. 540.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate a message from the House which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

S. 540

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 540) entitled ''An Act to designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the 'Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center'.'', do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Temporary Debt Limit Extension Act''.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PUBLIC DEBT LIMIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall not apply for the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on March 15, 2015.

(b) SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO OBLIGATIONS ISSUED DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.—Effective March 16, 2015, the limitation in effect under section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall be increased to the extent that—

(1) the face amount of obligations issued under chapter 31 of such title and the face amount of obligations whose principal and interest are guaranteed by the United States Government (except guaranteed obligations held by the Secretary of the Treasury) outstanding on March 16, 2015, exceeds

(2) the face amount of such obligations outstanding on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. RESTORING CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONAL DEBT.

(a) EXTENSION LIMITED TO NECESSARY OBLIGATIONS.—An obligation shall not be taken into account under section 2(b)(1) unless the issuance of such obligation was necessary to fund a commitment incurred pursuant to law by the Federal Government that required payment before March 16, 2015.

(b) PROHIBITION ON CREATION OF CASH RESERVE DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall not issue obligations during the period specified in section 2(a) for the purpose of increasing the cash balance above normal operating balances in anticipation of the expiration of such period.

Mr. REID. I move to concur in the House amendment, and I have a cloture motion at the desk.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Debbie Stabenow, Elizabeth Warren.

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

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Debbie Stabenow, Elizabeth Warren.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540 shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 67, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 33 Leg.]

YEAS—67

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

NAYS—31

Alexander	Graham	Risch
Ayotte	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Heller	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Scott
Burr	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Paul	
Fischer	Portman	

NOT VOTING—2

Chambliss	Coburn

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the ayes are 67, the nays are 31. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

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

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 34 Leg.]

YEAS—55

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

NAYS—43

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

NOT VOTING—2

Chambliss	Coburn

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. The next vote will be the last rollcall vote in this series. The next vote after this vote—other than these we are going to try to do by consent—will be a week from Monday at 5:30. I wish you all well in your airplane rides today.

CONVEYING CERTAIN FEDERAL FEATURES OF THE ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate a message from the House with respect to S. 25, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

S. 25

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 25) entitled ''An Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal features of the electric distribution system to the South Utah Valley Electric Service District, and for other purposes.'', do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.

Paragraph (6)(B) of section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) is amended by striking ''and for fiscal year 2023'' and by inserting '', for fiscal year 2023, and for fiscal year 2024''.

SEC. 2. INAPPLICABILITY OF REDUCED ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF RETIRED PAY FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES UNDER THE AGE OF 62 UNDER THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 WHO FIRST BECAME MEMBERS PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2014.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1401a(b)(4) of title 10, United States Code, as added by section 403(a) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113–67) and amended by section 10001 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113–76), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(G) MEMBERS COVERED.—This paragraph applies to a member or former member of an armed force who first became a member of a uniformed service on or after January 1, 2014.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on December 1, 2015, immediately after the coming into effect of section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and the amendments made by that section.

SEC. 3. TRANSITIONAL FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE (SGR) REFORM.

Section 1898 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii) is amended—

(1) by amending the heading to read as follows: ''TRANSITIONAL FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE (SGR) REFORM'';

(2) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish under this title a Transitional Fund for Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) Reform (in this section referred to as the 'Fund') which shall be available to the Secretary to provide funds to pay for physicians' services under part B to supplement the conversion factor under section 1848(d) for 2017 if the conversion factor for 2017 is less than conversion factor for 2013.'';

(3) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''during—'' and all that follows and inserting ''during or after 2017, $2,300,000,000.''; and

(4) in subsection (b)(2), by striking ''from the Federal'' and all that follows and inserting ''from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund.''.

Mr. REID. I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 25 and ask for the yeas and nays on that motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

Mr. REID. We yield back on this side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

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

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 35 Leg.]

YEAS—95

Alexander	Bennet	Boxer
Ayotte	Blumenthal	Brown
Baldwin	Blunt	Burr
Barrasso	Booker	Cantwell
Begich	Boozman	Cardin

Casey	Johanns	Reed
Cochran	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Risch
Coons	Kaine	Roberts
Corker	King	Rockefeller
Cornyn	Kirk	Rubio
Crapo	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cruz	Landrieu	Schatz
Donnelly	Leahy	Schumer
Durbin	Lee	Scott
Enzi	Levin	Sessions
Feinstein	Manchin	Shaheen
Fischer	Markey	Shelby
Franken	McCain	Stabenow
Gillibrand	McCaskill	Tester
Graham	McConnell	Thune
Grassley	Menendez	Toomey
Hagan	Merkley	Udall (CO)
Harkin	Mikulski	Udall (NM)
Hatch	Moran	Vitter
Heinrich	Murkowski	Walsh
Heitkamp	Murphy	Warner
Heller	Murray	Warren
Hirono	Nelson	Whitehouse
Hoeven	Paul	Wicker
Inhofe	Portman	Wyden
Isakson	Pryor	

NAYS—3

Carper	Coats	Flake

NOT VOTING—2

Chambliss	Coburn

The motion was agreed to.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF KEVIN W. TECHAU TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA

NOMINATION OF ANDREW MARK LUGER TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

NOMINATION OF ROBERT L. HOBBS TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

NOMINATION OF GARY BLANKINSHIP TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

NOMINATION OF AMOS ROJAS, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

NOMINATION OF PETER C. TOBIN TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

NOMINATION OF ANTHONY LUZZATTO GARDNER TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

NOMINATION OF ROBERT A. SHERMAN TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC

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 legislative clerk reported the nominations of Kevin W. Techau, of Iowa, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa; Andrew Mark Luger, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota; Robert L. Hobbs, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Texas; Gary Blankinship, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Texas; Amos Rojas, Jr., of Florida, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Florida; Peter C. Tobin, of Ohio, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio; Anthony Luzzatto Gardner, of New York, to be Representative of the United States of America to the European Union; and Robert A. Sherman, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Portuguese Republic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, at the conclusion of the vote, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Minnesota be recognized for up to 1 minute, the Senator from Georgia up to 7 minutes, the senior Senator from Rhode Island for up to 2 minutes, and that I be recognized thereafter, subject to the majority leader.

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

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Kevin Techau on his nomination as the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa.

U.S. attorneys hold a very important position in our system of justice. They are charged with upholding the law and, consequently, must possess impeccable legal skills and superior knowledge. Additionally, it is just as important that U.S. attorneys be committed to justice, fairness, due process and equal protection. I am confident that Mr. Techau understands the importance of the job he is about to undertake and has the skills, perseverance, and sense of justice necessary to make the most of his new position.

There is no question that Mr. Techau is highly qualified to be a U.S. attorney. He gained extensive law enforcement and managerial experience as head of Iowa's Department of Public Safety and Department of Inspections and Appeals under then Governor Tom Vilsack. He also has broad criminal justice and trial experience, including as an assistant Federal public defender in Iowa, as a staff judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force and Iowa National Guard, and in private practice. That experience will serve him well in his new position.

Mr. Techau has also demonstrated over the course of his career his commitment to public service, strong leadership, excellent judgment, and integrity. He will vigorously and fairly enforce the law, and I am certain that Mr. Techau will continue his dedication to justice.

Mr. Techau is a person of truly outstanding intellect and character, and I wholeheartedly congratulate him—as well as his wife, Stephanie, and two children—on his nomination as the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to share a few words of support of Kevin Techau to be U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa. Mr. Techau received his undergraduate degree from the University of Iowa in 1981, and his J.D. from the University of Iowa in 1984. Mr. Techau also has a distinguished military career. He served in the U.S. Air Force as a judge advocate from 1985 until 1992. While serving in the base legal office he provided legal counsel on a broad array of issues, including Federal laws, employment law, medical malpractice claims and criminal prosecution.

As a circuit defense counsel, he served as lead attorney in major felony cases in European and eastern United States circuits representing U.S. Air Force airmen in court-martial cases involving charges brought under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Mr. Techau joined the Iowa National Guard in 1993 and served until 2011.

In 1992, Mr. Techau joined the firm of Grefe & Sidney in Des Moines, IA. As an associate attorney, the primary focus of his practice was in civil litigation. From 1996 until 1999, Mr. Techau served as a Federal public defender for Iowa. His practice as a public defender was both at the trial and appellate level, and he has tried cases in the U.S. Federal Courts for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa and the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Techau was appointed to the position of director of inspections and appeals for Iowa in 1999, and in 2002 was appointed as commissioner of public safety for Iowa.

Since 2007, he has been associate general counsel at American Equity Investment Life Insurance Company. There he handles litigation management for the company. Throughout his career, Mr. Techau has demonstrated

his commitment to serving the people of Iowa and the United States.

Finally, let me just add that I have known the Techau family for decades and I know Mr. Techau personally. He has even been a running partner of mine from time to time. He is a man of fine character and commitment. I believe he will serve as U.S. attorney with distinction and honor. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Kevin W. Techau, of Iowa, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON LUGER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota is now recognized for 1 minute.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise in support of Andrew Luger. I thank my colleagues for the work they have done to make sure Minnesota has a U.S. attorney in place. I want to particularly thank Leader REID and Senator MCCONNELL, the two leaders, for their work, as well as Senator FRANKEN. The two of us put together a nonpartisan recommendation coming from the committee, and we are very glad the President took that recommendation and recommended Andrew Luger, with his vast criminal prosecution experience as well as his civil experience.

I also thank Senator GRASSLEY for his work as well as Senator CORKER. Minnesota has gone 2½ years without a full-time U.S. attorney, as our U.S. attorney was doing the job as ATF Director at the same time, and the over 100 people who work at the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota truly deserve a leader.

I thank my colleagues for their support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Andrew Mark Luger, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HOBBS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Robert L. Hobbs, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Texas?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BLANKINSHIP NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Gary Blankinship, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Texas?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON ROJAS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Amos Rojas, Jr., of Florida, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Florida?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON TOBIN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Peter C. Tobin, of Ohio, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will now be notified of the Senate's action.

The motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that S. 1963 be returned to the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, two nominations remain to be disposed of.

Mr. REID. Are we in executive session?

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume executive session.

VOTE ON GARDNER NOMINATION

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Anthony Luzzatto Gardner, of New York, to be Representative of the United States of America to the European Union?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SHERMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Robert A. Sherman, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Portuguese Republic?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. As with the previous nominations, 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. The Senate now resumes legislative action.

The majority leader.

MEASURE RETURNED TO THE CALENDAR—S. 1963

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that S. 1963 be returned to the calendar.

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

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to calendar No. 301, S. 1982.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 301, S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, as we leave Washington for about 10 days, I wish to leave some suggestions in President Obama's suggestion box.

There has been a lot of commentary about income inequality, needing to raise the minimum wage, needing to create more jobs, and the President talked about doing these things with the stroke of a pen in his office because of an uncooperative legislative branch. I want to suggest four things the President himself could do to immediately initiate job creation, opportunity, and a more robust economy for the United States of America.

First, trade promotion authority. The President said in his remarks in his State of the Union speech he was for trade promotion authority. We need him to get with the Democratic majority in the Senate to bring TPA to the floor of the Senate.

A history lesson: In the 1990s, a Republican Congress gave Democratic President Bill Clinton trade promotion authority for fast track. America's exports and imports grew exponentially, jobs were created, and America became a robust trading partner around the world with countries all over the world. That has expired. We need to give it to President Obama.

We have three pending opportunities: The Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and the African Growth and Opportunity Act, all of which are pending negotiations between now and 2015, and all of which will generate jobs, trade, and opportunity for the United States of America.

Please, Mr. President, demand from the Senate that you get TPA and you get it now.

Secondly is Keystone. We have all heard a lot about Keystone, but I want to reiterate, now that the State Department has for the fifth time signed off on the Keystone Pipeline, why are we denying America the oil and petroleum it needs and instead acceding ourselves to the nation of China?

America has the opportunity to become the most independent energy

country in the world. It is critical the Keystone Pipeline be built to create jobs and to see that we continue to control the generation of petroleum and energy in our country and become a net seller rather than a gross importer, which we have been for many years in the past.

The Keystone Pipeline makes sense for the unions, makes sense for business, makes sense to America, and America does a better job environmentally of treating petroleum and refining it than any country in the world, particularly China. It ought to come to America, and the President can do that with the stroke of a pen.

Third, GSE reform. Our government-sponsored entities Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae continue to do business, but they languish from a lack of attention. We need to reform those two entities so we can have a robust housing market for a middle America.

If you have enough money to pay cash for a house in America today, you can do that. If you are on the low end and want an FHA loan, you can get that. But if you are in middle America—if you are one of those Americans we all talk about wanting to help—there is not enough mortgage money available because there is no government-sponsored entity to guarantee the paper to guarantee the capital to flow into America.

If you want to get the unemployment rate down from 6.4 to 5 percent, which all of us want, there is one way to do it; that is, bring back a robust housing market, which still does not exist in the United States today.

Fourth, talk to PATTY MURRAY and TOM HARKIN. TOM HARKIN is the chairman of our Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. PATTY MURRAY is the chairman of the subcommittee I serve on in terms of labor, and let's get the Workforce Investment Act, which for 6 years has languished in terms of continuation and renewal, renewed and reauthorized. Let's get it done. The work is done. We are this close. We just need an impetus from the White House to tell the Congress to go ahead and get it done and send it.

I appreciate what the President said he is going to do with JOE BIDEN. I think JOE BIDEN is a tremendous Vice President and he does a great job, but we don't need to recreate the wheel. Congress has done the work on WIA. It is time to pass it and it is time for the President to sign it.

TRIBUTE TO BOBBY COX

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a great Georgian, a personal friend of mine, and a great baseball player in the history of our country: Bobby Cox, No. 6, former third baseman for the New York Yankees, third baseman for the Atlanta Braves, manager of Toronto's Blue Jays when they won a World Series, and for 14 consecutive seasons he took the Atlanta Braves to a playoff. Five of those seasons he took them to the National League Championship and one of those seasons he took them to win the World Series against the Cleveland Indians.

Bobby Cox was voted into Baseball's Hall of Fame and will be sworn in at Cooperstown, NY, on June 27 of this year. Bobby Cox is an icon in baseball and a greet human being. He set many records, such as the following: 2,085 victories with the Atlanta Braves, best in Braves history; overall record of 2,413 wins and 1,930 losses. The Braves won more games with Cox, 1,725 in a 19-season span, than any other team in baseball; 15 divisional crowns, 5 pennants, and he holds the record for the most ejections of any manager in the history of baseball.

The reason that is a positive story is this: Bobby Cox fought for his players. He knew how to motivate a crowd, he knew how to get on an umpire's back, and he knew how to turn the team bench around. His 132nd ejection took place in November of 2007 during one of the playoff games when he went out and argued a third called strike against his star player Chipper Jones. Two innings later the Braves came back and rallied and won. In large measure, it was Bobby's fighting for his players that made the difference.

But Bobby Cox also fights for Georgia. His work with the Dreams of Recovery Foundation, which Cindy Donald founded for those who are paraplegic and quadriplegic in Georgia, has been a miracle. Bobby gives his time and effort all the time to help those who are less fortunate.

He also continues to help the Atlanta Braves, who will soon be moving from downtown Atlanta to my home county of Cobb County, in Marietta, GA.

I pay tribute and give thanks to Bobby Cox for all he has given to our State and recognize him for the achievement of being sworn into Baseball's Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Best of luck, Bobby, for many more years to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, I wish to thank my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE for yielding me 2 minutes.

We are leaving here with major unfinished business. We have not extended unemployment benefits for 1.8 million Americans. They are getting to be increasingly desperate. They need this assistance as they continue to look for work in a very difficult time.

I think it is interesting, if not ironic, that the pay-for mechanism that was instead used to pay for the appropriate adjustment of the military retirees' COLA was the same pay-for mechanism we had proposed to use to extend these benefits for up to several months, almost 1 year. Yet many of my colleagues on the other side rejected that, saying that was inappropriate.

We have to come back. We will come back. We have to deal with unemployment insurance. We have to find a way, both sides, to come together and find a way to provide modest assistance for these Americans who are struggling to find work in a market where there are up to three applicants for every job.

With that, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator BOOZMAN precede me in recognition on the floor for such time as he may consume.

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

The Senator from Arkansas.

RESTORING THE MILITARY COLA

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, in last year's budget agreement our retired servicemembers were unjustly targeted to bear the burden of irresponsible spending. Balancing the budget on the backs of our servicemembers is a reckless move which violates the responsibility we have to those who wear our Nation's uniform, which is why I voted against the budget agreement.

Numerous Arkansans have reached out to me urging Congress to correct these misguided cuts. I have been encouraging my colleagues to restore these cuts at the earliest opportunity in order to provide certainty for our military retirees' financial future. I, working with others in this body, have worked hard to bring this to a vote.

Yesterday, the House took action. I am pleased to be able to stand here today and tell those Arkansans and all veterans that the Senate has followed suit and corrected this injustice.

However, we must continue working to fully repeal the section of the Bipartisan Budget Act which reduces retirement pay for those who enlist after January 1, 2014. Any changes which Congress may consider to our military compensation system should be done in a thoughtful and responsible manner in the context of a broader compensation system.

I supported this bill before the Senate today to restore the full cost of living adjustment for those enlisted prior to 2014, but I will continue working to fully repeal this cut which singles out current military enlistments to bear the burden of wasteful Washington spending. We need to right this wrong so our veterans, servicemembers, and their families have one less thing to worry about. However, this overwhelmingly bipartisan vote today was certainly a step in the right direction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this marks the 58th consecutive week we have been in session where I have

come to the floor to seek to wake up this Congress to the threat of climate change.

Carbon pollution from the burning of fossil fuels is altering the climate. The consensus around this fact within the scientific community—and in fact the reality-based community—is overwhelming.

Since the industrial revolution, humans have dumped 2 trillion metric tons of carbon dioxide into the air and oceans—and counting. The EPA estimates that in 2011, the United States alone emitted more than 5.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide.

We know the concentration of carbon in the atmosphere is higher than it has been in the history of mankind. We know that when we put more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, it warms up the planet. This has been understood science since Abraham Lincoln was President.

We know the ocean absorbs 90 percent of the excess heat and 30 percent of the carbon in the air. As water warms, it expands, and sea levels go up. This is called the law of thermal expansion. We know that when carbon dissolves in water, it increases the levels of carbonic acid in the water. This is a law of chemistry. We know from simple measurements that seawater is acidifying at a rate we haven't seen at any time in the past 50 million years. We are a species of homo sapiens who have been on the planet for a little over 200,000. So 50 million takes us back a way.

When we put these things together, and then look at things like 37 straight years with a global temperature above the 20th century average, sea level up 10 inches in Newport, RI, oyster spat killed off by acidic water in Washington State, shorter seasons for ski resort operators and longer seasons for wildfire fighters, our climate is changing. The scientific debate is long settled, and public awareness of the crisis is growing stronger and even across party lines.

Outside these walls of Congress, which have been barricaded by lies and special interest propaganda, Americans of all stripes, including more and more responsible Republican voices, acknowledge the threat of climate change and call for responsible solutions. Yet Congress remains trapped behind a barricade of polluting special interest influence. Republicans in Congress refuse to get serious.

It wasn't always this way. Conservation of this land's natural resources used to be a core value of the Republican party, and protecting future generations' natural birthright from plundering by special-interest industry was a cornerstone of Republican leadership. This month actually marks the anniversary of a milestone in that kind of American leadership.

On February 1, 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt established the U.S. Forest Service. Fed up with the cronyism and bureaucracy that defined the weak existing conservation programs, he dissolved the Bureau of Forestry within the Department of Agriculture and transferred management of the 63 million acres of national forests under the Department of the Interior to the new Forest Service.

Roosevelt resented the ''malefactors of great wealth,'' as he called them, the timber and mining interests whose ''selfish and shortsighted greed,'' he called it, ''seeks to exploit [our natural resources] in such fashion as to ruin them, and thereby to leave our children and our children's children heirs only to an exhausted and impoverished inheritance.''

Roosevelt not only knew how to say the right thing, he knew how to say it well.

Pictured here is Teddy Roosevelt looking across the vast expanse of Mogollon Rim in Arizona, one of the many forests transferred to the newly created Forest Service. With the President is Gifford Pinchot, a prime advocate of the Forest Service. As its first Chief, Pinchot restructured and professionalized the management of the national forests. During Roosevelt's Presidency, the Federal forest system grew by nearly 130 million acres. In total, he extended protection to an additional 230 million acres of our Nation's land.

Roosevelt said:

> We have become great in a material sense because of the lavish use of our resources, and we have just reason to be proud of our growth. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils shall have been still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers.

Today, some of these long-cherished American forests, grasslands, and landscapes are under assault due to climate change.

In July 2010, the Forest Service issued its ''National Roadmap for Responding to Climate Change.'' Specifically, the Forest Service report says:

> Most of the urgent forest and grassland management challenges of the past 20 years, such as wildfires, changing water regimes, and expanding forest insect infestations, have been driven, in part, by a changing climate. Future impacts are projected to be even more severe.

Our Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change, which I chair with Congressman WAXMAN, hosted a roundtable of firefighters and State and Federal foresters. Here is what Dave Cleaves, the Forest Service's Climate Change Advisor, told us:

> So what have we been seeing? . . . The length of the fire season increasing by more than 60 days over the last 10 years, the annual area burned by wildfire increasing more than four times what it was in the 1970s; the portion of the area burned by large fires has gone up two to seven times, so most of that increase in acreage has been because of the large fires, and the extreme part of the distribution of fires.
>
> . . . So we have a big issue on our hands, it's an ecological issue, it's an economic issue, it's a social issue, and dealing with it means we have to understand it better and understand some of the related challenges.

Shown here is the devastation from the largest rim fire in the Sierra Nevada range in recorded history. The healthy forest is shown 2 years prior to the fire on the left, while monitoring right before the fire showed a sudden decline in the health of the forest caused by the western pine beetle killing ponderosa pine and making the forest vulnerable to burning. This is a beetle that is killed off by cold weather. So where it can infest forests is limited by cold weather and altitude, of course, because it gets colder at higher altitudes.

With climate change, the territory of the infestation has expanded, and we see this change from a healthy forest to this. When it turns to this, it can burn. On the right we see the charred and unrecognizable landscape. Although we cannot definitively attribute any single fire to climate change, according to a 2012 comprehensive science report for the U.S. forest sector, increased temperature and drought can increase frequency and magnitude of fires and amplify insect and pathogen outbreaks which affect forest health. For example, Montana's deep freezes used to kill off the pine bark beetle. Today, that beetle kills millions of acres of trees across the American West.

President Roosevelt issued a warning a century ago:

> One distinguishing characteristic of really civilized men is foresight. We have to, as a nation, exercise foresight for this nation in the future; and if we do not exercise that foresight, dark will be the future.

Have we heeded Roosevelt's warning? We can clearly foresee the devastation climate change will bring. Yet many modern Republicans, particularly those in Congress, are aligning themselves with the polluters and deniers to manufacture doubt about the science and fight any limits on greenhouse gas emissions.

Roosevelt, a Republican, had foresight to protect the natural resources we relay on, but his once great party has lost track of his ideals. Democrats and Republicans should be working with President Obama to implement his climate action plan to reduce carbon pollution. But when the Environment and Public Works Committee recently held an oversight hearing on the President's plan, what did we get from our Republican colleagues? Flat-out climate denial—the polluter party line.

Theodore Roosevelt, the great Republican conservationist, stood up to polluting special interests. He was, in the name of the recent book, ''The Wilderness Warrior.''

Today, too many Republicans in Congress have joined polluting corporate special interests in their war on the wilderness. Perhaps they should listen to another Roosevelt. Theodore Roosevelt IV is the great-grandson of the 26th President, and he is still a Republican. He wants his fellow Republicans

to return to the values of his great-grandfather.

It seems to be beyond the scope of many on the right to say, for instance, that species extinction, as a result of unrestrained human activity, is immoral and indefensible; that our refusal to seriously engage in a global effort to address climate change is unethical and imprudent.

There are such clear warnings. The facts speak for themselves. The denial position has shown itself to be nonsense, a sham. Yet in Congress we sleepwalk on. Every day more and more Americans realize the truth, and they increasingly want this Congress to wake up. They know that climate change is real.

It is time to wake up and to do the work necessary to combat climate change. It is time for us to heed the words of President Theodore Roosevelt:

Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance.

Let us wake up.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 564, 570, 566, and 567—these are district court judges for the District of Connecticut, the Eastern District of Arkansas, the Northern District of California, and the Northern District of California—that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; 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 any of the nominations; that any related statements 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?

The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, as everyone knows, last year our friends on the other side of the aisle invoked the so-called nuclear option. The stated reason was to strip the minority of any ability to stop any executive or judicial nominees on the floor. But, in fact, prior to the President's attempt to fill up the DC Circuit Court with judges they didn't need, the Senate actually had a very good record of confirming the President's judicial nominees, 215 to 2.

Now the majority leader would like to short-circuit the process which was put in place as a result of the nuclear option and seek to get confirmation of these judicial nominees by unanimous consent. My hope would be that the majority leader would choose to reverse the partisan rules change so we can go back to the bipartisan cooperative process which resulted in more than 200 Obama judges being confirmed.

Absent that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate my friend's understanding of what has happened, and we will have further conversations about this.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JEFFREY ALKER MEYER TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 564.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

Harry Reid, Sherrod Brown, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher Murphy, Robert Menendez, Christopher A. Coons, Angus S. King, Jr., Martin Heinrich, Amy Klobuchar, Dianne Feinstein, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Bernard Sanders, Barbara Boxer, Brian Schatz, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Benjamin L. Cardin, Michael F. Bennet.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The question is on the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JAMES MAXWELL MOODY, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 570.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JAMES DONATO TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 566.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Nomination of James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to executive session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

NOMINATION OF BETH LABSON FREEMAN TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 567.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

The motion was agreed to.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. REID. Is the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301, S. 1982, now pending?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed is pending.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301, S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act.

Harry Reid, Bernard Sanders, Tom Harkin, Brian Schatz, Mary L. Landrieu, Jack Reed, Jeanne Shaheen, Tim Kaine, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Joe Donnelly, Jon Tester, Barbara Boxer, Richard Blumenthal, Sherrod Brown, Barbara A. Mikulski.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived and that the cloture vote on the motion to proceed occur following the disposition of the Freeman nomination and the resumption of legislative session.

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

Mr. REID. 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. 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 1 year ago today, the Senate came together in the best tradition of the Chamber to pass the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, including the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, with a strong bipartisan vote. It marked the culmination of years of collaboration with survivors and the victim services professionals who work with them every day. It also marked an historic step to protect all victims, regardless of their immigration status, their sexual orientation or their membership in an Indian tribe. As I have said countless times on the floor of this Chamber, ''a victim is a victim is a victim,'' and the bill the Senate passed 1 year ago today was a reflection of that truth.

In passing this historic VAWA reauthorization, the Senate showed that we still can act in a bipartisan way and put crime victims above politics. Senators CRAPO and MURKOWSKI were steadfast partners in that effort and listened to the call from thousands of survivors of violence and law enforcement by supporting a fully-inclusive, lifesaving bill.

In the year since its passage, the important changes we made to the Violence Against Women Act have made lives better. The new nondiscrimination provisions included in the law are ensuring that all victims, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, have access to lifesaving programs and cannot be turned away. I was discouraged by the opposition of some to these inclusive provisions last year, especially when the research so clearly underscored the need to update the law to protect the most vulnerable populations. I am proud, however, that after all was said and done, we stayed true to our core value of equal protection and these provisions were enacted.

We also made vital improvements to the law to address the epidemic of violence against Native women. Three out of five Native women have been assaulted by their spouses or intimate partners. On some reservations, Native American women are murdered at a rate more than 10 times the national average. Think about those statistics for a minute. They are chilling. Native women are being brutalized and killed at rates that shock the conscience. We simply could not continue to ignore

this ongoing and devastating violence, and I am proud that as a country we said ''enough.''

A key provision in the Leahy-Crapo bill, now law, recognizes tribes' special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction to prosecute non-Indian offenders who commit acts of domestic violence against an Indian on tribal land. This provision also faced strong opposition by some but we held firm in the belief that a tribal government should be able to hold accountable those who commit these heinous crimes against its people on its land. I was so proud when voices from around the country—Indian and non-Indian—joined our message that this was a VAWA to protect all victims and refused to give in. With their unified support, we beat back efforts to strip out this critical provision. That is why I was particularly pleased to see the launch of the new pilot project last week in which three tribes—the Umatilla, the Pascua Yaqui, and the Tulalip—will begin to exercise this authority we fought so hard to protect. I ask unanimous consent that a recent Washington Post article highlighting this project be printed in the RECORD.

Other key provisions of the new law include funding to help law enforcement and victim service providers reduce domestic violence homicides, including in my home State of Vermont. It is leading to more investigation and prosecution of rape and sexual assault crimes and a greater focus on these issues on college campuses. It is also helping eliminate backlogs of untested rape kits to help those victims receive justice and security promptly.

Unfortunately, one provision that was not included in the final VAWA bill was a modest increase in the number of U visas available to immigrant victims of domestic violence and other crimes. These visas are an important law enforcement tool that encourages immigrant victims to report crime, making us all safer. I reluctantly agreed to remove this provision and instead ensured its inclusion in the comprehensive immigration reform bill the Senate passed last year. As the House considers ways to move on that important issue, I urge them to include an increase in U visas so that all victims of domestic violence will be protected.

The Violence Against Women Act is an example of how the Federal Government, in cooperation with State and local communities, can help solve problems. By providing new tools and resources to communities all around the country, we have helped bring the crimes of rape and domestic violence out of the shadows. There is much we can learn from that effort as we consider legislation that should similarly rise above politics.

After the Senate passed the bill last year, I mentioned a tragic incident that had just occurred. A man shot and killed two women waiting to pass through metal detectors at a courthouse, where he was stalking another victim. Two male police officers also were struck by bullets but were saved by their bulletproof vests. At that time, I urged this body to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program so that more of our law enforcement officials can be protected. Sadly, a year later, that effort remains incomplete.

Before I came to the Senate, I spent years in local law enforcement and have great respect for the men and women who protect us every day. When I hear Senators say that we should not provide Federal assistance, we should not help officers get the protection they need with bulletproof vests, or that we should not help the families of fallen public safety officers, I strongly disagree.

In our Federal system, we can help and when we can, we should help. That is what programs like the Violence Against Women Act are all about. Despite our different political perspectives, most of us came to the Senate with the goal of helping people. We must be able to find common ground to do that. I hope that this body can again come together to protect the American people and support law enforcement like we did 1 year ago today when we passed the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

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

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 8, 2014]

NEW LAW OFFERS PROTECTION TO ABUSED NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN

(By Sari Horwitz)

WHITE EARTH NATION, MINN.—Linda Davidson. Lisa Brunner remembers the first time she saw her stepfather beat her mother. She was 4 years old, cowering under the table here on the Ojibwe reservation, when her stepfather grabbed his shotgun from the rack. She heard her mother scream, ''No, David! No!''

''He starts beating my mother over the head and I could hear the sickening thud of the butt of the shotgun over her head,'' Brunner said. ''Then he put the gun back on the rack and called her a bitch. He slammed the bedroom door and sat down on the squeaky bed. And then I heard the thud-thud of his cowboy boots as he laid down, squeaking again, and he went to sleep.''

There were many more beatings over the years, Brunner said. Twenty years later, she said, she was brutally assaulted by her own husband on this same Indian reservation, an enormous swath of Minnesota prairie that has seen its share of sorrow for generations.

An estimated one in three Native American women are assaulted or raped in their lifetimes, and three out of five experience domestic violence. But in the cases of Brunner and her mother, the assailants were white, not Native American, and that would turn out to make all the difference.

Lisa Brunner of the Ojibwe tribe in Minnesota speaks on the cycle of sexual violence Native American women, including herself, have faced.

For decades, when a Native American woman has been assaulted or raped by a man who is non-Indian, she has had little or no recourse. Under long-standing law in Indian country, reservations are sovereign nations with their own police departments and courts in charge of prosecuting crimes on tribal land. But Indian police have lacked the legal authority to arrest non-Indian men who commit acts of domestic violence against native women on reservations, and tribal courts have lacked the authority to prosecute the men.

President Obama, joined by Vice President Biden, members of women's organizations, law enforcement officials, tribal leaders, survivors, advocates and members of Congress, signs the Violence Against Women Act in March.

Last year, Congress approved a law—promoted by the Obama administration—that for the first time will allow Indian tribes to prosecute certain crimes of domestic violence committed by non-Indians in Indian country. The Justice Department on Thursday announced it had chosen three tribes for a pilot project to assert the new authority.

While the law has been praised by tribal leaders, native women and the administration as a significant first step, it still falls short of protecting all Indian women from the epidemic of violence they face on tribal lands.

The new authority, which will not go into effect for most of the country's 566 federally recognized Indian tribes until March 2015, covers domestic violence committed by non-Indian husbands and boyfriends, but it does not cover sexual assault or rape committed by non-Indians who are ''strangers'' to their victims. It also does not extend to native women in Alaska.

Proponents of the law acknowledge that it was drawn narrowly to win support in Congress, particularly from Republican lawmakers who argued that non-native suspects would not receive a fair trial in the tribal justice system.

For their part, native women say they have long been ill-served by state and federal law. U.S. attorneys, who already have large caseloads, are often hundreds of miles away from rural reservations. It can take hours or days for them to respond to allegations, if they respond at all, tribal leaders say. Native women also have to navigate a complex maze of legal jurisdictions.

''There are tribal communities where state police have no jurisdiction and federal law enforcement has jurisdiction but is distant and often unable to respond,'' said Thomas J. Perrelli, a former associate attorney general who was one of the administration's chief proponents of the amendment. ''There are tribal communities where the federal government has no jurisdiction but state law enforcement, which has jurisdiction, does not intervene. And there are still other tribal lands where there is a dispute about who, if anyone, has jurisdiction. All of this has led to an inadequate response to the plight of many Native American women.''

More than 75 percent of residents on Indian reservations in the United States are non-Indians. In at least 86 percent of the reported cases of rape or sexual assault of American Indian and Alaska native women, both on and off reservations, the victims say their attackers were non-native men, according to the Justice Department.

'NOT ENROLLED'

The loophole in the American Indian justice system that effectively provides immunity to non-Indians is the story of a patchwork of laws, treaties and Supreme Court decisions over generations.

At the root of the confusion about Indian jurisdiction is the historical tension over Indian land. As American settlers pushed Native Americans off their tribal lands and then renegotiated treaties to guarantee tribes a homeland, large areas of the reservations were opened for white families to homestead.

That migration led to the modern-day reservation, where Indians and non-Indians often live side by side, one farm or ranch home belonging to a white family, the next one belonging to an Indian family. It is a recipe for conflict over who is in charge and who has legal jurisdiction over certain crimes.

''The public safety issues in Indian country are so complicated,'' said Deputy Associate Attorney General Sam Hirsch, one of the Justice Department officials who focus on tribal justice issues. ''No one would have ever designed a system from scratch to look like the system that has come down to us through the generations.''

Over the past 200 years, there have been dramatic swings in Indian-country jurisdiction and the extent of tribal powers.

In 1978, in a case widely known in Indian country as ''Oliphant,'' the Supreme Court held that Indian tribes had no legal jurisdiction to prosecute non-Indians who committed crimes on reservations. Even a violent crime committed by a non-Indian husband against his Indian wife in their home on the reservation—as Brunner said happened to her on the White Earth Nation reservation—could not be prosecuted by the tribe.

The court said it was up to Congress to decide who had that authority.

''We are not unaware of the prevalence of non-Indian crime on today's reservations, which the tribes forcefully argue requires the ability to try non-Indians,'' the court said. ''But these are considerations for Congress to weigh in deciding whether Indian tribes should finally be authorized to try non-Indians.''

Congress took no action for 35 years.

As a result, native women who were assaulted were often told there was nothing tribal police could do for them. If the perpetrator was white and—in the lingo of the tribes—''not enrolled'' in the tribal nation, there would be no recourse.

''Over the years, what happened is that white men, non-native men, would go onto a Native American reservation and go hunting—rape, abuse and even murder a native woman, and there's absolutely nothing anyone could do to them,'' said Kimberly Norris Guerrero, an actress, tribal advocate and native Oklahoman who is Cherokee and Colville Indian. ''They got off scot-free.''

In 2009, shortly after taking office, Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. was briefed by two FBI agents on the issue of violence on Indian reservations.

They told him about the soaring rates of assault and rape and the fact that on some reservations, the murder rate for native women is 10 times the national average.

''The way they phrased it was, if you are a young girl born on an Indian reservation, there's a 1–in–3 chance or higher that you're going to be abused during the course of your life,'' Holder said in an interview. ''I actually did not think the statistics were accurate. I remember asking, 'check on those numbers.' ''

Officials came back to Holder and told him the statistics were right: Native women experience the highest rates of assault of any group in the United States.

''The numbers are just staggering,'' Holder said. ''It's deplorable. And it was at that point I said, this is an issue that we have to deal with. I am simply not going to accept the fact it is acceptable for women to be abused at the rates they are being abused on native lands.''

MEASURING TAPE

Diane Millich, left, joins Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. and Deborah Parker, vice chairwoman of the Tulalip Tribes of Washington state, at the bill-signing ceremony in March.

Diane Millich grew up on the Southern Ute Indian reservation, nestled in the mountain meadows of southwestern Colorado. When she was 26, she fell in love and married a non-Indian man who lived in a town just beyond the reservation.

Not long after they were married, Millich's husband moved in with her and began to push and slap her, she said. The violence escalated, and the abuse, she said, became routine. She called the tribal police and La Plata County authorities many times but was told they had no jurisdiction in the case.

One time after her husband beat her, Millich said, he picked up the phone and called the sheriff to report the incident himself to show that he couldn't be arrested, she said. He knew, she said, there was nothing the sheriff could do.

''After a year of abuse and more than 100 incidents of being slapped, kicked, punched and living in terror, I left for good,'' Millich said.

The brutality, she said, increased after she filed for a divorce.

''Typically, when you look backwards at crimes of domestic violence, if less serious violence is not dealt with by the law enforcement system, it leads to more serious violence, which eventually can lead to homicide,'' said Hirsch, the deputy associate attorney general.

One day when Millich was at work, she saw her ex-husband pull up in a red truck. He was carrying a 9mm gun.

''My ex-husband walked inside our office and told me, 'You promised until death do us part, so death it shall be,' '' Millich recalled. A co-worker saved Millich's life by pushing her out of the way and taking a bullet in his shoulder.

It took hours to decide who had jurisdiction over the shooting.

Investigators at the scene had to use a measuring tape to determine where the gun was fired and where Millich's colleague had been struck, and a map to figure out whether the state, federal government or tribe had jurisdiction.

The case ended up going to the closest district attorney. Because Millich's husband had never been arrested or charged for domestic abuse on tribal land, he was treated as a first-time offender, Millich said, and after trying to flee across state lines was offered a plea of aggravated driving under revocation.

''It was like his attempt to shoot me and the shooting of my co-worker did not happen,'' Millich said. ''The tribe wanted to help me, but couldn't because of the law. In the end, he was right. The law couldn't touch him.''

SECTION 904

Last year, Millich and other American Indian women came to Washington to tell their stories to congressional leaders. They joined tribal leaders in lobbying for the passage of the 288–page reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which included language proposed by the Justice Department that for the first time would allow tribal courts to prosecute non-Indians who assaulted native women on tribal lands. It would also allow the courts to issue and enforce protective orders, whether the perpetrator is Indian or non-Indian.

Opponents of the provision, known as Section 904, argued that non-native defendants would not be afforded a fair trial by American Indian tribes. In the case of Alaska, the Senate excluded Native Alaskan women because of especially complicated issues involving jurisdiction.

At a town hall meeting, Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) said that ''under the laws of our land, you've got to have a jury that is a reflection of society as a whole.''

''On an Indian reservation, it's going to be made up of Indians, right?'' Grassley said. ''So the non-Indian doesn't get a fair trial.''

Sen. John Cornyn (R-Tex.), another opponent, said the Violence Against Women Act was ''being held hostage by a single provision that would take away fundamental constitutional rights for certain American citizens.''

The bill passed the Senate last February but was held up by House Republicans over Section 904. They argued that tribal courts were not equipped to take on the new responsibilities and non-Indian constituents would be deprived of their constitutional rights without being able to appeal to federal courts.

''When we talk about the constitutional rights, don't women on tribal lands deserve their constitutional right of equal protection and not to be raped and battered and beaten and dragged back onto native lands because they know they can be raped with impunity?'' Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Wis.) argued on the floor.

Underlying the opposition, some congressmen said, was a fear of retribution by the tribes for the long history of mistreatment by white Americans.

With the support of Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.), a member of the Chickasaw Nation, the House accepted the bill containing Section 904 on a vote of 229 to 196. On March 7, President Obama signed the bill with Millich, Holder and Native American advocates at his side.

The Justice Department has chosen three Indian tribes— the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona, the Tulalip Tribes of Washington state and the Umatilla tribes of Oregon— to be the first in the nation to exercise their new criminal jurisdiction over certain crimes of domestic and dating violence.

''What we have done, I think, has been game-changing,'' Holder said. ''But there are still attitudes that have to be changed. There are still resources that have to be directed at the problem. There's training that still needs to go on. We're really only at the beginning stages of reversing what is a horrible situation.''

Lisa Brunner and her daughter, Faith Roy, fold clothes at home on the White Earth Indian reservation in Minnesota.

SLIVER OF A FULL MOON

Last summer, several Native American survivors of domestic violence from around the country put on a play, ''Sliver of a Full Moon,'' in Albuquerque. The play documented the story of the abuse and rape of Native American women by non-Indians and the prolonged campaign to bring them justice.

Using the technique of traditional Indian storytelling, Mary Kathryn Nagle, a lawyer and member of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma, wove together their emotional tales of abuse with the story of their fight to get Washington to pay attention.

Millich and Brunner played themselves, and actors played the roles of members of Congress, federal employees and tribal police officers who kept answering desperate phone calls from abused native women by saying over and over again, ''We can't do nothin',?'' ''We don't have jurisdiction,'' and ''He's white and he ain't enrolled.''

Brunner portrayed herself in a play that told the story of the abuse and rape of Native American women by non-Indians and the campaign to bring them justice.

By that time, Brunner's intergenerational story of violence and abuse had taken a painful turn. Her youngest daughter, 17, had been abducted by four white men who drove onto

the reservation one summer night. One of them raped her, Brunner said.

It was the real-life version of author Louise Erdrich's acclaimed fictional account of the rape of an Ojibwe woman by a non-Indian in her 2012 book, ''The Round House.'' In both the real and the unrelated fictional case, the new congressional authority would not give the tribe jurisdiction to arrest and prosecute the suspects, because they were not previously known to the victim.

Last week, inside her home on the frigid White Earth Nation, which was dotted by vast snowy cornfields and hundreds of frozen lakes, Brunner brought out a colorful watercolor she had painted of three native women standing in the woods under a glowing full moon. The painting was the inspiration for the title of Nagle's play, she said, but it's also a metaphor for the new law.

''We have always known that non-Indians can come onto our lands and they can beat, rape and murder us and there is nothing we can do about it,'' Brunner said. ''Now, our tribal officers have jurisdiction for the first time to do something about certain crimes.''

''But,'' she added, ''it is just the first sliver of the full moon that we need to protect us.''

GI EDUCATION BENEFITS FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I introduced a bill this week that would fix a small problem with the Post-9/11 GI bill that is creating big problems for some servicemember and veteran families.

In 2010, SFC Angela Dees sent her son, Christopher Webb, to the University of Illinois at Chicago after receiving approval from DOD that she could transfer her GI benefits to pay for his education.

Dees first enlisted in the Army in 1998. At the time, she was married, and Christopher was her stepson. But after a divorce, she went to court and obtained sole legal custody, raising him from a 2-year-old into a young man. Since she never formally adopted him he was legally considered her ward.

But no matter how you slice it, Angela Dees is Chris's mother, and he is her son.

But halfway through Chris's first year at UIC, he received a letter from the VA telling him that he could no longer use his mother's GI benefits. The letter explained that he needed to repay the first year's benefits, $30,000.

What happened?

It turns out they were caught in a bureaucratic wrinkle with enormous implications for this family. Foster children and legal wards like Chris are considered dependents by the Department of Defense, but not by the VA.

Servicemembers can pass along their GI Bill benefits to their spouses or children if they re-up for 4 more years. So Angela did that. In good faith, she signed an Army contract for 4 more years so that she could give her son a college education.

But the left hand of government did not know what the right hand of government was doing. So when it came time for the VA to pay Chris's tuition bill, VA said no. In their case, neither of them had the money to repay the VA, so Chris had to drop out of school and get a job in order to pay it back.

According to DOD, at least 25 students are in the same boat—approved by DOD, they enrolled in school only to have their benefits revoked by the VA when the bill came due.

It is an expensive bureaucratic nightmare for these families, and it should be fixed.

The Post-9/11 GI bill is the most comprehensive education benefits package for servicemembers since 1944. It was the first time we granted servicemembers the opportunity to transfer some or all of their earned benefits to family members.

But in this small way it is clear that the benefit does not match our intent.

The GI Education Benefits Fairness Act, S. 2014, will fix that.

This bill is very simple: it will align the definition of an ''eligible child'' at the DOD and the VA so that wards and foster children also qualify, and it will offer retroactive payment to those whose benefits were revoked because of the original discrepancy.

The bill has the support of many veteran and military advocacy groups: the Military Officers Association of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, Student Veterans of America, the National Military Family Association, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Association of the United States Navy, and the Foster Parent Association of America.

In the House, Representatives BILL FOSTER and CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS are leading a companion bill in a bipartisan effort.

These servicemembers have made good on their obligations to our country. And the GI Education Benefits Fairness Act allows us to make good on the promises we have made to them.

I hope my colleagues will join me in support of this important bill.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to discuss the circumstances many unemployed families face.

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and now face serious financial consequences.

Many families are having trouble paying the rent or their mortgage, or they are struggling to buy necessities for their children.

On February 6, the Senate voted, again, to try to extend unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed who are down on their luck.

But we still fell one vote short. We needed one more Republican.

I hope one of my colleagues on the Republican side will join us soon to get that legislation over the top and help folks who have been hurting since the first of the year. Getting this benefit extended is only one of the problems that unemployed families have faced in my State.

Thousands of unemployed Floridians have had their benefits delayed by flaws in the State's new automated unemployment system.

The website is called ''Florida CONNECT.''

But ironically it has left many Floridians disconnected.

We started hearing about some of the problems people were facing soon after the website was launched late last year.

When I started hearing about these reports, I asked U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez to investigate.

And I am pleased to report that the Department of Labor is now working with the State to sort out who should be getting their checks.

I am told most of the people who were stuck in this mess have either started getting the benefits they deserve or have received a letter directing them to a human being they can talk to and resolve possible problems with their applications.

I trust that the State of Florida will hold anyone responsible for that flawed website completely accountable for this mess.

In the meantime I hope that we here in the Congress will do our part to help folks that are down and out and pass the extension of benefits for long-term unemployed.

THE SOCHI OLYMPICS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, as we speak, the 22nd Winter Olympics are well under way in Sochi, Russia.

Let me first congratulate the organizers on a fantastic opening ceremony. It really was something to see the depth and breadth of Russia's rich history and culture on display for the entire world to admire.

The Olympics put a powerful spotlight on Russia—a spotlight Russia's president has so vigorously sought. But just as this attention is educating the world about Russia's invaluable contributions to music, science, and sport, it is also highlighting the gaps between Russia's previous commitment to fundamental freedoms and the reality on the ground.

There is no question that in recent years we have seen Russia move towards a less open, less pluralistic society. But we cannot lose hope yet. Change is possible and Russia's beleaguered but tenacious civil society offers much hope for the future. We continue to expect Russia's leadership to uphold basic and universal human rights. Now there are other countries where the situation is much worse, but Russia is a powerful global example and should be committed to upholding fundamental freedoms much like Germany or the United Kingdom, its European neighbors. But unlike those governments, Russia's current leadership wantonly violates international commitments and seems bent on trying to redefine a settled consensus on the universality of human rights. We cannot let that go unchallenged.

Much has been said about Russia's 2013 law prohibiting so-called gay propaganda. Some have pointed to the fact

that this law enjoys widespread public support while others have faintly condemned it and worried that Western pressure could be counterproductive. Let's stop negotiating with ourselves here and tell it like it is. And it is really quite simple: this law infringes on the rights to free speech, association, and assembly. These rights are not American rights, they are human rights, and they are universally shared and universally binding. Russia acknowledged as much in myriad international commitments. And this law is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg when it comes to fundamental freedoms in Russia.

In recent days it has been fashionable to change the colors of your website or make other symbolic gestures of solidarity with Russia's LGBT community. I applaud this and have done as much myself, but let's not kid ourselves or rest on our laurels. It takes little courage to swap an avatar on Twitter or to use a coded phrase in a statement and it is going to take a lot more to change the world for the better. As important as these symbols of solidarity are, let's not confuse them with the steady and sustained activism that will be necessary to highlight human rights abuses in Russia long after the flame goes out in Sochi.

I have heard much speculation of a further crackdown in Russia after the Olympic spotlight fades, and I would note that the ongoing unrest in Ukraine is watched with great interest from Russia. While the Kremlin appears nervous at the prospects of renewed demonstrations at home or the success of any grassroots uprising on its borders, many in Moscow and St. Petersburg appear envious that the Ukrainian protests have shown staying power and the ability to pry concessions from the ruling elite. I worry that if anything could provoke a crackdown inside Russia post-Sochi, a turn of events in Ukraine could well prove that trigger and I urge the administration to double-down on its efforts to head off further violence. That is why I introduced the Global Human Rights Accountability Act, which would ensure human rights abusers from anywhere in the world are denied entry into the United States and barred from using our financial institution.

Finally, let me commend our current and outgoing ambassador to the Russian Federation, Dr. Michael McFaul, for a job well done. Dr. McFaul served with distinction in a tough post at a tough time and did a fantastic job of representing our country's openness and ''can do'' spirit. He will be missed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

PURITAN BACKROOM

● Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and honor the Puritan Backroom in Manchester, a beloved New Hampshire restaurant that celebrates its 40th anniversary this month. The Backroom has earned its place as one of the Granite State's most popular family restaurants, serving up delicious dishes for four decades.

Today, the Backroom is part of a tradition of outstanding hospitality that dates back for nearly a century in New Hampshire's Queen City. In 1917, Arthur Pappas and Louis Canotas, who immigrated to the United States from Greece, opened an ice cream and candy shop on Hanover Street. They started a restaurant the following year, the first of several in Manchester and beyond. In 1938, Pappas and Canotas opened an ice cream stand on Daniel Webster Highway, later adding a candy shop and a restaurant. In February 1974, the Puritan Backroom served its first meal, and it is now a fourth generation family business.

There is something for everyone on the menu at the Backroom—from fresh seafood, to prime rib, to their sauté specials.

The restaurant is perhaps most famous for its fried chicken tenders, which come with duck sauce, and can be ordered in a few different ways—regular, coconut, buffalo or spicy. Or, you could get them broiled in the Backroom's special sauce. Or, you could have chicken tenders parmigiana or chicken tenders cacciatore.

For dessert, you can not beat the Backroom's homemade ice cream. On hot summer nights, it is not unusual to see customers lined up in front of the ice cream stand, eager to choose from among dozens of flavors. You will find the standard offerings—vanilla and chocolate—alongside Backroom favorites, including: Baklava, Moose Tracks, and Mudslide. Speaking of mudslides, they're also on the drink menu, and the Backroom was once recognized for being the top buyer in the Nation of Baileys Irish Cream.

The Puritan Backroom is more than just a restaurant. It is part of the heart and soul of Manchester, NH. It is a place for friends to meet and enjoy a meal. And it is a place for families to celebrate special occasions. I know that my family always looks forward to heading to the Backroom, where we know we will see familiar and friendly faces.

The family ownership, management and staff of the Backroom have made this special restaurant a true New Hampshire treasure. The Backroom sets the standard for excellence in hospitality in the Granite State, and I am so proud to join citizens across our State in congratulating the Puritan Backroom on its 40th anniversary. ●

ASCAP'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

● Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the centennial of ASCAP, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

When ASCAP's founders gathered in a New York hotel 100 years ago, they could not have imagined what the future held in store for the music industry, and the central role their organization would play in the music community. ASCAP's membership has grown to include more than ½ million songwriters, composers, and publishers. Among these are some of America's most beloved musical talents, but ASCAP is also home to thousands of lesser known musicians who inspire and delight us.

ASCAP licenses nearly 9 million musical works. The royalties ASCAP collects on behalf of its members, and the additional resources it provides, empower thousands of musicians to follow their lifelong passion for music while providing for themselves and their families. ASCAP is truly an invaluable resource both for songwriters and composers as well as the music loving community they serve.

Over the years, ASCAP has been a tireless advocate for strong intellectual property protections. It continues to be at the forefront of the movement for sensible intellectual property laws that can keep pace with changes in technology, all the while serving the interests of both music creators and consumers in the digital age.

It is critically important that both music creators and consumers have certainty about the relevant legal rules and protections. Yet, the current regulatory regime that governs ASCAP's operations may need to be updated to keep pace with innovations in how music is created, shared, and enjoyed. An updated legal regime is important not only for the musicians that make up ASCAP's membership, but also for the continued enjoyment of all their listeners among the American people. As Congress contemplates reforming our country's copyright law, it is my hope that this and other related issues will be given careful consideration.

I invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing ASCAP's 100 years of tireless advocacy on behalf or songwriters, composers, and publishers, and wish them 100 more years of great music and success.●

REMEMBERING MICHAEL ANGELO OLIVERIO, SR.

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of a dear friend and a remarkable West Virginian who was taken from us on February 5, 2014. Michael Angelo Oliverio, Sr. was a dedicated public servant, an inspiring educator and a passionate civic leader who was respected and admired by all who knew him. He led an extraordinary life that will always be remembered in the hearts of the countless individuals whose lives he touched.

The son of an Italian immigrant shepherd, Mike was born and raised in the town of Carolina in Marion County, just a few miles down the road from my hometown of Farmington. Like many other families in North Central West Virginia, our families' ancestors both originated from the same town in

Italy, San Giovanni in Fiore. Our shared heritage was truly a special aspect of our family friendship.

Mike lived a life of unprecedented success both professionally and personally. He graduated from Monongah High School, Fairmont State College, West Virginia University, and also received postgraduate education from the University of Virginia, College of St. Thomas, Minnesota, and George Washington University.

He was a tireless advocate for the disabled community, which was recognized not only in West Virginia but on a national level. As the president of the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association and also president of the National Rehabilitation Association International Advocacy Group for Persons with Disabilities, he met with Congress and Presidents Carter and Ford to promote laws for persons with disabilities.

With a heart of gold, Mike passionately served his community, his State and his country. He served for more than 10 years as the Monongalia County clerk, served as chairman of the Community Advisory Committee, and vice chairman on the national board of the American Heart Association.

Genuinely committed to improving the lives of all West Virginians, Mike helped start the Kennedy Correctional Center and founded the Ronald McDonald House. He also designed and facilitated the building of a memorial honoring fathers and President John F. Kennedy in Star City called ''A Father's Love.''

Additionally, he served as chairman of the Fairmont State University Board of Advisors, the Klingberg Development Center Advisory Committee, North Central West Virginia Goodwill Board, People Aware of Children Exceptional (PACE), West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival, and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church.

During his life, Mike received many awards for his incredible works—of which he was most proud, Mike received the National Nathan Hale Award for Patriotism and the F. Ray Power Award for Administration State Director Internationally.

Promoting his family's cultural history and Italian heritage was one of Mike's greatest passions. He made West Virginia and Calabria, Italy, sister states and conducted the twinning process joining Clarksburg and San Giovanni in Fiori, Italy. He also initiated an exchange program with students from the University of Calabria and Fairmont State University. He was rightly awarded the International Award for Achievement and Humanity in Rome, Italy.

Mike took many trips to Italy throughout his life, but there was one trip in particular I know he cherished most. Dubbed ''The Oliverio Boys Tour,'' Mike traveled to the homeland in 2009 with his three sons, Joe, Mike, and Frank; his brother, John; and his cousins, Jason, Maryn, and Nate.

During the trip they were blessed to spend time with relatives and friends in the region and experience the authentic Italian traditions, passion and food. As they walked the streets, natives knew the Americans were in town and that Mike Oliverio had brought his family. They were hosted by many of Mike's second and third cousins, including Mario Oliverio, who had recently been elected President of the Region. It was very important to him to travel around Italy together as a family and to explore their roots. I know it was a special memory he held close to his heart.

Mike was not only reputable and accomplished in his public life, but he was also an unparalleled example of a dedicated family man—a devoted husband, a proud father, and a wonderful grandfather. Much of his success he credited to his late wife, Julia, who supported him in all of his endeavors. His children are accomplished and respected throughout our state.

I will never forget a special dinner my wife, Gayle, and I shared at the Governor's Mansion in 2007 with Mike, Julia, and their family—Joe, Paula, Alyssa, Mary, Christina, Maria, Mike, Melissa, Frank, Amy, Julia, Aunt Teresa Gabriele, and a family friend, Jessica Faulkenberry. It was just two weeks before Julia lost her life to ovarian cancer and we were celebrating her birthday. I remember being touched by the love shared within their family and the strength they had in one another. You see, the Oliverios personify the power of families—working hard, supporting one another, and standing together when times get tough.

Anyone who knew Mike Oliverio can tell about his incredible ability to inspire each person he encountered to live a life of purpose. Personally, I have lost a dear friend and mentor. And although he will be forever remembered for his many years of service, he will also be remembered as a loving father, grandfather, and friend. He was truly a local legend in our State, and though he will be greatly missed, his legacy will always live on.●

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.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:17 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 25. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal features of the electric distribution system to the South Utah Valley Electric Service District, and for other purposes.

S. 540. An act to designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the ''Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center''.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following joint resolutions, without amendment:

S.J. Res. 28. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of John Fahey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

S.J. Res. 29. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 81. Concurrent resolution providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 25.

H. Con. Res. 82. Concurrent resolution providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 540.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3448. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks.

H.R. 3578. An act to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 3448. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2024. A bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of ''marriage'' and ''spouse'' for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

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–4659. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Importation of Live Birds and Poultry, Poultry Meat, and Poultry Products From a Region in the European Union; Technical Amendment'' ((RIN0579–AD45) (Docket No. APHIS–2009–0094)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 10, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4660. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Chlorantraniliprole; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9905–56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4661. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''D-mannose; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9905–44) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4662. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Thiram; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9904–22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4663. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Linuron; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9905–22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4664. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Bacillus thuringiensis Cry1F Protein in Soybean; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9905–59) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4665. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fenpropidin; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9904–31) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4666. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General William M. Fraser III, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4667. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Robert W. Cone, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4668. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4669. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to assistance provided by the Department of Defense (DoD) for sporting events during calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4670. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4671. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4672. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2013–0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4673. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's semiannual Monetary Policy Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4674. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Exemptions for Security-Based Swaps'' (RIN3235–AL17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4675. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2013–0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4676. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, (2) two reports relative to vacancies in the Department of the Treasury, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 3, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4677. A communication from the Administrative Specialist, Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulations Governing Definitive United States Savings Bonds, Series EE and HH; Regulations Governing Definitive United States Savings Bonds, Series I; Regulations Governing Securities Held in TreasuryDirect'' (31 CFR Parts 353, 360, and 363) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4678. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program: Compliance Date for the Dehumidifier Test Procedure'' (RIN1904–AD06) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4679. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for External Power Supplies'' (RIN1904–AD06) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4680. A communication from the Regulatory Liaison, Office of Natural Resources Revenue, Department of the Interior transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to ONRR's Service of Official Correspondence'' (RIN1012–AA14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4681. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Nonroad Technical Amendments'' (FRL No. 9905–35–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4682. 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; Indiana; Allen, Greene, Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Vigo Counties; 1997 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Plan Revision to Approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets'' (FRL No. 9906–50–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4683. 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; Colorado; Construction Permit Program Fee Increases; Construction Permit Regulation of PM 2.5; Regulation 3'' (FRL No. 9903–94–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4684. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to the New Source Review (NSR) State Implementation Plan (SIP); Standard Permit for Oil and Gas Facilities and Standard Permit Applicability'' (FRL No. 9906–60–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4685. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Finding of Failure to Submit State Implementation Plans Required for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)'' (FRL No. 9906–80–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the

Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4686. 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 Plan; State of Colorado Second Ten-Year PM 10 Maintenance Plan for Telluride'' (FRL No. 9906–35–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4687. 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'' (FRL No. 9903–70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4688. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Test Methods and Testing Regulations'' (FRL No. 9906–23–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4689. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Consumer Product Policy Statement; Revision'' (NRC–2010–0292) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4690. A communication from the Acting Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Introduction—Part 2, Standard Review Plan for the Review of Safety Analysis Reports for Nuclear Power Plants: Light-Water Small Modular Reactor Edition'' (NUREG–0800) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4691. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Maximum Civil Money Penalty Amounts; Civil Money Penalty Complaints'' (Docket No. FDA–2014–N–0113) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4692. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program'' (RIN1840–AD13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4693. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Community Services Block Grant (CCSBG) Program Report for Fiscal Year 2010''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4694. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) annual report on Drug Shortages for Calendar Year 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4695. A communication from the Chairman of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Buy American Act Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4696. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on National HIV Testing Goals; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4697. A communication from the Chair, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Evaluating Job Applicants: The Role of Training and Experience in Hiring''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4698. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–273, ''Omnibus Health Regulation Amendment Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4699. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13–188); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4700. A communication from the Chief of the Office of Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Importation of Arms, Ammunition and Implements of War and Machine Guns, Destructive Devices, and Certain Other Firearms; Extending the Term of Import Permits'' (RIN1140–AA42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4701. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of Four Synthetic Cannabinoids Into Schedule I'' (Docket No. DEA–385) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4702. A communication from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4703. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''2012 Impact and Effectiveness of Administration for Native Americans (ANA) Projects: Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–4704. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist (Executive Resources), Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, (3) three reports relative to a vacancy in the Small Business Administration, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC–4705. A communication from the Executive Secretary, Medicare-Eligible Retiree Health Care Board of Actuaries, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2013 Report of the Department of Defense Medicare-Eligible Retiree Health Care Fund (MERHCF); to the Committee on Armed Services.

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 Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2017. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to ensure that voters in elections for Federal office do not wait in long lines in order to vote; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 2018. A bill to provide for the use of hand-propelled vessels in Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and the National Elk Refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. 2019. A bill to reauthorize and update certain provisions of the Secure Water Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2020. A bill to set forth the process for Puerto Rico to be admitted as a State of the Union; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2021. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the incentives for the production of biodiesel; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER:

S. 2022. A bill to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2023. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. LEE):

S. 2024. A bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of ''marriage'' and ''spouse'' for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage; read the first time.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2025. A bill to require data brokers to establish procedures to ensure the accuracy of collected personal information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2026. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 2027. A bill to authorize an additional district judgeship for the district of Idaho; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. THUNE):

S. 2028. A bill to amend the law relating to sport fish restoration and recreational boating safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2029. A bill to use amounts provided for the Fund for the Improvement of Education to establish a pilot program that supports year-round public elementary schools and secondary schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2030. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 2031. A bill to amend the Act to provide for the establishment of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in the State of Wisconsin, and for other purposes, to adjust the boundary of that National Lakeshore to include the lighthouse known as Ashland Harbor Breakwater Light, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2032. A bill to require mobile service providers and mobile device manufacturers to give consumers the ability to remotely delete data from mobile devices and render such devices inoperable; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. LANDRIEU:

S. 2033. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow the Secretary of Education to award job training Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. LEVIN):

S. Res. 355. A resolution calling on the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to cease the extra-judicial release of Afghan detainees, carry out its commitments pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding governing the transfer of Afghan detainees from the United States custody to Afghan control and to uphold the Afghan Rule of Law with respect to the referral and disposition of detainees; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 356. A resolution designating February 13, 2014, as ''$2.13 Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. Res. 357. A resolution expressing concern of undemocratic governance and the abuse of the rights of individuals in Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 358. A resolution commending the Seattle Seahawks for winning Super Bowl XLVIII and the 12th Man for their critical support; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID:

S. Res. 359. A resolution to constitute the majority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 313

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 313, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 489

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 633

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 633, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for coverage under the beneficiary travel program of the Department of Veterans Affairs of certain disabled veterans for travel in connection with certain special disabilities rehabilitation, and for other purposes.

S. 635

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 641

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 641, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, and other programs, to promote education in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 896

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 896, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 1022

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1022, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to extend the exemption from the fire-retardant materials construction requirement for vessels operating within the Boundary Line.

S. 1070

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1070, a bill to make it unlawful to alter or remove the unique equipment identification number of a mobile device.

S. 1208

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1208, a bill to require meaningful disclosures of the terms of rental-purchase agreements, including disclosures of all costs to consumers under such agreements, to provide certain substantive rights to consumers under such agreements, and for other purposes.

S. 1235

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1235, a bill to restrict any State or local jurisdiction from imposing a new discriminatory tax on cell phone services, providers, or property.

S. 1468

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1468, a bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Network for Manufacturing Innovation and for other purposes.

S. 1599

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1599, a bill to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1738

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1738, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1977

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1981

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1981, a bill to provide that the rules of the Federal Communications Commission relating to preserving the open Internet and broadband industry practices shall be restored to effect until the date when the Commission takes final action in the proceedings on such rules that were remanded to the Commission by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

S. 1999

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1999, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to require the consent of parties to contracts for the use of arbitration to resolve controversies arising under the contracts and subject to provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2009

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2009, a bill to improve the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans in rural and highly rural areas, and for other purposes.

S. 2011

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2011, a bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

S.J. RES. 20

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 20, a joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 350

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 350, a resolution designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care.

AMENDMENT NO. 2732

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2732 intended to be proposed to S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2023. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when it comes to understanding the influence of big money donors on congressional and presidential campaigns, the numbers don't lie. In 2012, the top 32 donors to super PACs spent as much money as every single small donation to President Obama and Governor Romney combined. The top 32 donors to super PACs spent as much money as every single small donation to President Obama and Governor Romney combined. That means 32 individuals contributed as much as 3.7 million Americans. In 2012, candidates from both the House and Senate raised the majority of their funds from large donations of $1,000 or more. Forty percent of all contributions to Senate candidates came from donors who maxed out at the $2,500 contribution limit, representing just .02 percent of the American population. The amount of money special interest lobbies, wealthy donors, corporations and super PACs are willing to spend to shape policy has grown exponentially since Citizens United and it is expected to increase.

This dramatic increase in spending tells us that special interests are not going to be shy about saying to Members of Congress: If you vote against our interests, we will spend millions to make sure you never get a chance to vote again. That is a terrible reality for many Members of Congress who are trying to make honest decisions about policy. It is an even worse statement about our democracy.

I think it is time for fundamental reform of the way we finance congressional elections. We need a system that allows candidates to focus on their constituents, their districts, and their States, instead of fundraising. We need a system that encourages ordinary Americans—the candidates I call mere mortals—to make their voices heard with small, affordable donations to candidates of their choice.

That is why I am introducing the Fair Elections Now Act. The Fair Elections Now Act will dramatically

change the way campaigns are financed in America. This bill lets candidates focus on the people they represent, regardless of whether these people have wealth or whether they are going to attend big money fundraisers. Fair elections candidates would be in the policy business, regardless of what policies are preferred by the special interests.

I thank Senators BOXER, BROWN, CARDIN, FRANKEN, GILLIBRAND, HARKIN, HEINRICH, KLOBUCHAR, LEAHY, MARKEY, MENENDEZ, MERKLEY, MURPHY, SANDERS, SHAHEEN, and WARREN for joining me in this effort.

The Fair Elections Now Act will help restore public confidence in congressional elections. It provides qualified candidates for Congress with grants, matching funds, and vouchers from the Fair Elections Fund to replace campaign fundraising that now relies largely on lobbyists, wealthy donors, corporations, and other special interests. In return, participating candidates would agree to limit their campaign spending to amounts raised from small-dollar donors plus the amounts provided from the Fair Elections Fund.

There are three stages for Senate candidates under this bill. To participate, candidates would first need to prove their viability by raising a minimum number and amount of small-dollar qualifying contributions from in-State donors. Once a candidate qualifies, that candidate must limit the amount raised from each donor to $150 per election.

For the primary, participants would receive a base grant that would vary in amount based on the population of the State that the candidate seeks to represent. Participants would also receive a 6-to-1 match for small-dollar donations up to a defined matching cap. The candidate could raise an unlimited amount of $150 contributions if needed to compete against high-spending opponents.

For the general election, qualified candidates would receive an additional grant, further small-dollar matching, and vouchers for purchasing TV advertising. The candidate could continue to raise an unlimited amount of $150 contributions if needed. Instead of spending so much time courting donors and super PACs, fair elections candidates would have an incentive to spend their time with the middle-class Americans they want to represent. Candidates would have an incentive to seek small donations, and citizens would have an incentive to donate.

Under the Fair Elections Now Act, the average citizen would know their small donation of $150 would be converted to a $900 donation through the 6-to-1 fair elections match. They would also be eligible for a refundable tax credit. The Fair Elections Now Act would establish the ''My Voice Tax Credit'' to encourage individuals to make small donations to campaigns. The maximum refundable amount for the tax credit would be $25 for individuals and $50 for joint filers. To ensure the tax credit targets small donors, it is only available to individuals who do not contribute more than $300 to a candidate or political party in any given year.

Our country faces major challenges. Everybody knows we need to reduce the deficit, modernize our energy policy, create good-paying jobs, reform the Tax Code, and many other things. What many people may not know is that at every turn, there are high-powered special interests fighting each and every one of these proposals. It is difficult for Members of Congress not to pay attention to the concerns of these special interests when the Members have to raise money for their own campaigns.

This bill would change the whole ball game. It would reduce the influence of these special interest lobbyists and wealthy donors. As a result, the bill would enhance the voice of average Americans.

Let me be clear. I honestly believe the overwhelming majority of the people serving in political life are good, honest people, and I believe Senators and Congressmen are guided by the best of intentions. But we are stuck in a terrible system. The perception is that politicians are corrupted because of all the big money we each have to raise. Whether it is true or not, that perception and the loss of trust that goes with it makes it incredibly difficult for the Senators to solve tough problems. That is why so many Americans have Congress in such low regard. This problem—the perception of pervasive corruption—is fundamental to our democracy, and we need to address it.

Fair elections is not a farfetched idea. Fair election systems are already at work in cities and States around America. Similar programs exist and are working well in jurisdictions throughout the country from Maine to Arizona. These programs are bringing new faces and new ideas into politics, making more races more competitive, and dramatically reducing the influence of special interests.

The vast majority of Americans agree it is time to fundamentally change the way we finance political campaigns. Recent polling shows that 75 percent of Democrats, 66 percent of Independents, and 55 percent of Republicans support fair elections-style reform. The Fair Elections Now Act is supported by numerous good government groups, former Members of Congress from both parties, prominent business leaders, and even some lobbyists. Everyone is entitled to a seat at the table, but no one is entitled to a special seat, or maybe the only seat. The Fair Elections Now Act will reform our campaign finance system so Members of Congress can focus on implementing policies in the best interests of the people who sent them to Washington.

The Presiding Officer just finished a campaign, and I know, having visited with her in her home State, she worked hard. I am in the midst of a reelection campaign myself. I know I am working hard. A lot of time is being spent on the telephone, raising money from a lot of generous people.

I say in politics there are millionaires and the mere mortals. I am in the second category, and that means I can't write a check to cover the cost of a campaign. I have to hope enough people want to support me in my effort. With those contributions I will be buying media—primarily television, radio, Internet advertising, some mailings—and paying for a headquarters and volunteers. It is expensive in a big State such as Wisconsin or Illinois.

In the Citizens United era, where the traditional campaigns I just described are frankly not even close to the reality of what candidates face, one incumbent Democratic Senator now up for reelection has had over $8 million spent against her in her home State with negative advertising that has gone on for months—for months. It is being paid for by some very wealthy billionaires. These billionaires, in this case the Koch Brothers, spent, I believe, $248 million of their own money in the last election cycle. They are, in fact, a political party to themselves. They decide the candidates they support, which, coincidentally, are all in the other political party, and they invest huge sums of money in those election efforts. Make no mistake. We are raising money on the Democratic side too, but not nearly to the numbers we see on the other side.

This business of politics is being swamped with money in amounts and levels we have never seen before. What it means is that if an incumbent or even a challenger wants to have a viable campaign, they spend more and more time raising money if they can't write a personal check to cover it—and most of us can't. So instead of being back in my State, working on issues that are important in the Senate, I spend a lot of time fundraising. We have become so used to it. It is like the frog in the pot of water on the stove that may not sense the increase in temperature until the water is boiling and it is too late. We are in that same predicament. We are watching, election after election, the cost of campaigns go through the roof. It discourages good people from engaging in the political process. It makes small contributors feel as though they are such small peanuts that nobody even notices.

We have to change that whole concept. I am reluctant to say this, but so far, this campaign finance reform bill is only being cosponsored by Members of one political party. I have tried for years to get Republican support for campaign finance reform. The only Republican Senator who would ever join me was Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, who ultimately changed political parties on me—not on me, but changed political parties and then I didn't have bipartisan sponsorship.

The point I am getting to is this should be a bipartisan issue. I have no

doubt that in a limited campaign with limited expenditures, I would still have enough money to get my message out in Illinois, and I am sure my opponent would, too. That would be a godsend, in sparing me and whomever from raising a lot of money, and a relief to the voters who get sick and tired of the political advertising that swamps the screens in the closing days of a campaign.

Fair elections now is an effort to move in that direction. It is a new concept, but it is one we should look at honestly. We can clean up the election campaigns in America. We can be responsive to the needs of our constituents. We can further the goals of our democracy and do it in a fashion that is affordable and allows mere mortals to compete.

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. 2023

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Fair Elections Now Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
TITLE I—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
Subtitle A—Fair Elections Financing Program
Sec. 101. Findings and declarations.
Sec. 102. Eligibility requirements and benefits of Fair Elections financing of Senate election campaigns.
Sec. 103. Prohibition on joint fundraising committees.
Sec. 104. Exception to limitation on coordinated expenditures by political party committees with participating candidates.
TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION
Sec. 201. Broadcasts relating to all Senate candidates.
Sec. 202. Broadcast rates for participating candidates.
Sec. 203. FCC to prescribe standardized form for reporting candidate campaign ads.
TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
Sec. 301. Petition for certiorari.
Sec. 302. Filing by Senate candidates with Commission.
Sec. 303. Electronic filing of FEC reports.
TITLE IV—PARTICIPATION IN FUNDING OF ELECTIONS
Sec. 401. Refundable tax credit for Senate campaign contributions.
TITLE V—REVENUE PROVISIONS
Sec. 501. Fair Elections Fund revenue.
TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS
Sec. 601. Severability.
Sec. 602. Effective date.

TITLE I—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

SUBTITLE A—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING PROGRAM

SEC. 101. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

(a) UNDERMINING OF DEMOCRACY BY CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PRIVATE SOURCES.—The Senate finds and declares that the current system of privately financed campaigns for election to the United States Senate has the capacity, and is often perceived by the public, to undermine democracy in the United States by—

(1) creating a culture that fosters actual or perceived conflicts of interest by encouraging Senators to accept large campaign contributions from private interests that are directly affected by Federal legislation;

(2) diminishing or appearing to diminish Senators' accountability to constituents by compelling legislators to be accountable to the major contributors who finance their election campaigns;

(3) undermining the meaning of the right to vote by allowing monied interests to have a disproportionate and unfair influence within the political process;

(4) imposing large, unwarranted costs on taxpayers through legislative and regulatory distortions caused by unequal access to lawmakers for campaign contributors;

(5) making it difficult for some qualified candidates to mount competitive Senate election campaigns;

(6) disadvantaging challengers and discouraging competitive elections; and

(7) burdening incumbents with a preoccupation with fundraising and thus decreasing the time available to carry out their public responsibilities.

(b) ENHANCEMENT OF DEMOCRACY BY PROVIDING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.—The Senate finds and declares that providing the option of the replacement of large private campaign contributions with allocations from the Fair Elections Fund for all primary, runoff, and general elections to the Senate would enhance American democracy by—

(1) reducing the actual or perceived conflicts of interest created by fully private financing of the election campaigns of public officials and restoring public confidence in the integrity and fairness of the electoral and legislative processes through a program which allows participating candidates to adhere to substantially lower contribution limits for contributors with an assurance that there will be sufficient funds for such candidates to run viable electoral campaigns;

(2) increasing the public's confidence in the accountability of Senators to the constituents who elect them, which derives from the program's qualifying criteria to participate in the voluntary program and the conclusions that constituents may draw regarding candidates who qualify and participate in the program;

(3) helping to reduce the ability to make large campaign contributions as a determinant of a citizen's influence within the political process by facilitating the expression of support by voters at every level of wealth, encouraging political participation, and incentivizing participation on the part of Senators through the matching of small dollar contributions;

(4) potentially saving taxpayers billions of dollars that may be (or that are perceived to be) currently allocated based upon legislative and regulatory agendas skewed by the influence of campaign contributions;

(5) creating genuine opportunities for all Americans to run for the Senate and encouraging more competitive elections;

(6) encouraging participation in the electoral process by citizens of every level of wealth; and

(7) freeing Senators from the incessant preoccupation with raising money, and allowing them more time to carry out their public responsibilities.

SEC. 102. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 431 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''TITLE V—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

''SUBTITLE A—GENERAL PROVISIONS

''SEC. 501. DEFINITIONS.

''In this title:

''(1) ALLOCATION FROM THE FUND.—The term 'allocation from the Fund' means an allocation of money from the Fair Elections Fund to a participating candidate pursuant to section 522.

''(2) BOARD.—The term 'Board' means the Fair Elections Oversight Board established under section 531.

''(3) FAIR ELECTIONS QUALIFYING PERIOD.—The term 'Fair Elections qualifying period' means, with respect to any candidate for Senator, the period—

''(A) beginning on the date on which the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1); and

''(B) ending on the date that is 30 days before—

''(i) the date of the primary election; or

''(ii) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

''(4) FAIR ELECTIONS START DATE.—The term 'Fair Elections start date' means, with respect to any candidate, the date that is 180 days before—

''(A) the date of the primary election; or

''(B) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

''(5) FUND.—The term 'Fund' means the Fair Elections Fund established by section 502.

''(6) IMMEDIATE FAMILY.—The term 'immediate family' means, with respect to any candidate—

''(A) the candidate's spouse;

''(B) a child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, or half-sister of the candidate or the candidate's spouse; and

''(C) the spouse of any person described in subparagraph (B).

''(7) MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'matching contribution' means a matching payment provided to a participating candidate for qualified small dollar contributions, as provided under section 523.

''(8) NONPARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.—The term 'nonparticipating candidate' means a candidate for Senator who is not a participating candidate.

''(9) PARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.—The term 'participating candidate' means a candidate for Senator who is certified under section 515 as being eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund.

''(10) QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'qualifying contribution' means, with respect to a candidate, a contribution that—

''(A) is in an amount that is—

''(i) not less than the greater of $5 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

''(ii) not more than the greater of $150 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531;

''(B) is made by an individual—

''(i) who is a resident of the State in which such Candidate is seeking election; and

''(ii) who is not otherwise prohibited from making a contribution under this Act;

''(C) is made during the Fair Elections qualifying period; and

''(D) meets the requirements of section 512(b).

''(11) QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'qualified small dollar contribution' means, with respect to a candidate, any contribution (or series of contributions)—

''(A) which is not a qualifying contribution (or does not include a qualifying contribution);

''(B) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

''(C) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed the greater of—

''(i) $150 per election; or

''(ii) the amount per election determined by the Commission under section 531.

''SEC. 502. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a fund to be known as the 'Fair Elections Fund'.

''(b) AMOUNTS HELD BY FUND.—The Fund shall consist of the following amounts:

''(1) APPROPRIATED AMOUNTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts appropriated to the Fund.

''(B) SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING APPROPRIATIONS.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

''(i) there should be imposed on any payment made to any person (other than a State or local government or a foreign nation) who has contracts with the Government of the United States in excess of $10,000,000 a tax equal to 0.50 percent of amount paid pursuant to such contracts, except that the aggregate tax for any person for any taxable year shall not exceed $500,000; and

''(ii) the revenue from such tax should be appropriated to the Fund.

''(2) VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.—Voluntary contributions to the Fund.

''(3) OTHER DEPOSITS.—Amounts deposited into the Fund under—

''(A) section 513(c) (relating to exceptions to contribution requirements);

''(B) section 521(c) (relating to remittance of allocations from the Fund);

''(C) section 533 (relating to violations); and

''(D) any other section of this Act.

''(4) INVESTMENT RETURNS.—Interest on, and the proceeds from, the sale or redemption of, any obligations held by the Fund under subsection (c).

''(c) INVESTMENT.—The Commission shall invest portions of the Fund in obligations of the United States in the same manner as provided under section 9602(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''(d) USE OF FUND.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The sums in the Fund shall be used to provide benefits to participating candidates as provided in subtitle C.

''(2) INSUFFICIENT AMOUNTS.—Under regulations established by the Commission, rules similar to the rules of section 9006(c) of the Internal Revenue Code shall apply.

''SUBTITLE B—ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION

''SEC. 511. ELIGIBILITY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—A candidate for Senator is eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for any election if the candidate meets the following requirements:

''(1) The candidate files with the Commission a statement of intent to seek certification as a participating candidate under this title during the period beginning on the Fair Elections start date and ending on the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period.

''(2) The candidate meets the qualifying contribution requirements of section 512.

''(3) Not later than the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate files with the Commission an affidavit signed by the candidate and the treasurer of the candidate's principal campaign committee declaring that the candidate—

''(A) has complied and, if certified, will comply with the contribution and expenditure requirements of section 513;

''(B) if certified, will comply with the debate requirements of section 514;

''(C) if certified, will not run as a nonparticipating candidate during such year in any election for the office that such candidate is seeking; and

''(D) has either qualified or will take steps to qualify under State law to be on the ballot.

''(b) GENERAL ELECTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for a general election or a general runoff election unless the candidate's party nominated the candidate to be placed on the ballot for the general election or the candidate otherwise qualified to be on the ballot under State law.

''SEC. 512. QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—A candidate for Senator meets the requirement of this section if, during the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate obtains—

''(1) a number of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

''(A) the sum of—

''(i) 2,000; plus

''(ii) 500 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

''(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

''(2) a total dollar amount of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

''(A) 10 percent of the amount of the allocation such candidate would be entitled to receive for the primary election under section 522(c)(1) (determined without regard to paragraph (5) thereof) if such candidate were a participating candidate; or

''(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

''(b) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO RECEIPT OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.—Each qualifying contribution—

''(1) may be made by means of a personal check, money order, debit card, credit card, or electronic payment account;

''(2) shall be accompanied by a signed statement containing—

''(A) the contributor's name and the contributor's address in the State in which the contributor is registered to vote; and

''(B) an oath declaring that the contributor—

''(i) understands that the purpose of the qualifying contribution is to show support for the candidate so that the candidate may qualify for Fair Elections financing;

''(ii) is making the contribution in his or her own name and from his or her own funds;

''(iii) has made the contribution willingly; and

''(iv) has not received any thing of value in return for the contribution; and

''(3) shall be acknowledged by a receipt that is sent to the contributor with a copy kept by the candidate for the Commission and a copy kept by the candidate for the election authorities in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election.

''(c) VERIFICATION OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Commission shall establish procedures for the auditing and verification of qualifying contributions to ensure that such contributions meet the requirements of this section.

''SEC. 513. CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.

''(a) GENERAL RULE.—A candidate for Senator meets the requirements of this section if, during the election cycle of the candidate, the candidate—

''(1) except as provided in subsection (b), accepts no contributions other than—

''(A) qualifying contributions;

''(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

''(C) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

''(D) matching contributions under section 523; and

''(E) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 524;

''(2) makes no expenditures from any amounts other than from—

''(A) qualifying contributions;

''(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

''(C) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

''(D) matching contributions under section 523; and

''(E) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 524; and

''(3) makes no expenditures from personal funds or the funds of any immediate family member (other than funds received through qualified small dollar contributions and qualifying contributions).

For purposes of this subsection, a payment made by a political party in coordination with a participating candidate shall not be treated as a contribution to or as an expenditure made by the participating candidate.

''(b) CONTRIBUTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PACS, ETC.—A political committee of a participating candidate which is not an authorized committee of such candidate may accept contributions other than contributions described in subsection (a)(1) from any person if—

''(1) the aggregate contributions from such person for any calendar year do not exceed $150; and

''(2) no portion of such contributions is disbursed in connection with the campaign of the participating candidate.

''(c) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be treated as having failed to meet the requirements of this section if any contributions that are not qualified small dollar contributions, qualifying contributions, or contributions that meet the requirements of subsection (b) and that are accepted before the date the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1) are—

''(1) returned to the contributor; or

''(2) submitted to the Commission for deposit in the Fund.

''SEC. 514. DEBATE REQUIREMENT.

''A candidate for Senator meets the requirements of this section if the candidate participates in at least—

''(1) 1 public debate before the primary election with other participating candidates and other willing candidates from the same party and seeking the same nomination as such candidate; and

''(2) 2 public debates before the general election with other participating candidates and other willing candidates seeking the same office as such candidate.

''SEC. 515. CERTIFICATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 days after a candidate for Senator files an affidavit under section 511(a)(3), the Commission shall—

''(1) certify whether or not the candidate is a participating candidate; and

''(2) notify the candidate of the Commission's determination.

''(b) REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may revoke a certification under subsection (a) if—

''(A) a candidate fails to qualify to appear on the ballot at any time after the date of certification; or

''(B) a candidate otherwise fails to comply with the requirements of this title, including any regulatory requirements prescribed by the Commission.

''(2) REPAYMENT OF BENEFITS.—If certification is revoked under paragraph (1), the candidate shall repay to the Fund an amount equal to the value of benefits received under this title plus interest (at a rate determined by the Commission) on any such amount received.

''SUBTITLE C—BENEFITS

''SEC. 521. BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—For each election with respect to which a candidate is certified as a participating candidate, such candidate shall be entitled to—

''(1) an allocation from the Fund to make or obligate to make expenditures with respect to such election, as provided in section 522;

''(2) matching contributions, as provided in section 523; and

''(3) for the general election, vouchers for broadcasts of political advertisements, as provided in section 524.

''(b) RESTRICTION ON USES OF ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—Allocations from the Fund received by a participating candidate under sections 522 and matching contributions under section 523 may only be used for campaign-related costs.

''(c) REMITTING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 45 days after an election in which the participating candidate appeared on the ballot, such participating candidate shall remit to the Commission for deposit in the Fund an amount equal to the lesser of—

''(A) the amount of money in the candidate's campaign account; or

''(B) the sum of the allocations from the Fund received by the candidate under section 522 and the matching contributions received by the candidate under section 523.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—In the case of a candidate who qualifies to be on the ballot for a primary runoff election, a general election, or a general runoff election, the amounts described in paragraph (1) may be retained by the candidate and used in such subsequent election.

''SEC. 522. ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall make allocations from the Fund under section 521(a)(1) to a participating candidate—

''(1) in the case of amounts provided under subsection (c)(1), not later than 48 hours after the date on which such candidate is certified as a participating candidate under section 515;

''(2) in the case of a general election, not later than 48 hours after—

''(A) the date of the certification of the results of the primary election or the primary runoff election; or

''(B) in any case in which there is no primary election, the date the candidate qualifies to be placed on the ballot; and

''(3) in the case of a primary runoff election or a general runoff election, not later than 48 hours after the certification of the results of the primary election or the general election, as the case may be.

''(b) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall distribute funds available to participating candidates under this section through the use of an electronic funds exchange or a debit card.

''(c) AMOUNTS.—

''(1) PRIMARY ELECTION ALLOCATION; INITIAL ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 67 percent of the base amount with respect to such participating candidate.

''(2) PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the amount the participating candidate was eligible to receive under this section for the primary election.

''(3) GENERAL ELECTION ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to the base amount with respect to such candidate.

''(4) GENERAL RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the base amount with respect to such candidate.

''(5) UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a primary or general election that is an uncontested election, the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund to a participating candidate for such election in an amount equal to 25 percent of the allocation which such candidate would be entitled to under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

''(B) UNCONTESTED ELECTION DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, an election is uncontested if not more than 1 candidate has campaign funds (including payments from the Fund) in an amount equal to or greater than 10 percent of the allocation a participating candidate would be entitled to receive under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

''(d) BASE AMOUNT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the base amount for any candidate is an amount equal to the greater of—

''(A) the sum of—

''(i) $750,000; plus

''(ii) $150,000 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

''(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

''(2) INDEXING.—In each even-numbered year after 2015—

''(A) each dollar amount under paragraph (1)(A) shall be increased by the percent difference between the price index (as defined in section 315(c)(2)(A)) for the 12 months preceding the beginning of such calendar year and the price index for calendar year 2014;

''(B) each dollar amount so increased shall remain in effect for the 2-year period beginning on the first day following the date of the last general election in the year preceding the year in which the amount is increased and ending on the date of the next general election; and

''(C) if any amount after adjustment under subparagraph (A) is not a multiple of $100, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of $100.

''SEC. 523. MATCHING PAYMENTS FOR QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall pay to each participating candidate an amount equal to 600 percent of the amount of qualified small dollar contributions received by the candidate from individuals who are residents of the State in which such participating candidate is seeking election after the date on which such candidate is certified under section 515.

''(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate payments under subsection (a) with respect to any candidate shall not exceed the greater of—

''(1) 400 percent of the allocation such candidate is entitled to receive for such election under section 522 (determined without regard to subsection (c)(5) thereof); or

''(2) the percentage of such allocation determined by the Commission under section 531.

''(c) TIME OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall make payments under this section not later than 2 business days after the receipt of a report made under subsection (d).

''(d) REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each participating candidate shall file reports of receipts of qualified small dollar contributions at such times and in such manner as the Commission may by regulations prescribe.

''(2) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each report under this subsection shall disclose—

''(A) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate;

''(B) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate from a resident of the State in which the candidate is seeking election; and

''(C) the name, address, and occupation of each individual who made a qualified small dollar contribution to the candidate.

''(3) FREQUENCY OF REPORTS.—Reports under this subsection shall be made no more frequently than—

''(A) once every month until the date that is 90 days before the date of the election;

''(B) once every week after the period described in subparagraph (A) and until the date that is 21 days before the election; and

''(C) once every day after the period described in subparagraph (B).

''(4) LIMITATION ON REGULATIONS.—The Commission may not prescribe any regulations with respect to reporting under this subsection with respect to any election after the date that is 180 days before the date of such election.

''(e) APPEALS.—The Commission shall provide a written explanation with respect to any denial of any payment under this section and shall provide the opportunity for review and reconsideration within 5 business days of such denial.

''SEC. 524. POLITICAL ADVERTISING VOUCHERS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall establish and administer a voucher program for the purchase of airtime on broadcasting stations for political advertisements in accordance with the provisions of this section.

''(b) CANDIDATES.—The Commission shall only disburse vouchers under the program established under subsection (a) to participants certified pursuant to section 515 who have agreed in writing to keep and furnish to the Commission such records, books, and other information as it may require.

''(c) AMOUNTS.—The Commission shall disburse vouchers to each candidate certified under subsection (b) in an aggregate amount equal to the greater of—

''(1) $100,000 multiplied by the number of congressional districts in the State with respect to which such candidate is running for office; or

''(2) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

''(d) USE.—

''(1) EXCLUSIVE USE.—Vouchers disbursed by the Commission under this section may be used only for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements relating to a general election for the office of Senate by the participating candidate to which the vouchers were disbursed, except that—

''(A) a candidate may exchange vouchers with a political party under paragraph (2); and

''(B) a political party may use vouchers only to purchase broadcast airtime for political advertisements for generic party advertising (as defined by the Commission in regulations), to support candidates for State or local office in a general election, or to support participating candidates of the party in a general election for Federal office, but only if it discloses the value of the voucher used as an expenditure under section 315(d).

''(2) EXCHANGE WITH POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A participating candidate who receives a voucher under this section may transfer the right to use all or a portion of the value of the voucher to a committee of the political party of which the individual is a candidate (or, in the case of a participating candidate who is not a member of any political party, to a committee of the political party of that candidate's choice) in exchange for money in an amount equal to the cash value of the voucher or portion exchanged.

''(B) CONTINUATION OF CANDIDATE OBLIGATIONS.—The transfer of a voucher, in whole or in part, to a political party committee under this paragraph does not release the candidate from any obligation under the agreement made under subsection (b) or otherwise modify that agreement or its application to that candidate.

''(C) PARTY COMMITTEE OBLIGATIONS.—Any political party committee to which a voucher or portion thereof is transferred under subparagraph (A)—

''(i) shall account fully, in accordance with such requirements as the Commission may establish, for the receipt of the voucher; and

''(ii) may not use the transferred voucher or portion thereof for any purpose other than a purpose described in paragraph (1)(B).

''(D) VOUCHER AS A CONTRIBUTION UNDER FECA.—If a candidate transfers a voucher or any portion thereof to a political party committee under subparagraph (A)—

''(i) the value of the voucher or portion thereof transferred shall be treated as a contribution from the candidate to the committee, and from the committee to the candidate, for purposes of sections 302 and 304;

''(ii) the committee may, in exchange, provide to the candidate only funds subject to the prohibitions, limitations, and reporting requirements of title III of this Act; and

''(iii) the amount, if identified as a 'voucher exchange', shall not be considered a contribution for the purposes of sections 315 and 513.

''(e) VALUE; ACCEPTANCE; REDEMPTION.—

''(1) VOUCHER.—Each voucher disbursed by the Commission under this section shall have a value in dollars, redeemable upon presentation to the Commission, together with such documentation and other information as the Commission may require, for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

''(2) ACCEPTANCE.—A broadcasting station shall accept vouchers in payment for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

''(3) REDEMPTION.—The Commission shall redeem vouchers accepted by broadcasting stations under paragraph (2) upon presentation, subject to such documentation, verification, accounting, and application requirements as the Commission may impose to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the voucher redemption system.

''(4) EXPIRATION.—

''(A) CANDIDATES.—A voucher may only be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on the day before the date of the Federal election in connection with which it was issued and shall be null and void for any other use or purpose.

''(B) EXCEPTION FOR POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES.—A voucher held by a political party committee may be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on December 31st of the odd-numbered year following the year in which the voucher was issued by the Commission.

''(5) VOUCHER AS EXPENDITURE UNDER FECA.—The use of a voucher to purchase broadcast airtime constitutes an expenditure as defined in section 301(9)(A).

''(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) BROADCASTING STATION.—The term 'broadcasting station' has the meaning given that term by section 315(f)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934.

''(2) POLITICAL PARTY.—The term 'political party' means a major party or a minor party as defined in section 9002(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 9002 (3) or (4)).

''SUBTITLE D—ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

''SEC. 531. FAIR ELECTIONS OVERSIGHT BOARD.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Federal Election Commission an entity to be known as the 'Fair Elections Oversight Board'.

''(b) STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall be composed of 5 members appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, of whom—

''(A) 2 shall be appointed after consultation with the majority leader of the Senate;

''(B) 2 shall be appointed after consultation with the minority leader of the Senate; and

''(C) 1 shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the members appointed under subparagraphs (A) and (B).

''(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The members shall be individuals who are nonpartisan and, by reason of their education, experience, and attainments, exceptionally qualified to perform the duties of members of the Board.

''(B) PROHIBITION.—No member of the Board may be—

''(i) an employee of the Federal Government;

''(ii) a registered lobbyist; or

''(iii) an officer or employee of a political party or political campaign.

''(3) DATE.—Members of the Board shall be appointed not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

''(4) TERMS.—A member of the Board shall be appointed for a term of 5 years.

''(5) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Board shall be filled not later than 30 calendar days after the date on which the Board is given notice of the vacancy, in the same manner as the original appointment. The individual appointed to fill the vacancy shall serve only for the unexpired portion of the term for which the individual's predecessor was appointed.

''(6) CHAIRPERSON.—The Board shall designate a Chairperson from among the members of the Board.

''(c) DUTIES AND POWERS.—

''(1) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall have such duties and powers as the Commission may prescribe, including the power to administer the provisions of this title.

''(2) REVIEW OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—After each general election for Federal office, the Board shall conduct a comprehensive review of the Fair Elections financing program under this title, including—

''(i) the maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(11);

''(ii) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(10);

''(iii) the number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512 to qualify for allocations from the Fund;

''(iv) the amount of allocations from the Fund that candidates may receive under section 522;

''(v) the maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523;

''(vi) the amount and usage of vouchers under section 524;

''(vii) the overall satisfaction of participating candidates and the American public with the program; and

''(viii) such other matters relating to financing of Senate campaigns as the Board determines are appropriate.

''(B) CRITERIA FOR REVIEW.—In conducting the review under subparagraph (A), the Board shall consider the following:

''(i) QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Board shall consider whether the number and dollar amount of qualifying contributions required and maximum dollar amount for such qualifying contributions and qualified small dollar contributions strikes a balance regarding the importance of voter involvement, the need to assure adequate incentives for participating, and fiscal responsibility, taking into consideration the number of primary and general election participating candidates, the electoral performance of those candidates, program cost, and any other information the Board determines is appropriate.

''(ii) REVIEW OF PROGRAM BENEFITS.—The Board shall consider whether the totality of the amount of funds allowed to be raised by participating candidates (including through qualifying contributions and small dollar contributions), allocations from the Fund under sections 522, matching contributions under section 523, and vouchers under section 524 are sufficient for voters in each State to learn about the candidates to cast an informed vote, taking into account the historic amount of spending by winning candidates, media costs, primary election dates, and any other information the Board determines is appropriate.

''(C) ADJUSTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Based on the review conducted under subparagraph (A), the Board shall provide for the adjustments of the following amounts:

''(I) the maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(11)(C);

''(II) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(10)(A);

''(III) the number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512(a)(1);

''(IV) the base amount for candidates under section 522(d);

''(V) the maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523(b); and

''(VI) the dollar amount for vouchers under section 524(c).

''(ii) REGULATIONS.—The Commission shall promulgate regulations providing for the adjustments made by the Board under clause (i).

''(D) REPORT.—Not later than March 30 following any general election for Federal office, the Board shall submit a report to Congress on the review conducted under paragraph (1). Such report shall contain a detailed statement of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Board based on such review.

''(d) MEETINGS AND HEARINGS.—

''(1) MEETINGS.—The Board may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Board considers advisable to carry out the purposes of this Act.

''(2) QUORUM.—Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for purposes of voting, but a quorum is not required for members to meet and hold hearings.

''(e) REPORTS.—Not later than March 30, 2017, and every 2 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration a report documenting, evaluating, and making recommendations relating to the administrative implementation and enforcement of the provisions of this title.

''(f) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each member, other than the Chairperson, shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

''(B) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code.

''(2) PERSONNEL.—

''(A) DIRECTOR.—The Board shall have a staff headed by an Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be paid at a rate equivalent to a rate established for the Senior Executive Service under section 5382 of title 5, United States Code.

''(B) STAFF APPOINTMENT.—With the approval of the Chairperson, the Executive Director may appoint such personnel as the Executive Director and the Board determines to be appropriate.

''(C) ACTUARIAL EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—With the approval of the Chairperson, the Executive Director may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code.

''(D) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Upon the request of the Chairperson, the head of any Federal agency may detail, without reimbursement, any of the personnel of such agency to the Board to assist in carrying out the duties of the Board. Any such detail shall not interrupt or otherwise affect the civil service status or privileges of the Federal employee.

''(E) OTHER RESOURCES.—The Board shall have reasonable access to materials, resources, statistical data, and other information from the Library of Congress and other agencies of the executive and legislative branches of the Federal Government. The Chairperson of the Board shall make requests for such access in writing when necessary.

''(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this subtitle.

''SEC. 532. ADMINISTRATION PROVISIONS.

''The Commission shall prescribe regulations to carry out the purposes of this title, including regulations—

''(1) to establish procedures for—

''(A) verifying the amount of valid qualifying contributions with respect to a candidate;

''(B) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the raising of qualified small dollar contributions;

''(C) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the use of personal funds by participating candidates;

''(D) monitoring the use of allocations from the Fund and matching contributions under this title through audits or other mechanisms; and

''(E) the administration of the voucher program under section 524; and

''(2) regarding the conduct of debates in a manner consistent with the best practices of States that provide public financing for elections.

''SEC. 533. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES.

''(a) CIVIL PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.—If a candidate who has been certified as a participating candidate under section 515(a) accepts a contribution or makes an expenditure that is prohibited under section 513, the Commission shall assess a civil penalty against the candidate in an amount that is not more than 3 times the amount of the contribution or expenditure. Any amounts collected under this subsection shall be deposited into the Fund.

''(b) REPAYMENT FOR IMPROPER USE OF FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Commission determines that any benefit made available to a participating candidate under this title was not used as provided for in this title or that a participating candidate has violated any of the dates for remission of funds contained in this title, the Commission shall so notify the candidate and the candidate shall pay to the Fund an amount equal to—

''(A) the amount of benefits so used or not remitted, as appropriate; and

''(B) interest on any such amounts (at a rate determined by the Commission).

''(2) OTHER ACTION NOT PRECLUDED.—Any action by the Commission in accordance with this subsection shall not preclude enforcement proceedings by the Commission in accordance with section 309(a), including a referral by the Commission to the Attorney General in the case of an apparent knowing and willful violation of this title.''.

SEC. 103. PROHIBITION ON JOINT FUNDRAISING COMMITTEES.

Section 302(e) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 432(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) No authorized committee of a participating candidate (as defined in section 501) may establish a joint fundraising committee with a political committee other than an authorized committee of a candidate.''.

SEC. 104. EXCEPTION TO LIMITATION ON COORDINATED EXPENDITURES BY POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES WITH PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(d) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 441a(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking ''in the case of'' and inserting ''except as provided in paragraph (5), in the case of'' and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5)(A) The limitation under paragraph (3)(A) shall not apply with respect to any expenditure from a qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund.

''(B) In this paragraph, the term 'qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund' means a fund established by the national committee of a political party, or a State committee of a political party, including any subordinate committee of a State committee, for purposes of making expenditures in connection with the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), that only accepts qualified coordinated expenditure contributions.

''(C) In this paragraph, the term 'qualified coordinated expenditure contribution' means, with respect to the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), any contribution (or series of contributions)—

''(i) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

''(ii) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed $500 per election.''.

TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION

SEC. 201. BROADCASTS RELATING TO ALL SENATE CANDIDATES.

(a) LOWEST UNIT CHARGE; NATIONAL COMMITTEES.—Section 315(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''to such office'' in paragraph (1) and inserting ''to such office, or by a national committee of a political party on behalf of such candidate in connection with such campaign,''; and

(2) by inserting ''for pre-emptible use thereof'' after ''station'' in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1).

(b) PREEMPTION; AUDITS.—Section 315 of such Act (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively and moving them to follow the existing subsection (e);

(2) by redesignating the existing subsection (e) as subsection (c); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (c) (as redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

''(d) PREEMPTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), and notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (b)(1)(A), a licensee shall not preempt the use of a broadcasting station by a legally qualified candidate for Senate who has purchased and paid for such use.

''(2) CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND CONTROL OF LICENSEE.—If a program to be broadcast by a broadcasting station is preempted because of circumstances beyond the control of the station, any candidate or party advertising spot scheduled to be broadcast during that program shall be treated in the same fashion as a comparable commercial advertising spot.

''(e) AUDITS.—During the 30-day period preceding a primary election and the 60-day period preceding a general election, the Commission shall conduct such audits as it deems necessary to ensure that each broadcaster to which this section applies is allocating television broadcast advertising time in accordance with this section and section 312.''.

(c) REVOCATION OF LICENSE FOR FAILURE TO PERMIT ACCESS.—Section 312(a)(7) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 312(a)(7)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''or repeated'';

(2) by inserting ''or cable system'' after ''broadcasting station''; and

(3) by striking ''his candidacy'' and inserting ''the candidacy of the candidate, under the same terms, conditions, and business practices as apply to the most favored advertiser of the licensee''.

(d) STYLISTIC AMENDMENTS.—Section 315 of such Act (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) by striking ''the'' in subsection (e)(1), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), and inserting ''BROADCASTING STATION.—'';

(2) by striking ''the'' in subsection (e)(2), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), and inserting ''LICENSEE; STATION LICENSEE.—''; and

(3) by inserting ''REGULATIONS.—'' in subsection (f), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), before ''The Commission''.

SEC. 202. BROADCAST RATES FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)), as amended by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (2) and (3)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.—In the case of a participating candidate (as defined under section 501(9) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971), the charges made for the use of any broadcasting station for a television broadcast shall not exceed 80 percent of the lowest charge described in paragraph (1)(A) during—

''(A) the 45 days preceding the date of a primary or primary runoff election in which the candidate is opposed; and

''(B) the 60 days preceding the date of a general or special election in which the candidate is opposed.

''(4) RATE CARDS.—A licensee shall provide to a candidate for Senate a rate card that discloses—

''(A) the rate charged under this subsection; and

''(B) the method that the licensee uses to determine the rate charged under this subsection.''.

SEC. 203. FCC TO PRESCRIBE STANDARDIZED FORM FOR REPORTING CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN ADS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall initiate a rulemaking proceeding to establish a standardized form to be used by broadcasting stations, as defined in section 315(f)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(f)(1)), to record and report the purchase of advertising time by or on behalf of a candidate for nomination for election, or for election, to Federal elective office.

(b) CONTENTS.—The form prescribed by the Commission under subsection (a) shall require, broadcasting stations to report to the Commission and to the Federal Election Commission, at a minimum—

(1) the station call letters and mailing address;

(2) the name and telephone number of the station's sales manager (or individual with responsibility for advertising sales);

(3) the name of the candidate who purchased the advertising time, or on whose behalf the advertising time was purchased, and the Federal elective office for which he or she is a candidate;

(4) the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person responsible for purchasing broadcast political advertising for the candidate;

(5) notation as to whether the purchase agreement for which the information is being reported is a draft or final version; and

(6) the following information about the advertisement:

(A) The date and time of the broadcast.

(B) The program in which the advertisement was broadcast.

(C) The length of the broadcast airtime.

(c) INTERNET ACCESS.—In its rulemaking under subsection (a), the Commission shall require any broadcasting station required to file a report under this section that maintains an Internet website to make available a link to such reports on that website.

TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

SEC. 301. PETITION FOR CERTIORARI.

Section 307(a)(6) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 437d(a)(6)) is amended by inserting ''(including a proceeding before the Supreme Court on certiorari)'' after ''appeal''.

SEC. 302. FILING BY SENATE CANDIDATES WITH COMMISSION.

Section 302(g) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 432(g)) is amended to read as follows:

''(g) FILING WITH THE COMMISSION.—All designations, statements, and reports required to be filed under this Act shall be filed with the Commission.''.

SEC. 303. ELECTRONIC FILING OF FEC REPORTS.

Section 304(a)(11) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 434(a)(11)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''under this Act—'' and all that follows and inserting ''under this Act shall be required to maintain and file such designation, statement, or report in electronic form accessible by computers.'';

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''48 hours'' and all that follows through ''filed electronically)'' and inserting ''24 hours''; and

(3) by striking subparagraph (D).

TITLE IV—PARTICIPATION IN FUNDING OF ELECTIONS

SEC. 401. REFUNDABLE TAX CREDIT FOR SENATE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to refundable credits) is amended by inserting after section 36B the following new section:

''SEC. 36C. CREDIT FOR SENATE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this subtitle an amount equal to 50 percent of the qualified My Voice Federal Senate campaign contributions paid or incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year.

''(b) LIMITATIONS.—

''(1) DOLLAR LIMITATION.—The amount of qualified My Voice Federal Senate campaign contributions taken into account under subsection (a) for the taxable year shall not exceed $50 (twice such amount in the case of a joint return).

''(2) LIMITATION ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO FEDERAL SENATE CANDIDATES.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to any taxpayer for any taxable year if such taxpayer made aggregate contributions in excess of $300 during the taxable year to—

''(A) any single Federal Senate candidate, or

''(B) any political committee established and maintained by a national political party.

''(3) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to any taxpayer unless the taxpayer provides the Secretary with such information as the Secretary may require to verify the taxpayer's eligibility for the credit and the amount of the credit for the taxpayer.

''(c) QUALIFIED MY VOICE FEDERAL SENATE CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of this section, the term 'My Voice Federal Senate campaign contribution' means any contribution of cash by an individual to a Federal Senate candidate or to a political committee established and maintained by a national political party if such contribution is not prohibited under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.

''(d) FEDERAL SENATE CANDIDATE.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'Federal Senate candidate' means any candidate for election to the office of Senator.

''(2) TREATMENT OF AUTHORIZED COMMITTEES.—Any contribution made to an authorized committee of a Federal Senate candidate shall be treated as made to such candidate.

''(e) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a taxable year beginning after 2017, the $50 amount under subsection (b)(1) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

''(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

''(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, determined by substituting 'calendar year 2016' for 'calendar year 1992' in subparagraph (B) thereof.

''(2) ROUNDING.—If any amount as adjusted under subparagraph (A) is not a multiple of $5, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of $5.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 6211(b)(4)(A) of such Code is amended by inserting ''36C,'' after ''36B,''.

(2) Section 1324(b)(2) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''36C,'' after ''36B,''.

(3) The table of sections for subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 36B the following new item:

''Sec. 36C. Credit for Senate campaign contributions.''.

(c) FORMS.—The Secretary of the Treasury, or his designee, shall ensure that the credit for contributions to Federal Senate candidates allowed under section 36C of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section, may be claimed on Forms 1040EZ and 1040A.

(d) ADMINISTRATION.—At the request of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Federal Election Commission shall provide the Secretary of the Treasury with such information and other assistance as the Secretary may reasonably require to administer the credit allowed under section 36C of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2016.

TITLE V—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND REVENUE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after chapter 36 the following new chapter:

''CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

''Sec. 4501. Imposition of tax.

''SEC. 4501. IMPOSITION OF TAX.

''(a) TAX IMPOSED.—There is hereby imposed on any payment made to a qualified person pursuant to a contract with the Government of the United States a tax equal to 0.50 percent of the amount paid.

''(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate amount of tax imposed under subsection (a) for any calendar year shall not exceed $500,000.

''(c) QUALIFIED PERSON.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified person' means any person which—

''(1) is not a State or local government, a foreign nation, or an organization described in section 501(c)(3) which is exempt from taxation under section 501(a), and

''(2) has contracts with the Government of the United States with a value in excess of $10,000,000.

''(d) PAYMENT OF TAX.—The tax imposed by this section shall be paid by the person receiving such payment.

''(e) USE OF REVENUE GENERATED BY TAX.—It is the sense of the Senate that amounts equivalent to the revenue generated by the tax imposed under this chapter should be appropriated for the financing of a Fair Elections Fund and used for the public financing of Senate elections.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapter of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986

is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 36 the following:

''CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contracts entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 601. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or amendment made by this Act, or the application of a provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act and amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions and amendment to any person or circumstance, shall not be affected by the holding.

SEC. 602. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided for in this Act, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on January 1, 2017.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 355—CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN TO CEASE THE EXTRA-JUDICIAL RELEASE OF AFGHAN DETAINEES, CARRY OUT ITS COMMITMENTS PURSUANT TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING GOVERNING THE TRANSFER OF AFGHAN DETAINEES FROM THE UNITED STATES CUSTODY TO AFGHAN CONTROL AND TO UPHOLD THE AFGHAN RULE OF LAW WITH RESPECT TO THE REFERRAL AND DISPOSITION OF DETAINEES

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. LEVIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 355

Whereas, on March 9, 2012, Afghan General Abdul Rahim Wardak and United States Marine General John Allen signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the United States reaffirmed its commitment to transfer Afghan nationals detained by the United States Armed Forces at the Detention Facility in Parwan (DFIP) to Afghanistan, provided that the Government of Afghanistan establish an administrative detention regime under its domestic law and comply with its international obligations with respect to due process;

Whereas, on March 25, 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Afghanistan called for the creation of an Afghan Review Board (ARB) to convene under Afghan law to determine the disposition of all Afghan detainees;

Whereas, in the event of a dispute over the disposition of detainees, the March 2013 Memorandum of Understanding also commits the Government of Afghanistan to exchange views and information between the Minister of Defense and the Commander of United States Forces, Afghanistan before any detainee is released;

Whereas the Government of Afghanistan has announced the imminent release of 65 dangerous individuals from the DFIP without referral to the Afghan justice system, despite evidence showing these detainees have engaged in violent crimes against the Afghan people and under protest from United States Forces, Afghanistan;

Whereas detainees from this group of 65 are directly linked to attacks wounding or killing 32 United States or Coalition Forces and attacks wounding or killing 23 Afghan National Security Forces or Afghan civilians;

Whereas the United States Government has declassified and provided hundreds of pages of evidence and investigative leads to the ARB;

Whereas the Justice Center in Parwan has successfully adjudicated more than 3,000 criminal cases of individuals who committed acts of terror against Coalition Forces, Afghan National Security Forces, and the people of Afghanistan;

Whereas there is a legitimate force protection concern for the lives of Coalition Forces and Afghan National Security Forces if any disputed individual is released, since the primary weapon of choice is the improvised explosive device, which also poses a significant threat to Afghan civilians;

Whereas there is evidence that some detainees already released by the ARB have rejoined the fight against Coalition Forces;

Whereas, despite evidence to the contrary, President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai stated the prisoners set to be released are innocent and must be released;

Whereas releasing the dangerous detainees deprives the people of Afghanistan of their day in court and undermines the rule of law in the country;

Whereas the release of detainees under these conditions is not authorized, and the ARB is performing an extra-judicial function, contrary to the rule of law in Afghanistan; and

Whereas this extrajudicial action harms the prospective Bilateral Security Agreement between the United States and Afghanistan for post-2014 United States military presence in the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) insists President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai honor the terms included in the Memorandum of Understanding, dated March 25, 2013;

(2) insists that if the Afghan Review Board (ARB) will not follow the conditions set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding, that the ARB shall be dismantled and the National Directorate for Security (NDS) and Afghan prosecutors shall determine how to handle the remaining detainees;

(3) urges close and continuing communication between the Minister of Defense and the Commander of United States Forces, Afghanistan prior to the release of any detainee;

(4) urges the Government of Afghanistan to cease the extra-judicial release of detainees and instead refer the dangerous individuals and the remainder of the ARB cases for prosecution at the Justice Center in Parwan or for investigation by the NDS; and

(5) calls on the Secretary of State to consider the Government of Afghanistan's adherence to existing detainee memoranda of understanding in implementing the certification requirements for assistance for Afghanistan under section 7044(3) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2014 (division K of Public Law 113–76).

SENATE RESOLUTION 356—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 13, 2014, AS ''$2.13 DAY''

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 356

Whereas $2.13 per hour is the Federal minimum wage that an employer is required to pay a tipped employee (as defined in section 3(t) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(t))) as a cash wage under section 3(m) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 203(m)) (referred to in this preamble as the ''Federal minimum wage for tipped employees'');

Whereas when the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee was established in 1966, such wage was linked to the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1));

Whereas while the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee increased in 2009, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee has not changed in more than 20 years;

Whereas in the 1980s, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee reached 60 percent of the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee, and in 2014, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee is only 29 percent of the $7.25 per hour Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee;

Whereas tipped employees work in many occupations, including working as restaurant servers, airport attendants, hotel workers, valets, and salon workers;

Whereas $2.13 per hour is such a low wage that tipped employees are dependent on the discretional contributions of consumers for the majority of their income;

Whereas 7 States have 1 minimum wage for both tipped employees and covered nonexempt employees, and the restaurant industry has continued to thrive in such States;

Whereas in States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee that is higher than $2.13 per hour, the poverty rate for tipped employees is lower than the poverty rate for tipped employees in States without such a higher minimum wage for tipped employees;

Whereas restaurant servers have a poverty rate that is 3 times that of the general workforce and are nearly 2 times more likely to depend on the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) than the general workforce;

Whereas States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee of $2.13 per hour have a poverty rate for employees of color that is nearly double that of States with the highest minimum wage for a tipped employee;

Whereas women account for 66 percent of all tipped employees and 71 percent of restaurant servers;

Whereas 1/3 of tipped employees are parents who work hard to support their families;

Whereas the Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that from 2008 to 2018, the food preparation and serving sector, as defined by the Bureau, would add more than 1,000,000 jobs;

Whereas such food preparation and serving sector has the lowest median wages of the top 20 growth sectors; and

Whereas raising the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee would provide hardworking people in the United States with more just wages, lift families in the United States out of poverty, and provide economic security to tipped employees in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate designates Thursday, February 13, 2014, as ''$2.13 Day''; and

(2) it is the sense of the Senate that the cash wage that an employer is required to pay a tipped employee (as defined in section 3(t) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(t))) under section 3(m) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 203(m)) should be increased to 70 percent of the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)).

SENATE RESOLUTION 357—EXPRESSING CONCERN OF UNDEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND THE ABUSE OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS IN UKRAINE

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 357

Whereas the political crisis that has engulfed Ukraine reflects the people's desire for a democratic state which rejects corruption and abides by the rule of law;

Whereas Ukraine is a participating State of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and has made commitments to respect the human rights of its citizens;

Whereas, in 2009, Ukraine joined the European Union's Eastern Partnership initiative, pledging to uphold the shared values of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine committed to judicial and electoral reforms to align with those of the European Union in preparation for the signing of an Association Agreement with the European Union;

Whereas, on Thursday, November 21, 2013, Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovych announced that Ukraine would not sign an Association Agreement with the European Union, causing thousands of Ukrainians to assemble in Kiev's Maidan Square in peaceful protest;

Whereas, on November 30 and December 11, 2013, Ukrainian paramilitary police used excessive force against peaceful demonstrators in Kiev's Maidan Square;

Whereas, on January 16, 2014, the parliament of Ukraine passed anti-protest legislation restricting the right to peaceful assembly and the exercise of free speech, constraining independent media, and inhibiting the operation of nongovernmental organizations;

Whereas it is unclear whether these measures were passed legally, or have subsequently been entirely repealed;

Whereas, on January 20, 2014, Freedom House stated it is ''deeply concerned by Ukrainian authorities' targeted violence against journalists during public protests in Kiev – demonstrations spurred by President Viktor Yanukovych's signing into law measures that tightly limit public protests, among other rollbacks on freedom'';

Whereas, on January 22, 2014, the actions of authorities in Ukraine resulted in the death of two protestors, including one who was ''brutally beaten by two riot police officers,'' according to Amnesty International;

Whereas, on January 30, 2014, Freedom House stated that ''at least five Euromaidan activists are still reported missing, some since November 30, 2013 when anti-government demonstrations intensified'';

Whereas there are substantiated reports of kidnappings, including the abduction and torture of opposition activist Dmitrii Bulatov, and evidence of police brutality carried out against protesters and other activists, and the Ukrainian nongovernmental organization EuroMaidan SOS claims that as many as 27 people may be missing;

Whereas, on January 31, 2014, Human Rights Watch found that ''Ukrainian police assaulted and injured dozens of journalists and medical workers while trying to disperse street fighters and protesters in Kiev'' and called upon the international community to ''press Ukraine to investigate serious human rights violations and prosecute those responsible in accordance with international due process standards'';

Whereas, on January 31, 2014, Freedom House reported that ''more than 40 journalists have been injured covering the demonstrations'' and that ''[m]any of the reporters were attacked while wearing visible identification of their status as journalists'';

Whereas the Government of Ukraine has continued to intimidate and use violence against journalists and others expressing political opinions critical of the current government; and

Whereas, on January 7, 2014, the United States Senate passed a resolution expressing support for the people of Ukraine in light of public resistance to President Yanukovych's decision not to sign an Association Agreement with the European Union: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the President should increase democracy and human rights programming in Ukraine to the extent possible;

(2) the United States Government should immediately review security assistance funding for any organization in Ukraine involved in repressive efforts that violate the civil or human rights of the people of Ukraine;

(3) the United States Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) should utilize the resources and mechanisms of the OSCE to monitor and address human rights concerns, including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and Representative on Freedom of Media (RFM);

(4) the United States Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council should address Ukraine appropriately to bodies such as the United Nations Human Rights Council;

(5) the Department of State should immediately consider the imposition of targeted sanctions, including visa bans and asset freezes, against the perpetrators of state-sanctioned violence in Ukraine against peaceful protesters, journalists, and other members of civil society;

(6) the United States Government should urge authorities in Ukraine to locate missing persons and release all political prisoners, including former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and hold perpetrators of extra-legal measures accountable;

(7) the United States Government should work closely with the European Union to strengthen and support its efforts in Ukraine; and

(8) the United States Government endorses the statement of the European Union's Council on Foreign Affairs of February 10, 2014, which stated, ''A new and inclusive government, constitutional reform bringing back more balance of powers, and preparations for free and fair presidential elections would contribute to bringing Ukraine back on a sustainable path of reforms.''

SENATE RESOLUTION 358—COMMENDING THE SEATTLE SEAHAWKS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL XLVIII AND THE 12TH MAN FOR THEIR CRITICAL SUPPORT

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 358

Whereas on February 2, 2014, the Seattle Seahawks won Super Bowl XLVIII with a commanding 43–8 victory over the Denver Broncos;

Whereas Super Bowl XLVIII is the first Super Bowl Championship won by the Seahawks franchise;

Whereas Seahawks coach Pete Carroll is only the third coach in the history of football to win both a Super Bowl in the National Football League (NFL) and a National Championship in college football;

Whereas Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson is the third-youngest starting quarterback to win the Super Bowl;

Whereas the Seahawks had a 13-3 record for the 2013 regular season, giving the Seahawks the best regular season record in the National Football Conference and tying them with the Broncos for the best regular season record in the NFL;

Whereas in December 1984, the Seahawks retired the number 12 in honor of their fan base, who are among the loudest, proudest, and most impactful group of fans in sports, which is known as ''the 12th Man'';

Whereas the 12th Man is critical to the home field advantage of the Seahawks at CenturyLink Field, holds a world record for crowd noise at 137.6 decibels, and has twice triggered measurable earthquakes on the Richter Scale;

Whereas the Seahawks have the top-ranked defense in the NFL, led by an unstoppable defensive line and cornerback Richard Sherman and the ''Legion of Boom'' secondary;

Whereas Seattle linebacker Malcolm Smith was named Most Valuable Player (MVP) of Super Bowl XLVIII after making several key plays, including a 69-yard interception return for a touchdown in the second quarter;

Whereas Smith is the first defensive player to be named Super Bowl MVP since Super Bowl XXXVII;

Whereas the Seahawks defense contributed to a Broncos safety that was the fastest score in Super Bowl history and helped the Seahawks hold the lead throughout the game despite the Broncos having the highest-scoring offense in NFL history;

Whereas Super Bowl XLVIII was the most-watched television show in United States history, with an average audience of 111,500,000 people tuning in;

Whereas Seahawks owner Paul G. Allen and team coaches, staff, players, and all of their families and supporters should be commended for their dedication to supporting communities throughout the State of Washington with generous charity and advocacy work on behalf of those less fortunate; and

Whereas on February 5, 2014, 700,000 fans packed the streets of Seattle to celebrate the Seahawks victory: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates—

(A) the Seattle Seahawks for their victory in Super Bowl XLVIII, the first National Football League championship brought home to the Pacific Northwest;

(B) Seahawks owner Paul G. Allen and the Seahawks coaching, management, and support staff;

(C) the Seahawks 12th Man, for being among the most loyal and loudest sports fans in the world; and

(D) the Denver Broncos and quarterback Peyton Manning on a historic season; and

(2) requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) Seahawks owner and Chairman Paul G. Allen;

(B) Seahawks President Peter McLoughlin; and

(C) Seahawks Executive Vice President of Football Operations and Head Coach Pete Carroll.

SENATE RESOLUTION 359—TO CONSTITUTE THE MAJORITY PARTY'S MEMBERSHIP ON CERTAIN COMMITTEES FOR THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS, OR UNTIL THEIR SUCCESSORS ARE CHOSEN

Mr. REID submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 359

Resolved, That the following shall constitute the majority party's membership on the following committees for the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: Ms. Stabenow (Chairman), Mr. Leahy, Mr. Harkin, Mr. Brown, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. Bennet, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Donnelly, Ms. Heitkamp, Mr. Casey, Mr. Walsh.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION: Mr. Rockefeller (Chairman), Mrs. Boxer, Mr. Nelson, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Pryor, Mrs. McCaskill, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. Begich, Mr. Blumenthal, Mr. Schatz, Mr. Markey, Mr. Booker, Mr. Walsh.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES: Ms. Landrieu (Chairman), Mr. Wyden, Mr. Johnson of South Dakota, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Sanders, Ms. Stabenow, Mr. Udall of Colorado, Mr. Franken, Mr. Manchin, Mr. Schatz, Mr. Heinrich, Ms. Baldwin.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Mrs. Boxer (Chairman), Mr. Carper, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Whitehouse, Mr. Udall of New Mexico, Mr. Merkley, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Booker, Mr. Markey.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE: Mr. Wyden (Chairman), Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Schumer, Ms. Stabenow, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Menendez, Mr. Carper, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Brown, Mr. Bennet, Mr. Casey, Mr. Warner.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Schumer (Chairman), Mrs. Feinstein, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Pryor, Mr. Udall of New Mexico, Mr. Warner, Mr. Leahy, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. King, Mr. Walsh.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Ms. Cantwell (Chairman), Mr. Levin, Ms. Landrieu, Mr. Pryor, Mr. Cardin, Mrs. Shaheen, Mrs. Hagan, Ms. Heitkamp, Mr. Markey, Mr. Booker.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS: Mr. Tester (Chairman), Mr. Johnson of South Dakota, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Udall of New Mexico, Mr. Franken, Mr. Begich, Mr. Schatz, Ms. Heitkamp.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING: Mr. Nelson (Chairman), Mr. Casey, Mrs. McCaskill, Mr. Whitehouse, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Manchin, Mr. Blumenthal, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Donnelly, Ms. Warren, Mr. Walsh.

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE: Ms. Klobuchar (Vice Chairman), Mr. Casey, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Heinrich, Mr. Pryor.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2741. Mr. REID (for Mr. NELSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1254, to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes.

SA 2742. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care.

SA 2743. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2741. Mr. REID (for Mr. NELSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1254, to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 2, line 25, insert ''and Prevention'' after ''Centers for Disease Control''.

SA 2742. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care; as follows:

Beginning on page 2, line 9, strike ''important'' and all that follows through line 2 on page 3, and insert the following: ''importance of both—

''(A) being humane and compassionate; and

''(B) providing technical expertise.''.

SA 2743. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care; as follows:

In the first whereas clause of the preamble, strike ''as reflected'' and all that follows through ''their families''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014 at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate office building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''MAP–21 Reauthorization: The Economic Importance of Maintaining Federal Investments in our Transportation Infrastructure.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014 at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Fisheries Treaties and Port State Measures Agreements.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. 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 February 12, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Extreme Weather Events: The Costs of Not Being Prepared.''

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the sessionof the Senate on February 12, 2014, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Indian Law and Order Commission Report: ''A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on February 12, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Report of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board on Reforms to the Section 215 Telephone Records Program and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.''

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

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Bipartisan Support for Improving U.S. Elections: An Overview from the Presidential Commission on Election Administration.''

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

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room 428A Russell Senate Office Building.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Energy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING AND THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet for a joint hearing during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, to conduct a hearing entitled ''In Search of a Second Act: The Challenges and Advantages of Senior Entrepreneurship,'' in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building beginning at 10 a.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Maj. Leslie L. Semrau, a U.S. Air Force officer, who is currently serving as my defense legislative fellow this year, be granted floor privileges for the duration of S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 597, 598, 601, 602, 603, with the exception of COL Mark A. Baird and COL Robert W. Stanley II; and Nos. 604, 605, with the exception of COL Andrew E. Salas; No. 606, with the exception of BG Jon K. Kelk; and Nos. 607, 608, 609, 610, and 611, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force and Army; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; 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 any of the nominations; that any related statements 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.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Brad R. Carson, of Oklahoma, to be Under Secretary of the Army.

William A. LaPlante, Jr., of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

IN THE AIR FORCE

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. William D. Cobetto

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 major general

Brig. Gen. Bart O. Iddins

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

Colonel Roy-Alan C. Agustin
Colonel Robert G. Armfield
Colonel Dieter E. Bareihs
Colonel Mitchel H. Butikofer
Colonel Mark D. Camerer
Colonel Douglas A. Cox
Colonel Stephen L. Davis
Colonel Eric T. Fick
Colonel Keith M. Givens
Colonel Paul H. Guemmer
Colonel Gregory M. Guillot
Colonel Gregory M. Gutterman
Colonel Darren E. Hartford
Colonel David W. Hicks
Colonel Brian T. Kelly
Colonel David A. Krumm
Colonel Peter J. Lambert
Colonel Evan M. Miller
Colonel Thomas E. Murphy
Colonel David S. Nahom
Colonel Mary F. O'Brien
Colonel Stephen W. Oliver, Jr.
Colonel Scott L. Pleus
Colonel John T. Rauch, Jr.
Colonel Christopher M. Short
Colonel Kirk W. Smith
Colonel Mark E. Weatherington
Colonel Stephen C. Williams

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

Colonel Dennis J. Gallegos
Colonel David D. Hamlar, Jr.
Colonel John S. Tuohy

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

Colonel Paul D. Jacobs
Colonel Timothy P. O'Brien

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

Brigadier General Cassie A. Strom
Brigadier General Kenneth W. Wisian

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

Brigadier General Daryl L. Bohac
Brigadier General Robert M. Branyon
Brigadier General Michael B. Compton
Brigadier General James E. Daniel, Jr.
Brigadier General Matthew J. Dzialo
Brigadier General Richard N. Harris, Jr.
Brigadier General Worthe S. Holt, Jr.
Brigadier General Gary W. Keefe
Brigadier General David T. Kelly
Brigadier General Donald A. McGregor
Brigadier General Robert L. Shannon, Jr.
Brigadier General Robert S. Williams

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 major general

Brigadier General Christopher J. Bence
Brigadier General Jack L. Briggs, II
Brigadier General David J. Buck
Brigadier General Thomas A. Bussiere
Brigadier General Stephen A. Clark
Brigadier General Stephen T. Denker
Brigadier General John L. Dolan
Brigadier General Michael E. Fortney
Brigadier General Peter E. Gersten
Brigadier General Gina M. Grosso
Brigadier General Jerry D. Harris, Jr.
Brigadier General Daryl J. Hauck
Brigadier General John M. Hicks
Brigadier General John P. Horner
Brigadier General James R. Marrs
Brigadier General Lawrence M. Martin, Jr.
Brigadier General John K. McMullen
Brigadier General Bradford J. Shwedo
Brigadier General Jay B. Silveria
Brigadier General Linda R. Urrutia-Varhall
Brigadier General Jacqueline D. Van Ovost
Brigadier General Mark W. Westergren

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. Paul W. Tibbets, IV

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army 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

Lt. Gen. David D. Halverson

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624, 3037, and 3064:

To be brigadier general, judge advocate general's corps

Col. Stuart W. Risch

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE—C–PN

PN1303 AIR FORCE nomination of Teresa G. Paris, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1304 AIR FORCE nomination of Joel K. Warren, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1305 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning JEFFREY P. TAN, and ending CRISTALLE A. COX, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1306 AIR FORCE nominations (17) beginning ROBERT D. COXWELL, and ending SCOT L. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1328 AIR FORCE nominations (14) beginning THERESE A. BOHUSCH, and ending JAMES A. STEPHENSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1331 AIR FORCE nominations (49) beginning RICHARD T. BARKER, and ending IAN P. WIECHERT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1333 AIR FORCE nominations (77) beginning JENARA L. ALLEN, and ending DERRICK A. ZECH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1334 AIR FORCE nominations (123) beginning ERIN E. ARTZ, and ending TODD K. ZUBER, which nominations were received by

the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1336 AIR FORCE nominations (276) beginning ADAM L. ACKERMAN, and ending KRISTEN P. ZELIGS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

IN THE ARMY—C–PN

PN1307 ARMY nomination of David W. Bryant, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1308 ARMY nominations (14) beginning JOSEPH B. BERGER, III, and ending WILLIAM D. SMOOT, III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1337 ARMY nominations (29) beginning JOSEPH A. ANDERSON, and ending D011695, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1338 ARMY nominations (67) beginning VICTOR M. ANDA, and ending JOSHUA A. WORLEY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1339 ARMY nominations (159) beginning TRACY K. ABENOJA, and ending DANIEL J. YOURK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1340 ARMY nominations (185) beginning HARRIS A. ABBASI, and ending DAVID M. ZUPANCIC, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1360 ARMY nominations (2) beginning STEPHEN E. FORSYTH, JR., and ending ERIC J. FRYE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 16, 2014.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, with the concurrence of Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 561; that there be 20 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of that time the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion 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 related statements be printed in the RECORD; and 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.

AMENDING THE HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2013

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 248.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1254) to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Nelson amendment which is at the desk be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The amendment (No. 2741) was agreed to, as follows:

On page 2, line 25, insert ''and Prevention'' after 2 ''Centers for Disease Control''.

The bill (S. 1254), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1254

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 ''Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013.''

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO THE HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL ACT OF 1998.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever 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 Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (16 U.S.C. 1451 note).

SEC. 3. INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS AND HYPOXIA.

Section 603(a) is amended—

(1) by striking ''the following representatives from'' and inserting ''a representative from'';

(2) in paragraph (11), by striking ''and'';

(3) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (13);

(4) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

''(12) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and''; and

(5) in paragraph (13), as redesignated, by striking ''such''.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA PROGRAM.

The Act is amended by inserting after section 603 the following:

''SEC. 603A. NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA PROGRAM.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Under Secretary, acting through the Task Force, shall establish and maintain a national harmful algal bloom and hypoxia program, including—

''(1) a statement of objectives, including understanding, detecting, predicting, controlling, mitigating, and responding to marine and freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events; and

''(2) the comprehensive research plan and action strategy under section 603B.

''(b) PERIODIC REVISION.—The Task Force shall periodically review and revise the Program, as necessary.

''(c) TASK FORCE FUNCTIONS.—The Task Force shall—

''(1) coordinate interagency review of the objectives and activities of the Program;

''(2) expedite the interagency review process by ensuring timely review and dispersal of required reports and assessments under this title;

''(3) support the implementation of the Action Strategy, including the coordination and integration of the research of all Federal programs, including ocean and Great Lakes science and management programs and centers, that address the chemical, biological, and physical components of marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(4) support the development of institutional mechanisms and financial instruments to further the objectives and activities of the Program;

''(5) review the Program's distribution of Federal funding to address the objectives and activities of the Program;

''(6) promote the development of new technologies for predicting, monitoring, and mitigating harmful algal bloom and hypoxia conditions; and

''(7) establish such interagency working groups as it considers necessary.

''(d) LEAD FEDERAL AGENCY.—Except as provided in subsection (h), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall have primary responsibility for administering the Program.

''(e) PROGRAM DUTIES.—In administering the Program, the Under Secretary shall—

''(1) promote the Program;

''(2) prepare work and spending plans for implementing the research and activities identified under the Action Strategy;

''(3) administer merit-based, competitive grant funding—

''(A) to maintain and enhance baseline monitoring programs established by the Program;

''(B) to support the projects maintained and established by the Program; and

''(C) to address the research and management needs and priorities identified in the Action Strategy;

''(4) coordinate and work cooperatively with regional, State, tribal, and local government agencies and programs that address marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(5) coordinate with the Secretary of State to support international efforts on marine and freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia information sharing, research, prediction, mitigation, control, and response activities;

''(6) identify additional research, development, and demonstration needs and priorities relating to monitoring, prevention, control, mitigation, and response to marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, including methods and technologies to protect the ecosystems affected by marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(7) integrate, coordinate, and augment existing education programs to improve public understanding and awareness of the causes, impacts, and mitigation efforts for marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(8) facilitate and provide resources to train State and local coastal and water resource managers in the methods and technologies for monitoring, preventing, controlling, and mitigating marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(9) support regional efforts to control and mitigate outbreaks through—

''(A) communication of the contents of the Action Strategy and maintenance of online data portals for other information about harmful algal blooms and hypoxia to State, tribal, and local stakeholders; and

''(B) overseeing the development, review, and periodic updating of the Action Strategy;

''(10) convene at least 1 meeting of the Task Force each year; and

''(11) perform such other tasks as may be delegated by the Task Force.

''(f) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES.—The Under Secretary shall—

''(1) maintain and enhance the existing competitive programs at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration relating to harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(2) carry out marine and Great Lakes harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events response activities;

''(3) establish new programs and infrastructure, as necessary, to develop and enhance critical observations, monitoring, modeling, data management, information dissemination, and operational forecasts relevant to harmful algal blooms and hypoxia events;

''(4) enhance communication and coordination among Federal agencies carrying out marine and freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia activities and research;

''(5) to the greatest extent practicable, leverage existing resources and expertise available from local research universities and institutions; and

''(6) increase the availability to appropriate public and private entities of—

''(A) analytical facilities and technologies;

''(B) operational forecasts; and

''(C) reference and research materials.

''(g) COOPERATIVE EFFORTS.—The Under Secretary shall work cooperatively and avoid duplication of effort with other offices, centers, and programs within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, other agencies on the Task Force, and States, tribes, and nongovernmental organizations concerned with marine and freshwater issues to coordinate harmful algal bloom and hypoxia (and related) activities and research.

''(h) FRESHWATER.—With respect to the freshwater aspects of the Program, the Administrator, through the Task Force, shall carry out the duties otherwise assigned to the Under Secretary under this section, except the activities described in subsection (f).

''(1) PARTICIPATION.—The Administrator's participation under this section shall include—

''(A) research on the ecology and impacts of freshwater harmful algal blooms; and

''(B) forecasting and monitoring of and event response to freshwater harmful algal blooms in lakes, rivers, estuaries (including their tributaries), and reservoirs.

''(2) NONDUPLICATION.—The Administrator shall ensure that activities carried out under this title focus on new approaches to addressing freshwater harmful algal blooms and are not duplicative of existing research and development programs authorized by this title or any other law.

''(i) INTEGRATED COASTAL AND OCEAN OBSERVATION SYSTEM.—The collection of monitoring and observation data under this title shall comply with all data standards and protocols developed pursuant to the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (33 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.). Such data shall be made available through the system established under that Act.''.

SEC. 5. COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH PLAN AND ACTION STRATEGY.

The Act, as amended by section 4 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 603A the following:

''SEC. 603B. COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH PLAN AND ACTION STRATEGY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Under Secretary, through the Task Force, shall develop and submit to Congress a comprehensive research plan and action strategy to address marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia. The Action Strategy shall identify—

''(1) the specific activities to be carried out by the Program and the timeline for carrying out those activities;

''(2) the roles and responsibilities of each Federal agency in the Task Force in carrying out the activities under paragraph (1); and

''(3) the appropriate regions and subregions requiring specific research and activities to address local, State, and regional harmful algal blooms and hypoxia.

''(b) REGIONAL FOCUS.—The regional and subregional parts of the Action Strategy shall identify—

''(1) regional priorities for ecological, economic, and social research on issues related to the impacts of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(2) research, development, and demonstration activities needed to develop and advance technologies and techniques for minimizing the occurrence of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia and improving capabilities to detect, predict, monitor, control, mitigate, respond to, and remediate harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(3) ways to reduce the duration and intensity of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, including deployment of response technologies in a timely manner;

''(4) research and methods to address human health dimensions of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(5) mechanisms, including the potential costs and benefits of those mechanisms, to protect ecosystems that may be or have been affected by harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events;

''(6) mechanisms by which data, information, and products may be transferred between the Program and the State, tribal, and local governments and research entities;

''(7) communication and information dissemination methods that State, tribal, and local governments may undertake to educate and inform the public concerning harmful algal blooms and hypoxia; and

''(8) roles that Federal agencies may have to assist in the implementation of the Action Strategy, including efforts to support local and regional scientific assessments under section 603(e).

''(c) UTILIZING AVAILABLE STUDIES AND INFORMATION.—In developing the Action Strategy, the Under Secretary shall utilize existing research, assessments, reports, and program activities, including—

''(1) those carried out under existing law; and

''(2) other relevant peer-reviewed and published sources.

''(d) DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION STRATEGY.—In developing the Action Strategy, the Under Secretary shall, as appropriate—

''(1) coordinate with—

''(A) State coastal management and planning officials;

''(B) tribal resource management officials; and

''(C) water management and watershed officials from both coastal States and noncoastal States with water sources that drain into water bodies affected by harmful algal blooms and hypoxia; and

''(2) consult with—

''(A) public health officials;

''(B) emergency management officials;

''(C) science and technology development institutions;

''(D) economists;

''(E) industries and businesses affected by marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

''(F) scientists with expertise concerning harmful algal blooms or hypoxia from academic or research institutions; and

''(G) other stakeholders.

''(e) FEDERAL REGISTER.—The Under Secretary shall publish the Action Strategy in the Federal Register.

''(f) PERIODIC REVISION.—The Under Secretary, in coordination and consultation with the individuals and entities under subsection (d), shall periodically review and revise the Action Strategy prepared under this section, as necessary.''.

SEC. 6. REPORTING.

Section 603 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date the Action Strategy is submitted under section 603B, the Under Secretary shall submit a report to Congress that describes—

''(1) the proceedings of the annual Task Force meetings;

''(2) the activities carried out under the Program, including the regional and subregional parts of the Action Strategy;

''(3) the budget related to the activities under paragraph (2);

''(4) the progress made on implementing the Action Strategy; and

''(5) any need to revise or terminate research and activities under the Program.''.

SEC. 7. NORTHERN GULF OF MEXICO HYPOXIA.

Section 604 is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 604. NORTHERN GULF OF MEXICO HYPOXIA.

''(a) INITIAL PROGRESS REPORTS.—Beginning not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, and biennially thereafter, the Administrator, through the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force, shall submit a progress report to the appropriate congressional committees and the President that describes the progress made by activities directed by the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force and carried out or funded by the Environmental Protection Agency and other State and Federal partners toward attainment of the goals of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan 2008.

''(b) CONTENTS.—Each report required under this section shall—

''(1) assess the progress made toward nutrient load reductions, the response of the hypoxic zone and water quality throughout the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin, and the economic and social effects;

''(2) evaluate lessons learned; and

''(3) recommend appropriate actions to continue to implement or, if necessary, revise the strategy set forth in the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan 2008.''.

SEC. 8. GREAT LAKES HYPOXIA AND HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.

Section 605 is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 605. GREAT LAKES HYPOXIA AND HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.

''(a) INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Task Force, in accordance with the authority under section 603, shall complete and submit to the Congress and the President an integrated assessment that examines the causes, consequences, and approaches to reduce hypoxia and harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes, including the status of and gaps within current research, monitoring, management, prevention, response, and control activities by—

''(1) Federal agencies;

''(2) State agencies;
''(3) regional research consortia;
''(4) academia;
''(5) private industry; and
''(6) nongovernmental organizations.
''(b) PLAN.—
''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Task Force shall develop and submit to the Congress a plan, based on the integrated assessment under subsection (a), for reducing, mitigating, and controlling hypoxia and harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes.
''(2) CONTENTS.—The plan shall—
''(A) address the monitoring needs identified in the integrated assessment under subsection (a);
''(B) develop a timeline and budgetary requirements for deployment of future assets;
''(C) identify requirements for the development and verification of Great Lakes hypoxia and harmful algal bloom models, including—
''(i) all assumptions built into the models; and
''(ii) data quality methods used to ensure the best available data are utilized; and
''(D) describe efforts to improve the assessment of the impacts of hypoxia and harmful algal blooms by—
''(i) characterizing current and past biological conditions in ecosystems affected by hypoxia and harmful algal blooms; and
''(ii) quantifying effects, including economic effects, at the population and community levels.
''(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the plan, the Task Force shall—
''(A) consult with State and local governments and representatives from academic, agricultural, industry, and other stakeholder groups;
''(B) consult with relevant Canadian agencies;
''(C) ensure that the plan complements and does not duplicate activities conducted by other Federal or State agencies;
''(D) identify critical research for reducing, mitigating, and controlling hypoxia events and their effects;
''(E) evaluate cost-effective, incentive-based partnership approaches;
''(F) utilize existing research, assessments, reports, and program activities;
''(G) publish a summary of the proposed plan in the Federal Register at least 180 days prior to submitting the completed plan to Congress; and
''(H) after submitting the completed plan to Congress, provide biennial progress reports on the activities toward achieving the objectives of the plan.''.

SEC. 9. APPLICATION WITH OTHER LAWS.

The Act is amended by adding after section 606 the following:

''SEC. 607. EFFECT ON OTHER FEDERAL AUTHORITY.

''Nothing in this title supersedes or limits the authority of any agency to carry out its responsibilities and missions under other laws.''.

SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS; CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Act, as amended by section 9 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 607 the following:

''SEC. 608. DEFINITIONS.

''In this title:
''(1) ACTION STRATEGY.—The term 'Action Strategy' means the comprehensive research plan and action strategy established under section 603B.
''(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.
''(3) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM.—The term 'harmful algal bloom' means marine and freshwater phytoplankton that proliferate to high concentrations, resulting in nuisance conditions or harmful impacts on marine and aquatic ecosystems, coastal communities, and human health through the production of toxic compounds or other biological, chemical, and physical impacts of the algae outbreak.
''(4) HYPOXIA.—The term 'hypoxia' means a condition where low dissolved oxygen in aquatic systems causes stress or death to resident organisms.
''(5) PROGRAM.—The term 'Program' means the national harmful algal bloom and hypoxia program established under section 603A.
''(6) STATE.—The term 'State' means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, any other territory or possession of the United States, and any Indian tribe.
''(7) TASK FORCE.—The term 'Task Force' means the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia under section 603(a).
''(8) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term 'Under Secretary' means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.
''(9) UNITED STATES COASTAL WATERS.—The term 'United States coastal waters' includes the Great Lakes.''.
(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 603(a) is amended by striking ''(hereinafter referred to as the 'Task Force')''.

SEC. 11. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.

The Act, as amended by section 10 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 608 the following:

''SEC. 609. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.

''The departments and agencies represented on the Task Force may participate in interagency financing and share, transfer, receive, obligate, and expend funds appropriated to any member of the Task Force for the purposes of carrying out any administrative or programmatic project or activity under this title, including support for the Program, a common infrastructure, information sharing, and system integration for harmful algal bloom and hypoxia research, monitoring, forecasting, prevention, and control. Funds may be transferred among the departments and agencies through an appropriate instrument that specifies the goods, services, or space being acquired from another Task Force member and the costs of the goods, services, and space. The amount of funds transferrable under this section for any fiscal year may not exceed 5 percent of the account from which the transfer was made.''.

SEC. 12. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

The Act, as amended by section 11 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 609 the following:

''SEC. 610. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Under Secretary to carry out sections 603A and 603B $20,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.
''(b) EXTRAMURAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.—The Under Secretary shall ensure that a substantial portion of funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) that are used for research purposes are allocated to extramural research activities. For each fiscal year, the Under Secretary shall publish a list of all grant recipients and the amounts for all of the funds allocated for research purposes, specifying those allocated for extramural research activities.''.

PROVIDING A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 25

PROVIDING A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 540

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 81 and H. Con. Res. 82 en bloc.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 81) providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 25.

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 82) providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 540.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolutions en bloc.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolutions be agreed to en bloc and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolutions (H. Con. Res. 81 and H. Con. Res. 82) were agreed to en bloc.

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY FOR COMPASSIONATE PATIENT CARE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 350 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

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. 350) designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Booker amendment to the resolution, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the Booker amendment to the preamble, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The amendment (No. 2742) was agreed to, as follows:

Beginning on page 2, line 9, strike ''important'' and all that follows through line 2 on page 3, and insert the following: ''importance of both—
''(A) being humane and compassionate; and
''(B) providing technical expertise.''.

The resolution (S. Res. 350), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2743) was agreed to, as follows:

In the first whereas clause of the preamble, strike ''as reflected'' and all that follows through ''their families''.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 350

Whereas National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care promotes national awareness of the importance of compassionate and respectful relationships between health care professionals and their patients;

Whereas on February 14 of each year, medical professionals and students stand in solidarity to support compassion in health care as expressed by Dr. Randall Friese, triage physician at the University of Arizona Medical Center, who stated that the most important treatment he provided to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords after she was shot on January 8, 2011, was to hold her hand and reassure her that she was in the hospital and would be cared for;

Whereas physicians, nurses, and all other health care professionals are charged with practicing medicine as both an art and a science;

Whereas an awareness of the importance of compassion in health care encourages health care professionals to be mindful of the need to treat the patient rather than the disease;

Whereas scientific research reveals that when health care professionals practice humanistically and demonstrate the qualities of integrity, compassion, altruism, respect, empathy, and service, their patients have better medical outcomes; and

Whereas February 14th would be an appropriate day to designate as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care and for health care students and professionals to celebrate by performing humanistic acts of compassion and kindness toward patients, families of patients, and health care colleagues: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care;

(2) recognizes the importance and value of a respectful relationship between health care professionals and their patients as a means of promoting better health outcomes; and

(3) encourages all health care professionals to be mindful of the importance of both—

(A) being humane and compassionate; and

(B) providing technical expertise.

COMMENDING THE SEATTLE SEAHAWKS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL XLVIII

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 358.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 358) commending the Seattle Seahawks for winning Super Bowl XLVIII and the 12th Man for their critical support.

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 358) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

MAJORITY PARTY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to S. Res. 359.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 359) to constitute the majority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 359) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2024

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand S. 2024 is at the desk and due 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. 2024) to amend Chapter 1 of Title 1 United States Code with regard to the definition of marriage and spouse for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulations of marriage.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for a second reading of the bill, but for the purpose of placing the bill on the calendar under rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for a second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREE—H.R. 3080

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SANDERS be appointed as a conferee to H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

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

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during the adjournment or recess of the Senate from Thursday, February 13, through Monday, February 24, the majority leader and Senators WARNER and LEVIN be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

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

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that not withstanding the upcoming recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, boards, conferences or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, concurrent action of the two Houses or by order of the Senate.

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

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 113–76, the appointment of the following individuals to be members of the National Commission on Hunger: Ricki Barlow of Nevada, Cherie Jamason of Nevada, and Dr. Mariana Chilton of Pennsylvania.

UPON RETURN

Mr. REID. When the Senate returns, it will address a number of important nominations, the comprehensive veterans bill, extension of unemployment insurance benefits, sexual assault in the military, and others.

On unemployment insurance, I am going to be very clear. This issue is not going to go away. We are one Republican vote away from restoring this lifeline; 1.7 million Americans, including 22,200 Nevadans, depend on this lifeline, and we are not going to let them down.

ORDERS THROUGH MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn and convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business conducted on the following dates and times; that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session on Friday, February 14, at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, February 18, at 10:30 a.m., and Friday, February 21, at 10:30 a.m.; and that the Senate adjourn on Friday, February 21, until 2 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2014; that on Monday, following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that Senator KING of Maine be recognized to deliver Washington's Farewell Address, under the previous order;

that upon the conclusion of the reading, the majority leader be recognized and then the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; that at 5 p.m. the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 564, the Meyer nomination, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled in the usual form prior to the cloture vote on the Meyer nomination.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. The next rollcall vote will be on Monday, February 24, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2014 AT 10:30 A.M.

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:46 p.m., adjourned until Friday, February 14, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD A. BATTA, OF IOWA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, VICE BRIAN T. BAENIG, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MARIA CANCIAN, OF WISCONSIN, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FAMILY SUPPORT, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, VICE CARMEN R. NAZARIO.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

D. NATHAN SHEETS, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, VICE LAEL BRAINARD, RESIGNED.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

MARK SOBEL, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS, VICE MARGRETHE LUNDSAGER, RESIGNING.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FRANCIS XAVIER TAYLOR, OF MARYLAND, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR INTELLIGENCE AND ANALYSIS, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE CARYN A. WAGNER, RESIGNED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

R. JANE CHU, OF MISSOURI, TO BE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE ROCCO LANDESMAN, RETIRED.

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

JULIA AKINS CLARK, OF MARYLAND, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS. (REAPPOINTMENT)

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2016, VICE CAROLYN L. GALLAGHER, TERM EXPIRED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

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. NATHANIEL S. REDDICKS

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. JAMES C. WITHAM

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY 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. KEVIN W. MANGUM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY 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. HERBERT R. MCMASTER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY 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. GUSTAVE F. PERNA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY 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. JAMES C. MCCONVILLE

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS 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

LT. GEN. ROBERT E. SCHMIDLE, JR.

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

To be brigadier general

COLONEL JULIAN D. ALFORD
COLONEL NORMAN L. COOLING
COLONEL KARSTEN S. HECKL
COLONEL WILLIAM M. JURNEY
COLONEL TRACY W. KING
COLONEL MICHAEL E. LANGLEY
COLONEL CHRISTOPHER J. MAHONEY
COLONEL AUSTIN E. RENFORTH
COLONEL PAUL J. ROCK, JR.
COLONEL JOSEPH F. SHRADER

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JAN E. TIGHE

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 12, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ROBERT L. HOBBS, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

GARY BLANKINSHIP, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

AMOS ROJAS, JR., OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

PETER C. TOBIN, OF OHIO, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

KEVIN W. TECHAU, OF IOWA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

ANDREW MARK LUGER, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TINA S. KAIDANOW, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERTERRORISM, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR AT LARGE.

INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER–AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT).

ANTHONY LUZZATTO GARDNER, OF NEW YORK, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.

ROBERT A. SHERMAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC.

DANIEL BENNETT SMITH, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH).

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

BRAD R. CARSON, OF OKLAHOMA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.

WILLIAM A. LAPLANTE, JR., OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.

IN THE AIR FORCE

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. WILLIAM D. COBETTO

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 major general

BRIG. GEN. BART O. IDDINS

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

COLONEL ROY–ALAN C. AGUSTIN
COLONEL ROBERT G. ARMFIELD
COLONEL DIETER E. BAREIHS
COLONEL MITCHEL H. BUTIKOFER
COLONEL MARK D. CAMERER
COLONEL DOUGLAS A. COX
COLONEL STEPHEN L. DAVIS
COLONEL ERIC T. FICK
COLONEL KEITH M. GIVENS
COLONEL PAUL H. GUEMMER
COLONEL GREGORY M. GUILLOT
COLONEL GREGORY M. GUTTERMAN
COLONEL DARREN E. HARTFORD
COLONEL DAVID W. HICKS
COLONEL BRIAN T. KELLY
COLONEL DAVID A. KRUMM
COLONEL PETER J. LAMBERT
COLONEL EVAN M. MILLER
COLONEL THOMAS E. MURPHY
COLONEL DAVID S. NAHOM
COLONEL MARY F. O'BRIEN
COLONEL STEPHEN W. OLIVER, JR.
COLONEL SCOTT L. PLEUS
COLONEL JOHN T. RAUCH, JR.
COLONEL CHRISTOPHER M. SHORT
COLONEL KIRK W. SMITH
COLONEL STEPHEN C. WILLIAMS
COLONEL MARK E. WEATHERINGTON

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

COLONEL DENNIS J. GALLEGOS
COLONEL DAVID D. HAMLAR, JR.
COLONEL JOHN S. TUOHY

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

COLONEL PAUL D. JACOBS
COLONEL TIMOTHY P. O'BRIEN

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

BRIGADIER GENERAL CASSIE A. STROM
BRIGADIER GENERAL KENNETH W. WISIAN

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

BRIGADIER GENERAL DARYL L. BOHAC
BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT M. BRANYON
BRIGADIER GENERAL MICHAEL B. COMPTON
BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES E. DANIEL, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL MATTHEW J. DZIALO
BRIGADIER GENERAL RICHARD N. HARRIS, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL WORTHE S. HOLT, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL GARY W. KEEFE
BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID T. KELLY
BRIGADIER GENERAL DONALD A. MCGREGOR
BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT L. SHANNON, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT S. WILLIAMS

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 major general

BRIGADIER GENERAL CHRISTOPHER J. BENCE
BRIGADIER GENERAL JACK L. BRIGGS II
BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID J. BUCK
BRIGADIER GENERAL THOMAS A. BUSSIERE
BRIGADIER GENERAL STEPHEN A. CLARK
BRIGADIER GENERAL STEPHEN T. DENKER
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN L. DOLAN
BRIGADIER GENERAL MICHAEL E. FORTNEY
BRIGADIER GENERAL PETER E. GERSTEN
BRIGADIER GENERAL GINA M. GROSSO
BRIGADIER GENERAL JERRY D. HARRIS, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL DARYL J. HAUCK
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN M. HICKS
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN P. HORNER
BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES R. MARRS
BRIGADIER GENERAL LAWRENCE M. MARTIN, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN K. MCMULLEN
BRIGADIER GENERAL BRADFORD J. SHWEDO
BRIGADIER GENERAL JAY B. SILVERIA
BRIGADIER GENERAL LINDA R. URRUTIA–VARHALL
BRIGADIER GENERAL JACQUELINE D. VAN OVOST
BRIGADIER GENERAL MARK W. WESTERGREN

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. PAUL W. TIBBETS IV

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY 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

LT. GEN. DAVID D. HALVERSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624, 3037, AND 3064:

To be brigadier general, judge advocate general's corps

COL. STUART W. RISCH

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF TERESA G. PARIS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JOEL K. WARREN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFFREY P. TAN AND ENDING WITH CRISTALLE A. COX, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 7, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROBERT D. COXWELL AND ENDING WITH SCOT L. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 7, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH THERESE A. BOHUSCH AND ENDING WITH JAMES A. STEPHENSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RICHARD T. BARKER AND ENDING WITH IAN P. WIECHERT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JENARA L. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH DERRICK A. ZECH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ERIN E. ARTZ AND ENDING WITH TODD K. ZUBER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ADAM L. ACKERMAN AND ENDING WITH KRISTEN P. ZELIGS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF DAVID W. BRYANT, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSEPH B. BERGER III AND ENDING WITH WILLIAM D. SMOOT III, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 7, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSEPH A. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH D011695, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH VICTOR M. ANDA AND ENDING WITH JOSHUA A. WORLEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TRACY K. ABENOJA AND ENDING WITH DANIEL J. YOURK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH HARRIS A. ABBASI AND ENDING WITH DAVID M. ZUPANCIC, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEPHEN E. FORSYTH, JR. AND ENDING WITH ERIC J. FRYE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 16, 2014.