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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, in this season of peace on Earth, we acknowledge that You govern in the affairs of humanity. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without You noticing it, may our lawmakers never think that You are indifferent to what they think, say, and do. Lord, keep them ever mindful of the scarcity of their days and the importance of their work. May they seize life's second chances to fulfill Your purposes on Earth. Transform the days of our Senators into redemptive moments so that they will rise to the challenges of these momentous times. May they strive always to live worthy of Your great Name. Give them the wisdom to use Your precepts to avoid life's pitfalls, enabling You to guide them through life's seasons of darkness to a safe harbor.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3516

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

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3516) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a best-practices peer review of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the efficacy of health care delivered at each such medical center.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it seems like any speech about the Democratic leader requires a mention of Searchlight, NV. There is a reason why that is. You cannot begin to understand the man until you understand where it all began, and here is where it began—a tiny mining town at the southern tip of Nevada. One teacher. Zero indoor plumbing. Miles of desert. That is Searchlight, at least the Searchlight HARRY REID knew when he was growing up. It is the kind of place where you might learn to drive at 13 or spend your summer roping cattle with a cowboy named "Sharky." In fact, if your name is "Harry Reid," that is exactly what you did.

HARRY grew up in a tiny wooden shack with a tin roof. He hitchhiked more than 40 miles to school and had a father who toiled in the hard rock mines. It goes without saying this was not an easy life. It taught some tough lessons, but HARRY had his escapes. He found one in the snap and crackle of his radio.

Searchlight didn't exactly have a radio station of its own, but every now and then, HARRY could pick up a faint signal from California. During the regular season, it carried his favorite

baseball team, the Indians. He can still rattle off Cleveland's 1948 roster. Just ask him.

HARRY himself played some baseball. He was the catcher in high school, and during his sophomore year, HARRY's team was crowned Nevada State champions. Later, after a close game on the California coast, his team won the Nevada-Arizona-California tristate play-offs as well. HARRY still treasures the big white jackets each member of the team received, not because, understand, he was the best player on the team—HARRY says he wasn't—but because of what that jacket represented: his hard work, his contributions, his worth.

Like many young men, HARRY once dreamed of a life in the majors, of cheering crowds and Commissioner's Trophies. So did I. I wanted to throw fastballs for the Dodgers. HARRY wanted to play center field at Fenway. We wound up as managers of two unruly franchises instead.

As the leaders of our parties, we are charged with picking the batting order, controlling the pitch selection, and trying our best to manage 100 opening-day starters. It isn't always easy. As HARRY has often pointed out, baseball represents a nice reprieve from the serious work of the Senate. So no matter how contentious the issue before us, we try to put politics aside—at least briefly—to trade our views on the Nats and Bryce Harper. HARRY is probably looking forward to having even more time to dedicate as a fan of the sport and never having to miss another game because of votes.

But if there is one thing HARRY loves more than baseball, it is his wife Landra and the family they built together. When HARRY first met Landra Gould, the two of them were in high school, and HARRY was hardly conflicted about his feelings for her. He recalled:

She looked like she belonged in the movies. She was smart [too]. And she'd been places. Out of my league, that's for sure.

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



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But if there is one thing we know about HARRY, he doesn't give up easily. It wasn't long before the two of them were heading off on their first date. As many dates do, it started with a movie and ended—as no dates do—with Landra push-starting his car. HARRY worried, as many of us might, that this could well be their first date and their last date. But then he looked over at Landra. She smiled as she pushed along beside him. He said it was the kind of smile that said: Who cares about the car? I am with you. It was a smile that has stayed with him ever since. HARRY said: "There are moments that turn a life . . . that stay with you until the last breath, [and] this was one of those moments for me."

The Reids have never been strangers to pushing through challenges. They have confronted a lot over nearly six decades in marriage. But hand in hand, sweat on the brow, they have always moved forward together. Through it all, Landra has never stopped smiling and HARRY has never stopped counting every lucky star for Landra. His idea of the perfect night out is still a quiet night in with her. Landra is his confidant, his high school sweetheart, and his best friend. She is his everything. For a guy who grew up with nothing, that is something.

HARRY REID didn't have an easy childhood. He faced tragedy from a young age. There were times when he just wanted to leave Searchlight and never look back, but these experiences helped shape him too. This is a guy who has seen it all. He has been on the wrong side of electoral nail-biters, and he has been on the other side of them too. He even won a primary against somebody named "God Almighty."

HARRY will now retire as the longest serving U.S. Senator from his State with some three decades of Senate service behind him. It is clear that HARRY and I have two very different world views, two different ways of doing things, and two different sets of legislative priorities, but through the years we have come to understand some things about one another, and we have endeavored to keep our disagreements professional rather than personal. We have also found some common ground through baseball.

I hardly know what it is like to serve here without HARRY—he came into office just a couple short years after I did—but I do know this: Come next month, you will know where to find him. He will be right next to Landra, writing new chapters, making new memories, and continuing a love story that began with a smile more than 50 years ago.

Today the Senate recognizes the Democratic leader for his many years of service to Nevada, to the country, and to his party. We wish him and Landra the best as they set off on their next journey.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THANKING MITCH MCCONNELL

Mr. REID. MITCH, thank you very much for those nice remarks.

Mr. President, I have heard for years—especially from the press and others—how do you get along with MITCH MCCONNELL? It is obvious it is not very good.

It is simple, everybody. He and I understand our relationship. We are both lawyers. I have been to court lots of times, over 100 jury trials, and when I would go to those trials, I would really fix on my opponent. How could he feel that way about an issue? He is wrong on the law, he is wrong on the facts, and we are going to take care of this in court.

Fortunately, I was fairly blessed with my trials; it turned out OK most of the time. But MITCH and I understand that is what we do here. When the trial was over—I have walked out of a courtroom with Neil Galatz or whoever it was—it was over with. It was gone. We were friends. We were there, each doing our thing to effect our cause, and that is what we do here.

MCCONNELL and REID don't need to be hugging out here every day. That is not what we do. We are advocates for our cause. I do the very best I can; he does the very best he can. And he laid that out just fine a few minutes ago.

So this is not a love session for REID and MCCONNELL, although I want everyone here to know that MITCH MCCONNELL is my friend. He and his wonderful wife have been kind and thoughtful to us. I have said that before; let me repeat it. When Landra was in that very dreadful accident, they were there—letters, flowers. They took care of us. When Landra had the devastating breast cancer, they were there. When I hurt myself, MITCH called me.

So everybody go ahead and make up all the stories you want about how we hate each other. Go ahead. But we don't. If it makes a better story, go ahead and do it, but maybe somebody should write this.

Thank you very much, MITCH.

OK, everybody, now my final speech.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the history of Searchlight starts this way, the first paragraph of that book:

Searchlight is like many Nevada towns and cities: it would never have come to be had gold not been discovered. Situated on rocky, windy, and arid terrain without artisan wells or surface water of any kind, the place we call Searchlight was not a gathering spot for Indian or animal.

Searchlight. It is a long way from Searchlight in the U.S. Senate.

I grew up during World War II in Searchlight. As Senator MCCONNELL

mentioned, my dad was a miner, a hard-rock miner, an underground miner, but work wasn't very good in Searchlight. The mines during World War II were especially gone—all over America but especially in Nevada. There were a few things that went on after the war, promotions. He would work, and sometimes they would pay him, sometimes there were bad checks that would bounce. Sometimes they wouldn't pay him, they would just leave.

My mom worked really hard. We had this old Maytag washer. There were lines outside. She worked really hard.

Searchlight had about 250 people then. It had seen its better days. Searchlight was discovered in 1898 when gold was discovered, and for 15 or 18 years, it was a booming, booming town. It was one of the most modern cities in all of Nevada. It had electricity—turn of the century, electricity. It had a telegraph. It had telephones. It had a fire station, firetrucks. It had roads with signs on them designating the name of the street. It had a railroad. When I grew up, that was all gone. Searchlight, as I said, had 250 people.

So people may ask: How did my mother work so hard in a town with 250 people? We had at that time no mines, but 13 brothels at one time in Searchlight—13, not over time but at one time. The biggest was the El Rey Club. So that tells everyone what wash my mom did, from the casinos and from the brothels. She worked really hard. She ironed. She washed.

As I look back on my growing up in Searchlight, I never felt, during the time I was a boy, that I was deprived of anything. I never went hungry. Sometimes we didn't have, I guess, what my mom wanted, but we were fine.

But as I look back, it wasn't that good, I guess. We had no inside toilet. We had a toilet outside. You had to walk about 50 yards to that because my dad didn't want it close to the house, and we had a good time, even with that. My poor mother, what a wonderful woman she was. Sometimes, my younger brother and I sometimes, just to be funny, when my mother would go to the toilet, which had tin walls—it was made out of tin—and we would throw rocks at that. "Let me out," she would say. It doesn't sound like much fun, but it was fun at the time.

When I started elementary school, there was one teacher for grades one through four and then another teacher for grades five through eight, but when I got to the fifth grade, there were not enough students for two teachers so one teacher taught all eight grades. I learned at that time in that little school that you can really learn. I have never ever forgotten a woman by the name of Mrs. Pickard. I can still see her with those glasses, just a stereotype spinster teacher—but she was a teacher. She taught me that education was good, to learn is good. When I graduated, we had a large graduating

class: six kids. The Presiding Officer from Nevada should feel good about me. I graduated in the top third of my class.

My parents did the best they could. My dad never graduated from eighth grade. My mom didn't graduate from high school. In Searchlight—this is probably no surprise to anyone—there was never ever a church service in Searchlight that I can ever remember. There was no church, no preachers, no nothing regarding religion. That is how I was raised.

My brother and I were born in our house. There was no hospital. It had long since gone. I didn't go to a dentist until I was 14 years old, but I was fortunate. I was born with nice teeth, especially on the top. The bottoms aren't so good, but rarely have I had a cavity of any kind. I have just been fortunate in that regard.

We didn't go to doctors. It was a rare occasion. There was no one to go to. I can remember my father having such a bad toothache, I watched him pull a tooth with a pair of pliers.

My mother was hit in the face with a softball when she was a young woman in Searchlight and it ruined her teeth. As I was growing up, I saw her teeth disappear—a few, a few less, and finally no teeth. My mom had no teeth.

My brother was riding his bicycle, slid on the dirt, broke his leg, never went to the doctor. I can remember it as if it were 10 minutes ago, my brother Larry in bed. We couldn't touch the bed, it hurt him so much, but it healed. The bottom part of one leg is bent, but it healed.

I can remember once a TB wagon came through Searchlight, the only time I remember. People had tuberculosis, or TB. I can remember Con Hudgens had TB. I don't remember who else. We had miners who were there who had silicosis, some of them, my dad included. My mom had one of those tests. She went into the big truck and had her chest x-rayed—I guess that is what they did. A few weeks later, she got a postcard that said her test was positive and she should go see a doctor. She never went to see a doctor. I worried about that so much. I can't imagine how my mother must have felt, but obviously it was a false positive. Think about that, never going to the doctor when you are told you have tuberculosis.

As I learned more about my dad, I know how important health care would have been for him, to be able to see somebody to try to explain more to my dad so he could understand himself a little better.

I am sure I haven't done all the good in life I could do, but I am here to tell everyone that there is one thing I did in my life that I am so proud of, and I will always be. I hope I am not boasting; if I am, I am sorry. I worked long hours at a service station. As MITCH indicated, there was no high school in Searchlight so I went to school in Henderson, NV. I worked in a Standard sta-

tion. I worked really hard, long hours. I took all the hours they would give me. I saved up enough money—I had \$250—I was going to buy my mother some teeth. I went to a man—he was a big shot. They named a school after him, and he was on the school board in Las Vegas. He married this beautiful woman from Searchlight. I went to him. I had never met him before, but Dr. Smith knows who I am. His name was J.D. Smith.

I said: I want to buy my mother some teeth.

He said: I don't do credit here.

He insulted me. So I went to Dr. Marshall in Henderson and bought my mom some teeth. It changed my mother's life. My mother had teeth.

My parents lived in Searchlight until they both died. There are a number of people who know, at least my staff knows, that my dad killed himself. I can remember that day so plainly. I had been out and spent 2 hours with Muhammad Ali, he and I, one of his handlers and one of my staff. It was so—for me, as someone who has always wanted to be an athlete, an athlete want-to-be, that was great. Some of you know I fought, but he was in a different world than I, but he was nice. He was generous with his time and he was so much fun. He said: Pay no attention to me. I am fighting some White guy and I am going to cause some trouble out here. He kicked the walls and yelled and screamed, and I was happy.

I walked to my car, got to my office, and my receptionist, Joanie, said to me, Mr. REID, your mom is on the phone. I talked to my mother all the time—many, many times a week. She said: Your pop shot himself. So she lived in Searchlight. It took me an hour, an hour and a half to get out there. I can still remember seeing my dad on that bed. I was so sad because my dad never had a chance. He was depressed always. He was reclusive. I did things; he never came to anything that I did. I never felt bad that he didn't because I knew my dad. My mom came to everything she could. But I felt bad about that. I will talk a little more about suicide in a little bit, but I think everyone can understand a little bit of why I have been such an avid supporter of ObamaCare, health care.

I was ashamed, embarrassed about Searchlight. When I went to college, when I was in high school, law school, I just didn't want to talk about Searchlight. I was kind of embarrassed about it. It was kind of a crummy place. I didn't show people pictures of my home.

Many years later, I was a young man, and I was in government. Alex Haley, a famous writer who wrote the book "Roots," was a speaker at the University of Nevada foundation dinner in Reno. He gave a speech that was stunning. It was so good. Basically, what he said to everyone there—he directed his remarks to me, I thought, and of course he didn't, but he said: Be proud of who you are. You can't escape who you are.

I walked out of that event that night a different person, a new man. From that day forward, I was from Searchlight. When I got out of law school, I bought little pieces of property so I had contacts there. My parents lived there, and I went there all the time, but I became HARRY REID, the guy from Searchlight.

So one thing people ask me all the time—they say: You have done OK. Tell me what you think are the important aspects—especially young people ask all the time—and "young" is a relative term—what would you recommend? What do you think is the way to success? I tell them all the same thing. I didn't make it in life because of my athletic prowess. I didn't make it because of my good looks. I didn't make it because I am a genius. I made it because I worked hard. I tell everyone, whatever you want to try to do, make sure you work as hard as you can to try to do what you want to do. I believe that is a lesson for everyone.

The little boy from Searchlight has been able to be part of the changing State of Nevada. I am grateful I have been part of that change.

When I graduated from law school, the population of Nevada was less than 300,000 people. The State of Nevada has now 3 million people. We grew from one Member of Congress in 1864 to 1882. One was all we had. Now we have four. During my 34 years in Congress, I have seen the country change. I have seen Nevada change. The change for the country and Nevada has been for the better.

Now I am going to spend a little bit of time talking about some of the things I have been able to do as a Member of the United States Senate. I know it is long and I know it is somewhat tedious, but I have been here a long time, so please be patient.

My legislation.

Reducing tax burdens. I am sorry he is not here—David Pryor from Arkansas. I don't want to hurt the feelings of any of my very capable friends, but the best legislator I have ever served with in State government, Federal Government, was David Pryor. He was good. He was not a big speaker, but he was good at getting things done.

The first speech I gave as a Member of the Senate was way back there where CORY BOOKER is right now. I gave a speech. I tried to do it in the House; it was called the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights. I couldn't get Jake Pickle, the chair of that subcommittee on Ways and Means, to even talk to me in the House. But I came over here and gave that speech, and David Pryor was presiding. He was subcommittee chair of the committee dealing with that in finance. CHUCK GRASSLEY was also listening to my speech. Pryor sent me a note when I finished and said: I want to help you with this. GRASSLEY did the same thing. So my first speech led to the passage of the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights, with the help of David Pryor and CHUCK GRASSLEY. It was landmark

legislation. It put the taxpayer on more equal footing with the tax collector. Everybody liked it so much, we have done two more iterations of it since then to make it even stronger.

Source tax. I am sure it is just a boring thing to everybody, but it wasn't boring to people who came from California and tried to retire someplace else. The State of California was merciless in going after people. They had the law on their side, they thought. If you had worked in California, it didn't matter where you went, they would go after you—for your pension, is what it amounted to. I tried for 15 years to get that changed, and I got it changed. No longer can California—with all due respect to FEINSTEIN and BOXER—do that. They can't do that anymore. If you retire in California and move someplace else, they can't tax that money.

Mortgage tax relief. We all participated in that. I initiated it when the collapse of Wall Street took place. That was a big help.

Tax incentives for solar and geothermal—very important. I will talk a little bit more about that.

Payment in lieu of taxes. All my western Senators will appreciate that. It was just 4 or 5 years ago that we were able to fully fund PILT, payment in lieu of taxes. I worked very hard with Baucus and Wyden, and we did things to take care of some issues they had. That is the first time it had ever been fully funded.

Cancellation of indebtedness. Those are buzzwords for people who understand taxes a little better. But what happened is people—everything collapsed. They would try to get out of the debt they had. They couldn't because the IRS would tax them at the value of it when they bought it. It was unfair, and we got that changed. That was in the stimulus bill. We got that changed.

Let's talk about the economy a little bit. I know some of my Democratic colleagues will say: Why did you do that? Here is what I did. I worked with Republican Senator Don Nickles from Oklahoma. There was a Republican President. Don and I talked about this. We knew the administration would change and it would affect every President, Democratic and Republican. It was called the Congressional Review Act. What that said is the President promulgates a regulation and Congress has a chance to look it over to see if it is too burdensome, too costly, too unfair. And we have done that quite a few times. That was because of REID and Nickles. That was legislation that I did, and it was great when we had Republican Presidents, not so great when we had Democratic Presidents, but it was fair.

One person who has been so important to the State of Nevada is a man by the name of Kirk Kerkorian, an uneducated man. He flew over the North Atlantic during World War II for England at great personal sacrifice to himself. As I said, he had no education,

but he became one of America's legendary entrepreneurs.

Many years ago, as a young new lawyer, I met him, and for many years I helped him and especially his brother with their legal issues. He is the man who helped create Las Vegas the way it is. He did something unique. He decided he was going to build something on the Las Vegas Strip called CityCenter. When you go to Nevada, look at that sometime. You could be in the middle of New York City—you would think you were there, basically. This is a magnificent operation. Well, it started before the Recession. They were desperate to get it finished. More than 10,000 people worked on that project. I would drive by there and count the cranes—25, 30 cranes at one time there at work. Well, I interceded in that. I did some things that probably a lot of people wouldn't do, but I did it because I thought it was very important that the operation didn't shut down. Kerkorian had already put billions of dollars of his own money in it, and they had an investor from one of the Middle Eastern countries. I did a lot of things, I say, that a lot of you probably wouldn't do, but I did it and I saved that project. I won't go into detail, but I called people whom I doubt any of you would call. I called bank presidents, and I called leaders of countries. Anyway, it is completed now. I take some credit for that.

The stimulus, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We got that done. Yesterday, the Presiding Officer was the senior Senator from Maine. Oh, she was so helpful. I will probably get her in trouble by boasting about her here today, but she and her colleague from Maine, Olympia Snowe, and Arlen Specter—we only had 58 votes as Democrats, and they were the difference. We were able to get that passed only because of them, and it was so good for our country.

President Obama—the first 2 months after having been elected, the country lost 800,000 jobs. Can you imagine that? One month. But because of the stimulus bill, we were able to reverse that. We did a lot of wonderfully good things in that that were important for the country.

The Travel Promotion Act. AMY KLOBUCHAR is here; she worked so hard helping get that done. It promoted travel to get foreigners to come here, come to America, and it worked out so well. Seven different clotures I had to file on that to get it done, but we got it done finally, and it has been remarkably good for America. Other countries—you will see them on TV—are always advertising: Come visit Australia. Come visit the Bahamas. Come visit England. Come visit everywhere. But now there is advertising around the world: Come visit America. Now, everyone knows that Las Vegas gets more than its share, probably, of visitors, but it was good for Nevada and it was also good for the country.

Nevada test site workers. We were the Cold War veterans in Nevada. That

was a big project. We had 11,000, 12,000 workers there at one time. An above-ground test—I could remember seeing them. We were a long ways away in Searchlight, but you could see that flash. You wouldn't always feel it. Sometimes it would bounce over Searchlight. But it was a very big deal. We didn't know it was making people sick, but they were good enough to make sure the tests didn't go off when the wind was blowing toward Las Vegas. It blew up toward Utah, and Utah suffered terribly because those were aboveground tests. So we worked to make sure the test site workers were a part of it because they were the reason we were winning the Cold War, because what they did was dangerous. We passed that. It took a number of different segments to get it done. So we have done a lot to protect people.

Nevada transportation. McCarran Airport. I have tried for years to get the name taken off—a Democratic Senator from Nevada who was an awful man. I tried to get his name off that, and it didn't work. I tried to get J. Edgar Hoover's name off the FBI Building; that didn't work. We had a vote here. I can still remember how mad ORRIN HATCH was when I did that, but, anyway, everybody had to vote on it. I think I made a mistake. I tried to name it after Bobby Kennedy. That was a mistake I made on that.

Anyway, McCarran Airport. It is I think the fifth busiest airport in America now. We have gotten money for a new air traffic control center. It is one of the largest structures in the Western United States. We have done a good job taking care of McCarran, with all kinds of construction funding for runways and rehabilitation of runways. In the stimulus bill, one of the last things we put in that was bonding capacity that allowed McCarran Field to build a big new terminal. More than \$1 billion we got in that legislation. It was really important during the recession to have all those workers. There were thousands and thousands of them on that new terminal, which is now completed.

Reno. I was also able to direct money toward getting a new traffic control center there, a new control tower. We have done all the construction funding. A lot of stuff, good stuff for the airport in Reno.

So I feel good about what we have done to help Nevada transportation, not the least of which, everybody, are the billions of dollars in directed spending for roads and highways in Nevada. It has made a change in Northern Nevada and in Southern Nevada.

It is important for us to be able to bring people to Las Vegas, so we made deals with the California State Department of Transportation, and we participated in big construction projects that took place in California, in Barstow and San Bernardino. We did that because it would make it easier for people to go to Las Vegas. So I wasn't just giving money to Las Vegas, NV; we also did it, of course, for California because it helped us.

Health care. The Affordable Care Act. I have talked about that a little bit. It would have been wonderful if we had something like that around to help my family when we were growing up. I worked hard to help a number of you on the Children's Health Insurance Program. ORRIN HATCH was certainly involved in that.

Just like I had trouble coming to grips with my home in Searchlight, I had trouble coming to grips with the fact that my dad killed himself. I was like most—we are called victims. We shouldn't be, but that is what we are called.

This year, about 32,000 people will kill themselves in America. That doesn't count the hunting accidents that are really suicides or the car accidents that are really suicides. So I couldn't get my arms around the suicide. Republican Senator Cohen from Maine was chairman of the Aging Committee upon which I served, and we were doing a hearing on senior depression. Mike Wallace came—the famous journalist—and here is what he said: I have wanted to die for years. I would take the most dangerous assignments I could hoping I wouldn't come back. You know, I am OK now, though. I want to live forever.

He said: I take a pill once in a while, I see a doctor once in a while, and I am good. I am OK.

I said for the first time publicly: Mr. Chairman, my dad killed himself. That was a long time ago, but I think it would be extremely important for this committee to hold a hearing on senior suicide because we have learned—since my focusing on suicide, we have done some good things as Members of Congress. We have directed spending to study why people kill themselves because we don't know for sure.

Isn't it interesting that most suicides take place in the western part of the United States? You would think it would be in the dark places, like Maine and Vermont, where it is so dark and cold, but, no, it is in the bright sunshine of the West. We are learning a lot more. That has been so good to me as a person, and we have now funded projects around America where there are suicide prevention programs that are extremely important. There are suicide victims programs where people can get together after a loved one kills themselves. That is something I am glad I worked on.

Finally, health care. So 24 years ago, one of my friends from Las Vegas called me, Sandy Jolly, and she said: I would like you to look at this film I am going to send you. You are not going to want to watch it, but I want you to watch it. What it showed was a beautiful little girl in Africa in a white party dress. She looked so pretty. It was a party. Suddenly, two men grabbed her, spread her legs apart, and cut out her genitals—right there, with a razor blade.

I thought: Man, that is hard to comprehend. My staff said it is something

you shouldn't deal with; it should be something for a woman. But I went ahead, and I did something about it. We haven't done as much as we should do, and I hope that we have people who will pick up this issue. I had a meeting last Friday—the biggest audience I have ever had. There was a conference on female genital mutilation. I say that word because that is what it is. Millions of little girls have been cut. That is what it is called—"cut." Last year, no one knows for sure, but probably 250,000 little girls were cut.

Last Friday, I had 200 people there. I said: This is wonderful. I said: I have had 10 people a couple of times. Two or three of the people were lost and didn't really want to be there.

It is really important that we do something about it. We have some laws now. It is against the law in the United States. They can't go away for the purpose of being cut. There is a lot more that needs to be done. Our government has done almost nothing.

I am going to spend a little bit on the environment. I have been chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee twice—not for very long. I gave it up once because I had to, because of the control of Congress, and one time I gave it away. Remember? I gave it away. I gave my chairmanship and my committee spot to Jim Jeffords. I love that committee.

I have been involved in environment and energy issues since I came here. The State of Nevada is 87-percent owned by the Federal Government; 87 percent of the State of Nevada is Federal land. The rest, 13 percent, is private land. Of course, I should be concerned about it. As to Yucca Mountain, I am not going to get into a long dissertation about that. We spent about \$8 billion there so far, maybe more. It is gone.

Someone asked me the other day: Well, you know, Republicans are in power now. They are going to come back to Yucca Mountain now. I said: Well, they better bring a checkbook with them because there is nothing there. They would have to start all over again. With the big auger, they spent well over \$1 billion digging that tunnel. That is scrap metal. There is nothing there. You can probably get it going again now for \$10 billion, \$12 billion. If you have a way to pay for it, good luck. If you were smart, what you would do is leave it where it is in dry cast storage containers, which is proven to be extremely safe and effective. That is what should be done.

Renewable energy transmission. Part of the stimulus bill said one of the problems we have with energy is that we don't have a way of transmitting electricity to where it should go. We talk about all this renewable energy, which is produced in places where there aren't a lot of people, but you can't get it anywhere where there are a lot of people. That has been changed with the stimulus bill.

For example, in Nevada we have Line One, and for the first time in the his-

tory of the State of Nevada, we can move power from the north to the south of Nevada. That is underway now. That line will go up into the north-northwest. That was good legislation.

I have had clean energy summits for many, many years. We bring in national leaders. Democrats and Republicans have focused attention on the problems America has with energy. The Clintons have come. Obama has been there. We have had Republicans. Here is one who came and did a great job—Tom Donohue. Everybody knows him. We Democrats know him, for sure. He is head of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

I have no problem with coal. I have helped fund clean coal technology. The Tracy powerplant, outside of Reno, was a clean coal plant. It didn't work. So they had to go to another type of fuel. I have nothing against coal. However, I was upset about this. Nevada is very pristine. I have told a couple of people this.

People don't understand Nevada. Everybody thinks it is the deserts of Las Vegas, but it is not. Nevada is the most mountainous State in the Union, except for Alaska. We have 314 separate mountain ranges. We have a mountain that is 14,000 feet high. We have 32 mountains over 11,000 feet high. It is a very mountainous State.

When I learned from reading the papers that we were going to have power companies come to Nevada in the most pristine areas and they were going to build three or four new powerplants fueled by coal, I said no.

My staff said: You can't do that. You are up for reelection, and they will destroy you.

They tried. They left leaflets on all the cars in the parking lots and said I was running up the power bills. I won; they lost. There are no coal-fired powerplants in Nevada. There are two left. One of them is going out of business in 2 weeks; the other is on its way out, probably within a year. We are not going to have coal-fired plants in Nevada, but we do have a lot of renewable energy.

I have done work, especially with John Ensign, when he was here, on major land bills—Clark County, Lincoln County, White Pine County, Carson County—and we were able to do a lot of good things to save land. He was a real conservative guy, and because of him, I had to make deals to make some of the 87-percent land private. I was able to do that. He was able to work with me to create more wilderness, and we worked together to get that done.

I created the first national park in Nevada, Great Basin National Park. It is wonderful. Everything within the Great Basin is in that park. It is hard to believe, but in Nevada we now have a glacier. We have the oldest living trees in the world on that mountain. Those old pine trees are there. They are 6,000 or 7,000 years old—bristlecone pine. It is a beautiful, beautiful park.

As to Basin and Range National Monument, I worked with President Clinton on this. There are more than 700,000 acres in a remote place of Nevada. It is a place where John Muir came as a young man, camping there, and talked in his diary about how beautiful this was. Now everyone can see that. In part of that wonderful place is a man who is a world famous artist. His name is Michael Heizer. He worked for 40 years building this monument in the middle of nowhere. It is in the middle of nowhere, and it is done. It is called the City. It is magnificent. We don't have roads coming there yet, but we will pretty soon. That is done.

Tule Springs. People came to me and said: We have this place in Nevada where we have the oldest and most abundant source of fossils anyplace in America. To make a long story short, that is now a national monument. You can come to Las Vegas if you are an archaeologist, or if you are interested in old fossils, you can come there. I don't mean old people. You can come there. There are all these studies going on with Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument.

When I came to Congress, we had about 70,000 acres of wilderness in Nevada. Now we have about 4 million. Those are legislative initiatives of mine. We have approximately 4 million acres of wilderness. We have a million, 1.5 million acres of additional conservation of land, and I mentioned some of it here.

Water has been difficult for Nevada, in the north and the south. I knew I had been elected to the Senate, and I was leaving Reno, NV, on an airplane and someone asked me: What is the most difficult problem facing Nevada? I said: Water.

Having said that—we have all done it—I thought: What am I going to do now? I had to do something. We did something. Now it is all done. We settled a 100-year water war between the States of California and Nevada. We settled all the litigation on the Truckee and Carson Rivers. It took 20 years to finally implement that. There were many water systems—the Lake Tahoe region—and they are gone. We had large wetlands that had gone dry, and that is now getting fresh water in it. It involved an irrigation district for Indian tribes and endangered species, and we were able to get all that done. It made a stable water supply for Northern Nevada, the Reno area.

Southern Nevada is really a desert. It has 4 inches of rain a year in Las Vegas. We have worked hard with Pat Mulroy. She has done wonderful things.

I see the junior Senator from Arizona here. When he was elected, the States of Arizona and California wouldn't speak to each other. They were fighting over water. Now we work together on water. It has been remarkable what we have been able to do as partners to get things done. We bank water for Arizona, and when they need the water and it is in our ground, we can give it

back to them. It has been good for Nevada because we can use that water in the meantime.

We have done good work with California. California got most of the water out of the Colorado River. They took a lot more than they should have, and we were able to work on that. We worked with California in a very positive way. We help pay for port reservoirs. We help line canals. We have done a lot of good things to help water in that whole area. I am happy about that.

We share Lake Tahoe with California. Lake Tahoe is a stunningly beautiful place. There are only two alpine lakes in the world. One of them is in Siberia, and the other is there. I have had 20 summits there. We have gotten over \$1 billion there with the cooperation of the California delegation and many others. We have done well in stabilizing and helping the clarity of that beautiful lake.

Walker Lake is another lake that was originally controlled by the Indians. It has been stolen from them by us. We now have gotten hundreds of millions of dollars directed toward that, and we have bought up water rights, and we have saved Walker Lake. There are 21 desert terminus lakes in the world. There are two in America. They are both in Nevada, and we saved those two lakes—Walker and Pyramid Lakes.

There was a great big gravel pit. It was 10, 15 times bigger than this Chamber—huge. There were spots of black that appeared on it. The State of Nevada didn't have the resources to take on the oil companies and airlines. So they didn't know what was wrong. I got Bill Bradley, who was chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy, to hold a hearing. It was so important we did that because we determined that oil was coming from broken oil lines, fuel lines, going to the Reno airport. Had we not done something, it would have been awful. It was declared an emergency superfund site, and people immediately moved in and took care of that.

I am giving a quick look at it. That gravel pit is now a beautiful lake. It is called the Sparks Marina. There are condos, apartments, and businesses all around there. People boat on it. It is wonderful. It all started out as a gravel pit. I appreciate Bill Bradley's good work on that.

I want to talk about national security. There are people in this Chamber much better than I am on national security, and I know that, but I have worked hard. I worked hard. We have been a dumping ground for all things in the military. We have Nellis Air Force Base. It was named after Bill Nellis, who was from Searchlight. He was a war hero in World War II. It is the finest fighter training facility in the world. If you want to fly jet airplanes, then you must train at Nellis. They have a large gunnery range. The Navy does the same thing in Northern Nevada with the naval air training center. Frankly, I was able to get tens of

millions of dollars for both of those operations because they have been important.

We hear a lot about drones. Every drone attack that takes place in the world takes place 30 miles outside Las Vegas at Creech Air Force Base. We have all of these great servicemembers, mostly airmen, who take care of that. They protect us around the world.

BARBARA MIKULSKI is here. She was in a position to help me on appropriations. She said: This facility in Reno is awful, and I—BARBARA MIKULSKI—am going to do something about it, and she did, very quickly. We renovated that place. It was so bad. It was a little VA hospital with hallways so narrow they couldn't bring in new hospital equipment because they couldn't get it down the hall. I appreciate what Senator MIKULSKI did for that hospital.

I requested money for two VA hospitals, and they were built in Southern Nevada. We had one that was an experiment. It was a joint venture between the Veterans' Administration and the Air Force. It worked great except we had a Middle East war and the veterans had to go someplace else so we don't have that hospital anymore, but we have a huge new one. It is the newest and best in the entire VA system. They don't have all of the equipment they need, but it has been functioning very well for the last couple of years. I feel very proud of that.

The Nevada Test Site is part of our national security, and I have done everything I can to make sure that facility is taken care of, and it is. There are a lot of experiments going on there all the time. We have fuel spills and different tests that take place there.

Finally, this is one of the best things I ever did. Yesterday I heard BARBARA MIKULSKI say listen to what your constituents say. A group of veterans came—just a few feet from here—to talk to me a number of years ago. One of them said: Senator, this is somewhat strange. I am disabled from the military, and I am also retired from the military. I can't draw both benefits. I said: What are you talking about? He said: I can't. If you retire from the Forest Service and have a military disability, you can get your pension from the BLM, the Forest Service or whatever it is, and also get your disability, but not if it is both military. We changed that. Now, if you have a disability and you have retired from the military, you can draw both. It is called concurrent receipt. That took a long time, but we got it done. It is not perfect, but it is 80 percent complete.

I talked earlier this morning about being a lawyer. I am proud of the fact that I was a trial lawyer. I hear Senators talk all the time about these judicial selection committees. They have to help pick whom they will have on the Federal bench. I am glad they do that because I also have a judicial selection committee. You know who is on that committee? Me. No one else is on it. I select all of my judges. I am the

committee, and I am very happy with what I have been able to do.

One of the things I did when I was in the House was name a Federal building in Las Vegas after a very famous family of lawyers, the Foley family. They had two Federal judges, a district attorney, and a State court judge. They were a wonderful family called the Foley family. I attended the 10th anniversary of that, and when I looked up there, I saw nothing but White males. I thought to myself, "Gee, I hope someday I can change that," and as fortune would have it, Lloyd George decided to take senior staff and I had a chance to do something about that. I have sent names to the President and selected far more judges myself in the entire history of the State of Nevada. So what I did with the first one, I said, well, I want to get a woman judge, but we didn't have a Black judge on the court either. I wanted to nominate a Black judge and a woman judge, and that is what I did. Boy, was I criticized. They said: She doesn't have enough experience. You could have found somebody better. She was a dynamo. People loved this woman. She was so good that she is now on the Ninth Circuit, and she quickly went there. To make a long story short, she has been part of the talk about who could get appointed to the Supreme Court. She is a wonderful woman named Johnnie Rawlinson.

I put Roger Hunt, great trial lawyer; Kent Dawson, one of my predecessors as city attorney; David Hagan, a wonderful trial lawyer, and I put him on the bench. I selected Brian Sandoval as a Federal judge, and he was a good Federal judge. Things were going great until he ran against my son for Governor, and I wish he hadn't because my son would now be Governor. He is my friend, and our family has accepted that. He was the first Hispanic on the bench. I appointed another Hispanic, Gloria Navarro. Her parents were born in Cuba, and she is now the chief judge. Miranda Du, how about that, a woman who was born in Vietnam is now on the bench in Nevada. How about that, Miranda Du. She was born in Vietnam and came over when she was 11 years old to Alabama. Jennifer Dorsey, a woman; Andrew Gordon, a Harvard law graduate; Richard Boulware, African American. I changed that Nevada Federal bench significantly. I had the pleasure of voting for and against all eight members of the Supreme Court who now sit there. I have had a chance to vote for every one of them during my career.

Education. I worked hard for education in Nevada, and I have done OK. The Desert Research Institute is a unique organization. It is not helped by the University in Nevada at all. They all have Ph.D.s and they have been in existence for 50 years. Some of the most significant research in the world is done there. They have two supercomputers. Our earthquake center is the best in the world. They have more shake tables than anyplace in America.

People come from all over the world to study what happens to earthquakes.

Biodiversity study. For many years, I directed funding to the biodiversity study. It was the best science going on at the time on the environment and studying the Great Basin.

Native Americans in Nevada. We have 26 different tribal organizations. I am really happy with what I have been able to do to help Native Americans, and, believe me, they haven't been treated well in Nevada or anyplace else. I have led the legislative efforts to make sure they have their water rights taken care of, settled longstanding claims against the United States. We have the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes, and the Duck Valley Reservation have all been able to develop their water rights and economies. For example, Pyramid Lake will receive almost \$100 million and Fallon will receive \$60 million. I worked to get two new high schools built, and they were so long overdue. It took decades to get the Shoshone Claims Distribution Act done, and we finally got it done. Thanks to President Clinton, we were able to get the Indians who belonged up there, the Washoe Tribe, right on the lake.

Working with the Obama administration for the last 8 years has been a dream job of mine, being the President's point man here in the Senate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have an extended speech on President Obama that I gave yesterday printed in the RECORD.

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

[Dec. 7, 2016]

STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARRY REID PAYING TRIBUTE TO PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

It's hard to imagine today, but it wasn't that long ago that Barack Obama was a little-known Illinois legislator with a very unusual name.

I still remember the first time I heard that name. I was in the House gym, where ex-members congregated. And one of the people I shared the room with was Abner Mikva, long-time Illinois Congressman, appellate court judge, President Clinton's chief legal officer.

I had known that Republican Senator Peter Fitzgerald of Illinois decided not to run for re-election after one term. And Judge Mikva turned to me and said he knew the perfect person to fill that open seat. "Who could that be," I said?

He said, "Barack Obama."

I said, "What?"

He said, "Barack Obama."

I said, "Who? What kind of name is that?"

He said: "He is one of the most talented people I've ever met in all my years." That said a lot to me. Even though, at that time, I smiled and left the room. But it didn't take long before I understood what Mikva told me.

Barack Obama won that election to the Senate. Came from nowhere, the man with the unusual name. And once he was here, it was obvious he was the real deal.

His ability to communicate was—and is—stunning. I can remember one of his first floor speeches he gave here in the Senate. It

was on George Bush's policy regarding the Middle East war. It was eloquent, thoughtful. Powerful.

I was so impressed that following his speech, there had been a quorum call. His seat was way back there. I walked up to him and he was sitting. I was standing, looking over him. I said, "Senator, that was really terrific. That was really good." I will never forget his response.

He looked at me without hesitation, without any braggadocio, no conceit, just humility. He looked up at me and said, "I have a gift."

This wasn't a boast. This was a fact. I have never met anyone with an ability to communicate like Barack Obama. Whether it is writing, speaking to 30,000 people, a small crowd or someone individually, he is without equal when it comes to communicating.

His reputation was well known, even before he came to the Senate. He had written his first book, "Dreams from My Father," a decade before arriving here. Like his 2006 book, "The Audacity of Hope," this book was full of lyrical, insightful writing.

In "Dreams from My Father," he outlined the remarkable life story we've all come to know: born to a father from Kenya in far-away Africa. His mother was from Kansas. He was raised by his grandparents in Hawaii. His mother and grandparents set positive examples for him. They pushed him to do better—to be the man he was born to be. That upbringing would serve him well.

Barack Obama went to some of the most elite schools in the world. Undergrad at Columbia. Of course he was an honor student. Harvard Law School. He graduated with distinction. He made history as the first African American to be elected president of the Harvard Law Review. Just to be a member of the Harvard Law Review, having gone to law school myself, it is significant. But he was the number-one guy in that very, very prestigious law school. Even then, his reputation for bringing people together and his gift for communication was renowned.

He became a professor of constitutional law at one of America's great law schools. He became a community organizer, as he has talked about a lot. He became an Illinois state senator before giving one of the most dramatic convention speeches in American history, in 2004 at the Democratic National Convention in Boston.

Throughout it all, his ability to communicate and connect with people fueled his ascendancy. Those skills made Barack Obama a terrific senator. And they have greatly benefited our country over the last 8 years.

In a few weeks, Barack Obama will finish his term as the 44th President of the United States. I don't know if I'm leaving with him or he's leaving with me. I guess I leave a few days before he does, but we're leaving together. I cannot think of a better person with whom to leave public service. For 8 years I was his point man and it has been an honor and an effort of pleasure.

What this man accomplished—despite unprecedented obstruction from Republicans—is remarkable. History will remember President Barack Obama's many accomplishments.

President Obama saved the country from economic collapse, ushering in a new era of growth.

Since 2010, the economy has added more 2.6 million private-sector jobs.

Median household incomes have risen significantly.

The unemployment rate is now at 4.6 percent. In some states, like Nevada, it was as high as 14 percent.

President Obama brought the American auto and manufacturing industries back from the brink of collapse with unique programs such as Cash for Clunkers.

More than 800,000 new manufacturing jobs since 2010.

The auto industry added more than 646,000 jobs since 2009.

Domestic production of autos doubled from below 6 million units per year to 12 million per year in 2015.

President Obama brought health care to tens millions of Americans through the Affordable Care Act. And every day we learn how important this bill has been. We heard from a very conservative American Hospital Association today that doing away with Obamacare would bankrupt the hospital industry. They would lose over the next few years—almost \$200 billion.

21 million more Americans now have affordable health care.

The uninsured rate is at an all-time low—92 percent of Americans have coverage.

Insurance companies cannot deny coverage or charge more to cover people with pre-existing conditions. And how many of us have gone out to our home states and had people with tears in their eyes say, you know, Debbie has been sick since she was a little girl with diabetes? Now for the first time in her life she can have health insurance.

Insurance companies cannot discriminate against anyone because of their gender.

Every American with insurance has access to preventive care without cost sharing. That means no co-pays for immunizations, cancer screenings, contraceptive coverage for women, diabetes screenings, or blood pressure and cholesterol tests.

President Obama held Wall Street accountable.

He signed into law the most comprehensive Wall Street and financial reform legislation since the—Great Depression—Dodd-Frank.

His Administration established a new watchdog to help protect consumers from unfair financial practices.

He signed legislation into law that protected homeowners from mortgage fraud.

President Obama took more action to protect our planet from a changing climate, including the historic Paris Climate agreement.

I met yesterday with some Native Alaskans. It was scary to talk to this woman, a Native Alaskan, her town of 800 having trouble getting in and out of the town. She told me the animals are confused because the seasons are changing. The caribou have traveled for 20,000 years, we believe, 3,000 miles, migrate every year. They walk in single file, not in large herds jammed together. She said they're having such difficulty. They used to be able to walk over.

President Obama made the largest investment ever in renewable energy. He tripled wind power and increased solar power by 30 times—creating more than 200,000 jobs in solar alone, with hundreds of thousands more jobs in the next few years.

President Obama protected more than 260 million acres of public lands and waters. That includes more than 700,000 acres in Nevada with one order that he signed. It's called the Basin and Range National Monument, a place where John Muir came looking around for special places in America.

He camped in the Basin Range. And hopefully someday every Senator can go to this magnificent thing in the desert. It has taken 40 years to build. One man has done it, a famous artist by the name of Michael Heizer. It's called City. When I talk about 40 years, I mean days, weekends, overtime, and large contingencies of people he directed to this magnificent thing in the middle of the desert.

President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama made our nation's children a top priority. In 2010, President Obama signed a bill into law to fight child hunger and improve

school meals to ensure children receive the nutrition they need to have healthy, successful futures.

President Obama made strides on education.

Our nation's high school graduate rate is the highest in history.

He reformed the federal student loan program, increased the Pell Grant, made student loan repayment more affordable, and expanded loan forgiveness for graduates that enter public service professions.

President Obama granted deferred action to immigrant youth who would have qualified under the DREAM Act, bringing nearly 800,000 young people out of the shadows.

President Obama made our country more inclusive.

He signed the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

He signed executive orders protecting LGBT workers.

Americans are now free to marry the person they love, regardless of gender.

And as Commander-in-Chief, President Obama brought Bin Laden to justice.

These are just a few aspects of President Obama's storied legacy that is still growing. What a record. It is a legacy of which he should be satisfied. America is better because of this good man spending eight years in the White House.

But I am even more impressed by who he is as a person than who he is as a president. He is a man of integrity, of honesty. I have learned much from him.

I have never heard Barack Obama denigrate anybody, ever. There have been times where he could have. Perhaps I thought a negative word should be said and I suggested that to him. But he would never take it. No, he would never do that. That's Barack Obama.

And, above all, I admire the attention he has given his family. He may be President of the United States, but nothing gets in the way of his family. He is a terrific husband to Michelle and outstanding father to Sasha and Malia. He arrives home for dinner with his family virtually every night he is in Washington. He goes to their plays. He goes to their games. President or not, he is a husband and a father.

His devotion extends to his staff, as well. And he has had a terrific staff working for him. I can't mention all of them, but I'll mention his present chief of staff, Denis McDonough. He and I have a very close relationship. Close relationships come with a lot of difficulty, sometimes, because it's been tough, what we've tried to work through together.

Pete Rouse, one of the nicest people I've ever known. He also worked for the president very closely. He was his chief of staff as senator and of course chief advisor when he was in the White House.

Rahm Emmanuel, now the mayor of Chicago, Illinois. Former chief of staff, current mayor of Chicago. A man known for his bluntness and his productivity as a member of Congress and as chief of staff.

Alyssa Mastromonaco, former deputy chief of staff. I hope that I had something to do with the romance that wound up with Alyssa marrying my chief of staff, David Krone.

These are a few people I had the pleasure of working with. And then there's President Obama's cabinet—a cabinet of quality.

That includes my friend, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar—a wonderful man and terrific public servant. A man of substance, like no other I have ever known.

After eight years leading our country, President Obama is leaving office on a high point. When he first took office, our country was in an economic freefall. It was hemorrhaging jobs. Now the economy is experi-

encing the longest streak of private-sector job growth ever. We have the lowest unemployment rate in nearly a decade.

After eight years of President Obama, we are now on a sustainable path to fight climate change and grow renewable energy. We are more respected around the world. We reached international agreements to curb climate change, stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and are on the path to normalizing relations with our neighbor Cuba.

Our country has made significant strides in nearly every way. There is no doubt that the United States is better now than we were eight years ago. And we have Barack Obama to thank for that.

Thank you, President Barack Obama, for being the person you are.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that lots and lots of stuff I have done be printed in the RECORD.

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

REDUCING TAX BURDENS FOR NEVADA RESIDENTS & BUSINESSES

Taxpayers' Bill of Rights—The "Taxpayers' Bill of Rights" was the first bill Senator Reid introduced upon entering the Senate. Several of the ideas in his bill were later incorporated into the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998. The "Taxpayers' Bill of Rights" laid out the rights of taxpayers during an audit, procedures for appealing a decision or filing complaints, the procedures the IRS may use to enforce laws and placed the burden of proof on all issues upon the IRS.

Ended the Source Tax—Senator Reid and the Nevada delegation were successful in protecting Nevada retirees from taxes imposed by other states. This legislation ended taxation without representation by prohibiting states from taxing the retirement benefits of nonresidents.

Sales Tax Deduction—Senator Reid reinstated the deduction for sales taxes to level the playing field for residents of states with no income taxes and he has been successful in extending it.

Mortgage Tax Relief/Debt Cancellation for Homeowners—Eliminates the income tax penalty for homeowners who are successful in negotiating a lower mortgage with their lender.

Tip Tax Agreements—These are agreements between the IRS, the employer, and tipped employees that make it easier for employees to report and pay the tax due on tipped income. Senator Reid was instrumental in making sure that these agreements are fair for Nevada's tipped employees.

Tax Incentives for Solar and Geothermal Energy—Senator Reid was instrumental in securing the long-term extension of tax incentives to promote the development of electricity generated by solar and geothermal sources in Nevada.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) & Secure Rural Schools—Senator Reid led a bipartisan coalition of Western senators to fully fund PILT and reauthorize Secure Rural Schools the first time since 1994 and provides \$130 million over five years to rural counties in Nevada.

Cancellation of Indebtedness—Businesses needing to restructure their debts in order to survive the economic downturn found themselves facing a significant tax penalty as a result of that process. As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Senator Reid was instrumental in pushing through relief from this tax penalty, helping Nevada companies to improve their balance sheets and save thousands of jobs.

Homebuyer Tax Credit Extension—Instrumental in securing an extension of the \$8000 tax credit for first-time homebuyers and offering a reduced credit of up to \$6500 for repeat buyers who have owned their current home for at least five years.

NEVADA JOBS, ECONOMY AND LABOR

Congressional Review Act—Worked with Senator Don Nickles to lead passage of the Congressional Review Act, making it easier for Congress to overturn burdensome regulations imposed by executive branch agencies.

CityCenter—Worked with stakeholders of CityCenter to ensure construction of project continued and advanced to opening in 2009, saving almost 10,000 jobs.

Housing Loan-to-Value Ratio—Requested the Administration raise the loan-to-value requirement for its mortgage modification program, and the Administration responded by raising it 125 percent.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)—Shepherded the stimulus legislation through the Senate and conference, which will provide Nevada with \$3 billion in economic recovery funding, which is expected to create or save 34,000 jobs, 90% of which are in the private sector. Each worker is eligible for up to \$400 in tax relief and families could receive up to \$800. A tax credit of \$8,000 for first-time homebuyers will help Nevadans invest in a home and move the excess supply of houses off the market. The ARRA provides a temporary deduction for non-itemizers for sales tax paid on the purchase of a car or truck. The HOPE education credit for higher education is increased to \$2,500 dollars. Every SSI recipient, Social Security beneficiary, Railroad Retirement beneficiary and disabled veteran receiving VA benefits will receive a one-time economic recovery payment of \$250. Federal and state pensioners who are not participants in Social Security will be eligible for a \$250 tax credit.

Travel Promotion Act—Using the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority's model for Las Vegas, the bill will create a Corporation for Travel Promotion which will be responsible for marketing the United States around the world as a tourist destination. Senators Reid and his colleagues from both sides of the aisle believe that efforts through this bill to make the U.S. more attractive abroad and easy to visit will directly increase the number of visitors to Nevada and create tens of thousands of sorely needed jobs. A study by Oxford Economics estimates that this plan would attract 1.6 million new international visitors annually and projects TPA could create \$4 billion a year in new economic activity.

Minimum Wage Increase—In 2007, Senator Reid worked with a bipartisan coalition of Senators to increase the minimum wage for the first time in ten years. Signed into law by President Bush, this legislation helped some of the hardest-working Nevadans make ends meet.

Nevada Test Site Workers EEOICPA—Senator Reid was instrumental in the passage of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) of 2000, which provides monetary compensation and medical coverage to NTS workers with radiation-induced cancer, beryllium disease, or silicosis.

Nevada Test Site Workers 1951–1962—Senator Reid was instrumental in establishing the Atmospheric Testing years at NTS in an expedited eligibility category.

Nevada Test Site Workers 1963–1992—Senator Reid was instrumental in the writing and submission of a regulatory petition to include more Nevada Test Site workers in an expedited eligibility category. According to a recent position paper by the agency responsible for establishing membership in the

expedited eligibility category, it appears the Underground Testing years are on their way to being granted the expedited status.

Nevada Test Site Workers Area 51—In 2008, Senator Reid successfully fought for the federal agencies to allow Dept. of Energy workers at Area 51 to be eligible for the EEOICPA, thereby reversing a Republican Bush Administration policy.

Unemployment Insurance Extension—Instrumental in passage of an extension of Unemployment Insurance benefits in 2009 and 2010 for states that have been hit the hardest, like Nevada, and out-of-work Americans across the country.

NEVADA TRANSPORTATION

McCarran Airport Funding—Senator Reid has secured tens of millions for McCarran Airport. Among the projects this money has funded include: new air traffic control tower; increased Customs and Border Control protections; wind hazard detection equipment; fiber optic telecommunications systems; and apron rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Reducing Flight Delays Act—Led passage of legislation that provided the Secretary of Transportation with flexibility to transfer funds to reduced FAA traffic control operations, which had been reduced as a result of sequestration.

Reno Airports Funding—Senator Reid obtained more than \$55.8 million for the needed improvements to the Reno-Tahoe International and Reno-Stead airports. These funds have paid for new approach lighting systems, new control towers, runway/taxiway reconstruction and lighting to name but a few projects.

McCarran Airport: Tax Relief for Growth and Construction—Senator Reid was able to save the Clark County Department of Aviation tens of millions of dollars by passing relief for the department's Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) for bonds which refinanced the Terminal 3 project at McCarran Airport. This provision will lower financing costs for this important project by at least \$72.4 million.

Last Highway Reauthorization (SAFETEA-LU)—Increased Nevada's highway funding by 30% and Transit funding by 152%. Senator Reid was instrumental in getting over \$1.3 billion for Nevada transportation projects included in the 2005 National Highway Bill.

Some Additional Major Transportation Projects:

NORTH

Interstate 580 Extension Between Reno and Carson City—\$29 million

Reno Transportation Rail Access Corridor Cover (ReTRAC)—\$15.25 million

Virginia and Truckee Railway from Virginia City to Carson City—\$10 million

Reno Bus Rapid Transit—\$12 million

Lake Tahoe Passenger Ferry Service—\$8 million

Carson City Bypass Enhancement—\$2 million

Meadowood Interchange—\$3.75 million

SOUTH

Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge—\$50 million

Boulder City Bypass—\$28.6 million

Interstate 15 Widening Project from Primm to Apex—\$27 million

Boulder Highway Bus Rapid Transit System—\$12 million

UNLV Transportation Research Center—\$2.5 million

Lake Mead Parkway, Henderson—\$2 million

AFFORDABLE & QUALITY HEALTH CARE FOR ALL NEVADANS

Affordable Care Act—Led passage of the Affordable Care Act, commonly referred to as the health reform law, which is helping

thousands of Nevadans and millions of Americans gain access to the affordable health care that they need and deserve. The law has resulted in 21 million more Americans being covered by health insurance, and an all-time high insured rate of 92%.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Creation and Reauthorization—This long overdue reauthorization ensures health care for thousands of children across Nevada whose parents earn too much for Medicaid, but not enough to afford private insurance. Thanks to the recent expansion, an additional 4.1 million low-income children across the country will now have access to quality health coverage.

Strengthening Medicare—Seniors and people with disabilities know the value of the Medicare program. In the last Congress, Senator Reid led the way to overriding a Presidential veto of improvements to the program. This legislation ensured that physicians did not experience severe cuts to reimbursement that could have jeopardized access to care for Nevada's seniors.

Suicide Prevention—Senator Reid is responsible for the creation of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and has helped enact a number of laws that will help reduce the rate of suicide, including the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act targeting youth suicide, legislation that will lower the Medicare coinsurance for outpatient mental health and the mental health parity act.

Mental Health Parity—The bipartisan legislation which Senator Reid helped pass ensures that plans covering mental health services cannot provide different financial requirements or treatment limitations than they would for medical or surgical benefits.

Drug Quality and Security Act—Provided the FDA with more authority to regulate and monitor the manufacturing of compounded pharmaceutical drugs.

Interstitial Cystitis Research—Senator Reid earmarked millions of dollars for the National Institutes for Health (NIH) to research IC, a disease which affects women, and has funded programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support public and health provider education and outreach about the illness.

Nevada Cancer Institute—Senator Reid has secured tens of millions of dollars to support the infrastructure costs to create a cancer institute in Nevada. This has helped to attract world class cancer researchers to Nevada and will help to ensure that Nevadans will have access to clinic trials. In 2009, Senator Reid worked on a bipartisan basis with the Nevada Congressional delegation to secure 80 acres of federal land for the Institute to construct a new facility devoted to developing new treatments for Nevadans afflicted with cancer.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Research—Senator Reid has a long history of supporting efforts related to Chronic Fatigue Syndrome since he first became aware of this devastating disease in 1987 when the first known outbreak of CFS cases was documented in Incline Village, Nevada. In 1999, he uncovered a scandal at the CDC and forced CDC officials to acknowledge that they had misappropriated the majority of the \$22.7 million he had earmarked for CFS research at the CDC in 1995.

Contraceptive Equity—Passed legislation ensuring that federal employees have access to prescription contraception.

Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act—Sponsored by Senator Reid, this law will help to establish a national strategy to study the potential links between the environment and breast cancer and would authorize funding for such research. The resulting discoveries could be critical to improving our knowledge of this complex illness, which

could lead to new treatments and perhaps, one day, a cure.

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Registry Act—Sponsored by Senator Reid, this law will create an ALS registry at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and will aid in the search for a cure for this devastating disease.

Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act—Senator Reid was instrumental in passing legislation that establishes strong protections against discrimination on the basis of genetic information by health insurance companies and employers.

Affordable Birth Control—Senator Reid was instrumental in passing a provision that would restore the practice of allowing safety net providers to have access to nominally priced drugs. Historically pharmaceutical companies have been permitted offer low, or “nominally priced,” drugs to safety net providers to help ensure that low-income populations have access to affordable medication. In 2005, Congress passed legislation which tightened regulations about who was eligible for nominally priced drugs. In doing so, Congress inadvertently cut off every safety-net provider from obtaining birth control at a low cost, and passing on those savings to their patients. Women who once paid five to ten dollars each month had to pay \$50 or more for basic birth control.

Pandemic Flu Funding—Senator Reid has worked to secure billions of dollars to ensure we are prepared to minimize the impact of the H1N1 flu or any potential flu pandemic.

Medical Research Funding—Senator Reid has a long history of directing funding to the National Institutes of Health for funding biomedical research in areas such as cancer, Alzheimer's, heart disease, diabetes and stem cells. Last year alone, he supported directing over \$40 billion to the National Institutes of Health through ARRA and the Omnibus. These investments could lead to new cures and treatments, and will address debilitating health conditions that prevent our workforce from reaching optimal productivity.

FDA Reauthorization Including Drug Safety Requirements—In September 2007, Senator Reid worked to enact the Food and Drug Administration Revitalization Act (Public Law 110-85), which extends the legal authority for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) programs for approving prescription drugs and medical devices. While this new law will improve prescription drug and food safety for all Americans, it also will improve programs focused just on our children. These improvements represent a victory for consumers and patients who depend on our nation's system for ensuring that life-saving drugs and devices come to market in a timely and safe way.

Federal Medical Assistance Program (FMAP) Increase—Senator Reid worked very hard to increase temporarily the federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) as included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5). The goal was to enable states to maintain their Medicaid services, while also targeting additional funds to the states most in need like ours. Nevada will receive more than \$450 million in additional funding as a result, which is the largest percentage increase of any state in the Federal Medical Assistance Program.

Cobra Expansion—The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) requires most employers with group health plans to offer employees the opportunity to continue their coverage under their employer's plan if their coverage is cut off or suspended due to a layoff, or other qualifying change in their employment status. Many Nevadans who have recently become unemployed are troubled by the steep-

ly rising premiums for their COBRA insurance coverage. Senator Reid was instrumental in obtaining a premium subsidy for COBRA recipients in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This provision created a 65% subsidy for health insurance premiums under COBRA for up to nine months for workers and their families who have been involuntarily terminated between September 1st, 2009 and December 31st, 2009.

NEVADA'S ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & LANDS

Yucca Mountain—Slashed funding for Yucca to record lows during the pro-Yucca Republican Bush Administration, and worked with President Obama to terminate the project and launch a Blue Ribbon Commission to develop alternatives.

Renewable Energy and Efficiency tax incentives—Since 2000, Senator Reid has secured over \$100 million for Nevada-based projects to research and advance our nation's renewable energy and energy efficiency capabilities. Additionally, the Recovery Act provided over \$500 million for energy efficiency, renewable energy and weatherization projects in Nevada. Nevada's institutions of higher education, schools, counties and others are working to make Nevada the nation's renewable energy leader.

Renewable Energy Transmission—Delivered \$3.25 billion in financing for developing transmission for renewable energy in the West (Recovery Act), as well \$4.4 billion to build a national smart grid to accelerate renewable energy development in Nevada and across the country.

Solar Energy—Worked with Department of Interior to designate seven Solar Energy Study Areas in Nevada and to institute fast track environmental reviews for key renewable energy projects (3 solar and 2 wind energy projects).

Hosted Eight National Clean Energy Summits Established the Blue Ribbon Panel on Energy in Nevada—Senator Reid, has hosted the National Clean Energy Summit in Nevada since 2008. These events have helped build a dialogue among the nation's most distinguished leaders in clean energy policy on how to build the infrastructure and create jobs to achieve energy security using renewables, other forms of clean energy, and efficiency. Speakers have included President Barack Obama, President Bill Clinton, Secretary Hillary Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, Energy Secretary Steven Chu, Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, Tesla CEO Elon Musk, along with many other leaders from government, business, labor, and the non-profit communities from Nevada and beyond.

Geothermal Energy—Prevented the Republican Bush Administration from closing down the geothermal energy R&D program.

Mormon Crickets—Was successful in getting over \$20 million appropriated for Nevada.

BLM California Trail Center in Elko—Passed authorizing legislation and secured more than \$10 million to build the Center.

Clark County Heliport—Conveyed 230 acres to create a new, dedicated facility. 100,000 people are safer as a result.

Ivanpah Airport—Authored and passed legislation that designates 6,500 acres for a new long-haul airport.

Clark County Land Bill—In 2002, led Nevada delegation to pass a comprehensive public lands management plan for Clark County. This strong bipartisan legislation released wilderness study areas to enhance economic opportunities in Clark County while also adding 440,000 acres to the national wilderness system.

Lincoln County Land Bill—Led Nevada delegation to pass the largest wilderness bill in the history of Nevada. This legislation des-

ignated over 768,000 acres in new wilderness areas, including over 150,000 acres of the Mormon Mountains. This legislation also provided new authority for land sales to increase Lincoln County's tax base.

White Pine County Land Bill—Senator Reid led the Nevada delegation to pass legislation protecting 559,000 acres of incredible wilderness lands and provided a timely economic boost to White Pine County. The bill also added important protections to the land surrounding Great Basin National Park, enlarged two state parks and a state wildlife management area, and provided lands for the future growth of the Ely Shoshone Tribe.

Carson City Land Bill—This legislation increases open space opportunities and helps the city pursue its smart growth plans. The bill includes a land exchange between the city and the Forest Service, giving each entity land that is more suited to its mission and management abilities. The legislation also conveys the Silver Saddle Ranch and Prison Hill to Carson City for continued public use, with a conservation easement retained by the Bureau of Land Management.

Ely Native Seed Warehouse—Currently under construction, the Ely Native Seed Warehouse will hold one million pounds of native seed used to will help reseed habitat after fires.

Fallon Plant Materials Center—Secured funding for the Center which will help develop resilient crops for the Great Basin.

Nevada Hunting Bill—Restored each state's ability to differentiate between in-state and out-of-state hunters when selling game tags.

Drop 2 Reservoir—Passed legislation allowing construction of a major water-saving reservoir east of San Diego, which will allow southern Nevada to take significant additional water from the Colorado River.

REBUILT/RECONSTRUCTED SEVEN BRIDGES IN JARBIDGE

Sloan Canyon—In the Clark County Land Bill, created the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area to preserve the beautiful areas that bless southern Nevada.

Clark County Shooting Park—Conveyed 3,000 acres and provided \$60 million to develop the world's finest shooting range.

Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area—Protected southern Nevada's most notable and beloved outdoor and scenic area.

Great Basin National Park—Championed legislation that created Nevada's first National park in 1986; secured funding for and dedicated a new visitor's center in 2005; and stopped two coal plants that would have wrecked the park's incredible clean air.

Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument—In 2012, Senator Reid authored and introduced legislation to establish Nevada's only current National Monument in the north Las Vegas Valley. The legislation was passed in 2014 and created a 22,600 acre National Monument that protects the best collection of Ice Age mammal fossils in the United States. The legislation also provided economic development, educational and recreation opportunities throughout Clark County.

Basin and Range National Monument—President Obama used his authority under the Antiquities Act on July 10, 2015, to permanently protect more than 700,000 acres of land in eastern Nevada as the Basin and Range National Monument. Senator Reid advocated for years to protect this truly special area where the Mojave Desert meets the Great Basin, and Joshua trees and cactus give way to a sea of sagebrush. It is home to desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, elk, and pronghorn antelope. It is an area that provided food and shelter for Native Americans, and one can see their history today in incredible rock art panels there. The Basin and

Range Monument will also protect the cultural integrity of world-renowned artist Michael Heizer's expansive sculpture, 'City'.

Lake Tahoe—Hosted the first Tahoe Summit to help preserve the lake's clarity; passed the original Lake Tahoe Restoration Act; sent over \$300 million in federal funds to help the Lake.

Fallon Water Treatment Plant—Senator Reid secured funding for the construction of the Fallon Water Treatment Plant which opened in April of 2004. The residents of Fallon and the neighboring Naval Air Station had been subjected to high levels of arsenic in their drinking water that were ten times greater than the national standard set by the EPA.

Walker Lake—In line with Senator Reid's commitment to protecting the environment and Nevada's natural resources, saving Walker Lake is one of his top priorities. In response, Senator Reid has secured more than \$375 million in federal funds for efforts to preserve the lake.

Truckee River Operating Agreement—Senator Reid helped negotiate the settlement for Truckee and Carson Rivers.

Sparks Marina—Senator Reid worked with the residents and community leaders of Sparks and used his position in the Senate to clean up the once-contaminated gravel pit into the Sparks Marina. Now the Sparks Marina is a popular recreational area used by thousands each year for boating, fishing and other outdoor activities.

2 Million Acres of Wilderness Land—Beginning with the Nevada Wilderness Act of 1989, which designated 740,000 acres of land as protected wilderness, Senator Reid has been devoted to protecting Nevada's wilderness. To this date, he has continued working hard to turn more than 2 million acres into protected wilderness. One of the highlights of the Senator's efforts includes the Black Rock Desert—High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails Act of 2000 which provided 750,000 acres of wilderness in Nevada.

Rural Water—Secured more than \$100 million to rural water systems across Nevada to improve drinking water quality and treatment systems.

Water Security—Enhanced Nevada's water security by directly authorizing development of the All American Canal, a critical piece in implementing the lower Colorado River Basin multi-state shortage agreement.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND VETERANS

Secured Vital Funding for All of Nevada's Military Installations. Over the course of his tenure, Senator Reid has secured millions for Nevada's troops, veterans, military families and installations. In fiscal year 2017, Senator Reid worked to obtain over \$204 million in federal funding for projects at the Nellis Air Force Base, Naval Air Station Fallon, and Reno VA Medical Center. In addition, \$90 million was allocated nationwide for construction of state veteran extended care facilities, including one to eventually be built in Reno.

Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC)—Successfully fought to keep Hawthorne Army Depot open through the BRAC process and prevented the Nevada Air National Guard from losing their C-130 aircraft. Senator Reid's leadership position in the Senate was pivotal in allowing him to appoint a Nevadan to the Commission.

Nellis Air Force Base—Secured more than \$350 million in funding for Base Infrastructure.

Creech Air Force Base (Indian Springs)—Secured \$128.8 million in funding for Base Infrastructure and for a new Center of Excellence for the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).

Hawthorne Army Depot—Secured over \$59 million in funding for Base Infrastructure

and modernized demilitarization facilities. Senator Reid also helped protect the Depot from closure during the BRAC process saving hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in impact for the community.

Nevada National Guard (Army and Air)—Secured over \$195 million in funding for Base Infrastructure and equipment.

Cold War Heroes—As part of the Omnibus Lairds Bill of 2009 (PL111-11), Senator Reid secured passage of the Cold War Historical Sites Study Act which requires the Department of the Interior to evaluate sites and resources for commemorating and interpreting the Cold War, including the Mount Charleston Plane Crash Memorial.

Concurrent Receipt for Nevada's Veterans—Senator Reid was instrumental in getting concurrent receipt legislation passed in 2004 that enabled our veterans with 100 percent service-related disability to collect both disability and military pay. The following year, Senator Reid won passage of his amendment that expanded concurrent receipt to cover America's disabled veterans rated as unemployable. This issue has been a top priority of Nevada's 250,000 veterans, as well as veterans across the country.

New Las Vegas Veteran's Hospital—Senator Reid has secured more than \$600 million for the construction of the Veterans Administration's new Las Vegas Hospital and Community Living Center on Pecos Road in North Las Vegas. Additionally, the \$75 million Mike O'Callaghan Federal Hospital at Nellis Air Force Base opened its doors in 1994 due to Senator Reid's leadership.

New VA clinic in Laughlin, Nevada—In January 2015, Senator Reid announced the opening of a VA Outreach Clinic in Laughlin, which will allow Veterans in the Southeast area to more easily access high quality care. The Laughlin Clinic will provide primary care for eligible Veterans who are appropriate for care at an outreach clinic as well as some mental health and social work care.

Nevada Test Site—Maintained the Nevada Test Site as part of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium, and provided appropriations of over \$20 million annually.

Urban Area Area Security Initiative—Reinstated Las Vegas onto the UASI (Urban Area Security Initiative) city list, thereby securing millions in funding to help prepare and protect the city from attack.

Implement the 9/11 Commission Recommendations—As Majority Leader, Senator Reid pushed to have the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission written into law. This law made Nevadans and all Americans more secure by: giving first responders the tools they need to keep us safe; making it more difficult for potential terrorists to travel into our country; advancing efforts to secure our rail, air, and mass transit systems; and improving intelligence and information sharing between state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies.

NEVADA'S JUDICIARY

Nevada Federal Courthouses and Buildings—Senator Reid secured more than \$83 million in funding for construction of a new federal building for Southern Nevada, the Lloyd D. George Courthouse and Federal Building in Las Vegas. Senator Reid was also instrumental in securing funding for the Bruce R. Thompson Courthouse and Federal Building in Reno.

Mills B. Lane Justice Complex Security Upgrades—Secured nearly \$1 million for the Reno Municipal Court and the Washoe County District Attorney's security following the 2006 sniper shooting.

ETHICS & LOBBYING REFORM

Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act (STOCK Act)—Senator Reid led the way in creating new reporting requirement for

Members of Congress and staff regarding stock and commodity transactions.

Honest Leadership and Open Government Act—Senator Reid authored the "Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007," which passed on a bipartisan basis and was signed into law by President George W. Bush. Sen. Reid's measure was recognized as one of the toughest and most sweeping ethics reforms in a generation. Among the many accomplishments of this law include:

Closing the "revolving door" between government & lobbyists by former Senators & staff

Reforming and increasing transparency for earmarks and conference reports

Prohibiting pensions for Members of Congress convicted of certain crimes

Expanding the lobbying disclosure requirements

Toughening limits on gifts and travel

NEVADA EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act—Changed the federal student loan program from fixed interest rates to rates based on the Treasury note plus a percentage for undergraduate, graduate or parent loans.

GI Bill of Rights—Under Senator Reid's leadership, the Post 9/11 GI Bill of Rights—the largest expansion of educational benefits since the original GI Bill of Rights—was passed.

Teach for America—Reid worked to bring Teach for America to Nevada, which has resulted in the hiring of several hundred highly qualified teachers in the Clark County School District.

America COMPETES Act—Reid led passage of the America COMPETES Act, bipartisan legislation to improve math and science education and increase the federal commitment to research.

UNR Fire Science Academy—The Fire Science Academy located in Carlin opened its doors in 1999. In cooperation with the University of Nevada, Reno, Senator Reid succeeded in getting the Department of Energy to award the facility with an \$8 million in grant and appropriations support.

Nevada State College Campus—In 2002, Senator Reid successfully pushed through a land transfer in Southern Nevada that provided campus land for the newly created Nevada State College.

Desert Research Institute (DRI)—Secured more than \$70 million in appropriations for projects.

UNLV Super Computers—Secured \$2.7 million.

UNR Earthquake Center & Biodiversity Study—Secured \$2.5 & \$7.5 million respectively.

UNLV Research Park—Conveyed 122 acres of federal land to UNLV Research Foundation for construction of a research center and provided special authority to allow the Foundation to keep and reinvest 100% of any lease revenues from the land.

Dandini Research Park Conveyance Act—Passed legislation signed into law by President Bush transferring 476 of the 467-acre parcel north of downtown Reno from the Bureau of Land Management to the Board of Regents of the University and Community College System of Nevada for use by Truckee Meadows Community College and the Desert Research Institute.

NATIVE AMERICANS

Indian Water Settlements—Senator Reid has led the legislative effort to quantify Indian water rights and settle long-standing claims against the United States. The Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe (1990), the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (1990), and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation (2009) have been able to develop their water rights and their economies because of these settlements.

Western Shoshone Claims Distribution Act—Senator Reid led efforts to enact a law ordering the United States to distribute settlement funds resulting in the resolution of the Western Shoshone land and accounting claims against the United States. The settlement funds, now totaling nearly \$160 million, will be distributed to an estimated 6,000 eligible Shoshones. They and their descendants will be eligible for benefits from a \$1.5 million educational trust fund.

Washoe Tribe: Additional Land for Residential and Commercial Development. As part of the Omnibus Public Land Act of 2009, Senator Reid passed a measure to address the Washoe Tribe's need for more land for residential and commercial development. Under the bill, about 300 acres of Forest Service and BLM land near the Carson and Stewart Colonies will be conveyed to the Washoe Tribe, with nearly half of those acres available for development.

Ely Shoshone Tribe Land Transfer—Senator Reid, working with his Nevada colleagues in Congress passed the White Pine County Lands Bill as part of a braided package in 2006. The bill transferred 3,526 acres to the Ely Shoshone Tribe for traditional, ceremonial, commercial and residential purposes.

Las Vegas Paiute Tribe Land—In 1983, Senator Reid (then in the US House of Representatives) passed a measure—which was signed into law by President Reagan—to declare 3850 acres of land held in trust by the federal government would thereby be “declared to be part of the Las Vegas Paiute Reservation.”

ENSURING EQUALITY FOR NEVADANS

‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’—As Majority leader, Senator Reid led passage of the repeal of ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.’

Mr. REID. I am winding down, everybody. I know you are glad, but it has been 34 years. I served with 281 different Senators during the time I have been here. I have such fond memories of so many. There was the hilarious and confident Fritz Hollings. I have never known a better joke teller than Frank Lautenberg. I asked him to tell the same story so many times, I could have told it. He had one about two wrestlers, but I am not going to repeat it. He was very, very funny. I am not going to go through the whole Ted Kennedy list and all of that, but I have had wonderful experiences with my Senate friends.

When I came here as a Democratic Senator, there was only one woman, BARBARA MIKULSKI, and that was it. I am very happy now that we have 17 Democratic women, and we have four Republican women. I want to make the record very clear that the Senate is a better place because of women being here. There is no question about that, for many different reasons, but they have added so much to the Senate. The only problem we have now is that there aren't enough of them, but we did our best this go-round. We have four new Democratic Senators.

Leaders. I have already talked about Senator MCCONNELL. It has been my good fortune to have served with such good leaders like Robert Byrd. I don't know if it is true. I accept it because that is what I want to believe, but a number of people told me I was his pet. As I said, I don't know if I was or not, but he sure was good to me.

George Mitchell, what a wonderful extemporaneous speaker. He was the best. He was a Federal judge, U.S. attorney, and a good man.

I was a junior Senator and didn't have a lot of interchange with Bob Dole when he was the leader, but I have had a lot lately. He calls me to talk about some issues he is working on now. One of the most moving times of my life was when Dan Inouye was lying in State in the Rotunda. Bob Dole called me and asked if I would go over there with him, and I said of course I would. He was in a wheelchair and somebody pushed him over there, and he said stop. There was a little alcove there, and Bob Dole, as hard as it was for him, walked over to the crypt where Danny was and he climbed up on the bier and said, “Danny, I love you.” If that doesn't bring a tear to your eye, nothing will. I will always remember that.

Trent Lott was a really good leader. He was extremely conservative but extremely pragmatic. We got lots of stuff done. I was Senator Daschle's point person to get legislation out of this body, and we did some really good things.

Tom Daschle always gave me lots of room to do things. I can remember one occasion when I was the whip, I thought he had been too generous with one of the other Senators and I complained. He said: Look, you are going to make this whip job whatever you want it to be. I took him at his word, and I did. I never left the floor. When the Senate opened, I was here, and when it was closed, I was here.

Bill Frist is a fine human being. I really cared for him a lot. He wasn't an experienced legislator, but that is OK. He is an experienced human being, and I liked him a lot. I already talked about MITCH.

Diversity. We don't have enough diversity in the Senate, but I do take credit for creating a diversity office here with Democrats. Senator SCHUMER has indicated he will continue that, and I am very happy he will do that. I repeat, we don't have enough diversity.

I want to tell everyone here I am grateful to all of my Democratic Senators. They have been so good to me during my time as leader, but I have to mention DICK DURBIN. He and I came here together 34 years ago. He has been so supportive of me. He has been my “Cousin Jeff.” Can I tell the story? Here I go.

My brother still lives in Searchlight, and he is an interesting man. He had a girlfriend there who was married and brought her home one night.

Her husband or boyfriend, whatever it was, jumped out of the tree on my brother's back, and they had a fight. My brother won. So a couple of weeks later, he is at the 49er Club, a bar, a little place in Searchlight. He is having a beer, whatever he drinks.

He looks around, and he sees the guy he beat up, but the guy has a couple of people with him. He knew why they

were there. They were there to work him over. He said: What am I going to do? Just about then a miracle happened. Our cousin Jeff walked in. He hadn't been to Searchlight for a couple of years. But Cousin Jeff was known as being a really tough guy.

So Larry said: Here's the deal.

Cousin Jeff looked them over and went over to the biggest one, grabbed his nose, twisted it as hard as he could. He said: Do you guys want any part of me or my cousin Larry?

They said no. They left.

The reason I mention that—the reason I say DURBIN is my Cousin Jeff—I was in my office watching the floor, and MCCONNELL was up there. I was so damn mad. He was talking about stuff. I was mad. I called my office: Why don't we have somebody out there saying something?

They said: Senator, that was recorded earlier today. We are out of session.

So DURBIN has been my man, my Cousin Jeff. Whenever I have a problem, I call DICK DURBIN, and he can come. DICK DURBIN can talk about anything, and it sounds good. OK.

CHUCK SCHUMER. My kids said: Make sure you tell everybody about how smart you think he is. OK. I am going to do it. One day I said to SCHUMER—we have known each other for a long time. But I said: How the hell did you ever get into Harvard?

He said: It helped that I got a perfect SAT and a perfect LSAT.

That is true. He did. He is a brilliant man. He has a big heart. He works extremely hard. He has been so good to me. We have worked together. He took a job he did not want, the chair of the DSCC twice, but it worked out great. We were able to get the majority. So I will always have great affection for him, and I wish him well in being my replacement. I am confident he will do a good job. He will not be me, but he will go a good job.

My staff. We checked yesterday—my staff did. It is hard to comprehend how many people I have had work for me over 34 years—almost 3,000, everybody. I feel so strongly about my staff. They are my family. I really, really do believe that. I feel they are my family. Chiefs of staff—I haven't had that many, surprisingly, over 34 years. Claude Zobell, Ray Martinez, Susan McCue, Gary Myrick, David Krone, Drew Willison, and, of course, Dave McCallum, who has done so much to make sure I did not overspin things, and my utility man, Bill Dauster. He can catch, pitch, play any position on the field. He has been great for me. I appreciate Bill's work very much.

Thank you, Adelle, because I would be so embarrassed if I did not say something about PATTY MURRAY. She has been part of this little leadership team I have had. We have never had anything like this before in the Senate. The leaders prior to me did it all on their own. But I have had these three wonderful human beings helping me for all these years.

We meet every Monday night and get set up for the caucus on Tuesday, leadership meetings on Tuesday. So, PATTY, you and Rob, I just care so much about. I want you to know how I appreciate your loyalty, your hard work. You have taken some jobs that you did not want to take: a budget job, that super—whatever the hell it was called. That was awful. I don't know how long she is going to live, but that took a few years off her life. You and Rob have been great. Loretta is my friend. Iris I love. So thank you very much, you guys.

I have told everyone on my staff, with rare exception: You represent me. If you are on the phone, when you answer that phone, you are representing me. You are as if you are HARRY REID on the phone. I say the same to those who speak, write, and advocate for me. They represent me. They have done so well. They have helped me in good times and bad times.

What is the future of the Senate? I hope that everyone will do everything they can to protect the Senate as an institution. As part of our Constitution, it should be given the dignity it deserves. I love the Senate. I don't need to dwell on that. I love the Senate. I care about it so very, very much. I have enjoyed Congress for 34 years. As the leader of the Senate, I have had such joy and times of awe. Wow. What are we going to do now?

That is what these jobs are like. They are so exhilarating, until, oh, man, something happens, and I think all of you have done as I have just said: Wow. What are we going to do now?

The Senate has changed, some for the good, some for the bad. I want to say this, though. It is not the same as when I first came here. There is change in everything. The biggest change has been the use of the filibuster. I do hope my colleagues are able to temper their use of the filibuster; otherwise it will be gone. It will be gone first on nominations, then it will be gone on legislation. This is something that you have to work on together because if you continue to use it the way it has been used recently, it is really going to affect this institution a lot.

Something has to be done about the outrageous amount of money from sources that are dark, unknown, and now involved in our Federal elections. The Citizens United case in January 2010—if this does not change and if we don't do something about this vast money coming into our elections, in a couple of more election cycles, we are going to be just like Russia. We are going to have a plutocracy—a few rich guys telling our leader what to do.

Leonard Cohen, who recently died, was one of America's great music geniuses. He recently died, as I said. In one of his songs called "Anthem," he says it all:

There is a crack in everything (there is a crack in everything)

That's how the light gets in

That is what he said. I believe there are cracks in what is happening with

the huge amount of money currently in Federal elections and excessive partisanship. The cracks are that the American people don't like it. They don't like this money. They don't like the partisanship. So there are cracks—cracks, I repeat—because the American people are complaining big time about excessive use of money and objecting to the partisanship. That is the crack. That is how the light is going to get in. That is how America has an opportunity to become a better place, where money will not control our political system over partisanship.

So just a little bit of advice to my colleagues: It has worked OK for me. It does not matter if I am in Elko, really a conservative place in Nevada, 400 miles from Las Vegas. If a question is asked of me in Elko, I give the same answer there as I give in Las Vegas. We should all do that.

People in Nevada have never had to weigh how I stand on an issue. I tell them how I feel. That is why I have never had any big-bang elections. People at least know how I stand. People don't necessarily like how I vote, what I talk about, but at least they know how I feel. I think that is good advice for everybody. At least that has worked well for me.

What is your formula for success? What do you recommend? I tell them the same thing about working hard. Of course that is important. Of course it is important, but also stay true to who you are—your roots.

Now my social life. My time in Washington has been different than that of many. I am not saying it is better, but it has been different. Every year there are galas: White House Correspondents' Dinner, the Gridiron Club Dinner, Radio and Correspondents' Dinner, Alfalfa Club. So during my 34 years in Congress, I had approximately 135 to 136 of these. I have attended one of them. For me, that was enough.

I have attended one Congressional picnic in 34 years. That was because my son Key had a girlfriend named Maile and he wanted to impress her. I guess he did because they are married. But one was enough for me.

I have attended one State dinner. That is because I had a son who spent 2 years in Argentina. I wanted him to meet the President of Argentina. I did that for my son Rory. But one was enough. I have not been to another one. I have never been to a White House Congressional Ball. That is going to be held tonight. I guess I am inquisitive of how it would be, but I don't want to go.

I have seen one World Series. That was enough. I have been to one Super Bowl. That was plenty. I have flown once in an F-18. That was enough. Over the years, I have gone to hundreds of fundraisers for my friends and colleagues, but everyone has to acknowledge, I can get in and out of those pretty quick.

Let me talk about the press a little bit and their responsibility, as I see it. We are entering a new gilded age, and

it has never been more important to be able to distinguish between what is real and what is fake. We have lawmakers pushing for tax cuts for billionaires and calling it populism. We have media outlets pushing conspiracy theories disguised as news.

Separating real from fake has never been more important. I have met him, but I wish I could sit down and talk to him sometime because I so admire Pope Francis. Here is what he said yesterday: The media that focuses on scandals and spreads fake news to smear politicians risks becoming like people who have a morbid fascination with excrement.

That is what Pope Francis said. He added that using communications for this rather than to educate the public amounted to a sin.

Well, he can categorize sin; I can't. But I agree with him on what he said. I acknowledge the importance of the press. I admire what you do and understand the challenges ahead of you. But be vigilant, because you have as much to do with our democracy as any branch of government. This is best understood by listening to what George Orwell had to say a long time ago: "Freedom of the press, if it means anything at all, means the freedom to criticize and oppose."

So, press, criticize and oppose. Please do that.

This really is the end of my speech. I have five children: Lana, Rory, Leif, Josh, and Key. They have been role models for me and for Landra. They were role models. We learned from them when we were young, and we are still learning from them. We appreciate the exemplary lives they have lived. I am confident, hopeful, and determined to make sure that they understand how much affection and admiration I have for each of them, for their wonderful spouses, and our 19 grandchildren.

OK. Here goes. Whatever success I had in my educational life, my life as a lawyer, and my life as a politician, including my time in Congress, is directly attributable to my Landra, my wife. We met when Landra was a sophomore in high school and I was a junior. That was more than six decades ago. We married at the age of 19. As I have said, we have five children, and we have 19 wonderful grandchildren.

She has been the being of my existence in my personal life and my public life. Disraeli, the great prime minister said in 1837—listen to what he said: "The magic of first love is that it never ends." I believe that. She is my first love. It will never end. Landra and I have talked. We understand we are going to have a different life. We have said and we believe that we are not going to dwell on the past. We will be involved in the past any way we need to be, but we are going to look to the future.

I wish everyone the best. I am sorry I have talked so long. I usually don't do that. I thank everyone for listening to my speech. I appreciate my wonderful family being here, my friends, my

staff, and each of you. Thank you for your friendships over the years.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I will yield for a couple more minutes for sentiments, and then I wish to say a few words.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 2943, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany S. 2943, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

TRIBUTES TO HARRY REID

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I stand in front of you to commemorate the long life and service of a fellow Nevadan who has given his all to serve our State and this country.

It has been said it is better to be feared than loved if you cannot be both. My colleagues in the Senate and those in the Gallery probably agree with me, no individual in politics embodies that sentiment today more than my colleague from Nevada, HARRY MASON REID.

Today I am on the floor to pay respect to Senate Minority Leader HARRY REID, after 30 years of service in this Chamber, in addition to the years of public service before entering into the Senate.

I know HARRY is notorious for his short conversations—minus today—for hanging up the phone before our conversations end, and sometimes even midsentence, so I will try to keep my comments respectfully short.

Before I truly get into the speech, I must first recognize HARRY's family. As a public official, very often it is time with your family that is most often sacrificed the most, and it is very true, as stated by a leader in our shared faith when he said, "Nothing compensates for failure in the home."

HARRY has been keenly aware of this fact and he shows his adoration. He has shown it for his wife Landra and his five children: Lana, Rory, Leif, Josh, and Key. He has made sure to keep a very close bond with his wife, his chil-

dren, and grandchildren. That is something we all respect and something I wish to emulate.

So what can I say? It is an end of an era for my home State of Nevada. HARRY has devoted his entire adult life to one cause, the State of Nevada and serving it.

Trust me, though we have had our differences when it came to our State, I can attest to one thing; that is, there is no stronger partner to serve the people of Nevada than HARRY REID.

It has been said victorious leaders feel the alternative to winning is totally unacceptable so they figure out what must be done to achieve victory, and then they go after it with everything at their disposal. I believe that describes HARRY REID in a nutshell.

Another measure of success, something HARRY and I have found amusing in the past, is being blamed for all things—all that is good, all that is bad, and all that is ugly. Let me assure you, HARRY has been blamed for a lot, some fairly and some unfairly.

Senator REID has served in every level of government, from city attorney, the State assembly, Lieutenant Governor, U.S. Congressman, and Senator. As a Senator, he is one of only three to serve at least 8 years as majority leader. Even in retirement, due to his far-reaching influence in just about every facet of State, local, and Federal Government, I totally expect he will operate as Nevada's third Senator.

After 26 elections, HARRY knows a thing or two about representing his constituency. He is one of the sharpest tactical minds ever to enter the political arena. Having worked together over the years, my hope is that we have sent a message, not only to all Nevadans but to everyone across this country, that two people who you can tell differ on many opinions can work well together, get things done for their constituents when both are willing.

That is why it is fitting this week that the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act will pass the Senate and will be sent to the President's desk to be signed into law. After fighting for years to refocus Federal policy on the 21st century threats to the lake, we teamed up to ensure important work that preserves the "Jewel of the Sierra" for future generations and that it will advance.

One of HARRY's lasting legacies will be that he and I worked to improve water clarity, reduce wildfire threats, jump-start transportation and infrastructure projects, and combat invasive species at Lake Tahoe. Because of this work, Lake Tahoe has once again been made a national priority.

Another policy initiative that we worked together on was the fight against Yucca Mountain. HARRY, rest assured, I will continue to fight Yucca. My mantra is borrowed from one of your late friends, the late Senator Ted Kennedy, when he said: "The work goes on, the cause endures. . . ."

We will not allow Nevada to turn into America's nuclear dump against the will of its own people.

HARRY, you share the Nevada values such as faith in God, hard work, and commitment to family. I know, because you displayed these values at home, at work, and at church. In fact, actually, that is how we first met HARRY. It was during his tenure as Lieutenant Governor when he spent time in Carson City. Our families were able to meet each other and become friends. Eventually, I became very good friends with his son Leif. HARRY, your dedication to family is extraordinary and it serves as a model to all of us.

I would be remiss if I didn't share a couple of my favorite HARRY REID stories. There are a lot of them. There are a few I cannot share, there are a few I can so I will share with you the ones I can.

Before serving in the Senate, I was elected to the House of Representatives in 2007, until my appointment to the Senate in 2011. Late one evening, I was sitting in my office with my chief of staff, Mac Abrams, discussing a few last-minute details before leaving for the day. It must have been near the end of the week because staffers in the House offices were milling around the hall celebrating a birthday party, enjoying each other's company, playing loud music, and taking a few moments to relax. I was having a hard time keeping the noise from the halls out of my office because of the thin walls. All of a sudden, it was if it all stopped immediately. A quiet hush came over the crowd. It became so quiet, to the point I could hear a small echoing—tap, tap, tap. The taps were magnified. The hallway, which was previously full of life, just immediately died. I began to walk toward the hall to see what it was. I could tell the tapping noise was the sound of footsteps. As they grew louder and closer, I barely heard a peep in that hallway. Sure enough, the next sound I heard was the doorknob to my office turning, and in walks HARRY: "Hi, Dean. Do you have a few minutes?" To me, that story illustrates how much presence HARRY has and the respect he commands no matter where he is. He quieted an entire hallway full of lively staffers by just passing through and walking down that hallway.

The second story occurred more recently. We were in HARRY's office on a January morning soon after I was elected to my first full term. During that campaign, HARRY and his special friends gave me 12 million reasons why I shouldn't be standing there in his office that day, but, hey, this is the Senate and collegiality reigns supreme so I was at that breakfast because our constituents were there.

HARRY and I have known each other for many years, and he made it a point to tell those in attendance how close we were. We were having a good breakfast. He gets up to tell everyone how long he had known me, some of my

background—but he kept highlighting how close we were.

So after his short speech—a little shorter than today—HARRY looks at me, offers for me to say a few of my own words. So I just got up in the front of the room and made sure that everybody knew I could attest that at least one Reid voted for me—HARRY's son Leif. The look on HARRY's face was priceless. Seeing HARRY process the fact that there was a Reid who voted for me is a memory seared in my brain forever.

For me, this speech is not a goodbye because I know we will be seeing you back home in our great State. HARRY, people, like me, may disagree with you at times, but we will always respect you for three things: your devotion to your family, your service to our State and Nation, and your commitment to fighting for what you believe in.

This Chamber has been blessed with some of the greatest men and women who have ever served our Republic. Today I recognize and rise to recognize your place among these figures and hope your career will give inspiration to a young child from Carson City or Searchlight or anywhere else in Nevada to follow in your footsteps.

Again, congratulations on your career. We, the people of Nevada, thank you for your service. Lynne and I wish you and Landra all the best in the years ahead—and as your new senior Senator, I hope I can count on your vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to say a few words about HARRY REID, our departing, retiring, Democratic leader. It is appropriate he is not on the floor because it is painful for him to sit and hear anybody say anything nice about him. I am sure he is going to be happy not hearing these words, but I want the rest of the folks following the proceedings in the Senate to hear them.

I was first elected to the House of Representatives the same year as HARRY, 1982. A friend of mine, who is an attorney in Chicago named Ed Joyce, said: Be sure and look up this HARRY REID from Nevada because he is a great fellow and a great lawyer. So I did. We came in with a large class of over 50 Members. I went up to HARRY and said: Hi. I am DICK DURBIN from Illinois. We have a mutual friend in Chicago.

He said: Well, great. I am looking forward to working with you.

I said: So are you headed up to Harvard for the orientation? I will see you up there.

He said: No, I am headed to Kansas City. We have settlement conference in a personal injury lawsuit that I couldn't miss.

And I thought to myself, this is some lawyer. Up to the bitter end of his legal career, he was still devoted to the cause of representing clients and rep-

resenting them effectively. When HARRY makes a commitment, he keeps it. I knew at that moment and I have known it ever since.

Four years later, he was in the Senate, I was still in the House, but the day came when I finally got elected to the Senate and joined HARRY REID.

I know we had a good friendship to start because we came to the House together, but I remember the day and I remember the moment when that friendship became something special. It was right there in the well of the Senate.

The most important bill in HARRY's political career was up for a vote. It was on Yucca Mountain.

He came before the rollcall was being announced and he said: How are you going to vote?

I said: Well, HARRY, I have kind of mixed feelings on this.

He said: Stop. I need you. I think I have enough votes, but I may need you. So can you promise that if I need your vote you will be there?

I said: Well, all right.

But he said: But I don't think I will need your vote.

You know what happened next. They called the roll, and at the very end, one of the Democratic Senators he counted on voted the other way. He turned to me and said: Well?

I said: I am giving you my word.

And I voted with HARRY REID on Yucca Mountain.

That was the moment when our friendship became solid. In this business, your word is your bond. When you promise somebody you are going to stick with them come heck or high water, that is when it is tested.

Our friendship grew from that point. I didn't know the time would come, but it did, amazingly, when Tom Daschle lost in the Senate race in South Dakota. The next day, I got a call from HARRY REID. He said: I hope you will consider running for whip. You ought to call every Member of the caucus, and I did.

I quickly learned that many of them had called him and said: Whom do you want to be your whip? And he said: Well, I think DURBIN would be a good choice.

That is why I am sitting here today.

Twelve years later, I am still serving as HARRY REID's whip and still counting the votes on key issues, and during those 12 years, I probably spent more time talking to HARRY REID, my colleague in the Senate, than to any other Member of this body. It is a close, personal friendship and relationship, and we have gone through a lot together.

I listened to his stories. He told some of them today. He returns to his youth, growing up in Searchlight, which we heard about today in just wonderful detail, but he also returns to all of those friendships that were made during those years with people he grew up with in Searchlight and in Henderson, where he went to school. I have come to know these people as if they were

my own classmates because I have heard these stories so many times. It is part of who he is, and it is part of his value system. It explains some important decisions in his life.

When he talks about the Affordable Care Act, we understand that he still remembers that his mother needed dentures, and he saved up money to buy his mother a set of teeth. He thought about the fact that there was no medical care for his family when they needed it the most. He thought about the depression that took his father's life and how that might have been averted with the right medical care. That is what has inspired him to public life.

The one thing that has inspired him the most is Landra. Over and over, I have heard these stories about this courtship. Now, by most standards, getting married when you are 19 is not recommended but, clearly, in this case, it worked out beautifully. When he tells the story of how he finally got Landra to marry him, it appears there was a little bit of tension between Landra's family and this young HARRY REID, to the point where Landra's dad basically said to him: Stay away; I don't want you dating my daughter. Well, they had words and other things, and HARRY insisted. He dated Landra, and they were married. The interesting thing about that is that despite that tension with her father in those early years, HARRY wears a ring that her father used to wear, and he carries it around with pride in memory of her father and her family. He manages to keep those memories as part of his life and his inspiration.

Another thing my colleagues may or may not know is that HARRY is a voracious reader. He reads books constantly. Even after he lost the sight in his right eye, he has continued to read. I love to read as well. It has been one of my real joys in life, exchanging books with HARRY. He reads everything under the sun. One time he told me he was reading the Koran cover to cover. I thought: Man, that is something I am not sure I could even do. He has this curiosity, this interest in learning. Even at this point in his life, as he nears the end of his public career, he wants to continue to learn about people and history and important things.

I look back on experiences we have had together. It was 9/11 when HARRY and I were in a room just a few feet away from here when there was an attack in New York, and in Virginia, and we thought the Capitol would be the next target. We had to race out of this building and stand outside, not knowing which way to turn as we were afraid that we were the next target here at the U.S. Capitol. Those were moments we spent together that I won't forget.

I remember as well that he was one of the first to say to my junior Senator from Illinois, Barack Obama, that he should seriously consider running for President. President Obama the other night said that was one of the most important pieces of advice he received in

making his decision to be a candidate for President of the United States. It is an indication of HARRY's credibility—how much people trust him, and how when he gives his word, you know he is going to be there.

When President Obama was elected, he needed a person—more than one, but he certainly needed a leader in the Senate whom he could count on. He couldn't have had a better ally than HARRY REID. When I look back on the battles over the last 8 years that were waged on behalf of America and HARRY's leadership role with the President, there wasn't another person in this Chamber who could really take as much credit. He would be the last person in the world to do so.

When it came to the stimulus package to turn this economy around, it was HARRY REID counting the votes. It was HARRY REID working every single day the holding hands of those Members of the Senate who weren't quite sure they could be there when he needed them.

It was HARRY REID who was counting up to 60 votes to pass the Affordable Care Act. It took every single Democrat. Not a single Republican would join us in that effort. And HARRY REID had to do it. What was he up against? He was up against Ted Kennedy, who sadly was giving his life up to cancer at that moment and fighting to stay alive until he could vote for that important bill. It was HARRY REID working with other Members of the Senate who would get cold feet on the issue and had to be brought back in. He did it time and again, day after day after day. In the end, 20 million Americans have health insurance because of HARRY REID's determination that what he went through as a kid growing up in Searchlight would not be repeated for families across the United States.

When it came to Wall Street reform and the Frank and Dodd bill that passed through the Senate, HARRY stuck with it and made sure we passed it, hoping to avoid the kind of recession we have been through and the damage that was done to businesses and families and individuals all across the United States.

I knew he was a fighter because I knew his record when it came to being a lawyer. There are so many stories about his clients that I have heard over and over. I feel like they were my clients because I have heard those stories so often.

One of the things I remember and read about in his book I want to share with you. There was a woman named Joyce Martinez who was working in Las Vegas, and the police came in to the casino where she was working and arrested her for writing bad checks at the local grocery store. Joyce tried going to several lawyers and kept insisting they were wrong. She had never done anything like that, but none of these lawyers would take the case. Then she met HARRY REID. HARRY believed her. HARRY said she reminded

him of the people he had grown up with—real people who had nothing but hard work as their life. Like many of the cases HARRY decided to take, his colleagues said: What are you doing wasting your time on this case? Spend your time on worthwhile cases. But every step of the way, despite the ridicule, HARRY decided to stand up for this cocktail waitress. HARRY was determined to keep at it and to make sure that she had a strong voice in court. Ultimately, Joyce won her case, and HARRY REID ended up with a victory that he still counted many years later as one of his great successes as a lawyer.

He also made sure the store that brought the charges against her had to follow the law in the future. So he didn't just help Joyce, he helped a lot of other people as well.

For HARRY, this is what the law was all about as a lawyer and what it was all about as a Senator—making life better for people and families across the United States.

He has fought for so many important causes, and there is one that I want to give special thanks for. It was his commitment to the DREAM Act. I introduced this legislation 16 years ago when I discovered a young woman in Chicago, undocumented, who sadly couldn't go on with her life and go to college because of her legal status. I introduced the DREAM Act to say those young people brought to the United States as kids deserve a second chance. HARRY REID heard my speeches and then met his own DREAMer in Nevada: Astrid Silva, a DREAMer who would often write to HARRY with updates on her life. On December 8, 2010, HARRY REID kept his promise to me and a promise to Astrid and to other DREAMers by allowing the DREAM Act to be brought to the floor for a vote. The Senate Gallery was filled with DREAMers wearing their graduation gowns and caps to remind people they were students who wanted to use their education and talents for the future of America. Fifty-five Senators voted for the DREAM Act that day. HARRY had given us our chance. But it wasn't enough to pass because we needed 60 votes under the Senate rules.

HARRY REID joined me and 22 other Senators in sending a letter to the President of the United States asking that he do everything he can to protect these DREAMers, and he did, with an Executive order known as DACA. To date, 744,000 of these young people have been protected with President Obama's Executive order, because HARRY REID believed, as I believe, that these young people deserve the chance.

Let me tell my colleagues one last story that I think really defines HARRY—his courage, as well as Landra's courage. It goes back to his days as chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission. Being a Mormon, not gambling, not drinking, he was the perfect choice for gaming commissioner. It was hard to consider bribing him. In

the 1970s, HARRY wore a wire for the FBI to catch a bribery attempt. The tape that was transcribed from that wire ends with HARRY jumping out of his seat and shouting: You SOB, you tried to bribe me. HARRY couldn't tolerate that somebody thought he could be bought.

In an effort to retaliate, the mob was mad at HARRY, and they planted a bomb in his family car. Thank goodness, a watchful Landra spotted it and told HARRY: Don't start the car. They are alive today because of Landra's vigilance, but they suffered that indignity because of their courage in standing up for ethics and integrity. Today, when we hear people talking about how rough politics can be, it certainly doesn't lead to a bomb, in most circumstances. In this case, HARRY proved then and today that he is up to that kind of a challenge.

Let me conclude with this. In HARRY's childhood home in Searchlight, there were words embroidered on a pillowcase that his mom hung on the wall. As we have heard, it was a simple and barren little shack that they lived in, but this pillowcase had the following words: "We can, we will, we must," Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

HARRY never forgot those words. They are engrained in his spirit. I want to thank him for what he has done for the Senate, for the State of Nevada, for me, and for his decades of service to the United States. I want to thank Landra and their five kids and their wonderful family for sharing her husband and their father with us for all of these years.

HARRY is leaving the Senate, but I am sure he is not going to quit. He is going to be fighting for Nevada to the end, and he will be fighting for the causes he believes in. He will continue to be a fearless advocate. I wish him and his family all the best.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, Senator HARRY REID and I were both elected to the House in 1982, and over the last 34 years, HARRY has become more than a colleague to me. He is like family.

I call him the "brother I never had," and he calls me the "sister he never had."

Only a brother can hang up on you like HARRY does.

And because a sister's job is to embarrass her brother, I want to talk today about HARRY's incredible, extraordinary career and how much he means to me.

HARRY, his wife, Landra, my husband, Stewart, and I have all grown to be dear friends and enjoy quiet dinners together. Stew and I even invited them to stay with us in our California desert home once—where I cooked, much to HARRY's disbelief.

Theirs is a truly beautiful love story. They met in high school and have been together ever since.

There was one incident early on that could have derailed them. When HARRY went to pick Landra up for a date, her

father, a Jewish immigrant, was opposed to his daughter dating a man with no religion.

But that wasn't going to stop HARRY. He actually got into a fistfight with his future father-in-law and punched him in the face.

As HARRY simply said, "It wasn't the greatest beginning."

But love always prevails. HARRY and Landra eloped during college, and Landra's parents eventually came around to supporting them.

And throughout HARRY's career—throughout every campaign, every election, every bump in the road—Landra has been by HARRY's side, and he by hers.

Though he has risen to the highest levels of success, HARRY has never forgotten where he came from and has always fought like hell for his State. He was born in what he calls a "flyspeck on the map"—Searchlight, NV in 1939, a year before me.

To say he grew up poor is an understatement. His childhood home had no toilet or running water, and in order to attend high school, he had to move in with relatives 40 miles away.

Nothing came easy for HARRY, but he never let that deter him. In high school, he wanted to buy a car, so he took a job at a bakery that required him to wake up at 4 a.m. during the week—3 a.m. on weekends. In his spare time, he took up boxing, which earned him a college scholarship.

His very humble beginnings taught him the value of hard work. We have all heard HARRY tell the story of working six days a week as a U.S. Capitol Police Officer while putting himself through law school full-time at George Washington University. For years, he proudly displayed his badge here in his D.C. office. Upon graduation from law school, he returned to Nevada as an attorney specializing in what he called, "the cases nobody would take" before starting his career in elected office: First, as the Henderson city attorney, then as an assemblyman, Lieutenant Governor, and chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission, before winning election to the House of Representatives.

After two terms in the House, HARRY won a seat in the Senate, where he gained a reputation for integrity and fairness. He was elected as our leader in 2004, and I believe he will go down in history as one of the best.

HARRY is a workhorse, not a show horse.

He is soft-spoken and a wonderful listener, but is not afraid to speak up.

He doesn't seek the spotlight—in fact, he often avoids it at all costs—but he also knows how to use it to fight for those without a voice.

And, he takes the time to know every member of his caucus—what makes us tick, what our core issues are, and where we each draw the line.

I want to relate one particular story that truly exemplifies the leader HARRY is.

One December night in 2009, I got a call from HARRY and Senator CHUCK SCHUMER. They were trying to negotiate the final issue on the Affordable Care Act, and this was our last chance to get the bill passed.

We needed every single Democrat in order to end the Republican filibuster, but we had reached a stumbling block: Senator Ben Nelson believed the Federal subsidy in the ACA should not go towards abortion.

If he voted against the bill, Obamacare would be gone. So HARRY trusted Senator PATTY MURRAY and me with the crucial responsibility of finding a solution.

For 13 grueling hours, my team and I would come up with an idea, Senator SCHUMER would run it over to Senator Nelson, and we would volley back and forth until we finally landed on a compromise.

The bill was saved, and today, more than 20 million Americans have health care—many for the first time ever—thanks, in large part, to HARRY REID. He never gave up, and he trusted members of his caucus to help get this bill—one of the most important health care bills in a generation—across the finish line.

HARRY has perfected the art of strategy and negotiation. He knows when to compromise and when to stand up and fight—especially when it comes to his beloved Nevada.

He has accomplished far too many things to mention, but I want to quickly talk about a few issues.

No one fought harder against the plan to dump nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain, which would have threatened the health and safety of Nevadans. Since he was first elected to Congress 34 years ago, HARRY fought proposal after proposal until the plan was finally scrapped—almost entirely because of him.

He has been instrumental in the fight to protect and restore Lake Tahoe—which is shared between our two States. HARRY created the Lake Tahoe Summit and worked across party lines to help keep Tahoe blue.

He has protected more than three million acres of wilderness, established Great Basin National Park, and has fought to protect our landmark environmental laws.

And when we were in the throes of the worst economic crisis in a generation, HARRY fought tooth and nail to stop the hemorrhaging of jobs and help Americans keep their homes—especially in Nevada, which was one of the hardest hit States.

HARRY worked tirelessly to shepherd the Recovery Act through Congress—a monumental task in our political environment. At every turn, the right wing threw everything they had at us, but HARRY took it all on the chin with his strength, stamina, and fortitude.

He stepped up and helped us avoid Armageddon, and I give a great deal of credit to Senator REID and President Obama for that.

At his core, that is who HARRY REID is: When he believes something to be right, he doesn't think twice about putting the gloves on, hopping in the ring and fighting for what he believes in. He just does it.

For this, and for so many other reasons, HARRY has made the Democratic Party better. He has made Nevada better. He has made our country better. And on a personal level, HARRY has made me better. I will forever be grateful for his leadership, his mentorship, and most of all, his friendship.

In closing, I would like to read the words I wrote about him.

HARRY . . . thank you for the strength you give to us.

HARRY . . . thank you for the way you make them cuss.

So you're not a TV star,

We just take you as you are.

HARRY, blue and true,

No one like you.

HARRY . . . working from the day until the night.

HARRY . . . never turns away when there's a fight.

Good thing there are no Senate duels!

HARRY, blue and true,

No one like you.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUDIT

MR. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to alert the new Trump administration to a problem in the Defense Department. There is a festering sore needing high-level attention. I am talking about what turns out to be a formidable barrier. It stands in the way of an important goal: auditing the books of the Department of Defense. At times, this barrier makes the goal seem unattainable.

The need for annual financial audits was originally established by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990. By March of 1992, each agency was to present a financial statement to an inspector general for audit. Today, all have earned unqualified or clean opinions, except one, and guess what. The Department of Defense is that one. It has the dubious distinction, out of all of the Federal Government, of earning an unblemished string of failing opinions known as disclaimers.

In the face of endless stumbling, Congress drew a new line in the sand. It is in section 1003 of the fiscal year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act. The Pentagon was given an extra 7 years to clean up the books and get ready. Guess what. The slipping and sliding never stopped. The revised September 2017 deadline is staring us in the face, and all the evidence tells us the Department will never make it.

The 25-year effort to audit the books is stuck in the mud.

Billions of dollars have been spent trying to solve the root cause of the problem, and that root cause is a broken accounting system. But the fix is nowhere in sight. Until control at the transaction level is achieved, auditing the books is nothing more than a pipe-dream.

Under the fiscal year 2010 law, the Financial Improvement and Auditing Readiness Plan, called FIAR, is supposed to tell us whether the financial statements of the Defense Department “are validated as ready for audit by not later than September 30, 2017.”

The latest FIAR report hit the street last month, but it does not answer the key question: Is the Department of Defense ready for audit? I read it, and I don’t know for sure. It is a study in fuzzy thinking. It is kind of like a riddle, and here is why.

True, the Department boldly declares that it is audit-ready. But in the very same breath, the Comptroller and Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Mike McCord, takes a step backward. He warns that earning a clean opinion is “many years” away. Being audit-ready should offer a reasonable prospect for success, but something is really out of whack here.

So the ultimate objective of section 1003 is a successful audit or clean opinion. Mr. McCord’s words seem to turn that objective upside down. How can the Department be audit-ready and meet the deadline if it is still years away from a clean opinion?

Mr. McCord’s message appears to be downright confusing, contradictory, and possibly misleading. If he knows the Department of Defense is years away from a clean opinion, then he must also know that it is not audit-ready or even close to it. He has to know that the accounting system is incapable of producing reliable information that meets prescribed standards. That tells me the Department of Defense is not audit-ready yet, and he knows it—like everyone else.

Before he steps down, Mr. McCord owes us an explanation for the confusing statements. And once the new Pentagon leadership is up to speed, I look forward to further clarification.

I also hope this new team will address the wisdom of doing full financial statement audits when there is limited control at the transaction level. By proceeding with full-scale audits without it, Mr. McCord has put the cart in front of the horse. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year for audits with a zero probability of success is wasteful.

I would like to remind my colleagues why a successful audit is so important. First and foremost, it would conform with constitutional requirements. It would strengthen internal controls and facilitate the detection of fraud and theft. But it is also important for more practical reasons: It would help bring about better, more informed decision-making. Management can’t make good decisions with bad information. If accounting information is inaccurate and incomplete—as it is today at the Department of Defense—then management doesn’t know what anything costs or how the money is being spent, and if they don’t have that information at their fingertips, how could they possibly make good decisions?

January 2015 was when the report I was referring to was first put out, but it was just now made public. Recent revelations about the \$125 billion in “administrative waste,” which was allegedly suppressed by senior defense officials, is living proof of bad decisions. If the time ever comes when the Department of Defense’s accounting system can generate reliable information, then such mistakes could be avoided.

So I keep coming back to the same old questions: Why has faulty accounting information been tolerated at the Pentagon for all these years? How is it that the Pentagon is able to develop the most advanced weapons the world has ever known with relative ease and yet, for some strange reason, it seems unable to acquire the tools it needs to keep track of the money it spends? Why is this national disgrace being tolerated at the Pentagon?

There are never-ending bureaucratic explanations, but there don’t seem to be any solutions.

With good leadership, this problem can be solved. The man nominated to be the next Secretary of Defense, Mr. James Mattis, strikes me as the kind of person who will tackle this problem head-on and run it to the ground until fixed. His record suggests he will not tolerate this kind of endless foot-dragging and inexcusable failure. Twenty-five years of lameduck excuses probably won’t sit too well with this marine general. Either he will whip the accounting system into shape or heads will roll. According to press reports, “failure” is not a word that he knows or uses.

With a new sheriff in town, maybe the endless, helpless “woe is me” hand-wringing at the Pentagon is about to come to a screeching halt. A modern, fully integrated finance and accounting system might be more than just the dream it has been.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to have a prop with me.

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

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I rise here in the Chamber to give my last speech in the Senate. I want to describe some experiences I have had that are at the heart of my service in the Congress.

As a staffer, I worked for the House International Relations Committee and for Chairman Benjamin Gilman. He had been asked by Cardinal John O’Connor of New York to investigate the plight of Catholics in northern Bosnia. From that assignment, I went to northern Bosnia to meet with Bishop Komanic, who started out the meeting in a very difficult fashion.

He started by saying: Am I a human? Am I a human? Am I?

I said: Yes, you are.

He said: You foreign delegations always don’t do anything for me.

I said to Bishop Komanic: Please give me one task that I can take on for you.

He said: If there is one thing I need, it is to get my human rights office head, Father Tomislava Matanovic—who was recently captured by a very notorious criminal, the police chief of Prijedor, Bosnia, who was infamous for starting the first concentration camp in Europe after 1945. It was called the Omarska Camp. The man who ran this place was named Simo Drljaca. He pushed 700 bodies down the shaft of this mine. In this work, he had probably captured the priest I wanted, Tomislava Matanovic.

When I went back to the States, as a reservist, I ransacked the DOD databases. We found from intelligence reports that we suspected this police chief of Prijedor had been the kidnapper of Tomislava Matanovic. I went to the CIA and asked to meet with this man so I could urge him to give this priest back to me. When Simo Drljaca met with me, he gave me this memento of Serbia. It has the markings of St. George slaying a dragon, with a date of 1994, and various Serbian markings.

After I learned so much about Simo Drljaca, I asked the Clinton administration to make sure they could indict him for war crimes, crimes against humanity, to make sure we could eventually bring him down.

When the Bosnian secret police brought him to me, he gave me this memento, which I have kept under my desk. He gave that to me hoping maybe he would not get picked up. Luckily, the Clinton administration had decided to pick him up. They had a typically obscure DOD acronym to cover the status of this kind of person. They called them PIFWC, persons indicted for war crimes.

Eventually we got an operation together to arrest Simo Drljaca, and the British Special Air Service carried it out. When they waited for Simo, they waited by a riverbank for him to do his Sunday fishing with his son.

An officer had painstakingly memorized the Serbian’s arrest record and indictment so he could read it to Drljaca in his British accent. When he started reading the indictment, Drljaca reached down into his fishing tackle box and shot the British arresting officer. Luckily, the British officer did survive, was wearing body armor. When that shot rang out, the security team across from the river put several rounds into Drljaca’s chest. He dropped dead right there at the beach.

After I heard about this, I was so proud to be part of this congressional team and to still be an officer in the U.S. Navy.

I will say that this institution, and the U.S. military that has given rise from the appropriations we have given, is the greatest force for human dignity that has ever been put forward. I was so proud we brought this monster to justice. The guy who put together the first concentration camp in Europe had been stopped, and he could no longer

hurt anyone. And this memento has been underneath my desk here in the Senate ever since to remind me of the basic human values that we share so dear—that we have here. I would say the United States is now the greatest force for human dignity that we have ever seen. To make sure those values continue has been at the heart of my service here in the Senate and in the Congress.

Let me conclude by thanking some critical people.

I thank Congressman John Porter for hiring me back in 1984, when I started my service here in the Congress; Chairman Ben Gilman of New York for putting me on that international committee; the people of the 10th Congressional District of Illinois who first sent me to the House and the people of Illinois who also sent me to represent their State here; all the family and friends who put me here: Karen Garber and Michael Morgan, especially Dodie McCracken, who was always at my side—people who wanted to make sure we had a person of thoughtful, independent values who could serve here in the Congress.

To conclude, I want to give a message to the people of Illinois. For the people of Illinois, I would say: Take heart, Illinois, that you come from one of the most industrious States in the Union, the fifth largest industrial State.

Especially after the problems we had with Governor Blagojevich, we have been a little down in the dumps.

A lot of times, I will pull out my iPhone and ask people in the State the same question: Who invented the iPhone, the cell phone? And the answer is, Martin Cooper from Winnetka, IL. On the top of the iPhone is a transmitter, and I remind us that the first cell phone call in the world was made from the 50 yard line of Soldier Field in Chicago. That trillion-dollar industry started right in the middle of our State. That, we should always remember.

Lots of times when I am giving this speech, I will say: If it weren't for the people of Illinois, a lot of the people you know would be missing teeth, because we invented modern dentistry with G.V. Black in Jacksonville, and our houses would not be so clean, because we invented the vacuum cleaner.

People on the southwest side of Chicago say: KIRK, tell them that we invented the zipper—which they did.

People in Peoria will say: Hey, remind them that we invented the electric blanket. And they did.

From the electric blanket to the vacuum cleaner and the cell phone, the people of Illinois have been so innovative.

Now we have a unique time in history. I can safely say without contradiction here in the Senate that the Chicago Cubs are now the World Series champions. As I have said so many times, any professional baseball team can have a bad century, but we have fi-

nally killed the curse of the goat and all the curses that befell our professional baseball team.

I would say take heart, Illinois. You are so inventive that you produce most of the pumpkins in the country. When we sit down to Thanksgiving pumpkin pie, that is 80 percent Illinois.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the remainder of my time to the victor of the Illinois Senate race, Senator-Elect TAMMY DUCKWORTH.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is becoming too common a theme that the U.S. Senate, in the closing days of session, rushes to consider a conferenced defense authorization bill. Earlier this year, we considered one of the largest defense authorization bills in history, and the Senate considered few amendments and was afforded a truncated debate period. Worse, the authorization threatened to bust a carefully balanced budget agreement, by misusing overseas contingency operations, OCO, funds for base spending. I opposed that bill. Now, in the closing hours of the Congress, we are faced with a vote on a conferenced version of that bill. It is far from perfect.

However, like open government groups across the spectrum, I am pleased to see that a dangerous provision concerning the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, that Senator GRASSLEY and I strongly opposed has been removed from the final bill. This overbroad provision, which was part of the reason I opposed the Senate bill, could have categorically exempted a vast amount of Department of Defense information from public disclosure, including potentially the Pentagon's handling of sexual assault complaints, reports about defective equipment issued to soldiers in combat zones, and documented health hazards faced by military families living on bases abroad. Hiding such information from public scrutiny would directly undermine the transparency required to address threats to the safety and security of our troops. As the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, the committee with jurisdiction over FOIA matters, Senator GRASSLEY and I are glad that our concerns were taken seriously and addressed. Now that this provision has been struck, our Nation's premier transparency law can continue its critical mission of watching over the safety of those who risk it all to keep us safe.

I am also grateful for the vital support this bill provides to our military personnel and their families and the augmentation of our preparedness to deter, or meet, future threats through a wise investment in technology and people. As the world becomes less stable, this bill includes a number of measures to reaffirm our long-standing commitments to our partners abroad who work with us to make the world safer.

Nonetheless, I still have concerns with a number of ill-considered provi-

sions in this bill. I am not yet satisfied that sufficient consideration has been given to how the caps on general officers affect the National Guard, where leadership often alternates between Army and Air Force officers. No one has accounted for why the vice chief of the National Guard Bureau is the only Vice Chief to not have a grade established by statute. And I remain concerned that this bill removes the requirement that the deputy commander of the U.S. Northern Command be drawn from the ranks of the National Guard. It is our National Guard leaders who are most capable of responding to domestic disasters.

Regrettably, this year's defense authorization bill also misses an opportunity to provide the Obama administration with the flexibility it needs to finally close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Rather than putting an end to this shameful chapter in our Nation's history, the bill maintains the status quo by extending the unnecessary prohibition on constructing facilities within the United States to house Guantanamo detainees and continues the counterproductive ban on transferring detainees to the United States for detention and trial. Closing the detention facility at Guantanamo is in our national security interest. It is the right thing to do. I strongly oppose the needless barriers to doing that in this bill.

In the end, I do believe this authorization bill more appropriately provides for the common defense. Nonetheless, Members of Congress, on either side of the aisle, should not tolerate this perennially constrained debate over the authorization of over half of our Nation's budget. Similarly, if Congress considers legislation next year about the important question of civilian control of the military, it should not do so under the abbreviated, restricted debate by which we will finally approve the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017.

It was my highest honor when Vermonters voted to send me back to the Senate this past November. In a time of uncertainty, they are looking for leaders. I am, too. I hope Senate leaders next year will insist on regular order and the deliberative process that has long been the hallmark of this body.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss the passage of my legislation, the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which was included in the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA, conference report. I especially want to thank Senator McCain who partnered with me on this legislation and who has been a true champion in the Senate for human rights and the fight against corruption. I also thank Senator BOB CORKER, Senator JACK REED, Congressman ED ROYCE, and Congressman ELIOT ENGEL for their help getting this important bill over the finish line.

Before I discuss the specifics of the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, I want to discuss how we got here. In the 112th Congress, we passed the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act. That act placed sanctions on Russian officials responsible for the death of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer who was arrested after he uncovered massive corruption in Russia. In 2009, Sergei Magnitsky died after suffering torturous conditions in pretrial detention. Those responsible for his torture and death were not brought to justice in Russia and some were even decorated and promoted.

With enactment of the Magnitsky legislation in 2012, the United States sent an unambiguous warning to gross violators of human rights in Russia that we will not allow them to travel to our shores and to use our financial system. The Magnitsky Act resulted in dozens of Russians implicated in his death from receiving travel visas and from benefiting from our financial system—and represented an extraordinary victory for human rights defenders in Russia.

As we know all too well, however, human rights violations against dissidents, journalists, whistleblowers, and rights advocates aren't unique to Russia. That is why Senator MCCAIN and I introduced the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which gives the President the authority to deny human rights abusers and those engaged in significant acts of corruption entry into the United States and access to our financial institutions.

Including significant acts of corruption as a sanctionable offense is an important addition to this legislation. The correlation between corruption, human rights abuses, and repressive governments is clear. Corruption destabilizes democracies, weakens a country's rule of law and can stall a nation's development. And those who call out these abuses are often threatened, physically or psychologically abused, or worse.

As many of my colleagues know, the United States has long struggled with the best way to address human rights violations and corruption around the globe. With passage of the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, I believe we now have the tools to hold accountable gross violators of human rights and those who engage in serious acts of corruption in a way that bolsters both our national security and foreign policy goals. Bad actors from South Sudan to Venezuela and Azerbaijan to Cambodia are on notice that they can no longer escape the consequences of their actions, even when their home country fails to act. But in my view, the most important message this legislation sends is that the United States stands in solidarity with all those who stand up against corruption and human rights violations—and we do so through both words and actions.

I, again, thank my Senate colleagues for their support for this important bill and for joining me in standing up for all those who seek a more just world, even though doing so often puts their own lives in jeopardy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to take an opportunity to salute and thank and commend my colleagues who are departing.

MARK KIRK

Mr. President, Senator KIRK, my colleague from Illinois, just finished his remarks.

MARK and I had the opportunity and the privilege to work on many things together. He is a Navy commander. He never lets me forget that. He always called me Major; I always called him Commander. He served the State of Illinois with great integrity, great energy, and great spirit, and we thank him for that very much.

Thank you for your service to the Nation in the uniform of the United States Navy.

We also have other colleagues departing: Senator AYOTTE from New Hampshire; Senator BOXER of California; Senator COATS of Indiana; as I mentioned, Senator KIRK of Illinois; Senator MIKULSKI of Maryland; Senator REID of Nevada; and Senator VITTER of Louisiana. Each has brought passion in their work to best serve their constituents, and the institution of the Senate and the Nation are better for this service. I am better for knowing them, working with them, and having the opportunity to share with them, and I want to thank them for their service. Let me mention a few words with respect to all of these distinguished Senators.

KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. President, KELLY AYOTTE and I worked together for many years on the Armed Services Committee. What she brought was an unparalleled commitment to and passion for the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States. She wanted them to have a quality of life that reflects their service and their sacrifice. She wanted them to have the training and the equipment that would protect them as they engage our foes, and she wanted to make sure they knew that we were always conscious of their sacrifice and service. She did this in so many different ways, and she did it so well.

She was particularly committed to making sure that the A-10 aircraft remained in our inventory. As someone who as a younger person was an infantry officer, I appreciated having seen in training how effective that system is to protect our forces on the ground, and her efforts were unstinting to make sure that our forces were fully protected. Again, that is just one example of her commitment.

BARBARA BOXER

Mr. President, BARBARA BOXER and I had the privilege to serve both in the

House and the Senate together. My first term in the House of Representatives was BARBARA's last term in the House before she was elected to the Senate. She is an extraordinary, tenacious fighter—remarkably so. She has fought for women's rights. She has fought for the rights of families, for people who needed economic assistance, and for people who needed a chance because she realized that the essence of America is opportunity—opportunity for all, not just for those who are privileged or who have the benefit of wealth or power but for all. She has done this extraordinarily well.

A great deal of her energy was directed to environmental protection because that is something that benefits all of us and that is something that is really the biggest legacy we will give to the next generation and the generations that follow. No one has more fiercely defended the environment—not just for a narrow interest, not just for a temporary expedient but for the long-term health and wealth of the American people.

DAN COATS

Mr. President, DAN COATS and I served together. This goes back to both his tenures in the Senate. DAN and I served in the Armed Services and HELP Committees. He was a remarkable Member. He continues to be a remarkable Member. He left us for a while to serve as Ambassador to Germany. Once again—no surprise—he distinguished himself with his thoughtful support of American policy, with his international approach to issues of concern, and with the ability to bring people together, not just colleagues in the Senate but, also, international colleagues.

When he returned, I was very, very grateful for his help. Senator DEAN HELLER and I were working very hard together on a bipartisan basis to help unemployment insurance extension. DAN joined us in that effort, and I thank him for that. It reflects the huge range of talent and interests that he has and, also, his commitment to the men and women of Indiana, particularly the working men and women of Indiana.

MARK KIRK

Mr. President, MARK KIRK I have mentioned. I had the privilege, the opportunity, and the pleasure of being able to salute him as he was here. Again, we always greet each other as Major Reed and Commander Kirk, and I see deep symbolism and deep affection in regard to that exchange. I wish him well as he goes forth.

DAVID VITTER

Mr. President, DAVID VITTER and I served together on the Armed Services Committee, and we continue to serve together on the Banking Committee. As a senior member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, he has been very critical in ensuring that we continue our commitment to infrastructure. Infrastructure is a word now

that is getting a lot of attention. Years ago, DAVID was interested in that, not only interested but instrumental in making sure we did our best to keep up with infrastructure so that we could have a productive America, so that people could enjoy the benefits, and so that we could be competitive in a global economy.

He has done a great deal. One area where we also shared an interest is his Home Owner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which became law in 2014. This was critical not just to Louisiana but to every coastal State, including Rhode Island. His energy, his commitment, and his dedication made it a success. I want to thank him for that, and I wish him well as he goes forward.

BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. President, BARBARA MIKULSKI—what an extraordinary individual. She is a pioneer. She was the first Democratic woman Senator elected in her own right. She is the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress. BARBARA MIKULSKI and history are one in the same. She has made it. She came from very modest roots in Baltimore. She talked yesterday on the floor about her father and mother running a small grocery store in her neighborhood. She took that sense of community, that sense of dedication, and that sense of selfless service to others. As she said, she was inspired by the nuns that taught her, and that inspiration was extraordinary and fully realized in her life. There are a lot of Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of Notre Dame who are sitting back today thinking: I knew that young lady had it in her.

She certainly did. She led us on the Appropriations Committee, the first woman to chair the committee. She has done so much to assist me on issues that are so important to Rhode Island. I must say that she and Kit Bond, one of her colleagues, were extraordinary in recognizing the problems of lead exposure in children and providing needed resources. I thank her for that.

She has assisted the fishermen in communities in Rhode Island with real assistance and real aid. She has done it over and over. She has given me profound advice, counsel, and kindness.

She said yesterday on the floor: The best ship in the world is friendship. I agree, but ultimately the measure of our service and of our days is kindness. I must say that by that measure, she is a very towering figure in the Senate, in the history of the United States, and I thank her.

HARRY REID

Mr. President, finally, there is our leader, HARRY REID. Much has been said about HARRY today. I will not go over the extraordinary tale of a young man from Searchlight, NV. He was a boxer and a Capitol Police officer while he was working his way through law school. He has always been a fighter—and a fighter for those who need help, not for the powerful but for the people without power. For those without a voice, he has given a voice.

I have always appreciated his counsel, his guidance, and his support, which were important to my constituents and important to all Americans. We have worked on numerous pieces of legislation together to address the housing crisis, to extend unemployment insurance, to make college more affordable, and to improve mental health services, to name just a few.

As he said today in his remarks, one of his achievements is to be able to give health care protection to millions of Americans who didn't have it and if it is taken away will not have it. He did that because it was the right thing to do, because he understood from his own personal experience how traumatizing and how debilitating and, ultimately, how destructive the lack of access to good health care—both physical health care and mental health care—is to America, and, also, how it does make us productive. Simply having health care is not just a good thing to do, it is a smart economic thing to do. He led that fight for us.

It has been an honor to serve alongside HARRY REID and to see this extraordinary legislator work his way quietly sometimes—many times—but persistently. There is no one more persistent than HARRY. His steady, unselfish leadership will continue to guide us and his example will continue to guide us.

I have been very fortunate. I have had the privilege to serve with these ladies and gentlemen, and I want to thank them for their service.

TRIBUTE TO VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Mr. President, I was also very privileged to serve with the Vice President of the United States, JOE BIDEN. The Vice President was here yesterday. I was here listening to the comments. I must add, if I could, some words of my own.

JOE BIDEN is a true statesman. I had the privilege of serving with him for over a decade. We traveled together to places such as Afghanistan and Iraq. I am honored to have gotten to know him and his wonderful family. Even though he is Vice President of the United States of America—the second highest office of the land—I know the titles he is proudest to hold are father, grandfather, husband, brother, and, after that, Senator.

A tribute to JOE BIDEN really has to extend to some others, and one person I want to single out is his sister, Valerie Biden Owens. Val is not only his closest adviser but the architect of his first campaign and every one thereafter. At a time when very few women were running U.S. Senate campaigns, Val was responsible for electing a 29-year-old newcomer. When tragedy struck, she was the one who helped bring him back, who enabled him to serve the people of Delaware and, ultimately, the people of the United States and of the world. She is a brilliant strategist who has gone on to advise many officeholders. We thank her for her lasting contributions, and I wanted to make sure she got some credit.

Both the Vice President and Val are quick to note the real credit goes to their parents—Catherine Jean Finnegan Biden, his mom, and his late, great father, Joe Sr. The Vice President and I would often joke—and it is not a joke; it is actually a truth: Always aspire to be half as good as mom and dad. That is an Irish aspiration. Joe has made it. I am still working on it, but he is at least half as good as these extraordinary people.

If you have spent any time with the Vice President, you know that he is famous for quoting his father and his mother and the wisdom they imparted to all the children—Joe, Val, Jimmy, and Frank. I think you have heard Senator BIDEN, Chairman BIDEN, and Vice President BIDEN say: "I give you my word as a Biden." You know you can take that to the bank. He meant it.

Once you heard that, without hesitation, you know he was there with you and would not equivocate, would not deviate, and would be with you.

I had the privilege of not only working with Senator BIDEN, but I also had the privilege of working with a young captain in the U.S. Army, at least briefly, as we visited him, and that was CPT Beau Biden of the Delaware National Guard. Beau Biden didn't have to join the National Guard. He didn't have to volunteer for Iraq, but he felt it was his duty and his obligation. When we were together with him in Iraq, you saw someone who personified the very best of this Nation—a soldier, someone conscientious, someone who would give his all, give his life for others and, particularly, give every ounce of energy and service to this great Nation.

Anyone who met Beau knew he was a Biden. He didn't have to say it. He looked like his dad but, more importantly, he acted like his dad—strong, tough, proud, dedicated, committed to helping others, particularly those who needed a chance, who needed a hand up. He had a passion for social justice, compassion, and that element of kindness. In the sum of his days—of Beau's days—he certainly surpassed that test of kindness, decency, and compassion.

The Biden family has known a great deal of tragedy—more than most families—but they have stuck together, and they have shared both moments of triumph and moments of profound sadness. Together, they have shaped history and made this a better nation and a better world. All of us who have had the privilege of knowing JOE, Jill, and their family are better people.

Mr. President, let me thank you. Mr. Vice President, Senator, JOE, thank you.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, the Constitution gives the Congress the power and responsibility to provide for the common defense, raise and support armies, provide and maintain a Navy, make rules for the government and regulation of the land naval forces. For 54 consecutive years, Congress has fulfilled these more important constitutional duties by passing the National Defense Authorization Act. Today the Senate has a chance to make it 55 years.

It is precisely because of this legislation's critical importance to our national security that it is still one of the few bills in Congress that enjoys bipartisan support year after year. Indeed, this year's NDAA has been supported by Senators on both sides of the aisle. The Senate Armed Services Committee overwhelmingly approved the NDAA in a 23-to-3 vote back in May. The full committee followed by passing the NDAA with a bipartisan vote of 85 to 13. After a collaborative and productive conference process, the House passed the NDAA conference report with an overwhelming vote of 375 to 34. I hope the Senate will deliver another resounding vote today.

I thank the committee's ranking member, the Senator from Rhode Island, JACK REED. Despite his lack of education at West Point and the impending doom of the Army football team this weekend, I appreciate the thoughtfulness and bipartisan spirit with which he approaches our national security. This is a much better bill thanks to the Senator from Rhode Island. I appreciate his friendship, and more than that, I appreciate the commitment he and I share to the defense of this Nation and the men and women who serve it.

I also thank the majority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, for his commitment to bringing the NDAA to the floor and for his support throughout the year to make sure this legislation received full consideration and debate.

Our Nation faces the most diverse and complex array of crises since the end of World War II—great power competition with Russia and China, rogue states like Iran and North Korea, and the enduring threat of radical Islamist terrorism. Rising to the challenges of a more dangerous world requires bold reform to our national defense, and that is exactly what the NDAA delivers.

The last major reorganization of the Department of Defense was the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which marks its 30th anniversary this year. Last fall, the Senate Armed Services Committee held a series of 13 hearings on defense reform with 52 of our Nation's foremost defense experts and leaders. We followed up these hearings with a comprehensive review of the roles, missions, and organization of the major actors in the Department of Defense.

This review was borne out of concern that the organization of the department too often inhibits, rather than enables, the talented people serving there to fulfill their duties at a time of major strategic and technological change. Building on this work, the NDAA seeks to improve strategic integration across functional components of the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

At a time when the Department of Defense faces numerous threats that all span different regions, functions, and military domains, the Secretary of Defense needs better tools to more effectively develop integrated solutions and strategies for critical department objectives. To this end, the NDAA would allow the next Secretary of Defense to create and delegate decision-making authority to a series of cross-functional teams to achieve core objectives of the Department. These cross-functional teams would support the Secretary and Deputy Secretary in performing strategic integration more effectively in efficiency.

Improving the effectiveness of our defense enterprise also requires targeting excess bureaucracy. Over the past 30 years, the end strength of the joint forces has decreased by 38 percent. I want to emphasize that. The end strength of the uniformed military has decreased by 38 percent, but the ratio of four-star officers to the overall force has increased by 65 percent. Especially at a time of constrained defense budgets, the military services must right-size their officer corps and shift as many personnel as possible from staff functions to operational and other vital roles. That is why the NDAA directs a reduction of 110 general and flag officers on Active Duty, and it requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a study that will identify a further 10-percent reduction. Likewise, the NDAA includes a reduction to the number of senior executive service civilian employees in the Department of Defense commensurate with a reduction to general and flag officers.

The legislation also imposes a limitation on funds used for staff augmentation contracts in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the military department, a practice which has gotten completely out of control.

The NDAA also caps the size of the National Security Council staff at 200 professional staff and detailees. The past 25 years has brought a consistent and steady growth of the NSC staff from 40 during the George Herbert Walker Bush administration to more than 100 in the Clinton administration, to more than 200 during the George W. Bush administration, to reports of nearly 400 under the current administration.

In addition to the growth and size, and largely enabled by it, we have seen an expansion of the NSC's staff role into tactical and operational issues. NDAA will push the staff toward prioritizing the strategic mission that

led Congress to create it in the first place. I will repeat that. The National Security Council was created to give advice and counsel to the President of the United States, not to give rules of engagement and specific instructions to officers, generals, and admirals in the field.

Former Secretary Gates quite often tells the story of when he was visiting Kabul, Afghanistan, and walked by an office where there was a red phone, and Secretary Gates said: What is that? They said: That is our line to the NSC.

My friends, we have 30-something staffers at the NSC who are giving directions as to how to carry out operations in the field. It is simply outrageous. By the way, it not only has an effect on morale but also on the ability to address the challenges on the battle-grounds.

For years after the end of the Cold War, the United States enjoyed a near monopoly on advanced military technology, such as stealth, precision-guided munitions, unmanned systems, and the advanced communications that enable network-centric warfare. That is changing rapidly. From China and Russia to Iran and North Korea, we see militaries that are developing, fielding, and employing long-range, precision-guided weapons, advanced fighter aircraft, anti-access and aerial denial systems, and growing space in cyber capabilities. The result is that we are at real and increasing risk of losing the military technological dominance that we have taken for granted for 30 years. That is why innovation cannot be an auxiliary office at the Department of Defense. It must be the central mission of its acquisition system. Unfortunately, that is not the case with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, known as AT&L. It has grown too big, tries to do too much, and is too focused on compliance at the expense of innovation. That is why the NDAA disestablishes AT&L and divides its duties between two new offices, a new Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, and an Under Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment.

The job of research and engineering will be developing defense technologies that can ensure a new era of U.S. qualitative military dominance. The job of acquisition and sustainment will focus on the execution of acquisition functions, ensuring compliance, and lowering risks to taxpayers. God knows we need to lower risks to taxpayers. These organizational changes complement the additional acquisition reforms in the NDAA. The legislation creates new pathways for the Department of Defense to do business with nontraditional defense firms. It streamlines regulations to procure goods and services. It provides new authorities for the rapid prototyping, acquisition, and fielding of new capabilities, and, critically, the NDAA establishes a preference for fixed-price contracts. The

overuse of cost-type contracts and the complicated and expensive government bureaucracy that goes with them serves as a barrier to entry for commercial, nontraditional, and small businesses that are driving the innovation our military needs.

Continuing down the path of reform, the NDAA initiates a comprehensive modernization of the military health care system to provide beneficiaries with higher quality care, better access to care, and a better experience of care. The NDAA includes provisions that expand DOD telehealth capabilities, reform TRICARE health care plans, modernize TRICARE medical support contracts, streamline the administration of the Defense Health Agency and military medical treatment facilities, and establish high-performance military-civilian integrated health delivery systems.

The NDAA ensures we maintain battlefield medicine as a pocket of excellence in the military health system by taking steps to improve trauma care in military hospitals and develop enduring partnerships with civilian military centers and hospitals. These reforms constitute an important first step in the evolution of the military health system from an underperforming, disjointed health system into a high-performing, integrated health system that gives beneficiaries what they need and deserve—the right care, at the right time, in the right place.

In a world of multiplying threats and increasing danger, we count on young Americans to enlist or commit to serve in the All-Volunteer Force that protects us and our families. The NDAA sustains the quality of life for the men and women and the total force and their families and addresses the needs of our wounded, ill, and injured servicemembers.

The NDAA authorizes a 2.2-percent across-the-board pay raise for members of the uniformed services, the largest military pay raise for our troops since 2010. The legislation authorizes over 30 special pays and bonuses to support recruitment and retention and ensures fair treatment for our Reserve members under their survivor benefit plan.

The NDAA also addresses a disturbing situation affecting members of the California National Guard who have been caught up in a scandal involving the improper issuance of bonuses. The legislation holds the Department of Defense responsible for expediting the review process, reaching out to each impacted servicemember, and notifying credit reporting agencies when debts have been forgiven.

The NDAA also implements the recommendations of the Department of Defense Military Justice Review Group by incorporating the Military Justice Act of 2016. The legislation modernizes the military court-martial trial and appellate practice, incorporates best practices from Federal criminal practice and procedures, and increases transparency and independent review in the military justice system.

Taken together, the provisions contained in the NDAA constitute the most significant reforms to the Uniform Code of Military Justice in a generation. As we implement these important defense reforms, we have to rebuild a modern and ready Armed Forces prepared to meet current and future threats. The NDAA authorizes a total of \$619 billion for defense discretionary spending, which is \$3.2 billion above President Obama's budget request. That includes the \$5.8 billion in supplemental funding requested by President Obama for operations in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. The NDAA prioritizes modernization to provide critical military capabilities to our warfighters, fifth-generation fighter aircraft, stealth attack submarines, vital munitions, more lethal and survivable armored vehicles and helicopters.

The legislation also fully supports the modernization of our nuclear triad and makes timely investments in research and development efforts to produce cutting-edge military technologies. Through a combination of added funds and redirected savings, the NDAA directs \$4.6 billion to address the military readiness crisis by reducing training shortfalls, supporting weapons maintenance, and sustaining facilities.

Critically, the NDAA stems the drawdown of military end strength that has exacerbated the readiness crisis, especially in the Army and Marine Corps. As we meet our commitments to our warfighters, we must also uphold our commitment to American taxpayers. The NDAA imposes strict oversight measures on programs such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, B-21 Long Range Strike Bomber, the Ford-class aircraft carrier, the littoral combat ship.

These provisions will ensure accountability for results, promote transparency, protect taxpayers, and drive the Department to deliver our warfighters the capabilities they need on time, as promised, and at a reasonable cost. The NDAA upholds America's commitments to its allies and partners. It authorizes \$3.4 billion to support our Afghan partners as they take the fight to our common terrorist enemies.

The legislation authorizes \$3.4 billion for the European initiative to deter Russian aggression. This is a very critical item, as we see more and more aggressive behavior, both in cyber, propaganda, and actual on-the-ground activities by Vladimir Putin—a fourfold increase from last year in the European deterrence initiative.

It provides \$1.2 billion for counter-ISIL operations. It authorizes up to \$350 million in security assistance to Ukraine, including lethal assistance. One of the things that has disappointed me as much as anything else, in some ways more, is that this President has refused to give defensive weaponry to the Ukrainians who are watching their country be dismembered by Vladimir

Putin, the same Vladimir Putin whose anti-air system shot down an airline, the same one who is slaughtering and killing brave Ukrainians as we speak.

This President has refused to give them weapons to defend themselves. This will be, again, the third year in a row where we have authorized it. This is another shameful chapter in the history of Obama's feckless administration as far as national defense is concerned.

Finally, the legislation includes \$600 million to modernize Israel's layered missile defense system. As we continue to support allies and partners against common threats, the NDAA makes major reforms to the Pentagon's complex and unwieldy Security Cooperation Enterprise, which has complicated the ability of the Department of Defense to effectively prioritize, plan, execute, and oversee these activities.

The NDAA consolidates security cooperation authorities from Title 10 and elsewhere in public law into a single chapter of U.S. Code. For the first time, this legislation requires the Secretary of Defense to submit a consolidated security cooperation budget, and the legislation modernizes the security cooperation workforce. Together, these steps will improve operational outcomes, program management, congressional oversight, and public transparency.

This legislation takes several steps to bolster border security and homeland defense. It authorizes \$933 million for Department of Defense counterdrug programs. The legislation codifies the authority of the Secretary of Defense to provide support to Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement for counterdrug and countering transnational organized crime operations. It enhances information sharing and operational coordination between the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security.

Finally, this legislation takes important steps to strengthen cyber security. The legislation elevates U.S. Cyber Command to a unified command. As our senior military leadership has testified, this step is critical to providing the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command with the necessary unity of command and streamlined decision-making.

The NDAA also prevents the premature termination of the dual hat arrangement under which the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command also serves as the Director of the National Security Agency.

Let me close by saying that we ask a lot of our men and women in uniform. They never let us down. We must not let them down. So let's be bold on their behalf. This NDAA is an ambitious piece of legislation, but in the times we live in, we can't afford business as usual in the Department of Defense. We can't afford these terrible cost overruns. We just had a hearing on the littoral combat ship. It was supposed to cost \$200 million each. Now it costs \$460

million each, and it has a 30-millimeter gun and a helicopter pad on it.

We cannot do this to the American taxpayers. There was a front page story in the Washington Post just a couple of days ago about some \$125 billion that, in the view of an outside study, had been wasted. We cannot continue to do that to the taxpayers of America, and we certainly cannot afford to continue to do it given the challenges we face all over the world, which are unprecedented in the last 70 years.

Yesterday, I was honored to be asked to speak at the World War II Memorial commemorating the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. It was an uplifting experience because, thank God, there were so many of our brave warriors who fought and were present in the war that was fought by our greatest generation. There were even a couple who had been on board the USS *Arizona*, which was sunk with 1,117 brave officers and men on board.

You know, one of the lessons at Pearl Harbor was that we were not ready. We were not prepared. The Japanese airplanes that came in and bombed those ships and killed so many brave Americans—we had nothing that could combat them. At that time, the Japanese Zero was so far superior to anything that we had that it was a relatively easy mission for those Japanese Zeros to attack and destroy a good portion of America's Pacific Fleet at that time.

What I fear is not another Pearl Harbor, but what I fear is that with sequestration and with the continuing resolution—which apparently we are going to do, although I will fight as hard as I can against it—we are reducing the ability of our men and women to serve this Nation with effectiveness.

All of the four service chiefs—every one of them—when asked about sequestration and this kind of continuing resolution, have said one thing: We are putting the lives of the men and women who are serving our Armed Forces in uniform in greater jeopardy. Are we going to take the responsibility here with another continuing resolution to place the lives of the men and women serving this Nation at greater risk?

That is a terrible burden—a terrible burden I say to my colleagues, who, maybe because they want to get out of here for Christmas, will be voting for a continuing resolution that again cuts defense spending—cuts it—reduces it. That is not acceptable in light of the fact, by the way, that the President-elect has said he wants to spend more on defense. The President-elect has said: We are not spending enough. We are not doing enough.

By the way, we have to do it right. We need to spend more. We need to do it right. But when we see a front page story on the Washington Post that shows—I think it showed \$125 billion was wasted, then we also have an obligation to spend those taxpayer dollars correctly. This legislation, which I urge my colleagues to vote for as fol-

lowup to last year's, has significant reforms in the way the Pentagon does business.

I would like to tell you that now we have reformed the Pentagon and everything is fine. My friends, we have a long way to go. We have a long way to go. I am proud of the bipartisanship that exists on our committee. I am proud of the seriousness with which most—not all, but most—of the members of the committee take their duties as members of the committee. I am proud that my friend and colleague from Rhode Island and I work so closely together, not only we but our staffs, in the spirit that is demanded if we are going to carry out our higher responsibilities to the men who serve.

I am not proud—I am not proud—to see sequestration continue, the mindless, across-the-board cuts that have characterized the last few years. It is supported by both sides of the aisle, not just Democrats. I love to blame the Democrats for it, but both Democrats and Republicans have refused to address sequestration, which is destroying the readiness, which is—not destroying—it is harming the readiness of our men and women to serve and fight.

Operations are being canceled, parts are not available, the training is not available. It goes on and on and on. Why don't we listen? I am not asking you to listen to the civilians. Ask the leaders that we have asked to be the chiefs of their services. Ask the leaders who are component commands. They will all tell you the same thing: We are going to have to spend more money, but we are also going to have to spend it more wisely.

By the way, the Pentagon bureaucracy does not like many of these changes, just as last year we forced these changes on them, and now they all take credit for them. Fine, but now, there is another year of reforms. Next year, we are going to have to do more reforms, but unless we have the funding that is necessary to make these men and women who are serving in our military fully prepared to counter the new challenges, we are going to relive, in some form, December 7, 1941, in the words of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "A day that will live in infamy."

So I ask my colleagues to vote for this NDAA. We have had the input from literally every Member of this body, I am happy to say. I hope they will vote for this legislation. But I also—when they do—recognize that unless we fund these programs, unless we fund these reforms, unless we provide sufficient funding, then they are not going to be able to carry out their mission in the most effective fashion.

I say to my colleagues: Vote for this. Vote for this, but do not vote for another continuing resolution that will harm the ability of us and the men and women who are serving, and their leaders, to defend this Nation. It is a heavy responsibility you take on when you vote for the continuing resolution be-

cause that does not allow the Pentagon to move money around. It is an overall cut of many billions of dollars at a time that any observer will tell you is more challenging to our national security than any time since December 7, 1941.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the NDAA.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

All postcloture time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the conference report.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON).

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 159 Leg.]

YEAS—92

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

NAYS—7

Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden
Lee	Paul	
Markley	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—

Cotton

The conference report was agreed to. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, for debate only, until 2:30 p.m. this afternoon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

WRDA

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about drought legislation that is critical to the State of Arizona.

As everyone knows, water is a controversial issue in the West. Arizona and California have long been at odds on a number of water-related issues, particularly the Colorado River.

Since the beginning of this Congress, I have worked to advance Arizona's water priorities. That included working with our neighbors across the Colorado River to get a Flake-Feinstein amendment included in the Energy bill. This amendment, which was adopted on the floor, would allow dams to be more efficient and enhance water storage.

In addition to this amendment, I have introduced the Western Water Supply and Planning Enhancement Act in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. I have worked with many of my colleagues on the committee to move this western drought bill through regular order, work that included attempting to find a way to reconcile this bill with the California drought bill in order to advance all of our priorities.

I am disappointed that instead of continuing with the committee process, a California-only deal was airdropped into an unrelated WRDA conference report. This was done at the last minute, circumventing regular order, and leaving Arizona and other western State priorities out to dry.

Not only does the WRDA conference report disregard the good work the Energy and Natural Resources Committee has carried out over these past 2 years, but it also fails to address western water matters in a holistic way. Let me be clear, important Arizona water issues still need to be addressed by Congress, and I will continue to fight for these priorities.

For example, the Colorado River Basin States are very close to reaching a groundbreaking agreement to deal with the prolonged drought on the river. We will seek legislation to implement this deal early in the next Congress.

Our watersheds are also under great threat from catastrophic wildfires. I

will continue to push Congress and the Forest Service to move ahead to reduce fire risks in Arizona.

I look forward to continuing my work on these issues and to fighting for other water needs in Arizona.

ADA DRIVEBY LAWSUITS

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, in a driveby lawsuit, an attorney will drive by a place of business and look for technical ADA violations. These are usually minor violations that are easily correctable, like the width of a parking space or the height of a van accessible sign.

Oftentimes, if a technical violation exists, the attorney will either send a demand letter or threaten the business with a lawsuit. Oftentimes, the demand letter will request a settlement that is just under what it would cost the business to litigate, so the business owner picks the lesser of the two evils and pays the settlement.

The scope of the problem is only growing. From the first 6 months of 2015 to the first 6 months of 2016, there was a 63-percent increase in the number of suits filed under title III of the ADA. This year is on pace to see almost 7,000 of these cases brought forward—7,000. Compare 7,000 to the 4,800 lawsuits filed in 2015 and 2,700 in 2013, and we can see what a boon this has been for trial lawyers. In fact, this past Sunday, “60 Minutes” did a special report on driveby lawsuits and the toll they are taking on small businesses throughout the country. I would encourage anyone to watch that piece. It explains the problem very well.

While California, Florida, and New York have the highest incidents of these driveby lawsuits, my home State of Arizona has seen a dramatic increase in these suits over the last 3 years. In 2013, there were three ADA title III suits brought in Arizona—three. By 2015, that number was up to 207. As of September of this year, Arizona has already seen 284.

It is clear that the problem is only getting worse. My legislation would go a long way to solve it. If enacted, property owners must first be given notice of their alleged ADA violation, at which point they would have 120 days to cure the violation before a lawsuit could be brought. If the property owner fails to address the violation in a timely manner, then they can be sued. The bill also instructs the Department of Justice to promote further ADA compliance through education so small business owners know what is expected of them. I think these reforms will help business owners and persons with disabilities achieve their mutual goal of ADA compliance.

The ADA has been a great success in its 25-year history. It is essential that business owners continue to see it as a tool to ensure fairness for people with disabilities and not as a weapon to line the pockets of unscrupulous lawyers.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for 10 minutes.

TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, earlier today we heard a moving speech by the Democratic leader and my longtime friend, HARRY REID. He spoke of his life and his time here.

An amateur boxer turned police officer, turned lawyer, turned majority leader, that is the supercondensed outline of the life of HARRY REID. When the book closes on this 114th Congress, so too will it close on the congressional career of Senator REID. He is a fighter and a champion. That is an understatement.

He is a fellow country boy, but he had a much tougher upbringing in the isolated hamlet of Searchlight, NV. You can read about that in his book. That upbringing has bred traits that I have admired since he arrived in the Senate in 1987. His humble upbringing, raised in a shack with no indoor bathroom or hot water, sowed the seeds of a life in public service and of the perspective that has infused and driven his public service. He first came to Capitol Hill as a police officer, working nights to pay his way through George Washington University Law School. Little did he know he would end up being one of the longest serving majority leaders in the history of the U.S. Senate.

He can point to so many of the things he has done, including steering the Affordable Care Act to Senate passage. But I want to thank Senator REID for his strong support of justice bills that I have championed. An original cosponsor of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization that I introduced in recent years—to strengthen and renew the transformative and lifesaving work that is made possible under VAWA—he has always worked to combat the scourge of domestic violence, helping to shepherd the reauthorization of this vital legislation across the finish line. He has also supported vital grant programs to put more cops on the street in communities small and large and to keep them safe. His commitment to advancing our comprehensive immigration reform bill, we got it through the Senate by a large bipartisan majority. When the history books are written, one of the huge mistakes made was when that the House of Representatives did not take up that bill, even though they had the votes to pass it. These are all examples of how true

leadership takes action—not merely talking points—no matter how difficult, to make a difference.

HARRY REID was at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in 2015, commemorating the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. I looked at him there with Congressman JOHN LEWIS and President Barack Obama—the first African American elected as President—as one of the towering figures in America. But the true measure of a man is revealed not when he pauses to remember past injustices, he works to prevent them from happening. From pay equity to restoring the Voting Rights Act, from the repeal of don't ask, don't tell, to the enactment of the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act, there can be no doubt that Senator REID fights for every American, every day.

And yet, no matter how large a national leader Senator REID has become, he has never forgotten the people of Nevada. In him they have a tireless and effective champion of the highest caliber. Senator REID's work on behalf of Nevada has been relentless.

He has been our fighter. He has been our champion. And he has been a friend. He has faced and risen above personal adversity. He is a truly American story. And his presence here in the Senate will be missed next year. When Marcelle and I leave Washington for the last time, we will think of the special friends we have had. HARRY REID, Landra Reid—we will think of them. We wish them all the best as they begin their next chapter together.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, mountains, rivers, cities, and plains separate Vermont and California, two States as different as any in the country. But here in the U.S. Senate, we are on equal footing. It is one of the hallmarks of our Constitution and representative government. For over three decades, BARBARA BOXER worked to advance the priorities of Californians. Thankfully, in many ways, those priorities, despite the diversity of our States, have mirrored those of Vermonters.

A trailblazer in her own right, Senator BOXER rose to become the first woman to chair the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, where she fought to protect and preserve our environment, promote clean and safe drinking water, update our antiquated infrastructure, and improve public safety.

Senator BOXER was an early and vocal supporter of our efforts to reauthorize and expand the important Violence Against Women Act. Her passionate pleas to Senators and Members of the House to approve this critical—and lifesaving—bill was essential to the Senate's debate.

Of course, most important in Senator BOXER's life is her family. Like many, I was touched when she announced her retirement in an interview with her

grandson. She has been a tireless advocate for her home State and for the country. And now, in retirement, I hope she enjoys even more time with Stewart and her wonderful family. Far from finished fighting, I know BARBARA's voice will not be one soon forgotten in the U.S. Senate.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID VITTER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to briefly recognize the service of retiring Senator DAVID VITTER. Senator VITTER has served the people of Louisiana in Congress since 1999, through the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, across three different administrations, and through countless debates. As he retires from the Congress after nearly two decades of service to Louisiana, I wish him, his wife, Wendy, their four children and his entire family all the best in the next chapter.

TRIBUTE TO MARK KIRK

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for nearly 16 years, Senator MARK KIRK has given voice to his Illinois constituents here in Washington. His long record of service includes work as a congressional staffer, a 24-year career as a naval intelligence officer, a U.S. Congressman, and a U.S. Senator.

Dedicated to several matters of national and international importance, Senator KIRK has supported a range of legislative efforts during his Senate tenure and has not shied from opposing his party's position. From supporting the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and efforts to repeal don't ask, don't tell, from his opposition to defunding Planned Parenthood and the blockade of President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Senator KIRK has emerged as a conservative voice in support of some of the most critical civil rights protections debated today.

When Senator KIRK returned to the Senate following his traumatic stroke in 2012, he showed his commitment to Illinois' voters. As Senator KIRK begins this new chapter, I wish him the very best.

TRIBUTE TO DAN COATS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is an honor for anyone to serve in the U.S. Senate. Giving voice to your constituents' views is a humbling responsibility. It is one thing to be called to serve; it is another to come back for a second tour of duty. Senator DAN COATS' life is one of public service, beginning with military service and culminating for now in his retirement this year from the Senate—his second tenure representing the people of Indiana.

Senator COATS has championed a number of efforts during his terms in the Senate. I am particularly grateful for his support of the National Guard and his support for our efforts to empower the National Guard within the

Pentagon. Senator COATS has been a watchdog of government spending, a supporter of critical home assistance programs for low-income families such as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and was a supporter of our most recent efforts to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

Senator COATS has come a long way since his early days as a State staffer for then-Representative and future Vice President Dan Quayle. I am sure Hoosiers have not seen the last this public servant will offer. I wish him, his wife, Marsha, and their entire family the best in retirement.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, New England is in itself a small community. We Senators who represent these States band together to fight for our urban and rural communities, to protect our borders, and to preserve the rich heritage on which our country was founded. For the last 6 years, one of those partners has been New Hampshire Senator KELLY AYOTTE. She has diligently sought to represent the Granite State.

Senator AYOTTE and I share a background in law enforcement; as New Hampshire's attorney general, she prosecuted many important cases. After her election to the U.S. Senate in 2011, Senator AYOTTE was recognized as one of the most influential women in her party. She has taken a practical, New England-style approach in the Senate. Like many of us from New England, she has been persistent in her efforts to call national attention to the opioid epidemic ravaging our communities and particularly hitting hard rural communities in Vermont and New Hampshire. She was a partner as we sought to advance and ultimately pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which should provide much needed support for those facing this crippling addiction. Her attention to this public health crisis will surely be a cornerstone of her Senate legacy.

I wish Senator AYOTTE, her husband, Joseph, and their children well in their future endeavors.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FINANCIAL REFORM

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, we all remember the very severe financial crisis of 2008, which precipitated a very severe recession from which we have had a very, very weak recovery. In many ways, we are still trying to recover from that. I want to talk a little about that, and I want to talk about

the opportunity that is before us to make some very constructive changes to help us have a more robust recovery, the recovery we have been waiting for.

Let's first review, very briefly, the causes of this financial crisis because the misguided response to it has contributed to our lack of a robust recovery. The causes of the financial crisis were of course principally government causes. It was principally the failure of government policy that created the financial crisis that led to this recession.

What specific government policies? I would say several. Briefly, first of all, it was failed monetary policy. The policy in which the monetary authorities kept interest rates too low for too long actually had negative real interest rates, and that policy, quite predictably, created a bubble, a bubble in residential real estate, the explosion of which led to this crisis. This was compounded by the failed legislative policy, which actually required mortgage lenders, especially the government-sponsored enterprises of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, to lend money to people who were very unlikely to be able to pay it back. It is generally a very bad idea to lend money to people who are not able to pay it back, and it was a bad idea in this case as well.

Thirdly, I would suggest that there was a failure of government regulators. There were many thousands of regulators crawling through all of the financial institutions of America, but somehow this gigantic bubble escaped their notice, and the interconnected nature of the firms and the exposures that firms had to financial risk seemed to escape their attention. The combination of a failed monetary policy, failed legislative policy, and failed regulatory policy was the government's enormous contribution to this crisis.

I think everybody would agree that one of the things we learned from the financial crisis was just how inadequate the resolution mechanism was that we had for the failure of a large, complex financial institution. We didn't have an adequate one at all. The failure of Lehman Brothers was a good case in point, and the worry at the time was that if large financial institutions were simply allowed to fail, they would have a knockdown effect that would bring down the entire global financial network and beyond so that was the concern. I think it is valid that the resolution mechanism at the time was insufficient.

In the wake of this crisis, Congress stepped in and decided we have to do something about it, and of course what they did was give us Dodd-Frank, which is a law that is very badly flawed in many ways and failed, in part, because the authors failed to fully comprehend the cause of this crisis and because they took the wrong fundamental approach to dealing with it. Most fundamentally was a conceptual flaw which is that future financial crisis would be avoided by having the government impose enormous and very ex-

tensive control and not by freeing up market discipline to prevent the crisis from occurring. I think that is very much at the heart of the fundamental conceptual flaw of Dodd-Frank.

Some of the specifics, broadly speaking, were to severely restrict what financial institutions could do, essentially turn medium- and large-sized banks into public utilities, give regulators, the same folks who missed the last crisis, virtually unlimited powers to micromanage these institutions with the thought that somehow in the future they will catch the next one. Then, as a failsafe in Dodd-Frank, the sort of final backstop, was to actually codify a category of financial institutions as too-big-to-fail. The terminology they use in Dodd-Frank is a little different. They call them systematically important financial institutions, but that is what it is. It is carving into law a category that we will deem too big to fail and the creation of an explicit bailout mechanism, whereby taxpayers will have to once again bail out these financial institutions if they fail.

There are many problems with this whole approach, not the least of which is—there should be no institution in America that is too big to fail. A private-for-profit organization, if it fails, it must be allowed to fail. There is no justification for forcing taxpayers to bail out any kind of firm, including banks. That is a bad and fundamental flaw, but there are many adverse consequences that have come along. We have seen a huge concentration in banking assets directly in response to Dodd-Frank that arguably concentrates risks. We have seen costs to consumers rise, and costs for financial services that consumers need has gone up. Liquidity and securities have gone down, and that just means pension funds and savers have to pay more to invest their savings in the stocks and bonds they are relying on for their retirement security. Innovation has dried up because bureaucrats have to approve everything and anything a financial institution can do.

By the way, it actually destroyed a whole industry. This is not reported on nearly as much as I think it should be, but Dodd-Frank, together with the abnormally low interest rates we have had once again, has completely ended the entire industry of startup community banking. It is worth noting that in the United States of America, prior to the passage of Dodd-Frank, Americans launched new banks for decades. It is something business folks would routinely do. A handful of businesspeople would pull their resources together, start up a bank, contribute the capital, do their own banking business there, and then what would they do? They would provide lending services to consumers and small businesses in their towns and communities. They would be there for the local pizza shop that needs to add a walk-in cooler in the back or the local HVAC repair shop

that needs to buy another pickup truck. It is community banks that provide the lending for these kinds of small business opportunities that allow families and individuals to live their dream and create jobs all across America. That is what community banks did for years.

For decades, prior to Dodd-Frank, we launched, on average, about 125 new community banks per year—many more in really good times, fewer in bad times but about 125 per year. From the day they signed Dodd-Frank into law in July of 2010 through this afternoon, we have launched two new community banks in America—two in over 6 years. This industry is done. It is dead. It doesn't happen anymore because when business folks sit around the table and say, gee, wouldn't it be a good idea to launch a bank because we need one in our community, we don't have a small community bank willing to provide these loans, what they have discovered very quickly is, they can't possibly make a go at it because the regulatory expense and costs are so staggering that they can't see their way to a surviving business model. As a result, we don't have these community banks anymore. They aren't being launched and haven't been for years. Who knows how many small businesses haven't launched and haven't been able to grow because people could never get the funding. Let me just promise you, Citigroup is not in the business of doing the kind of lending that new community banks do every single day. This is just one of the many problems, and one of the most fundamental ones is that taxpayers have this big contingent liability hanging over their head in the form of that bailout mechanism I alluded to earlier—this requirement that they will be forced to bail out big financial institutions all over again. Dodd-Frank codifies it. Dodd-Frank spells out exactly how it should happen.

It is my strongly held view that we need to reform Dodd-Frank. It is overdue. It needs substantial reforms, and those reforms should include making sure taxpayers never have to bail out another giant institution. That is just wrong. That should not be on the table. In fact, it should be precluded.

A second issue is, taxpayers should not be forced, through the mechanisms of this bill, to make banking products more expensive for consumers—less available, more expensive, fewer products and services. We can do this while we maintain our ability to deter, detect, prevent, and prosecute fraud when it occurs. That is absolutely a fundamental responsibility we have, and we can do that.

Most importantly, we have to enable a vigorous, competitive market for financial services to respond to consumers with new services and new products at ever-lower costs and to have a market discipline that forces those institutions to behave prudently because their future depends on it.

We are coming into a new Congress soon, and I am hoping our Democratic colleagues will work with us to correct the fundamental flaws in Dodd-Frank, repeal the things that don't work, and roll back the problems with this legislation, but the incoming Senate minority leader is on record in interviews already declaring they will not do so. They will not help us in this endeavor. They are not interested and can deny us the 60 votes we will need to make substantive reforms to Dodd-Frank.

Let me suggest to my colleagues that—first of all, I hope there is a change of heart on the other side. I hope, first and foremost, as we go through this process, that some of our Democratic colleagues will work with us and will agree that there are changes that need to be made and that we can make them, hopefully, with a very broad consensus. If that is not possible, I suggest there is an alternative. The alternative is that we use a budget resolution that would contain reconciliation instructions to the Banking Committee. For that matter, this could apply to other authorizing committees, but I am specifically referring to the Banking Committee. The reason that is important is because that will allow us to pass subsequent legislation in compliance with the reconciliation instructions that can pass the Senate with a simple majority vote. That is not my preferred way to do it, but we have to do this. We have to get this done. This change in Dodd-Frank will have a very profound impact on our economy. It will encourage and enable us to have growth that we have been waiting for, for too long. This device might be what we need to get there.

Let me point out that there are precedents for this. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 used a budget resolution to create reconciliation instructions, which in turn switched some of the FHA funding streams from mandatory spending to discretionary spending, from spending that is on autopilot to spending that is at the annual discretion of Congress. That was done through exactly this mechanism.

The FDIC and NCUA are deposit insurance funds. They were restructured and reformed, and it was done under the same device using the same procedural mechanism. Those changes were possible because they had a very significant budgetary impact, and that is one of the criteria for using the reconciliation device, which in these cases was something on the order of a couple of billion dollars of taxpayer savings over 10 years.

Reforming Dodd-Frank can save taxpayers a lot of money. The CFPB alone, over 10 years, is expected to consume—on its current path—over \$6 billion. That is a lot of money. Some real sensible, thorough reforms there could save taxpayers.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the Orderly Liquidation Fund will cost taxpayers \$20 billion

over the next 10 years. By the way, that \$20 billion is bailout money. We can fix that. The office of financial research costs over \$1 billion.

There are many cases in which we can save serious taxpayer money, in the process reduce our deficits, thereby achieve the goal of the reconciliation instructions given to the Banking Committee, and along the way help encourage stronger economic growth by modifying some of these misguided policies in Dodd-Frank.

I suggest that the election we just went through was about several things, but one of them was certainly shaking up the status quo and getting some things done and not just continuing what we have always been doing. Well, for too long now we have been putting up with the Dodd-Frank bill that is costing us a lot of economic growth and opportunity. I am hoping our Democratic colleagues will work with us so we can begin to make the constructive changes we need, but, if not, I think we should use all tools available to get this job done.

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

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

DACA

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to share the story of an incredible DREAMer from my home State of New Mexico, but first I would like to commend my colleague, Senator DICK DURBIN of Illinois, for his tremendous leadership in standing up for DREAMers—young undocumented immigrants who are brought to the United States as children. I am proud to join him in this effort.

Four years ago, the President announced that DREAMers would have the opportunity to apply for temporary protection from deportation through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, known as DACA. Today, more than half a million young people across the country have benefited from DACA, including more than 6,500 in my home State of New Mexico.

Across this country, there are DREAMers working to become doctors, scientists, lawyers, and engineers. They want to start businesses and teach in our classrooms and serve in our military. DREAMers want to earn an education and contribute to our economy, to pay taxes and give back to their communities and their country. I would argue that most DREAMers don't know how to be anything but Americans.

Over the last month, I have heard from many New Mexicans who are fearful and uncertain about just how the new Trump administration could im-

pact their community, their neighbors, their friends. This is particularly true for the thousands of young people who applied for temporary status under the DACA Program.

Over the last few years, I have come down to the floor to tell stories of DREAMers from my home. I told the story of twin sisters who graduated from college and are now both seeking advanced degrees, one in law, one in medicine. I told the story of a young man who applied for DACA and wanted to pursue graduate school for biology. I am happy to report that he is currently studying to earn a joint Ph.D. and M.D., with the hope of working on disease prevention. I will continue to tell the inspiring stories of DREAMers who demonstrate why we should protect them from deportation.

Today, I would like to tell you about one of those New Mexicans, someone I heard from last week when I held a listening session with community and faith leaders, immigrant rights advocates, and DREAMers from across New Mexico. She and her family live in the Mesilla Valley in southern New Mexico.

The Mesilla Valley is a rich agricultural region. It is home to dairy farms, pecan orchards, and many of New Mexico's famed green chile fields. Generations of farmers and families in the Mesilla Valley have shaped the rich history and, fundamentally, the culture of my home State.

Today, families like the family of the DREAMer I heard from are working hard each and every day to improve their community, many of which lack adequate transportation and water infrastructure. They are working to create a better future for the next generation.

This young woman's strength is rooted in her family and in her faith. She is the oldest child in her family and is the first person in her family to seek higher education. She told me that through her education and her work ethic, she wants to set an example to her five younger brothers and sisters. She teaches catechism classes for children at her church, where she also helps with fundraisers, cooks meals, and assists with church events.

Since graduating from high school, she has started working toward her associate's degree in nursing. In a State like New Mexico, where we badly need more nurses and medical professionals in our rural and underserved communities, her professional dreams and aspirations are truly critical.

DACA allowed her to get a work permit to hold a job that assists her in paying for her education, for her textbooks, but now, with the President-elect pledging to rescind DACA, this young woman fears that everything she has worked so hard to achieve could be lost. She fears that her family will be separated and that she might be deported from the only community she knows and the community she calls home. She told me, "If [DACA] were to

be removed, then my dream would be destroyed."

This young woman's dream and her drive to give back to her community in southern New Mexico are incredible, but her story is far from unique. Her story is similar to thousands of other DREAMers in my home State and hundreds of thousands across our country, some of whom have escaped unthinkable hardships. They are working to contribute to their communities and to create a brighter future. These DREAMers should be met with compassion.

During my listening session, I also heard from a Catholic priest who serves many immigrant families in his parish. He said he was deeply impacted by hearing this young woman's story during our listening session. He told me that her story "reflects exactly what [he's] seen and heard from many families not only from [his] parish but also from neighboring parishes." He said, "There is a lot of fear and people are so concerned and worried—especially families—[about] what can happen after the election."

I want to make it very clear that in the coming years, I will not waiver in standing up for all New Mexicans in my role in the Senate. We should never be a country that kicks out some of our best and brightest students, and we should not be a nation that tears families apart. I will not stand for policies that are contrary to our fundamental American ideas and values.

I would like to thank the young woman who shared her story with me for having the courage to speak out, particularly with the uncertainty of her situation and in the wake of the recent election. The idea that young men and women like this hard-working nursing student in southern New Mexico will have to retreat back into the shadows or fear being removed from their homes as a consequence of congressional inaction on immigration reform is simply unconscionable.

I am calling for the Obama administration to take every possible legal action to protect DREAMers—individuals who are American in every way but for their immigration status—so that they are not targeted for removal by the incoming administration. Last week, I sent a letter to the White House urging President Obama to use his pardon authority to protect DREAMers from deportation.

I also plan to continue pushing for comprehensive immigration reform in the new Congress, which I still strongly believe has bipartisan support among my colleagues—those colleagues who want real solutions rather than rancorous rhetoric. We need to modernize our immigration system to meet the needs of our economy and provide an accountable pathway to earn citizenship for the undocumented workers living here in the shadows, including making the DREAM Act law.

As southwest border security is discussed in the context of immigration

reform, I will continue to be focused on pragmatic and accountable policy decisions that include the many concerns of our border communities. As the son of an immigrant myself, I am familiar with the unique promise that America represents for so many families. I am grateful that when my father and my grandparents fled Germany in the years leading up to World War II, our country chose to see them for what they were—enthusiastic American immigrants.

Our Nation's remarkable spirit is rooted in our diversity, our history, and our culture, which has always been enriched by our immigrant communities and their family members. I encourage my colleagues and our incoming President-elect to look at the human faces of our broken immigration system and to work toward real solutions.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MEDICARE

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, every year I hear from hundreds of constituents about the transformative impact Medicare has on their lives. For many of them, Medicare is literally the difference between life and death, between living with dignity or in abject poverty. It is as dramatic as that.

Before we passed Medicare 51 years ago, slightly more than half of our seniors—in Hawaii we call our seniors kupuna—had health insurance. Only half. The insurance they had was very expensive and did not cover much. Millions could barely afford routine medical care, let alone treatment for a catastrophic illness. For the past 50 years, our seniors have approached retirement with the peace of mind of knowing that Medicare will be there for them. It is part of a commitment we have made to care for and honor our kupuna.

To understand what life would be like for our seniors without Medicare, we don't need to look to the distant past before we had Medicare; we can learn from what happened, for example, 3 years ago to a family in Maui, to Phyllis and Tommy Duarte of Maui.

Phyllis and Tommy contacted my office after they received a notice that the Social Security Administration had canceled Phyllis's Social Security payments. Like millions of kupuna across the country, Phyllis and Tommy live on a fixed income and depend on Social Security to pay their bills. After several months without receiving her Social Security check, Phyllis could no longer pay the premiums for her Medi-

care Part B plan. They threatened to terminate her coverage, which is when she contacted my office. Fortunately, we were able to resolve the situation within a few weeks. Phyllis started receiving a check and continues to pay her premiums. Only a short time later, Phyllis fell and broke her arm. It required surgery and years of ongoing physical therapy. The final bill: \$200,000. Phyllis and Tommy were only weeks away from understanding just how devastating it would be to live without Medicare coverage.

It is because of people like Phyllis and Tommy that I fought tooth and nail to make sure Medicare will always be there for our kupuna. It is why I have been on the frontlines to beat back every attempt to privatize and voucherize Medicare since I have been in Congress.

That is why I will do everything in my power to stop our new President and his allies in Congress from shredding this crucial safety net program. Over the past month, Speaker RYAN has made it clear that he intends to resurrect his plan to turn Medicare into a voucher program for private insurance. Under his system, private insurers could deny or delay coverage because seniors would no longer have Medicare's consumer protections. His plan caps the value of these vouchers to the point where they will not keep up with the rising costs of health care. The Congressional Budget Office calculated that the Ryan plan would increase out-of-pocket expenses by \$6,000 per year for millions of seniors—millions who are already on fixed incomes. My colleagues know that I am not given to hyperbole, but this attempt to privatize Medicare is a clear and present danger to millions of seniors.

I know from talking with kupuna in Hawaii that one of the things they worry about most is their health and whether their needs will be met. Anyone who talks to seniors and understands what they are going through would recognize that privatizing Medicare means seniors will have to go out and find medical insurance on the private market. How can you think they will be able to accomplish that? Are insurance companies going to step up to take care of some of the most vulnerable members of our population even though it is not profitable for them to do so? I don't think so.

During the campaign, President-Elect Trump said the right thing about protecting Medicare, but choosing TOM PRICE to head the Department of Health and Human Services sends the opposite message. For years, Congressman TOM PRICE has been PAUL RYAN's closest ally in his crusade to privatize and voucherize Medicare. The Ryan-Price plan would hurt more than 217,000 seniors in Hawaii and millions across the country, including those who live in Janesville, WI, and Roswell, GA. I wonder how Speaker RYAN and Congressman PRICE would explain to seniors in their districts, their States, how

voucherizing Medicare will not hurt them.

Saving Medicare is going to be a daunting fight, but I am not going to shy away from it. I am going to do whatever I can, whenever I can, to protect Medicare for our seniors.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment to express my appreciation to the Democratic leader, Senator HARRY REID, who spoke earlier on the floor.

I was here with many of my colleagues and listened to his incredible story about his background from Searchlight, NV, to his ascension to the Senate and becoming the Democratic leader.

When I first came to the Senate, Senator REID asked to meet with me. I thought he was going to talk about my philosophy on different issues or what my interests would be or how I was going to try to move forward on particular bills, but what he really wanted to talk about was my family, what I thought was important in life. He was very interested in my family traditions and how that would be impacted by my life in the Senate.

I must tell you, it was very personal. I think many of us have seen many sides of HARRY REID, but one side of him is clear. He treats the Senate as his family, and he treats each one of us as his family.

I wish to express my appreciation for his service in the U.S. Senate and for his public service over so many years.

Myrna and I are friends of Landra and HARRY. We wish them only the best as he moves forward from his career in the Senate.

It has really been a pleasure to serve with him in the Senate. This is an incredible place to serve. Senator REID has certainly made this Senator's life in the Senate much more enjoyable and productive.

Mr. President, part of American culture is to celebrate our small towns. There are few American towns smaller than Searchlight in Clark County, NV. That is the hometown of our beloved Democratic Leader, Senator HARRY REID.

Senator REID epitomizes the American Dream. He grew up without indoor plumbing, in a small cabin built out of scavenged railroad ties, and attended a two-room elementary school. His father was a hard-rock miner. As a young boy, Senator REID would go deep into the mines with his father. Searchlight didn't have its own high school so Senator REID had to hitchhike each week to Henderson, 40 miles away, where he attended Basic High School and boarded with relatives and other families.

Local businessmen saw his potential and helped him attend Utah State University, a debt he repaid. He earned his law degree from George Washington

University and supported his young family by working as a U.S. Capitol Police Officer.

Senator REID started his career in public service as Henderson's city attorney. He revised the city charter and extended the city's boundaries by acquiring Federal land. In 1968, when he was just 28, he was elected to the Nevada State Assembly. As an assemblyman, he introduced the first air pollution legislation in Nevada's history. Two years later, Senator REID became the youngest lieutenant governor in Nevada history, winning election as Governor Mike O'Callaghan's running mate. Mike O'Callaghan had been Senator REID's mentor in high school as a teacher, boxing coach, and friend.

In 1977, Senator REID was appointed chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission. For 5 years, he was engaged in an unrelenting fight with organized crime syndicates to clean up Nevada's gaming industry. In 1981, his wife—high school sweetheart Landra—found a bomb attached to the family station wagon.

In 1982, Senator REID won the first of two elections to serve in the House of Representatives and then he was elected to the Senate in 1986. In 2005 he became the Democratic Leader, two years later, he became the majority leader, a post he held until the Republicans gained control of the Senate last year. As the Las Vegas Sun put it, he went from being the underdog to the top dog.

I have talked about Senator REID's hardscrabble upbringing because it has made him one of the toughest people I have ever known. Yet he is also one of the kindest, and most compassionate.

Senator REID may be the top dog, but he has always fought for the underdog. I think that quality is best exemplified by his advocacy on behalf of Native Americans, which includes helping to build the Nation's first utility-scale solar project on tribal land in Nevada. I know how much he is respected in Indian country.

Senator REID was instrumental in passing the Affordable Care Act, ACA, which—along with the Medicaid expansion—has provided health care to more than 20 million Americans.

Senator REID's efforts to choose qualified Federal jurists for the U.S. District Court for the District of Nevada will be felt for decades after he leaves office. Senator REID has recommended and helped confirm five of the six judges currently serving on the court. As a result of Senator REID's commitment to diversity, there have been numerous "firsts" for the court.

In 1998, Senator REID recommended Johnnie Rawlinson to be the first woman to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court. At his request, she was elevated to the Ninth Circuit in 2000.

In 2010, Gloria Navarro became the first Hispanic woman to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court.

In 2012, Miranda Du became the first Asian-Pacific American to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court.

In 2014, Richard Boulware became the first African-American man to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court.

The Senate still has the opportunity to confirm Anne Traum, who would be the first Jewish person to serve on the Nevada District Court.

Senator REID has fought hard on behalf of his fellow Nevadans. He has prevented the Federal Government from building a nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain. He authored and passed legislation establishing Nevada's first national park, Great Basin National Park. He has led the fight to protect and restore Lake Tahoe. He prevented the removal of the Nevada Air National Guard's C-130 aircraft and the closure of the Hawthorne Army Depot, and he secured over \$600 million for the Southern Nevada Veterans Administration Medical Complex.

When it comes to combatting climate change and promoting the development and adoption of clean, sustainable, renewable energy, Senator REID has been a visionary. He has incentivized \$5.5 billion in investments in Nevada's clean energy resources through tax credits, grants, and loan guarantees. He helped to create a new fast-track permitting process for clean energy development on public lands. He facilitated the public-private partnership needed for the One Nevada Transmission Line, which connects northern and southern Nevada's electricity grids for the first time, helping to unlock the State's vast clean energy potential. While his interest in promoting clean energy—especially solar—may have a local origin, the benefits will accrue to all humanity for generations to come as we transition from our reliance on fossil fuels.

Serving as the Leader, whether in the majority or the minority, is a tough job. The leader has to fight the most intense partisan battles. The Leader has to say "no" on many occasions. The leader has to stand up for other members of the party. Senator REID has been tough enough to be an extraordinary leader. If I were in a foxhole, I would want HARRY REID by my side. I know every other Democratic Senator feels the same way—and surely most Republicans. We are going to miss HARRY REID. I wish him, his wife Landra, their five children, and 19 grandchildren all the best.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WORK BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, earlier today we moved the Defense authorization bill across the finish line. This legislation authorizes funding for things such as training our troops to counter the ever-evolving threats emanating from around the world. The Defense authorization bill will also give our men and women in uniform the most up-to-date weaponry and the other equipment they need, including advanced aircraft, ships, and ground vehicles.

Fortunately, the bill also authorizes needed improvements in military facilities such as those in Fort Hood, TX, Joint Base San Antonio, Red River Army Depot, and Ellington Field.

Finally, it provides a much needed pay raise for our troops. I am pleased we were able to finish our work on that to better serve our men and women in uniform.

I hope the President reconsiders his stated intention to veto this legislation. It makes absolutely no sense to me, and I think it would be an insult to the troops—whom we all claim to support—to deny them the resources and the pay raise that this bill provides for.

We still have more work ahead of us, including the continuing resolution. I know there are Members of this body who say: Well, we want to change that appropriations bill to add some other provisions. But I just came back from meeting with some of the Members of the Texas House delegation. They tell me the House is leaving. So even if changes are made, the House is not going to be here and in session to make changes to the continuing resolution.

Our friends across the aisle need to face up to the reality that if they somehow prevent us from passing this continuing resolution, it will be on their hands. I hope they will reconsider because they are not going to be able to achieve the goal they are seeking.

We are close to wrapping up the Water Resources Development Act as well. This bill has also experienced a little bit of a hiccup. It has been held up over questions about how to best address the drought in California, but the bottom line is that California needs this legislation to help deliver water to its people and to keep producing billions of dollars' worth of crops each year.

I know the folks in California consider themselves to be the breadbasket for America and literally the world because of all the food we export, but that is one reason why this legislation is so important and why the senior Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Majority Leader MCCARTHY negotiated this package.

I know Senator BOXER is not pleased with it, but the fact is, under the current procedures, we are going to finish this legislation one way or another—perhaps as late as Monday, but we need to get it done.

This legislative package will make sure that California and the rest of the country get the resources we need

while complying with all environmental laws. Of course, with some co-operation we can get all of these moving parts done for the American people soon.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know it is always difficult to come to the floor and talk about the departure of our good friends and valued colleagues. The word I have heard mentioned the most this week is “bittersweet”—people looking forward to the next chapter of their lives but regretting the fact that good friends and valued colleagues are moving on to the next chapter of their lives. But every other December, we find ourselves bidding farewell to some of our most admired and respected Members. Today I wish to speak briefly about four of them, starting with our good friend from New Hampshire, Senator AYOTTE.

KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. President, Senator AYOTTE and I have more in common than may meet the eye, so let me explain. Our hometowns are 2,000 miles away, so it doesn't seem obvious. She served as attorney general of the State of New Hampshire and holds the distinction of being New Hampshire's first and only female attorney general. She was first appointed to that position by a Republican Governor, and she did such an outstanding job serving the people that she was reappointed to that position by a Democratic Governor.

Everybody who knows KELLY AYOTTE knows that she epitomizes the spirit of bipartisanship and comradery that makes a good public servant a great one. That has been evident in her work she has done here in the U.S. Senate. From the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act to multiple national security issues, Senator AYOTTE has been eager to work with Members on both sides of the aisle when it comes down to doing what is best for the people of her State and for the United States.

Senator AYOTTE and I both come from military families. My dad flew in the Army Air Corps in World War II, with the 303rd Bomb Group of the Air Force. Her grandfather also served in World War II. And, as many of us know, Joe, her husband, served in the Air Force and the Air National Guard, and he flew combat missions in Bosnia and Iraq. Senator AYOTTE's firsthand knowledge of the military has been a great help to us, particularly in her role on the Armed Services Committee.

KELLY will tell us that she does her best to listen first, to take in the concerns and priorities of her fellow Granite Staters, discuss the merits of each side's policy position, and only then carefully and methodically reach a well-considered decision. That patience and willingness to listen and consider all views has served her well during her tenure in the U.S. Senate. It is a lesson

we all should take to heart and learn from by her good example.

I want to add my thanks to our friend, Senator KELLY AYOTTE, for her years of service on behalf of the people of New Hampshire. I also thank her husband Joe Daley and their two children, Katherine and Jacob, for their steadfast support of Joe's wife and their children's mom over these past years.

I don't know in what capacity Kelly will continue to serve her community and her State and her Nation, but I know we will be hearing and seeing her more in some capacity of service, and I look forward to seeing where and in what capacity she finally decides to serve next.

DAN COATS

Mr. President, next I wish to recognize our friend, Senator DAN COATS. Senator COATS is a well-known commodity not just in Hoosier country but across the United States. He has earned the reputation of a distinguished statesman who genuinely doesn't need an introduction because his sterling reputation precedes him.

We know his impressive resume. After serving the country as a soldier in the Army, he decided he wanted to continue in public service, so he worked as a congressional staffer for then-Congressman Dan Quayle. When his boss decided to run for the Senate and won, Senator COATS took his boss's congressional seat to serve in the House of Representatives. And when Senator Quayle became Vice President Quayle, Representative Coats became Senator COATS, following on in his example.

He broke that pattern of following in the footsteps of the former Vice President when he was appointed Ambassador to Germany. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, he was an instrumental diplomat, working with our allies in Europe as we responded and as the world responded to the worst terror attack on our country in our history.

I know I speak for every Member here when I say that we are grateful Senator COATS came out of retirement and came back to the Senate in 2010. We have come to know that he is a warrior when it comes to wasteful Washington spending, and every week he comes to the floor to talk about his waste of the week. It is a service to all of us, really, to remind us that we have a lot of work to do in that area but also to point out how we can save taxpayers' dollars and use them more efficiently.

Many folks wouldn't know that he regularly attends the weekly Prayer Breakfast we have here in the Senate as well, which is a great time for Senators to come together and to support one another. It reflects Dan's commitment to faithfully encourage his colleagues day in and day out.

My colleagues know that Senator COATS is also a big fan of getting things done during votes, and he knows how to work a room. He has been on

the deputy whip team and helped consult with and helped inform our colleagues in a way that has helped us to actually get legislation passed by unifying us.

Suffice it to say Senator COATS is a true diplomat wherever he goes, and this Chamber has been a better, more civil place with him in it.

I know DAN would be the first to tell us that his decades of public service were made possible because of the equal partner he has in his wife Marsha. They met in college. They have been married more than 50 years, and they are a great example to all of us. So thanks to Marsha and their children and grandchildren for sharing DAN all these years.

I have a suspicion that Senator COATS doesn't have it in him to step totally away from public service, and there has been some news and discussion as to whether he might be in the running for another important position, perhaps in the next administration. I know we all look forward to seeing where he goes next to serve our country, which we know is so important to him.

DAVID VITTER

Mr. President, I would also like to say a few words about the senior Senator from Louisiana, DAVID VITTER. Back in the 113th Congress, in 2013, I began my tenure as the Republican whip, and at the same time I invited Senator VITTER to serve the conference as a deputy whip. One thing we always know about DAVID VITTER, whether you are a colleague, a staffer, or a constituent, is that no matter what, he is going to have thought carefully about the issue in ways that perhaps surprise many of us, and when he has something to say about an issue, it is always something worth listening to. I can't say that about all of us, but certainly Senator VITTER adds to the value of our deliberations every time he speaks.

But, of course, nothing is closer to his heart than the people of Louisiana, and what he has done diligently and faithfully here is serve the people of his State. I have had the pleasure of working with him on issues we share in common, like coastal protection issues that affect both of our States with our gulf coast.

Senator VITTER was sworn into office the same year Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans. As a matter of fact, for a time, he and his family literally lived outside the Houston area because of the devastation wrought by that terrible hurricane—a storm that FEMA called the “single most catastrophic natural disaster in U.S. history.” Katrina did billions of dollars' worth of damage, killed almost 2,000 people, left thousands without a roof over their heads, and cut the population of New Orleans in half. About 100,000 of those, I am told, made permanent residence in Texas, having had their homes destroyed.

I know Senator VITTER took this devastation as a personal challenge. He hit

the ground running. When the people of Louisiana needed him most, he worked at every level of government to bring them together and get the help they needed. Of course, just a few years after Katrina, Hurricane Ike pummeled its way through the Gulf Coast of Mexico before making landfall on the Texas coast. So I have had a number of opportunities to work with Senator VITTER not only on recovery efforts for our States but to make sure our communities along the coast stand ready to help each other and particularly as we prepare for future storms.

I wish him and his wife Wendy and their entire family well as they look to more adventures and more opportunities to serve. I have no doubt he will continue to take his passion for helping the people of Louisiana with him wherever the future may lead.

MARK KIRK

Finally, Mr. President, I wish to recognize the senior Senator from Illinois, MARK KIRK. If my colleagues have noticed Senator KIRK's interests on the floor, they will notice a trend. In addition to supporting measures that help the people of Illinois, he is laser-focused on keeping America safe. He provides us a declassified situation map that shows us where the U.S. military is engaged in fighting the War on Terror in the Middle East and in Africa.

He is a former member of the U.S. Navy, and so he has worked long and hard to strengthen our military at every turn. He has been a thoughtful and vocal critic of some of our Nation's biggest adversaries, like North Korea and Iran. MARK has never been one to shy away from more sanctions or steeper penalties for those countries if it means the United States will be safer as a result. To put it simply, MARK KIRK is a great patriot.

We all know his personal story of overcoming a stroke and his great perseverance and fortitude. It really has been an inspiration to watch MARK as he has recovered from that devastating stroke and continued to be an enormously productive Senator on behalf of the State of Illinois.

It has been a joy to see him turn that difficult circumstance into a rallying cry to help others get the best care and rehabilitation available today.

So I am personally grateful to Senator KIRK for many things, but in particular I want to mention his strong support of anti-human trafficking legislation. I joined him in Chicago a few years ago to speak with law enforcement about the connections between organized crime and sex trafficking. MARK has never wavered from his support for important legislation that we passed here this last year called the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. He understood right from the beginning that human trafficking was essentially modern-day slavery, targeting, as it did, vulnerable children—typically a child of 12 to 14 years old who has run away from home, only to find themselves unable to leave because

they have become a victim of slavery. So I am thankful to Senator KIRK for standing up for the victims of human trafficking and taking care of and prioritizing our veterans and service men and women.

Let me close by saying thank you again to our friends Senator KIRK, Senator VITTER, Senator COATS, and Senator AYOTTE for the indelible mark and contributions they made to the Senate and my sincere appreciation for how they have faithfully served our country. I am grateful for their friendship and wish them and their families well as they tackle new ventures ahead.

I will just close by saying we have another colleague who has been nominated to serve as Attorney General, who still has to go through the process of confirmation and advice and consent by the Senate. That, of course, would be the senior Senator from Alabama, Mr. SESSIONS—not to jinx him; I will wait until that process is concluded, but I will be back here speaking about him at the appropriate time.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, for debate only, until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like to have a colloquy with my colleague.

It is my understanding that Senator CARPER was interested in 5 minutes, Senator MERKLEY was interested in 5 minutes, I was interested in 5 minutes, and I think Senator ENZI was interested in 5 minutes.

Could I ask my colleague if he would amend his UC so that each of those four Senators would have 5 minutes? I think that would take us to about 3:10, as opposed to 3 o'clock.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would like to accommodate my friend from Washington, but the House message containing the continuing resolution is due here at 3 o'clock. There are a number of procedural matters that need to be attended to, so we will have Senators coming to the floor for that purpose. I am told that after that process occurs, which shouldn't take very long,

the floor will be wide open for Senators to speak as long as they like.

I object to the modification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the original request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

FORESTRY POLICY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am speaking in morning business with my colleague and friend Senator MERKLEY to talk about forestry policy and to give the Senate a little bit of an update on where we are because we have so many resource-dependent communities that have been devastated as a result of a variety of policies. I want to touch briefly, and then yield to Senator MERKLEY, on what some of those elements are.

No. 1 is that our softwood lumber producers are now in a titanic battle with the Canadians, fighting the Canadian system of heavily subsidizing their industry, thereby cutting ours. A group of 25 Senators—a quarter of the Senate—have joined me in an effort so that our trade representative pushes back and continues to fight this unjust, inequitable system until we no longer see Oregon and American jobs destroyed as a result of the Canadians' unfairly subsidizing their industry.

No. 2, we feel very strongly about getting the harvest up in a sustainable fashion. We know there is an awful lot of work to do in the woods. We can do it with an environmental ethic, with an ethic of forest health, and I strongly support that. I have introduced legislation to do that in my home State and have been supportive of colleagues' efforts to do it in their parts of the country.

The reality is—and the Forest Service has said this—you would have to increase logging on our public lands by 400 percent in order to no longer need a third leg of the forestry stool, which is the Secure Rural Schools program.

I want it understood that we are going to push back against inequitable trade practices that are hurting jobs in rural Oregon and rural America. We are going to support increasing the harvest in a sustainable fashion, but there is no realistic increase that might possibly win passage here in Washington and be upheld legally that involves taking the harvest up to 400 percent. You are going to need a safety net.

Senator MERKLEY and I, Senator CRAPO, Senator RISCH, and many colleagues on both sides of the aisle have fought to get this program, which has now expired, extended for one more year. This program began in 2000 as a result of a bipartisan piece of legislation, which Senator Craig and I authored, called the Secure Rural Schools bill. It now benefits more than 700 counties, and we see it benefiting communities all over the country. This program is depended on for education. It is depended on for roads. It is de-

pended on in many areas for law enforcement. Unfortunately, our colleagues have not been willing to extend it. Senator MERKLEY and I, and Senator CRAPO and Senator RISCH, in a bipartisan way, have wanted to work in the Senate to get this extended, but to put these vital county payments on the back burner would be an enormous mistake.

I want to yield the remainder of our time to my friend and colleague, but there are really three legs to this stool: fight unfair trade practices, get the harvest up in a sustainable kind of fashion, and understand that you are not going to be able to meet the needs of hard-hit rural communities without the safety net program—the Secure Rural Schools program.

Senator CRAPO, Senator RISCH, Senator MERKLEY, and I are going to keep coming back here again and again until we get it reauthorized.

I yield the remainder of our time to Senator MERKLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague from Oregon, who, back in the year 2000, fought so hard to right a wrong. The wrong was that a variety of measures related to these timbered acres reduced the ability to pull as much harvest off as in the past. Part of that was the fact that there was simply a lot of second growth that wasn't ready to be cut yet. Another was a variety of rules related to environmental protections, to forest fire prevention. There were a whole series of things.

The bottom line is that these counties, which originally had these lands before they transferred them to Federal Government for safekeeping, are dependent upon revenue from the timber sales on these lands. My colleague pointed out that those timber sales simply can't operate at the same level to provide the resources those counties operated on. Much as with Payments in Lieu of Taxes, or the PILT program, we stepped in—my colleague stepped in and led the effort to honor the promise made to those counties. We have been doing so now for 16 years.

One of the challenges that has emerged is that we reauthorize it only for a short period of time. We say we will still honor the promise but only for a year or only for 2 years, which means the counties never know what is going to be coming. They are really caught in limbo. Because they are rural counties—they don't have a great amount of manufacturing; a lot of the counties don't have a lot of farmland—they are really dependent upon the forest industry as the heart of their economy. This is very important to them.

We need to honor the promise to these counties, just as we have through the PILT program. It is a situation we can debate at whatever level that should be, but it needs to be a long-term commitment to this promise to

these counties. Remember, these were county lands that were transferred back to the Federal Government to essentially hold in trust for them.

I share with my colleague the desire that we address this in a fashion that provides a strong foundation, a strong commitment to the promise made to rural America, to rural forested counties. As mentioned, 720 counties in 41 States—that is a pretty significant deal across the country. We need to act, and we need to act now.

I turn this back over to my colleague.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am going to wrap this up simply by saying a program like this has generated a tremendous amount of community involvement. There are advisory committees that bring the industry and environmental folks together. That is what we are going to need to get this job done right. It is called collaborative forestry. The Secure Rural Schools program is something that Senator MERKLEY and I want to reauthorize. It is a textbook case for what you want to do for collaborative forestry.

We didn't even really get into forest health because we all know our forests, particularly in the West, are burning up, so Senator RISCH, Senator CRAPO, and I went into something called fire borrowing, which is an extraordinarily inefficient policy that discourages prevention with respect to fire.

We are going to be back to talk about the nuts and bolts of sensible forest policy. We need to build on this collaborative effort, as we have sought to do in our O&C bill—the bill that Senator MERKLEY and I have been involved with—which will double the harvest, on average, for the next 50 years, according to the experts. We want it to be understood that we are going to be fighting on a number of fronts. We will fight with respect to the trade policy, which is long overdue, as it relates to getting a fair shake for our softwood lumber producers and value-added forestry. We are going to focus on collaborative approaches and get the harvest up in a sustainable way.

Senator MERKLEY has talked about the promise of Secure Rural Schools, and I feel it is very regrettable that when Senator CRAPO and Senator RISCH tried to convince the other side of the aisle to accept Secure Rural Schools now, we couldn't get it done.

I think anybody who knows us knows we are persistent, and you don't get anything important done without bipartisan support. That is the way we will approach our forestry policy in the days ahead.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONTINUING RESOLUTION AND
WRDA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to call everybody's attention to the House vote that just occurred on the continuing resolution and on the WRDA bill. The continuing resolution passed 326 to 96; 208 Republicans voted for it and 33 voted against it. On the Democratic side, 118 Democrats voted for it and only 63 voted against it.

The WRDA bill passed 360 to 61. Republicans voted for it 222 to 17; Democrats voted for it 138 to 44. The House has clearly—with two overwhelming votes—sent us the last two measures that we need to deal with here before we wrap up this Congress and head home for the holidays.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the body the message to accompany H.R. 2028.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2028) entitled "An Act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.", with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment on H.R. 2028.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The senior 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Orrin G. Hatch, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Thad Cochran, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Bill Cassidy, John Hoeven, John Barrasso, Thom Tillis, John Boozman, John Thune, Daniel Coats, Marco Rubio, Roy Blunt.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 5139

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur on the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2028, with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] moves to concur in the House amend-

ment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2028 with an amendment numbered 5139.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end add the following:

"This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment."

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the motion to concur with the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5140 TO AMENDMENT NO. 5139

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 5140 to amendment No. 5139.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "1 day" and insert "2 days".

MOTION TO REFER WITH AMENDMENT NO. 5141

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to refer the House message on H.R. 2028 to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment numbered 5141.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] moves to refer the House message to accompany H.R. 2028 to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment numbered 5141.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end add the following:

"This act shall be effective 3 days after enactment."

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5142

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have an amendment to the instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 5142 to the instructions of the motion to refer the House message to accompany H.R. 2028.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "3 days" and insert "4 days".

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays on my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5143 TO AMENDMENT NO. 5142

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 5143 to amendment No. 5142.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "4" and insert "5".

GEORGE P. KAZEN FEDERAL
BUILDING AND UNITED STATES
COURTHOUSE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the body the message to accompany Calendar No. 65, S. 612.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 612) entitled "An Act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the 'George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse'." do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 612.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The senior 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to Calendar No. 65, S. 612, an act to designate the Federal building and the United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the "George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse."

James M. Inhofe, Roger F. Wicker, Orrin G. Hatch, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Thad Cochran, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Bill Cassidy, John Hoeven, John Barrasso, Thom Tillis, John Boozman, John Thune, Daniel Coats, Marco Rubio, Mitch McConnell.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 5144

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 612, with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] moves to concur in the House amendment to S. 612 with an amendment numbered 5144.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end add the following:

"This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment."

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays on the motion to concur with the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5145 TO AMENDMENT NO. 5144

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 5145 to amendment No. 5144.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "1 day" and insert "2 days".

MOTION TO REFER WITH AMENDMENT NO. 5146

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to refer the House message on S. 612 to the Committee on Environment and Public Works with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment numbered 5146.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] moves to refer the House message on S. 612 to the Committee on Environment and Public Works with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment numbered 5146.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end add the following:

"This act shall be effective 3 days after enactment."

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5147

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I have an amendment to the instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 5147 to the instructions of the motion to refer the House message to accompany S. 612.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "3 days" and insert "4 days".

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays on my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5148 TO AMENDMENT NO. 5147

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL] proposes an amendment numbered 5148 to amendment No. 5147.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike "4" and insert "5".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

TRIBUTE TO DAN COATS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, as this session of Congress draws to a close, it provides us with an opportunity to acknowledge and express our appreciation to those Members of the Senate who will be retiring in a few weeks. One of those who will be retiring and will be greatly missed is DAN COATS of Indiana. DAN has had an interesting career and through his more than 15 years in the Senate has made a difference.

He has been a reliable vote for the best interests of his home State and the future of the Nation, and he leaves behind a legacy of which he should be very proud. DAN's first years of service in the Congress began in 1981, when he served in the House of Representatives. He was then appointed to the United States Senate when Dan Quayle was elected Vice President.

He served in the Senate from 1989 to 1999, when his self-imposed term-limit pledge brought to an end his first years in the Senate. It was not long thereafter that DAN was again asked to serve, this time as Ambassador to Germany.

He arrived in Germany and took up his service there just before our Nation experienced the tragic event of September 11. Our relationship with our allies took on prime importance after that, and we were fortunate to have DAN abroad to maintain our strong friendship with the German Government and people.

Several years later, the Indiana Senate seat was open again, and DAN took up the challenge to run again to serve the people of his home State in the Senate. The people of Indiana and our Nation, conservatives and people of

faith, have been fortunate to have DAN to rely on. He has been a steady and dependable force for taking better care of our Nation's finances and keeping a close watch on our security.

Last year, after a great deal of prayer and thought and consideration, DAN did announce that he would not be running for another term in the Senate. It was a decision he made once again with the people of his home State in mind. He has always been determined to have the best representatives in place to serve the people of Indiana and address those issues that most concerned him.

With that in mind, DAN announced that he believed "the time has come to pass this demanding job to the next generation of leaders." We will miss DAN. We will miss his background and experience. We will miss his reasonable, appropriate, and well-timed comments and his ability to get results. I look forward to his next challenge or adventure and know he will continue to look out for what is best for our Nation and our people.

DAN has been a great source of strength and support for our party and he will be missed. To you, DAN, Diana and I join in sending our best wishes and our appreciation to you and Marsha. Together, you have been great examples of the importance of public service. The organization you founded, the Foundation for American Renewal, and the Project for American Renewal that you created have helped you to focus on and work toward solutions to many of our problems.

That is also a part of our legacy and why you will continue to receive the recognition you deserve. You have also been a part of a number of community and volunteer organizations. For these and so many more reasons, we thank you and Marsha for devoting so much of your life to making our Nation a better place to live. You certainly achieved that goal and we wish you both the best.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. President, I also want to take some time today to speak about the senior Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI. In the years to come, Senator MIKULSKI will be known for a lot of things that made her years of service to the people of Maryland quite remarkable. It will always be mentioned that she has been the longest serving woman in the history of the United States Congress.

Although that is important, Senator MIKULSKI did not come to Washington to see how long she could stay. She came here to see how much of a difference she could make. In the end, she served for so many years because of what she was able to do with her time in the House and then in the Senate. The people of Maryland have such a strong affection for Senator MIKULSKI because they always felt like she was one of them. She never lost touch with the people back home.

Her family name was well known to the people in her neighborhood because

her parents ran a grocery store. Every morning they opened their store early so people could stop by to pick up something before they headed off to work.

In that, and so many other ways, her family played an important role in the day-to-day life of their neighborhood and her neighbors never forgot that. When the opportunity came for Senator MIKULSKI to run for a seat in the House representing Baltimore, she didn't hesitate. She took her case to the people and they liked what they heard. She won what was to be the first of a long series of elections, each of which she won easily and impressively.

Senator MIKULSKI has a number of interests, and one of the things I am sure she enjoyed about Congress has been her ability to take up a number of those issues to make a difference in people's lives. In everything she has done, she has always found a way to help the people back home. A key example of that is her fight over "the road." The battle dates back to 1966 when BARBARA was a social worker in Baltimore. The city council proposed building a highway to connect downtown Baltimore to its suburbs, a plan that BARBARA worried would cause Polish Americans, African Americans, and lower income residents to lose their homes. As is her way, BARBARA sprung to action by forming a community group of opposition. The road was blocked. BARBARA wound up on the city council, and the area where the road was supposed to be built is now one of Baltimore's biggest draws.

As far as her work in the Senate goes, one of her many legislative victories that I will long remember is work she did on something that came to be known as Rosa's Law. Rosa was a 9-year-old young lady who was diagnosed with Down syndrome. Her mother was well aware of what a hurtful label things like "mental retardation" and "mentally retarded" were to those who saw them in the Federal laws that were written to help them. BARBARA knew there was only one solution to this problem and that was to eliminate those terms from Federal law.

I was pleased to be able to help in the effort to pass that bill, seeing how much it meant not only to Rosa and her family but to Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. Our work on that bill will stay with me and will be a reminder of the reason we work so hard to pass legislation and answer the needs of the people back home.

In the end, it is all about making lives better. That is something BARBARA has done every day of her service in Congress. As the longest serving woman in Congress, she has continued to earn the title of "Dean of Senate Women." She has been a mentor and source of good advice to her colleagues who appreciated being able to ask for her opinion and her guidance on their work on the Senate.

She certainly helped me when I was a new Senator and was advocating for

low-income housing in Jackson, one of the rich areas of our State. With her support, we got that done and made sure there was a mix in the community of different occupations and people.

Her reputation has been to not only help the Members of the Senate with whom she has served, it also helped serve to encourage the women of Maryland to get active and involved in the work that must be done to make her home State and our Nation better places to live. In a very real sense, her leadership skills have inspired the next generation of Maryland's leaders.

Now Senator MIKULSKI is leaving the Senate after having made a difference and leaving her mark on the history of Congress. One of the key things she will be remembered for is her tireless support of NIH. I know they will miss her and her commitment to the principles and values that guided her through her career, from her service on the Baltimore City Council to her work in the House of Representatives and then the Senate. She made a difference everywhere she served. For that reason and for many more, she will never be forgotten.

My wife Diana and I join in sending our best wishes to Senator MIKULSKI for her years of service. Now that her Senate adventure has come to an end, she will undoubtedly come up with more challenges to pursue in the years to come. I am hoping these plans might include a followup to her mystery novel that was set in the Senate. We are looking forward to seeing what the next chapter of her life may include.

Good luck to these fellow Senators.

TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Mr. President, at the end of each Congress, the Senate tradition is to pause for a moment to share our thoughts about those Senators who will be retiring when the final gavel brings the session to a close. One of those senators who will be leaving the Senate is HARRY REID. Senator REID is quite a remarkable individual, and his story should be read and considered by students of government and history—of all ages.

Over the years, I have spent some time with HARRY at prayer breakfasts and listened to his reflections on his life—personally and politically. He has lived a life that few would ever believe to be possible.

HARRY makes for a great example of how to take your life and make the most of it. He was born in a small cabin that offered few of life's comforts, but he didn't complain about it. He took what he was given in life and worked to make things better.

As a young man, he served as the student body president of his high school and drew the notice of his teachers and his boxing coach. He attended Utah State University, and his next stop was George Washington University—my alma mater—where he worked to earn a law degree. To make that possible, HARRY needed a job, and so he worked as a U.S. Capitol Police officer. HARRY

then returned home to Nevada and took up what would be his lifelong ambition, serving the people of his home State.

It wasn't long before HARRY had served in Nevada's State legislature and on the Nevada Gaming Commission. When the opportunity presented itself, he served in the House and then moved on to the Senate.

He didn't win every election, but each disappointment only served to make him more determined to make a difference for the people of his State. His statistics are impressive—more than 30 years in Congress, serving under five Presidents, and being a part of both the minority and majority. And all the time, HARRY has found ways to pursue and support agendas to benefit the people of Nevada.

One of my favorite memories will always be the work HARRY, and I did to enable the LDS Church to purchase a site that has a great deal of historic significance to them. The legislation had already passed the House, but was stuck in the Senate as some concerns were raised. HARRY knew what he needed to do to make it possible for the bill to clear the Senate, and together, we figured out a way to make it happen. Today Martin's Cove is a popular site that draws large crowds every year.

This is one of those moments most of us thought would never happen. It seemed like HARRY REID would always be in the Senate. He has not only left a remarkable record, he also seems to be the last of an era. I have no doubt those who will take up his position in the years to come will do a good job and get results, but they will never do it "like HARRY did." He will forever stand as a unique mix of personality, character, history, and background.

Diana joins in sending our best wishes to HARRY and his wife, Landra. Together they have been quite a team and have accomplished a great deal. We didn't always agree on the issues, but one thing can be said: If you had a tough battle before you and you needed someone by your side who wouldn't give up until the battle was won, HARRY was the kind of guy you would want in the fight. If you were on the other side of an issue, you would always prefer someone like HARRY would not be opposing you.

Thank you for your service, HARRY. You have left an example that will inspire and encourage others in the years to come. Whenever faced with an impossible task, people will remember you and realize that with some creativity, determination and an understanding of the rules of the Senate, much can be done.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Mr. President, at the end of each Congress, the Senate takes a moment to express our appreciation and acknowledge the efforts of those Members who will be retiring in just a few weeks. This year one of our colleagues who will be returning home is Senator BARBARA BOXER.

BARBARA will be leaving us after a career of over 30 years in the House and Senate. During her service, she has impressed all those with whom she has worked with the strength of her views, her courage, and her determination to fight for the things in which she truly believes. Regardless of the circumstances that drew her into each legislative battle, she has always held true to the principles that have guided her in her life.

For BARBARA, her early career work as a stockbroker soon found her heading to California with her husband after he had completed his work in law school. She then got interested in politics and became a strong voice for the political views of the people who resided in the area she now called home. Her constituents liked what they heard from BARBARA—and the way she expressed her views on the issues and proposals she wanted to work on.

Her style of speaking soon became her trademark in Congress. She has a convincing way of presenting her case, and that is one reason why it was always good to be on her side. She calls it speaking “extremely candid and straight from the shoulders, and not to be mealy-mouthed or waffle.” Anyone who has had a chance to come to know her—or to tackle an issue either with her or opposed to her—knows how accurate that description is.

Right after the tragedy of 9/11, I joined BARBARA as ranking member of the subcommittee she chaired regarding terrorism financing. I was proud to join her in that work, and I have appreciated the significant role she has played on a number of highway bills, which are important to both of our home states.

Over the years, there have been some other issues that we could discuss and work on with an eye towards compromise. For each of us, however, there were other issues that were of such importance to our constituents it would have been hard for either of us to move too far from the path that we had been following from our early days in politics.

BARBARA and I both have a strong touch of the West in our hearts that we express every day in everything we do. That is why I was not surprised when she mentioned as she spoke about her retirement that she felt that it was time for her to return home—as she said so well—“to the state I love so much, California.”

BARBARA, Diana joins me in sending our congratulations for your hard work and your dedication to your home State. You have left your mark here in Congress, and I think it is safe to say you will not be forgotten. Thanks again for your willingness to serve and work so hard for what you believe in. You have helped to encourage and inspire the next generation of leaders from your State. In that way and so many others, you have made a difference.

TRIBUTE TO MARK KIRK

Mr. President, when the current Congress is brought to a close with the banging of the gavel, several Members will be departing our Senate community. Whatever they will be doing after closing this chapter of their lives, we wish them well and share with them our great appreciation for their willingness to serve and make a difference over the years.

MARK KIRK, one of our current senators from Illinois, has left a mark on the Congress that will not soon be forgotten. He has served with great distinction, and he has made a difference in the Senate.

MARK's time in Washington began when the people of Illinois voted to send him to the House of Representatives. He represented their interests in that Chamber from 2001–2010. In 2010, MARK ran for and won an open Senate seat. When he was sworn in, he brought with him what had earned him the trust and support of the people back home throughout his years in the House—an independent streak and an open mind to everything that drew his interest and captured his attention.

The statistics of the past 6 years bear that out. Whatever came before the Senate gave MARK reason to review each issue considering the best interests of the people of his state. He wasn't always found exclusively on one side of the aisle or the other when it came time to vote.

During his years of service in the Senate, two issues that particularly drew his attention were Iran and the treatment of our Nation's veterans. MARK has been focused on Iran and what our Nation should be doing to ensure that Iran's threat to the Middle East and other nations is minimized. He has been tireless in keeping watch over their potential nuclear program. As chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, MARK has focused on ensuring that those veterans who retired from duty with medical issues have received the care they needed to recover and live better, more healthful lives. This was an interest that stemmed from his service in the Navy Reserve from 1989–2013 and is yet another way for MARK to make a difference in the lives of those who had served our nation.

Before I close, I must recognize the challenge MARK overcame by recovering from a stroke during his Senate service. It was a long and difficult road back to the Senate so he could again represent the people of his home State, but MARK persevered. All told, it took him a year before he was strong enough to return to Washington on a permanent basis.

One moment I will always remember is the day he came back to the Senate, walking the steps with Vice President JOE BIDEN and West Virginia Senator JOE MANCHIN. The courage, determination and step by step success MARK made in achieving another difficult

goal could not have been more clear to those of us who watched him climb the stairs.

The stroke that affected him physically also had an impact on his personal outlook on life. When he was able, he wrote of his experience, “I was once a pessimist. I'm not that man anymore. And that change, brought about by misfortune, is the best thing that ever happened to me.”

I have enjoyed the opportunity to come to know MARK over his Washington years, and I wish he were going to stay with us so we could continue to follow his life as he works on his goals, dreams, ambitions, and efforts to keep us safe.

MARK, Diana joins me in sending our best wishes and our appreciation for your willingness to serve. You have a record of which you should be very proud—just as proud as we are of you. You leave having made a difference far beyond your years of service.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. President, at the end of each Congress, it is a tradition for the Senate to pause for a moment to acknowledge and express our appreciation for the service of each Senator who will not be returning for the next session. One of those we will miss next year will be KELLY AYOTTE of New Hampshire.

During the past 6 years, those of us who had a chance to come to know and work with KELLY have been impressed with her dedication to the people of her home State, her involvement with the issues of concern to them, and her willingness to work with members on both sides of the aisle to find solutions to the problems and concerns of the people of New Hampshire and America.

There were at least three key steps that brought KELLY to the Senate after she earned her law degree from Villanova. First, she spent a year clerking for the New Hampshire Supreme Court. Then she spent the next part of her career in private practice. The third step brought her into the State attorney general's office and then on to serve as New Hampshire's attorney general. When Senator Judd Gregg announced his retirement, KELLY knew the time was right for her to pursue another goal. She decided to run for the Senate.

It wasn't easy, but those who doubted her underestimated KELLY's innate political sense and her ability to reach the people of New Hampshire. In the end she brought about a closely fought but well-earned victory in the primary and a big win in the general election.

KELLY came to Washington in 2010 and started working right away on a number of issues that she knew were a concern to the people back home. She made it clear that she would fight for what was best for the people of her home State and worked hard on national security, veterans issues, health care, and substance abuse. She has also been a tireless advocate and an outstanding partner for me on the Budget Committee.

I am sad to see KELLY leave the Senate at the end of this year, but if her past is any indication of her future, I think she will make good use of her talents, abilities, background, knowledge, and experience in her future endeavors. I hope it is in some part of our government. There is no doubt that we need good people like KELLY to make this a better country for us all.

I have a prediction to make about her future—we haven't seen the last of KELLY AYOTTE. She has a lot more to give, and I think we are all looking forward to seeing it.

KELLY, Diana joins me in sending our best wishes to you and your family, and our appreciation for your willingness to serve New Hampshire and the Nation. There are countless sayings about how politics isn't for anyone but the brave and the resilient. I think your experience, especially this past year, has shown that you are more than tough enough for any career challenge. Good luck in whatever you choose to do next. Clearly, you specialize in making the world a better place and that is a win/win for us all—especially our children and grandchildren.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID VITTER

Mr. President, each year at the end of the Congress, it has been a tradition for the Senate to pause for a moment to express our appreciation for the service of those Members who will be retiring. One of those who will be leaving this year is DAVID VITTER.

DAVID will be a loss for my party's membership in the next Congress because he was a hard worker and we could always count on him for his support of our conservative positions. Simply put, he made the most of the terms he served and made an important difference on a number of issues.

Over the years, DAVID would study each bill in Committee and on the floor carefully to determine how those who would fall under its provisions would be affected. He had a good sense of what needed to be strengthened or tweaked to make legislation more effective and less costly. The people of Louisiana and the Nation have had a friend in him, and they greatly appreciated how well he looked out for them.

One issue that drew DAVID's and my attention was Obamacare. We both had a lot of concerns about how it would work and whether or not it would provide the kind of care its supporters promised. That is one of the reasons why I hate to see him leave. We have a lot of work to do on health care, and DAVID would have been someone who could help with the heavy lifting.

DAVID also chaired the Small Business Committee in this Congress and was able to put forward some ideas to preserve jobs and businesses. I have been proud to work with him in that effort.

In short, Senator VITTER has had a remarkable career and has done his best to serve the people of his State and champion the issues that were of importance to them.

Now DAVID has decided to end his Senate career and take on some new challenges. I have no doubt that his skills and his background will lead him down a new path to help the people of Louisiana. I wish him well and look forward to seeing what he will do.

DAVID, Diana joins me in sending our best wishes and our appreciation for your service, as well as that of your family. Together with Wendy, you were able to make a difference that will last for a long time in the Senate and in Louisiana. It is good to know you won't be far away and we can get in touch with you whenever we need your advice.

TRIBUTE TO VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the service of a former colleague and our current Vice President, JOE BIDEN.

JOE was born in Pennsylvania, but moved with his family to Delaware when he was 13. He left Delaware for brief stints at St. Helena School and Syracuse University Law School, but he has always returned to Delaware, including the daily trips he made home during his Senate career and the regular trips he makes home to this day.

Because of his devotion to Delaware, JOE quickly got his start in politics, first on the New Castle County Council and then in the U.S. Senate, where he became the fifth-youngest U.S. Senator in history in 1972. He also has the distinction of being Delaware's longest serving Senator.

I worked with JOE on many different issues during his time in the Senate and served on the Foreign Relations Committee when he was our Chairman. JOE is known as a foreign affairs expert, and he has many reasons to be proud of the work he's done in that area. One of those things that we worked on together was the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

I remember being at the 2003 State of the Union speech when President Bush said, "We're going to put \$15 billion into an AIDS effort." That shocked all of us who were there. It was a lot of money. But we worked together to develop a bill that passed the House and Senate unanimously.

JOE managed the floor when we reauthorized that program in 2008, and we worked with Senators Coburn, BURR, and Lugar to develop that reauthorization. At the time, JOE suggested historians will regard PEPFAR as President Bush's "single finest hour," and I tend to agree. A few years ago, I visited the Kasisi Orphanage in Zambia. We were told that before PEPFAR, they had to bury 18 kids a month that died of AIDS, but because of PEPFAR, they got that down to one a month. I know JOE shares my pride in the difference that program is making.

We were all a little sad to see JOE move to the White House in 2009, when he became our 47th Vice President. Lucky for us, he has been able to keep his ties to the Senate in his role as President of this body, and I think he

has been one of our best partners in the administration.

All of us were glad to be able to honor JOE and his son, Beau Biden, by naming the cancer section of 21st Century Cures Act after Beau. I expect JOE will continue to be a voice for ending cancer, and I hope to work with him towards that cause.

JOE, Diana and I send our best to you, Jill and your family. You have served the people of Delaware and the people of the United States with distinction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine

SENIORS&SAFE ACT

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, at the end of a Congress, we all know how easy it is for just one Senator to block a bill. I rise today to express my great disappointment that we have been unable to overcome objections from just one Senator from the other side of the aisle who is blocking the passage of legislation called the SeniorSafe Act that is designed to help protect our seniors from financial fraud and exploitation. This is a bill I introduced with my colleague, Senator CLAIRE McCASKILL, as a result of extensive hearings and investigations that we have conducted in the Senate Aging Committee. A companion bill passed the House on a voice vote.

Nationally, as many as 5 million seniors may be victims of financial abuse annually. Stopping this tsunami of fraud has been one of the top priorities of the Senate Aging Committee.

In the many hearings we have held on this issue, what we found is that scammers seek to gain the trust and active cooperation of their victims, who are usually older Americans. Without that trust and cooperation, their schemes would fail. Unfortunately, seniors often do not see the red flags that signal that fraud is likely involved in these sophisticated schemes. Sometimes seniors are simply too nice, too trusting. In other sad cases, they may suffer from diminished capacity. But just as often, they miss these flags because the swindlers who prey upon them are extremely crafty and they know how to sound convincing. Any of us who have received these calls at home know how persuasive and persistent these con artists can be.

Whatever the reason, a warning sign that can slip by a victim might trigger a second look by a financial services representative who is trained to spot common scams and who knows enough about a senior's habits to question a transaction that just doesn't look right. In our work on the Senate Aging Committee, we have heard of so many cases where an alert bank teller or credit union employee on the frontlines has stopped a financial fraud in its tracks, saving seniors untold thousands of dollars. In fact, the Government Accountability Office estimates that our seniors lose an astonishing \$2.9 billion a year to this kind of fraud,

and that is probably the tip of the iceberg because many times this fraud is never reported.

I will give an example. Earlier this year, an attorney in the small coastal city of Belfast, ME, was sentenced to 30 months in prison for bilking two older female clients out of nearly half a million dollars over the course of several years. The lawyer's brazen theft was uncovered when a local bank teller noticed that he was writing large checks to himself from his clients' accounts. When confronted by authorities, he offered excuses that the prosecutor later described as "breathtaking." For example, he put one of his clients into a nursing home to recover from a temporary medical condition and then managed to keep her there for 4 years until the theft of her funds came to light. In the meantime, he submitted bills for services, sometimes totaling \$20,000 a month, including charging her \$250 per hour for 6 to 7 hours to check on her house, which was a 1-minute drive from his office.

Financial institutions are in a critical position to check these fraudsters. If properly trained, employees can be the first line of defense. Regrettably, certain laws can inadvertently impede efforts to protect seniors because financial institutions that report suspected fraud can be exposed to lawsuits. Our bill, the SeniorSafe Act, encourages financial institutions to train their employees and shields them from lawsuits for making good-faith, reasonable reports of potential fraud to the proper authorities.

As Jaye Martin, the head of Maine Legal Services for the Elderly, put it in a letter describing her support for the Collins-McCaskill bill, "In a landscape that includes family members who often wish to keep exploitation from coming to light because they are perpetrating the exploitation, the risk of facing potential nuisance or false complaints over privacy violations is all too real."

This is a barrier that must be removed so that financial institutions will act immediately to make a report to the proper authorities upon forming a reasonable belief that exploitation is occurring. These professionals are on the frontlines in the fight against elder financial exploitation and are often the only ones in a position to stop the exploitation before it is too late.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the full letter from Ms. Martin immediately following my remarks.

Our bipartisan bill is based on the State of Maine's innovative SeniorSafe Program. It has been a collaborative effort by my State's regulators, financial institutions, and legal organizations to educate bank and credit union employees on how to identify and help stop the exploitation of older Mainers. It was pioneered by Maine's securities administrator, Judith Shaw, and it has led to a significant increase in reports of suspected senior financial exploitation and fraud.

The Maine program also serves as a template for model legislation developed for adoption by the North American Securities Administrators Administration, which is known as NASAA. The SeniorSafe Act and this model State legislation are complementary efforts, and I am very pleased that the association of securities administrators has endorsed our bill.

As I mentioned, the House Financial Services Committee approved our companion bill by a vote of 59 to 0 in June, and it passed the House by a voice vote in July. The Senate bill is sponsored by a quarter of the Members of this body, balanced nearly evenly on both sides of the aisle, and has the support of a wide range of stakeholders looking out for the interests of consumers, including the securities administrators whom I have already mentioned, the Conference of State Bank Supervisors, and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. These are all regulators who are looking out for our consumers.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD these letters of endorsement immediately following my remarks.

Under our bill, liability protections are only provided for good-faith, reasonable reports of suspected fraud.

The legal obstacles facing financial institutions that report this kind of suspected fraud and abuse are not limited to just privacy laws because these institutions have also been threatened with claims such as breach of contract, bad faith, slander, unfair practices, and even harassment. As one compliance officer for one of my community banks put it, without this kind of immunity for good-faith reporting, small community banks will face the "freeze effect" and won't make reports that could help to protect our seniors; thus, "the effectiveness of SeniorSafe will be undercut."

I just cannot believe we cannot clear this commonsense bill for the President's signature when it would help so many seniors avoid becoming the victims of financial fraud and abuse, when it is supported by groups like Maine Legal Services for the Elderly, when it has won the support of national organizations of State securities administrators, State insurance commissioners, State bank regulators, when it would make such a difference.

Sadly, because of the objections of just one Senator on the other side of the aisle, we are stymied. That means we will have to start all over again next year. Much needed help for our seniors—that could help them avoid being swindled out of what GAO estimates is almost \$3 billion a year—will have to wait for another day. I just don't understand it.

I have made many good-faith efforts in this regard, but regrettably, because we are at the end of the session, we don't have the time to go through all of the procedural steps that would be needed to pass this bill, which I am

sure, given its broad bipartisan support, would pass overwhelmingly. I hope the Senator in question will reconsider and allow us to send this important bill to the President for his signature.

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

LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY,
FREE LEGAL HELP FOR MAINE'S
SENIORS,

December 5, 2016.

Re SeniorSafe (S. 2216).

Senator SUSAN COLLINS,
Chair, Senate Special Committee on Aging,
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: I want to thank you for inviting me to speak with the Senate Special Committee on Aging about the serious problem of financial exploitation of seniors by guardians and others in a position of power. I also want to thank you for your leadership in working to ensure there is training of financial institution employees in reporting elder abuse and an improvement in the timely reporting of financial exploitation when it is suspected through passage of the SeniorSafe Act. I strongly support this legislation that is based upon work done here in Maine.

I served for over two years on the working group that developed Maine's SeniorSafe training program for financial institution managers and employees. It is a voluntary training program. Through that work I came to fully appreciate the very real concerns of the financial industry regarding the consequences of violating, or being perceived as violating, the broad range of state and federal privacy laws that apply to their industry. I also came to appreciate that absent broad immunity for reporting of suspected financial exploitation, privacy regulations would continue to be a barrier to good faith reporting of suspected financial exploitation. In a landscape that includes family members who often wish to keep exploitation from coming to light because they are perpetrating the exploitation, the risk of facing potential nuisance or false complaints over privacy violations is all too real.

This is a barrier that must be removed so that financial institution employees will act immediately to make a report to the proper authorities upon forming a reasonable belief that exploitation is occurring. These professionals are on the front lines in the light against elder financial exploitation and are often the only ones in a position to stop exploitation before it is too late.

I want to add that tying the grant of immunity to required training for not just supervisors, compliance officers, and legal advisors, but to all who come in contact with seniors as a part of their regular duties, will have the direct result of bringing more cases of exploitation to the timely attention of the proper authorities because it will significantly increase the knowledge and awareness in the industry of the red flags for elder abuse. In Maine, where our training program is entirely voluntary and carries no legal status or benefit, we have already seen what a difference training can make.

SeniorSafe is a much needed step in the fight against financial exploitation of seniors and there is no doubt it will make our nation's seniors safer. I thank you again for your leadership in this important area.

Sincerely,

JAYE L. MARTIN,
Executive Director.

NORTH AMERICAN SECURITIES
ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION, INC.,
Washington, DC, October 27, 2015.

Re the SeniorSafe Act of 2015.

Senator SUSAN COLLINS,
Chairman, Senate Special Committee on Aging,
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Wash-
ington, DC.

Senator CLAIRE McCASKILL,
Ranking Member, Senate Special Committee on
Aging, Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COLLINS AND RANKING
MEMBER McCASKILL: On behalf of the North
American Securities Administrators Asso-
ciation ("NASAA"), I'm writing to express
strong support for your work to better pro-
tect vulnerable adults from financial exploi-
tation through the introduction of the
SeniorSafe Act of 2015. Your legislation will
better protect seniors by increasing the like-
lihood that financial exploitation targeting
the elderly will be identified by financial
services professionals, and by removing bar-
riers that might otherwise frustrate the re-
porting of such exploitation to state securi-
ties regulators and other appropriate govern-
mental authorities.

Senior financial exploitation is a difficult
but critical policy challenge. Many in our
elderly population are vulnerable due to social
isolation and distance from family, care-
giver, and other support networks. Indeed,
evidence suggests that as many as one out of
every five citizens over the age of 65 has been
victimized by a financial fraud. To be suc-
cessful in combating senior financial exploi-
tation, state and federal policymakers must
come together to weave a new safety net for
our elderly, breaking down barriers to iden-
tify those who are best positioned to identify
red flags early on and to encourage reporting
and referrals to appropriate local, county,
state, and federal agencies, including law en-
forcement.

As you know, state securities regulators,
working within the framework of NASAA,
are in the late-stages of our own concerted
effort to bolster protections for elderly in-
vestors at risk of exploitation, including
through the development of model legisla-
tion to be enacted by states to promote re-
porting of suspected exploitation. While the
approaches contemplated by the recently an-
nounced NASAA model legislation and the
SeniorSafe Act differ in some respects, they
are complementary efforts, both undertaken
with the shared goal of protecting seniors by
increasing the detection and reporting of el-
derly financial exploitation.

The SeniorSafe Act consists of several es-
sential features. First, to promote and en-
courage reporting of suspected elderly finan-
cial exploitation by financial services profes-
sionals, who are positioned to identify and
report "red flags" of potential exploitation,
the bill would incentivize financial services
employees to report any suspected exploi-
tation by making them immune from any
civil or administrative liability arising from
such a report, provided that they exercised
due care, and that they make these reports
in good faith. Second, in order to better as-
sure that financial services employees have
the knowledge and training they require to
identify "red flags" associated with financial
exploitation, the bill would require that, as a
condition of receiving immunity, financial
institutions undertake to train certain per-
sonnel regarding the identification and re-
porting of senior financial exploitation as
soon as practicable, or within one year.
Under the bill, employees who would be re-
quired to receive such training as a condi-
tion of immunity include supervisory per-
sonnel; employees who come into contact
with a senior citizen as a regular part of

their duties; and employees who review or
approve the financial documents, records, or
transactions of senior citizens as a part of
their regular duties.

The benefits of the types of reporting that
the SeniorSafe Act aims to facilitate and en-
courage are far-reaching. Elderly Americans
stand to benefit directly from such report-
ing, because early detection and reporting
can minimize their financial losses from ex-
ploitation, and because improved protection
of their finances ultimately helps preserve
their financial independence and their per-
sonal autonomy. Financial institutions
stand to benefit, as well, through preserva-
tion of their reputation, increased commu-
nity recognition, increased employee satis-
faction, and decreased uninsured losses.

In conclusion, state securities regulators
congratulate you for introducing the
SeniorSafe Act of 2015. We share and support
the goals of this legislation, and look for-
ward to working closely with you as the leg-
islation is considered by the Senate.

Sincerely,

JUDITH M. SHAW,
NASAA President and Maine
Securities Administrator.

NAIC & THE CENTER FOR
INSURANCE POLICY AND RESEARCH,
September 14, 2016.

Re Senior Safe Act.

Chairman SUSAN M. COLLINS,
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, Dir-
ksen Senate Office Building, Washington,
DC.

Ranking Member CLAIRE McCASKILL,
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, Hart
Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COLLINS AND RANKING
MEMBER McCASKILL: On behalf of the Na-
tional Association of Insurance Commis-
sioners (NAIC), which represents the chief
insurance regulators from the 50 states, the
District of Columbia, and five U.S. terri-
tories, we write to express our support for
the Senior Safe Act and applaud you for your
leadership to increase identification and re-
porting of suspected senior financial exploi-
tation.

It is estimated that older adults in our
country lose \$2.9 billion annually from finan-
cial exploitation, and these losses can result
in a diminished quality of life for those who
fall victim to such exploitation. State insur-
ance regulators share your commitment to
protecting seniors from financial exploi-
tation. State and federal officials entrusted
with the responsibility of protecting con-
sumers must remain vigilant in their over-
sight. That is why a key component of the
NAIC's Retirement Security Initiative is en-
suring consumers have clarity and trans-
parency into the insurance products they are
being offered, that the products are suitable
for their needs, and that bad actors do not
undermine efforts to address lifetime income
and retirement security challenges. We look
forward to continuing to work with you and
your committee on these important issues.

Thank you again for your efforts to com-
bat financial exploitation of seniors.

Sincerely,

JOHN M. HUFF,
NAIC President, Direc-
tor, Missouri De-
partment of Insur-
ance, Financial In-
stitutions and Pro-
fessional Registration.

THEODORE K. NICKEL,
NAIC President-Elect,
Commissioner, Wis-
consin Department
of Insurance.

JULIE MIX MCPHEAK,
NAIC Vice President,
Commissioner, Ten-
nessee Department
of Commerce and In-
surance.

ERIC A. CIOPPA,
NAIC Secretary-Treas-
urer, Super-
intendent, Maine
Department of Pro-
fessional and Finan-
cial Regulation, Bu-
reau of Insurance.

CONFERENCE OF STATE
BANK SUPERVISORS,
April 29, 2016.

Senator SUSAN COLLINS,
Chairwoman, Senate Special Committee on
Aging, Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Senator CLAIRE McCASKILL,
Ranking Member, Senate Special Committee on
Aging, Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN COLLINS AND RANKING
MEMBER McCASKILL: On behalf of the Con-
ference of State Bank Supervisors (CSBS), I
write to express strong support for S. 2216,
the SeniorSafe Act of 2015. State regulators
are committed to combatting financial abuse
of elderly residents and believe that S. 2216
recognizes the contribution of states while
empowering institutions to reduce financial
exploitation of the elderly.

State regulators supervise a diverse credit
ecosystem, are locally-focused, and have a
unique insight on the consequences of abu-
sive practices in their communities. State
banking regulators supervise approximately
4,850 state-chartered depository institutions,
representing over 75% of our nation's banks.
Additionally, most state banking depart-
ments regulate a variety of non-bank finan-
cial services providers, including mortgage
lenders.

Since the 1980s, several states have enacted
laws to address the abuse, neglect, and finan-
cial exploitation of their elderly residents.
These state laws provide immunity for finan-
cial service professionals to report abuse in
good faith, contain penalties for failing to
report or making false reports of elder abuse,
and combat power of attorney abuse. S. 2216
recognizes the important work of states and
creates a consumer protection floor upon
which states can build.

Financial services professionals are in a
position of trust and have a unique window
into the financial condition of seniors. Their
expertise and vantage point should be lever-
aged to forcefully combat the growing epi-
demic of elder abuse.

The SeniorSafe Act incentivizes financial
services employees to report any suspected
exploitation by making them immune from
any civil or administrative liability arising
from such a report, provided they exercised
due care and reported in good faith. Addi-
tionally, to ensure financial services per-
sonnel have the requisite expertise, the bill
requires, as a condition of receiving immu-
nity, that financial institutions train key
personnel regarding the identification and
reporting of senior financial exploitation as
soon as practicable.

Early detection is key to combatting elder
financial abuse. Not only can it minimize
losses, but it may be able to prevent abuses
from occurring in the first place. Moreover,
this bill can deepen the involvement of fi-
nancial institutions in their community, en-
hance the training of financial services per-
sonnel, and reduce insured losses.

In sum, CSBS strongly supports S. 2216 and looks forward to working with you as the Senate considers this legislation.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. RYAN,
President and CEO.

Ms. COLLINS. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Senator LEAHY and I are on the floor for the same issue. I defer to Senator LEAHY if he prefers to go first.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAM

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have been here on the floor before, joined by Senator GRASSLEY, to share my frustration with the EB-5 Regional Center Program. Senator GRASSLEY and I have been working for years to improve this flawed program that is set to expire tomorrow, but, once again, unfortunately, the congressional leadership on the other side has rejected our bipartisan reforms and the program will be extended in the continuing resolution.

We have done this in a way, as has been pointed out, as a Republican and as a Democrat—two of the most senior Members of this body—who have introduced real reforms, but time and again leadership has caved behind closed doors to narrow corporate interests. I believe that is a serious mistake.

The EB-5 Program I once championed seems like a distant memory. The program was designed to bring jobs to underserved rural and distressed urban communities. For some time, it did just that. Communities in Vermont, like Warren and Vergennes, once used EB-5 to create and save jobs during difficult economic times, but that is EB-5 of yesterday.

Today EB-5 is mired in fraud and abuse. It suffers from obvious and outrageous flaws. It is a magnet for fraud, security violations are rampant, and the incentives Congress created to promote investment and create jobs in rural and high unemployment areas—the sole reason I championed the program—have been rendered obsolete through economic gerrymandering.

Only 3 percent of EB-5 investors now invest in rural areas—3 percent. The distinguished senior Senator from Iowa and I understand what a rural area is, and they are not being served. Less than 10 percent invest in true high unemployment areas. Almost every other EB-5 project uses gerrymandering to qualify as distressed, despite many being located in the most affluent areas of the country. The fact that a luxury hotel in Beverly Hills can use gerrymandering to claim it is located in a distressed community is troubling. Beverly Hills is not rural Iowa or rural Vermont, but the fact that this type of abuse now represents almost 90 percent of the entire EB-5 Program is appalling.

Anyone who maintains that today's EB-5 Program is about creating jobs is either a lobbyist for the real estate in-

dustry or is simply not paying attention. An untold number of the luxury developments that now dominate EB-5 would be pursued even if you did not have EB-5 financing. Financing provided through EB-5 represents a small portion of the capital stack. To claim that EB-5 is responsible for all of these jobs is a farce. EB-5 merely allows developers to replace their conventional financing with dirt cheap capital subsidized by the sale of U.S. visas.

It is not just exploited by wealthy American developers. Chinese developers, and even the Chinese Government itself, are now exploiting the EB-5 subsidy. That is beyond troubling when a foreign government is permitted to earn tens of millions of dollars through the sale of U.S. visas.

The proposal I developed with Senator GRASSLEY would address this. It would require background checks. It would require third-party oversight of funds. It would create protections for defrauded investors. It would ban foreign government ownership of an EB-5 company. It would end gerrymandering and provide modest incentives to direct a small portion of investment to underserved areas—just 15 percent to both rural and urban poor communities—but even this was too much for some developers and some lobbyists.

Gluttonous, shortsighted corporate greed blocked these critical reforms, greed that was given a voice by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Unfortunately, the leadership has allowed a couple of powerful developers to exploit this program's flaws to derail critical reforms. I find it shameful that the worst abusers of this program have been given, by some in Congress, veto power over its reform.

I commend Secretary Johnson and his efforts to improve EB-5. I commend his efforts to change the rules to address fraud, inadequate investment levels, and the abuse of development incentives.

I will work with the chairmen of the Senate and House Judiciary Committees and the next Secretary of Homeland Security to get these reforms implemented and enforced, but the EB-5 regional Senate program no longer serves the American people's interests. It certainly does not serve the rural and urban poor communities as Congress intended.

Next year, I will be the vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and I will continue to press for broad bipartisan reform. I know Senator GRASSLEY and Senator FEINSTEIN, the incoming ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, will not sit idly by either.

If EB-5 cannot be reformed due to the paralysis of leadership, it is very simple. If it cannot be reformed, then let us end EB-5.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I heard my friend and colleague Senator

LEAHY express his opposition, and opposition that I share, to the EB-5 Regional Center Program. I am here for the same purpose, to express the same opposition to the EB-5 Regional Center Program that was extended without reforms. One year ago, we made similar statements. I could easily read the same statement I gave at that time and it would be just as relevant today. We are very disappointed that reforms were not included in the continuing resolution, which simply extended this very flawed immigration program.

The EB-5 Regional Center Program has been plagued by fraud and abuse. It poses significant national security risks. There are serious allegations that the program may be facilitating terrorist travel, economic espionage, money laundering, and investment fraud. Yet considering all of those things, the continuing resolution before us fails to include much needed reforms.

So after a year, we have yet another missed opportunity. The chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees have agreed on a package of reforms. We have worked in a bipartisan and bicameral fashion. We have agreed—all four of us—on every aspect. We instituted compliance measures, we instituted background checks, and we instituted transparency provisions. We made sure rural and distressed urban areas benefited from the program, as Congress already intended and as Senator LEAHY very clearly laid out the problems.

Despite the bipartisan support, not a single one of our recommendations will be implemented. Instead of reforming the program, we will have the status quo. The status quo means the following:

Investments can be spent before business plans are approved.

Regional Center operators can charge excessive fees of foreign nationals in addition to their required investments.

None of the jobs created have to be “direct” or verifiable jobs, but rather they are “indirect” and based on estimates, not knowing for sure if there are jobs created or based upon economic modeling—again, not knowing for sure if jobs are created.

Investment funds are not adequately vetted.

Gifts and loans from anyone are acceptable sources of funds from foreign nationals.

There is no prohibition against foreign governments owning and operating regional centers or projects.

Regional centers can be rented or sold without government oversight or approval.

Regional centers don't have to certify that they comply with securities laws. There is no set of sanctions for any violations—in other words, no recourse for the bad actors.

There are no required background checks on anyone associated with these regional centers. The investment level is lower than Congress ever intended.

Gerrymandering continues, and rural and urban distressed areas then lose out.

Site visits or even audits are not required.

There is no transparency on how funds are spent, who is paid, and what investors are told about the projects they are investing in.

The preferential treatment we have seen in the past is enabled without a strict code of conduct rules.

Those are just some of the things that are wrong.

The four of us on the two committees, in a bicameral and bipartisan way, tried to address awareness and have a process for dialogue leading to reform. My committee held two hearings this year. The House held one. Staff met with very interested stakeholders who asked for and we offered more concessions than we did last year. To top it off, we were ready to provide a 6-year reauthorization. This would have provided long-term stability for investors and regional centers.

But let's talk about why this package was not acceptable to some, most notably, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which was the most rigid in not compromising. Here is a list of issues raised by this leading voice of business in opposition to our package.

They want, in effect, one investment level. They don't want any meaningful discount for rural or urban distressed areas. Don't forget that this law was passed 20 years ago to help rural and high-unemployment areas. That is the purpose of it.

They don't want visas set aside for areas that Congress selected as targeted employment areas for fear that investors in affluent areas would have to wait slightly longer for a visa.

They didn't want to incentivize foreign investors to fund manufacturing projects that create long-term, sustainable, and real jobs that this country desperately needs.

They wanted to make it harder for rural areas to qualify at a discount investment level, even though it is common knowledge that small and rural communities have a harder time attracting capital.

They wanted certifications and compliance measures to be delegated to the agency. They did not want Congress to dictate transparencies and reporting requirements.

We must remember that our job is to legislate, not to delegate. Delegating authority to the executive branch on this program would result in more of the same, because even by the departments in charge, there is very little oversight and monitoring now, even if it might be required by law. But not enough of it is required by law. That is why they get away with all this stuff.

The Chamber of Commerce didn't like a provision saying a foreign national had to be 18 years old to invest and obtain a green card through the program. They would like children as young as 14 to be able to make these

major financial decisions and invest up to \$1 million—a 14-year-old, to do that.

They wanted restrictions on where investor funds came from lifted. Our package limited a foreign national from taking out a questionable loan or taking gifts from unknown sources. One way to find out what is wrong is to follow the money. We wanted to be sure that those investing were doing so because they obtained funds lawfully. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce wanted no such restrictions.

They wanted foreign governments and even sovereign wealth funds to own EB-5 projects. They wanted to delay rules saying foreign governments could not own or administer regional centers by requiring bureaucratic rulemaking. Despite the changes we made this year on this very strict provision, they continued to want to water it down in every negotiating session we had.

They didn't want regional centers to have to consult with local officials about EB-5 projects to ensure that economic development efforts were coordinated.

They wanted to do away with a requirement that a foreign investor would have to create at least one direct job before obtaining a green card. Now, here we have a situation where a program was instituted 25 years ago to create jobs—particularly in rural America and high unemployment areas—and they don't even want the investors to show that they are going to create at least one job right now.

Then they used economic modeling to show indirect jobs. Neither the existence of those jobs nor the location of those jobs can truly be verified. When you have the Federal Government setting up a program like this that is supposed to create jobs in rural areas and high unemployment areas, wouldn't you think there ought to be a way of showing that those jobs are actually created?

They raise new concerns about provisions that have been discussed way back since last June, such as requiring regional centers to pay a fee to an enforcement and monitoring fund.

They wanted a 3-day notification of a site visit by the agency to determine if the regional center truly exists. Sure, tell the inspectors you are coming so you can get everything in order before the inspectors get there.

They fought efforts to require transparency of how investor funds were used. Now, this is a major problem of the existing program. Nearly every story of fraud relates to how regional center operators use EB-5 funds for their own personal gain and luxury.

This program is meant to create jobs, not to help individuals in charge of the program have personal gain and, more importantly, even the luxury that might go with that.

But the kicker in all of this is that these business interests insist on more visas and to make those visas even cheaper. They want Congress to increase immigration numbers through

controversial recapture mechanisms or by exempting certain people from the annual cap. The pro-EB-5 groups want more visas for an already faulty program, which makes more money and puts more money in their pockets.

On top of that, they asked us to make the visas cheaper than it is even under current law. I, of course, refused to do that. I refuse to go below the \$1 million level that has been in law since 1990. The demand for visas is there. There is no justification to further cheapen this program and the green cards that come with that program.

We will have 5 months until we are faced with another reauthorization because that is how far this continuing resolution goes. In those 5 months, I expect that proposed rules changing the investment level and stopping gerrymandering will be published by the end of the year by the Obama administration, and I will support those proposed rules. I will be asking the new Trump administration to keep those new regulations and build off them.

In regard to the new administration coming in, they took a very strong position on various immigration issues. In taking that position, I would expect them to consider very closely the fraud and misuse of the EB-5 Program. When this administration sees things wrong with it and they correct those things that are wrong with it through regulation, those are regulations that should be backed up very solidly by the new administration coming in.

Next year, we will have to start over again. So as we heard Senator LEAHY speak about this—and we know his feelings and mine are very similar; I have already referred to the House Judiciary Committee—we will continue to work in a bipartisan and bicameral way to ensure this program.

Now, I want to speak about the new ranking member, Senator FEINSTEIN. I intend to continue this work as closely with her as I did with Ranking Member LEAHY, and Ranking Member LEAHY will still be involved in this process. I want to point out that she is not a fan of this program at all, and she has been very vocal about closing this program down because of all the fault we find with it, whether it is fraud, whether it is misuse of the program, whether it is possible terrorist activity taking advantage of it, or whatever it is for national security reasons—all of those. Some of these have been pointed out by law enforcement agencies at the Federal level.

So I want everybody to know that change is coming. I have always wanted to reform the program, but I am not sure that the industry will ever come around. The leadership of this body and the other body could help by ending this program in a continuing resolution. Let it sunset, and let all these people come to the table with a more compromising point of view to correct everything that is wrong here. But the industry loves the status quo and, of course, they love the billions of dollars

that pour into affluent areas. Consequently, the money is not directed where it was intended to in 1990, when this legislation was passed, which was to rural areas and high unemployment areas.

I am not sure, with the attitude of the industry, that reforms are possible. So just leaning on Senator FEINSTEIN a little bit and considering her point of view, it may be time to do away with the program completely.

I said that same thing a year ago, and I repeat: Maybe we should spend our time, our resources, and our efforts in other programs that benefit the American people as opposed to benefiting the well-healed and the well-connected. Maybe it is time this program goes away.

I yield the floor and thank Senator LEAHY for his speaking on it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

REMEMBERING JOHN GLENN

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, it is my sad duty to announce the passing of John Glenn.

John Glenn was one of the original seven astronauts of this country. All of them were characterized as having the right stuff, and if you knew any of them, that was certainly true.

John Glenn was not only a pioneering astronaut and a great Senator, he was a first-class gentleman as well as a devoted husband and father.

He leaves behind Annie, his beloved, who always stood with him as he ventured into the unknown cosmos, and it was unknown because John was the first to go into orbit as an American. He paved the way for all the rest of us.

At his passing, America is in the planning and the developing of the rockets that will take us, a human species, all the way to Mars. John Glenn was the pioneer. He was the one who paved the way.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was a little bit delayed getting to the floor this afternoon because I was in tears, literally, when I heard the news about John. I think of my last long conversation with him just a few weeks ago. I will speak more on the floor about him later.

I came to the Senate with John Glenn. I enjoyed traveling with him, with the anonymity it gave me when people said: there is Colonel Glenn. It was not Senator Glenn, it was Colonel Glenn, even after having been sworn in. We traveled, he and Annie, Marcelle and I, all over the world, but the time I remember the most was the weekend we spent at our old farmhouse in Vermont because they wanted to see the foliage.

We used a seaplane and went flying around, landing in little ponds; taking off, then landing in another one. We went to a trappers convention where everybody was saying, "It is Colonel

Glenn and some bald guy with him," and that was me, of course. We went there and then flew back to Montpelier where Marcelle and Annie had been traveling around. John landed the plane in a stiff crosswind. Of course, the pontoons did not help. He had to bring it in sideways. I did not worry. It was John Glenn. Then he turned to me with a big wink and said: I have never been so frightened flying anything in my life. I do not think John ever was frightened at anything, but my heart did stop.

I will speak more about him on the floor, and I appreciate my friend from Iowa yielding so I could speak.

John was one of the best people I ever served with. When I speak of what it was like coming here as a brand new Senator, every time I am asked about that, I talk about the fact that I came here and was sworn in with John Glenn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, it is my understanding that I was going to go next. But my distinguished colleague from West Virginia has important visitors—miners, who help fuel our country. So I ask unanimous consent that after he is recognized, I be recognized immediately thereafter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.
The Senator from West Virginia.

MINERS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, let me say to my dear friend from New Jersey, I appreciate his support so much. He has been right with me from day one, basically for the working men and women of this country but, most importantly, for the miners who have given us the country we have had today.

I have been doing this for quite some time now. It is nothing new. This is not new to anybody. This has not been sprung on somebody at the last minute, what we are fighting for and what we are trying to do.

As of October, we had over 16,000 of our retired miners and a lot of elderly women—widows whose husbands have passed away—who were notified they would be losing their health care benefits December 31 of this year. We have been working for a permanent fix called the Miners Protection Act, and if that bill were brought to the floor today, it would pass. We have all of the Democratic caucus—all 46 of us—and we have at least 15 who have committed to voting for it from our Republican colleagues, but that is not to be. That is not going to happen.

We have been working everything we can. We have gone through regular order. That means it has been to the Finance Committee. It has gone through and been debated and vetted, and it came out of there with an 18-to-8 vote—very strong in a bipartisan way.

Now what do we do? We are not going to get a vote on the floor. We thought,

well, let's attach it. The Cures Act came over, and it is a health care act. It was germane to that bill, and it should fit in perfectly. They said, no, we can't put it in there.

The only thing we have left is what we are doing now, a CR. This is something I have never done. I have been here 6 years and have never used this procedure to say: Wait a minute. If we don't stand for the people who have fought, worked, and died for us and basically given us the country we have—we have won two wars with the domestic energy that has been mined right here in America, an awful lot of it in West Virginia, I might add. We have the strongest country in the world. We are a superpower. That would never have happened. We would never have the military might we have today. We would never have the middle class we have. We just wouldn't have the quality of life we have in America if had not been for the domestic energy our miners have given us.

What we are asking for and all they are saying is this is a promise that was made in 1946 that President Truman said: Listen, we are going to commit to you that every ton of coal mined from this day forward and the coal companies you work for, we are putting money aside to make sure you have lifetime benefits for health care and for your pension.

These are not big, elaborate pension plans. They are very small. They are subsidies, if you will. The health care has been so very important to many people. This has been going on for quite some time, and we have been involved many times. Yes, the Federal Government has been involved to make sure the companies put that money aside so they would have their health care and their pensions.

Then, lo and behold, Congress basically passed bankruptcy laws that let people walk away from their obligations through bankruptcy. Now the promises were made and the promises that were kept by Congress were done away with through the bankruptcy laws that were so lenient that people could declare bankruptcy and say: Listen, I am sorry, but we are just not going to fulfill that commitment. That legacy goes away. That is somebody else's problem.

To fast forward to where we are today and why we have the problems we have, let me bring you up to speed with what we are dealing with. We have asked for the Miners Protection Act, which was the permanent health care fix and a permanent pension fix. These are for the retirees. We have another group of retirees here who have gone through bankruptcy and there was money set aside, about \$47 million. That was supposed to run out in June. We were going to bring all of them together so we took care of everybody.

Now, the bill they put in front of us that the House of Representatives has given us is horrendous and it is inhumane. They gave us a bill and said: Take it or leave it on the CR.

Nobody wants to close this great institution, this government down—not a person. You have to stand for something or surely to God, you will stand for nothing. That is where we find ourselves. They gave us a 4-month extension.

If your aunt or your mother were getting a notice in October that she would lose it in December—they want us now to say: OK. We are going to be so sympathetic, we will give you 4 more months, through April. That same person is now going to get another notification in January that she is going to lose it in April. On top of that, she will not even be able to meet her deductibles. So there is no insurance. There is nothing.

You remember the money I said they set aside, \$47 million, for the miners who basically have gone through a bankruptcy and lost their jobs and retired, they were going through June. Those same miners now are going to lose May and June—2 months. They are going to lose 2 months. There is going to be a \$2 million surplus that goes back to Treasury.

I had one woman call me. She said: Senator MANCHIN, I don't know, but back home where I come from, they call that thievery. She is absolutely correct. This is why we are so committed, and we are so dug in on this issue. It is a fairness. It is the right thing to do. All we have asked for is to take care of our miners' health care. We will come back and fight another day for pensions, but give us the health care that has been promised and committed time after time again.

I have never seen anything this calous in my life, that we weren't willing to fulfill a promise we have made and the Federal Government put its stamp of approval on.

For those who are saying it is inconvenient and the procedures I have been using and my other colleagues with me—I have had everybody, and I appreciate them so much. And for them to say: Hey, you have held up a lot of goods bills—yes, a lot of bills that I have worked on for a year or more I have held up, but if we can't pass forward on this and walk out of here basically knowing we did the right thing, what is our purpose for being here? Why do we come?

We all talk. I have seen everybody's elections. All of our election advertisements, whether they be Democratic or Republican, are we are all for the middle class. We are all for the working class. We are going to make sure the working men and women really get a fair shake. They have been screwed and left behind so let's do it. OK. We are all for that. All of our advertising, our campaigns say that. We are committed to it. The only thing I am saying is now fulfill it. It is either put up or shut up. That is all.

You have already told them, you have asked them to vote for you because of this reason. Now you have a chance to show them that is why you

are here. I came here to do exactly what I told you I was going to do—fight for you, make sure you are treated fairly. We have pay-fors. This is not coming out of taxpayers' money. This is AML—abandoned mine lands. The abandoned mine land money comes from every ton of coal. There is a certain percentage of money from that coal that goes into a fund and that is put aside to do reclamation.

Now, I have some of my Western States that don't have quite the reclamation we have had. In the Eastern part of the country, in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Southwestern Virginia, there is an awful lot of work to be done, and we do that work. We have done this for quite some time. We are saying: Listen, we are not denying you getting your money, but you shouldn't get first dibs on it and then hinder us from taking care of the responsibility we have to the miners who have been giving you the opportunity to live in this great country.

That is really what it comes down to. I have been asking all of my colleagues—this is not a fight that is going to be damaging to anybody. This is the only time-sensitive issue we have before us. There is nothing else we have before us. All of the bills are on hold right now. Not one bill has time sensitivity. We can come back and do it again. We have no problems doing them over and over. We have been here a long time.

This is the only one where the miners lose their health care—16,500 lose it December 31. You show me anything else we have in here where someone is going to be that harmed at a time specific when we walk out of here. That is what this is about. To tell me they are going to give us 4 months and they are doing us a favor for 4 months, that is inhumane. How they did it and paid for it is a crime. It is awful. That is why we are standing here fighting, and that is why I am going to continue to fight.

I think we have a purpose in life. If you have a purpose in life in public service, then serve the public. Don't come here to serve yourself. That is all people have asked for—do your job. You wonder why we have a low rating from the public, why they think so little of Congress. This is common sense. It is so easy for us to do. It is so easy for us to do. It is so easy for us to be able to say: Fine, we are going to fulfill this, and then we have a lot of other things we want to take care of.

That is all we have asked for, and that is all we are asking for now. We can do the right thing between today and tomorrow. We truly can.

Someone said the House has left. I am so sorry they were inconvenienced and had to leave so early to go home for Christmas. You go home and tell the people I live with, the people I was raised with, the people who have taken care of me: I am so sorry. We had to go home for Christmas. I am sorry you are losing your health care December 31. I didn't mean for that to happen, but you know I had to get home for Christmas.

That doesn't play well where I come from. That is not a commitment, and that is not public service. I am so sorry. I hope I have haven't inconvenienced anybody. I hope I haven't made you feel uncomfortable. I hope I haven't held up a bill that you have been working on because I have held up all my bills. No one was left unscathed in this. All we are saying is, for Pete's sake, do the right thing; stand up for this. Stand up for the people who gave us what we have today.

History said if you don't know where you come from, you sure don't know where you are going. If we are not going to stand up for the people who have given us the life we have, I am not sure where we are going. I know one thing. I go home and look them in the eye. I can say I am doing everything I can, and I am going to fight for you. I am willing to take whatever it takes, whatever medicine it takes here, however upset people get with me, however uncomfortable they may be. I am asking: Please, take care of the miners' health care. That is all right now. We will talk about the rest later.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I came to the floor for a different purpose, but I do want to say to my friend and colleague from West Virginia and to those he is fighting for, Senator MANCHIN has been at this in the most constructive way possible, trying to prick the conscience of the Senate to do what is fundamentally right, to help those who help make the country great, help them at their greatest time of need—to simply be able to go to sleep at night not worried that you are one illness or one black lung away from dying.

He has ceded time and time again, asking for regular order. I was very pleased to support Senator MANCHIN as a member of the Senate Finance Committee, where there was a markup and there was a strong vote, and members who were running for reelection got to go home and say we passed it in the Finance Committee. We will take care of it when we come back after the elections.

Well, here we are, and now it is time to put your votes and insist on having the miners' health care taken care of. If I were a miner, I couldn't have anybody better fighting for me. I want those you have been fighting for to know you have been doing it for some time and tenaciously and graciously as well but, nonetheless, with conviction. I strongly support my colleague.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. President, I rise, as I have many times before, to discuss the urgent need for the United States to have an immigration system that reflects our values as a nation of immigrants.

Today, in my first floor speech on the subject since Donald Trump won the election, I am deeply troubled by the

fear and panic I hear from our immigrant community, from our young immigrants known as DREAMers and their families to the workers in the field, to those in our restaurant kitchens and our homes.

Their panic is justified and palpable because of the inflammatory remarks made by the President-elect on the campaign trail about immigrants. His campaign promises made it seem as if no immigrant was safe from deportation, even otherwise law-abiding, decent people who came to this country searching for the American dream for themselves and their children. The threat of deportation was heard loud and clear by over 744,000 young, law-abiding immigrants who are American in every way, except for a piece of paper.

These DREAMers were brought to the United States, many as infants or toddlers, for reasons beyond their control or their knowledge. They grew up in America going to school. The only flag they have ever pledged allegiance to is that of the United States. The only national anthem they know is the "Star-Spangled Banner."

The effects of deporting them or their families would be incomprehensible and destructive. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or DACA, has been a tremendously successful program. It is something I fought for, to allow young men and women to come out of the shadows and step forward to register themselves with our government and make them right. DACA has allowed nearly 800,000 undocumented youth who came to the United States as children to obtain temporary protection from deportation and a 2-year work permit that is renewable. First, they would have to register with the government by handing over their personal information and the information of their immediate families, pass a criminal background check, and pay nearly \$500 in fees, and we said the information would be confidential and not used against them. Now their fears of deportation are justified.

The DACA Program now has the potential of becoming a registry of millions of undocumented immigrants who are now exposed for seeking a better life for themselves and their kids. Let's think about this for a second. These kids came into this country without any notion that they were doing anything wrong. Many of them didn't even know they were undocumented until they tried, for example, to go to college or get a loan for school. We asked them to come out of the shadows, voluntarily turn over their information and the information of their immediate relatives in exchange for protection from deportation, a work permit, and a chance for a better life. As early as next year, once again through no fault of their own, these young immigrants and their families are at risk of losing it all. The human cost is too high to pay. It is a cost measured in the thou-

sands of parents separated from their children who are deported, husbands and wives separated from their spouses, millions of families who are torn apart because of our broken immigration system.

Among his many campaign promises, President-Elect Trump pledged to end the DACA Program. This means that DACA recipients, a group of individuals the U.S. Government has deemed as otherwise model citizens who pose absolutely no threat to our national security, would be at risk for deportation and could no longer continue working legally.

We are here talking about children who have grown up in the United States and attended our schools. Many of them were the valedictorians, salutatorians, and in the top tier of their graduating classes. These are children who serve our communities and were given a chance to be fully integrated into the only country many of them have ever known.

I have listened many times to my colleagues talk about the core of family values, and the essence of that core is a family unit. I have heard that you don't subscribe the sins of the parents to the children, and yet those who are advocates of ending DACA would undo all of those things they have spoken to.

If the DACA Program is dismantled, young immigrants will be stripped of the jobs, education, and forced back into the shadows of our society. In fact, the Center for American Progress finds that ending DACA would cost the United States \$433 billion in gross domestic product over the next 10 years.

Having said that, I am hoping that when President-Elect Trump said on election night, "Now is the time for America to bind the wounds of division"—he later said in an interview that millions of undocumented immigrants are "terrific people." I hope the next administration thinks long and hard about binding the wounds of division. A good start would be a clear and unequivocal message that there will be no mass deportation task force and that the DACA Program will continue, something the President-elect already alluded to this week in an interview with *Time* magazine, saying that "we're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud . . . [DREAMers] got brought here at a very young age, they've worked here, they've gone to school here. Some were good students. Some have wonderful jobs. And they're in never-never land because they don't know what's going to happen."

It appears to me that hopefully we are getting to a place where there is universal respect and admiration for DREAMers. This acknowledgement offers a glimmer of hope for a productive way forward, and I hope that is the case.

Let me close by saying the following: I do not intend to sacrifice one set of immigrants for another. Let me be clear about our Nation's immigrants.

It is not just enough to say DREAMers are terrific people. Protecting a temporary program is not enough, although the panic and sense of urgency to protect these young immigrants is justified. It is not enough because the reality is that DREAMers do not exist in a vacuum. They have parents. They have loved ones who have instilled values and work ethic and supported them to pursue an education and reach their full potential to benefit our country. Their parents are also terrific people and so are so many other hard-working immigrants who have lived in this country for years, have obeyed the law, are not criminals, and have integrated themselves into the tapestry of American society. We know them. You have to be blind not to know them. They are sitting next to us in the pew in church. They attend parent-teacher conferences. They are our neighbors. They pick our crops. There isn't a person in this country who isn't beholden to an immigrant worker. They watch our kids. They open businesses. They perform back-breaking work—work we can't get many Americans to do—to keep the gears of this economy turning.

Immigration is not an easy problem to fix, but I think we came close in 2013, when the Senate came together to pass comprehensive immigration reform. I was part of that bipartisan Gang of 8 that produced a bill which passed with strong bipartisan support of nearly three-quarters of this Chamber. That bill is a strong model for reforming our immigration system as we look ahead to the Congress.

The bill, S. 744, addressed the key pillars necessary for a functioning, legal immigration system. It addressed the 11 million undocumented so we can know who is here to pursue the American dream versus who is here to do it harm. It reformed the legal immigration for high- and low-skilled workers. It had strong family reunification provisions, it put DREAMers on a path to citizenship, and it included tough border security measures. The bill, S. 744, wasn't perfect, but it was a significant milestone in our Nation's efforts to truly reform our immigration system.

We must remember what our economy and America needs. Our Nation will be stronger when there is an accountable path to citizenship for the undocumented living in the United States, our borders are secure, employers are held accountable for whom they hire, jobs are filled with qualified and documented workers who contribute to the economy, families are kept together, and we don't have downward pressures by an underground economy against the wages of all other Americans.

With an immigration system as flawed as ours and with so many things still to fix, DACA has been a beacon of hope—one shining light leading the way toward fairness, justice, and a better life for so many young immigrants looking for a chance to succeed in America as Americans.

Yes, abolishing it would be a tragic mistake for an administration seeking to unite what they helped divide. Let me be clear, as I have said all along, we cannot lose sight of our ultimate objective. The only real solution in the end is a permanent legislative solution that doesn't pick winners and losers amongst the most vulnerable in our society. That is why I am pleased to once again see a bipartisan coalition of voices begin to resurface so we can work toward a bipartisan moment to fix our immigration system once and for all because beyond stopping those who wish to turn the clock back on any progress we have made, we still need to implement a functioning legal immigration system for all. We need to make sure we don't take a giant step back and focus our Nation's resources against the most vulnerable, talented, and hardworking.

I have always been and remain committed to solving this problem in a fair, comprehensive manner that reforms our immigration system, and I will continue to work with a bipartisan coalition of voices toward this goal. Our DREAMers, their parents, immigrant families, and our Nation deserve nothing less. Irrelevant of who occupies the White House, I will never stop fighting for those who, like my mother, came to this country in the last century to give their families a chance to contribute to America's exceptionalism in this century.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

INDIANA'S BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I am pleased to speak with Senator DONNELLY about a momentous occasion for our beloved home State of Indiana—a celebration of our bicentennial.

On December 11, 1816, President James Madison signed the Indiana Enabling Act, which allowed Indiana to be the 19th State to join the Union and require that Indiana's leaders draft the State constitution. In the two centuries since Indiana's admission to the Union, Indiana residents—we call ourselves Hoosiers—have accomplished extraordinary things.

In 1840, William Henry Harrison became the first Hoosier to be elected President. In 1888, Benjamin Harrison, his grandson and fellow Hoosier, followed in his footsteps to the Presidency. Five Hoosiers have served our Nation as Vice President: Schuyler Colfax, Thomas Hendricks, Charles Fairbanks, Thomas Marshall, and Dan Quayle. Just a few short weeks ago, Americans elected Gov. Mike Pence to serve as our next Vice President. He will become the sixth Hoosier to serve in this role. We have a well-deserved reputation as the mother of Vice Presidents.

As many of you know, when Dan Quayle was elected, George Herbert Walker Bush's Vice President, I was appointed to fill his vacant Senate seat. Vice President Quayle has been a

close friend and source of advice to me throughout the years.

When President Trump named Mike Pence to be his running mate, I knew Hoosiers would continue to have a strong impact on our country, providing guidance and leadership in one of the top elected offices in our land.

I am honored to call both Dan Quayle and Mike Pence close friends and commemorate the great work they have done for the State of Indiana and have and will do for our Nation.

We have had excellent Governors, Representatives, Senators, and others who have contributed significantly to this body, the Congress, and the Nation, and we are proud of that as Hoosiers.

I keep using the name Hoosiers because we were misnamed Indianians, which is hard to pronounce and awful hard to spell. We are Hoosiers. I could go into a long discourse on what Hoosiers means, but I will not take the Senate time to do that right now. Please contact my office and we will send you a full description of what a Hoosier is, but you will see two of them on the floor here today.

Loyal public servants is not the only contribution our great State has made to the Nation. During the Civil War, over 200,000 Hoosiers answered the call to serve; although only one Civil War battle was fought in Indiana, more than 41,000 Hoosiers lost their lives and an estimated 50,000 were wounded.

During World War II, nearly 10 percent of Indiana's population joined our Nation's Armed Forces. Those who stayed behind contributed greatly to the manufacturing boom required for the war effort, manufacturing nearly 5 percent of all weapons and equipment required for the war.

Our State has continued that call to service to the military. We have for years and decades been one of the leading States providing per capita support to our Armed Forces.

In addition to these accomplished Hoosiers whom I have named, the places and events that make Indiana unique are numerous. I just want to mention a few, and I apologize to those that we don't have time to put in place here. But as Senator DONNELLY and I know, a few months ago we commemorated the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500 on this Senate floor.

Known as the "World's Greatest Spectacle in Racing," the Indianapolis 500 is a great source of pride to Hoosiers throughout the State and throughout the country. Every year our race is an epic event as drivers jockey for position at speeds regularly surpassing 200 miles per hour. In addition to the "Indy 500," the automotive industry has deep ties to Indiana.

In 1896, the Haynes-Apperson Company opened its doors in Kokomo, IN, producing one of the very first automobile manufacturing sites in the entire United States. It operated until 1905. Its 1904 model seated two passengers and sold for \$1,550 at the time.

Now, you don't have to go too much farther than Kokomo, IN, to arrive in the city of Auburn, where the Cord Dusenbergs and other popular cars were manufactured. Every year, the Cord Dusenbergs festival, parade, and museum are open to people from around the world to see a magnificent parade of cars in that era in absolutely perfect shape.

If you find yourself in Southern Indiana, take a minute to stop by the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County. Abraham Lincoln may have been born in Kentucky, and he may have ended up in Illinois, but he was raised and shaped in Indiana.

In addition to our landmarks, some of America's most famous buildings have been constructed using Indiana limestone. The Pentagon, the National Cathedral, the Lincoln Memorial, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Empire State Building in New York, and many more, all feature Indiana limestone quarried in south-central Indiana.

Our State has been blessed with a climate of soil fit for all kinds of agricultural activities. God has blessed us with a climate and a soil fit for all kinds of agriculture activities.

While corn and soybeans are our top commodities by value, Indiana produced \$11.2 billion worth of agricultural products in 2012. This includes 41.5 million broiler chickens, 10.5 million hogs and pigs, numerous dairy products, and 37,000 acres of vegetables harvested for sale. The next time you head to the movie theatre, think of Indiana. Indiana produces more than 20 percent of the United States' popcorn supply, and a great deal is exported around the world.

We are also a world leader in pharmaceuticals, biologics, and medical devices. Our medical device industry is the fifth largest in the United States, generating more than \$10 billion in annual economic output. Hoosiers are truly working hard to provide healthier, longer, and more rewarding lives for all Americans. Not only does Indiana seek to enrich the quality of life of Hoosiers through its contributions to the medical manufacturing field, we also do this through our institutions of higher education.

Hoosiers don't need to travel far to receive a high-quality education. We boast a rich variety of world-class colleges and universities, such as Indiana University, Purdue University, Butler University, Notre Dame University, Indiana State, Rose-Hulman, Trine, Grace, Manchester, Earlham, Evansville, Indiana Wesleyan, Valparaiso, and on and on we could go.

I would be remiss if I were to neglect mentioning my own graduate school, the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law.

This quality of education bleeds into the quality of coaching found in Hoosier schools. There is nothing quite like being in the stands during a Hoosier high school basketball game. The

coaching quality that we have has produced all-stars in every facet of basketball, whether it be professional, college, high school, or elementary.

There is nothing quite like being in the stands during Taylor University's Silent Night, where the fans pack the basketball stadium and stay completely silent until the home team scores their tenth point. Then the noise really starts and the game finishes with the fans signing singing "Silent Night."

Through the years, so many Hoosier teams have proved to be formidable foes on the court and the field. We are the home of the Colts, the Pacers, the birthplace of Larry Bird, James Dean, and David Letterman. On and on I could go with that.

But in addition to recognizing all that Indiana has contributed to our Nation over the past 200 years, I would like to add that one of our greatest contributions has been and will be always Hoosier hospitality. While at times our country is a more divided and complicated place, Hoosiers continue to demonstrate that kindness and a good meal can make the world a little better.

It is an honor for me to commemorate this bicentennial for this great State of Indiana. I am honored to be able to do this with my fellow Senator JOE DONNELLY from Indiana.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleague, DAN COATS, our senior Senator from Indiana, who is wrapping up his time in the Senate as of the next few weeks. What an extraordinary service he has provided to our Nation, to our State. We are incredibly grateful to Senator COATS for what he has done. I also want to celebrate Indiana's bicentennial. I want to reflect on the past two centuries of our State's rich history and the important contributions Hoosiers have made to our State and our Nation. For nearly a year now, in every corner and in every community of Indiana, from the biggest to the tiniest, we have been commemorating the storied history of our beloved Hoosier State.

Together, we will culminate the celebration on Sunday, December 11, when Indiana turns 200 years old. Admitted to the Union in 1816, Indiana has developed and grown into the crossroads of America, a welcoming place, where businesses and families can grow and succeed.

As Hoosiers, we take pride in putting in an honest day's work. We don't want a free lunch. We don't want a handout. We want the chance to work, to work a good job, to educate our children in good schools, to ensure that our kids have the tools to make a better life than we did—the American dream, the Hoosier dream—and, eventually, after a life of hard work, to retire with dignity, to have a chance to go fishing in one of our lakes, to have a chance to be

with our family in one of our extraordinary parks or a national forest.

Indiana has a proud tradition of serving our country, and working to protect our Nation's security. Nearly 500,000 veterans and many servicemembers and military families call Indiana home. Our National Guard dates back to 1801, when we were still a Territory. Today, our National Guard is the fourth largest in all of the United States. Hoosiers have proudly served our country in all of our wars, in all of our efforts to protect our Nation over the years.

It is also home to Naval Support Activity Crane, the third largest naval installation in the world. I think we can take particular pride that in the middle of the country, about as far away as you can get from the Atlantic and the Pacific, we have the third largest naval base in the entire world. Our State is also home to Grissom Air Reserve Base in Kokomo, where the 434th Air Refueling Wing is based. The 122nd Fighter Wing is in Fort Wayne, and A-10s are training daily. As well, there is Camp Atterbury and the 181st Intelligence Wing based at Terre Haute Air National Guard Base.

Throughout our 200-year history, Indiana's success has helped drive America's success. The backbone of our State has been built from our manufacturing and steel plants, our small businesses, and our farms. Hoosier farmers and those involved in agriculture know what it means to work hard and do their part. Our corn and soybean farmers, our pork producers, and our beef producers have helped to feed not just Indiana but our country and the world.

Our dairy farmers have produced incredible products. On a hot summer night, some of the best ice cream in the world comes right between the Illinois border and the Ohio border, and the Michigan border and the Ohio River—that beautiful place we call home. In the cities and towns across Indiana, small businesses are the cornerstones of our communities.

Indiana is home to nearly half a million small businesses, employing almost 1.2 million Hoosier workers. So many of those small businesses are in agriculture as well. We don't want to leave anybody out. There are the ag producers—so many—and the turkey producers, the chicken producers. If it grows, we make it. We feed the world every single day.

Throughout our State's history, steel has been not just a major employer but also a source of pride for Hoosier communities. Hoosier steel serves as the foundation of buildings and bridges all across the United States. What Indiana makes the United States and the world takes. Still today, Indiana is the largest producer of steel in the United States.

Speaking of construction, the limestone from Southern Indiana has traveled all over the world, from places like Yankee Stadium to buildings in other parts of the world, to buildings

all across the Nation's Capital. Some of the most beautiful buildings you have ever seen are built from Indiana limestone and from Indiana products.

Manufacturing is central to our economy. It contributes to roughly 30 percent of Indiana's economic activity and economic growth. Manufacturing plays a larger role in our economy than it does in any other State in the Nation, and we are really, really good at it. Manufacturing employs 17 percent of our workforce, some of the most skilled workers in the world.

Hoosier manufacturers and their workers build some of the most advanced, highest quality products in the world, from engines to RVs.

Just down the road from my home in Granger, is Elkhart, the RV capital of the world. I know that the Presiding Officer has traveled a few miles in RVs as well, from one end of our State to the other. More than 80 percent of global RV production is based in Elkhart, and throughout the northeast region and the north-central region. So if you see an RV on the road, there is a really good chance it was built by hard-working Hoosier manufacturers. There is a real good chance your family is going to have an awesome time.

We boast some of the best educational institutions in the world—as my colleague Senator COATS mentioned as he listed them off—attracting students, professors, and researchers from across Indiana, across our country, and across the world. Our colleges and universities provide an exceptional education to our students and lead the way in innovation and cutting-edge research.

Not surprisingly, many know our State because of our sports heritage, particularly in auto racing and basketball. This year marked the 100th running of the "Greatest Spectacle in Racing," the Indy 500. It is a special event unlike any other.

We don't just showcase the best Indiana has to offer on the racetrack but also on the hardwood. Basketball has been part of Indiana's identity since the late 1890s. It remains king today. Our State has achieved great basketball success, including with history-making teams like the Flying Tigers of Crispus Attucks High School, who, in 1955, became the first all African-American high school athletic team in the country to win a State basketball title. Few things have defined our State's culture and fabric as much as basketball.

As Senator COATS, the Presiding Officer, knows, John Wooden may be considered the father of all coaches in this country. He came from Indiana. As we reflect on our 200 years, we have so much to be proud of. As we look to the next 200 years, we know that through hard work and by working together, we can make our State's future even more prosperous because that is the American promise—that we work nonstop, that we work together, so that when we look at our kids and our grandkids,

we can tell them and tell all of you: We are going to build a stronger, better Indiana. We are going to build a stronger, better America because that is the promise that we pass on from one generation to the other.

To my friend, the senior Senator from Indiana, I wish to tell you what a pleasure it has been to serve with you, what a good friend you have been, and how lucky I am to have been your junior partner in this endeavor where we try to stand for America every single day.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, as my two colleagues from Indiana leave—again, congratulations on their bicentennial.

There are many great Hoosiers who have made their way to the State of Washington. One was a most beloved Mariner broadcaster named Dave Niehaus, who was from Evansville, IN. He was a great, great part of our sports history. Certainly, I should mention Dave Calabro, who was a Hoosier and another great announcer for our basketball team. We also have the great Bill Ruckelshaus, former EPA Director under President Nixon. He works on salmon issues and does other great things.

Congratulations to those Hoosier Senators today.

ENERGY LEGISLATION

Mr. President, I come to the floor with my colleague Senator MURKOWSKI of Alaska to talk about all the great work that was put into developing the Energy Policy Modernization Act. The Presiding Officer knows well how much work we put into that legislation.

We are here today after many markups, many amendments, and what was an unbelievable Senate vote of 85 to 12, to urge our House colleagues to consider the conference report on this legislation before adjourning for the year. There are so many important provisions in this legislation that should be enacted.

We reached an agreement to mark the National Park Service's 100th birthday by making an investment in our national parks. In response to requests from 47 Senators, the bill protects hundreds of thousands of acres of land.

We were also able to reach agreements on important issues such as water resources, providing and securing funding for fighting forest fires, and making sure that communities that are at risk of wildfires get the attention they so deserve. Having lost

seven individuals fighting wildfires over the last decade and a half, I can say, from the State of Washington's perspective, it is essential that we provide the communities the resources they need to fight fires. We also included a sportsmen's bill that will help hunters and fishers.

We were also able to reach agreement on numerous energy provisions. For instance, the legislation bolsters our energy security against cyber attacks. We improve the Department of Energy's capabilities to protect the grid. We are not just talking about hardening some of our physical infrastructure such as hydro power projects, but actually the work that it takes to make the grid more resilient from hacking. We also reached agreement on provisions to develop the workforce that will be needed to fill the 1.5 million new energy workers that the Quadrennial Energy Review estimates will be needed by 2030. We were also able to reach agreement encouraging investments in hydro power projects, geothermal energy, nuclear power and other emissions-free resources. Finally, this conference agreement also would promote innovation in many areas of science that are so important to us.

What is so frustrating is that we followed regular order in putting together an Energy bill. We held numerous hearings followed by a 3-day committee markup. On the Senate floor, we considered in excess of 300 amendments. We then worked all summer long and all fall with our House colleagues to reach a conference agreement.

It is so disappointing to now have our House colleagues refuse to consider these important provisions. There were many hard-fought issues upon which we eventually agreed. We all had to come to the table and take into consideration all interests. Whether you are talking sportsmen and open access to hunting, which my colleague from Alaska so championed, or whether you are talking about how to get water agreements that involve fishermen, tribes, farmers, and a variety of river interests—we were able to accomplish that. Or whether you are talking about fixing the fire funding budget issue that has been debated back and forth among our House and Senate colleagues for almost 7 or 8 years now, we were able to reach agreement on all of these things. It is very irresponsible for our House colleagues to drop the ball by failing to consider these solutions and taking yes for an answer.

What is even more outrageous is that now the House wants to take a provision subject to the Energy and Natural Resource's jurisdiction—the California water issue—and airdrop it into the WRDA bill, which is subject to the jurisdiction of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

As much as our House colleagues like to boast about their mythical no-earmark rule, the California water deal that is now being decried in newspapers in California as the "midnight rider,"

was airdropped in as an earmark in the WRDA bill and sent over to the Senate. This is an issue that should be considered by the Energy Committee.

I say to my colleagues that, if you want energy policy considered in the future and you want it to be a product of the regular order process in the Senate that creates consensus, you need to say to our House colleagues that are refusing to move forward on a conference report that this situation is problematic. The process that we are supposed to follow includes the Senate and House resolving differences as part of a conference committee. Instead, if we pass the WRDA bill, we will be rewarding those that wish to sidetrack regular order and drop into bills other items that have not been worked out and basically don't adhere to the rules of the Senate or even the House's own rules against earmarks they hypocritically claim to follow.

It is a very cynical view of the world to allow the House to add Energy and Natural Resources Committee jurisdictional legislation into another committee's bill and violates the House's own rules and basically overruns the collaborative process we used for the Energy Policy and Modernization Act. The House has, instead, turned to backroom deal making.

I join my colleague, Senator MURKOWSKI, tonight to describe the great and hard work that was done in our conference. I think she and I believe in it. I think we believe in the Senate the way it is supposed to work. We believe in the hard work that it took to reach compromise on so many issues, and I think we want to make sure that our colleagues know that getting to yes was just inches away.

It is very unfortunate that the House, instead of doing its homework, pursued a very cynical approach to the legislative arena—something I thought we jettisoned a decade ago—airdropping things in the dark of night. I mistakenly thought the House leadership was being earnest about making sure that the legislative process is transparent.

I hope our colleagues will understand these are important policy issues and take the remaining days—if we happen to be here an extra few days this weekend or even into next week—and encourage the House leadership to get our energy and natural resources bill enacted and bank what is good public policy in the best interests of the United States.

I thank my colleague from Alaska for her leadership on the Energy Committee, her hard work and dedication, her willingness to work across the aisle, and a willingness to be very tough on these important thorny public policy issues—and not to back away from that—and to find solutions for everybody in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I acknowledge the very good work of my

friend, colleague, and neighbor to the south of us from Washington State, Senator CANTWELL.

She has been a partner throughout this 2-year process we have been engaged in as we have tried to formulate and format a renewed energy policy for this country, something that has not been done in close to a decade.

We acknowledged early on that there were going to be policy differences we each have, given where we come from and some differing views, but we were committed to working together to work through the thorny issues, to work toward consensus, not only that she and I could come to but our whole committee and, ultimately, the Senate. We were successful in doing that.

I also acknowledge the good work of Senator CANTWELL's staff, as well as my staff, on the Energy Committee. These folks have been working tirelessly for 2 years, but more immediately—and when I say tirelessly, pretty much 24/7 for the past several weeks, in trying to get us to a point where instead of talking about what might have been in an energy bill, being able to stand in front of my colleagues and tell them these are the policy changes that we will now see placed into law.

I had truly wished I would not be in a situation where I would have to come to the floor and speak negatively about where we are right now because, as Senator CANTWELL outlined, the process we have been engaged in is one that we are proud of, but also that the institution should be proud of.

Our committees are designed to be incubators of good ideas and how we then allow these ideas to materialize and come together through good debate, amendments, refinement and then bringing that forward to the full body, again, for further work and refinement.

We have done it by the book. There are not too many things in Congress that look like what you learned about how a bill becomes law. I am looking at the young pages sitting here. In your classes, in American Government, you learn about how a bill becomes law.

If you read that and you see what happens around here, you would say: these are two different universes. You are nodding because you know you are seeing that.

What we have attempted to do and what we have done for the past 2 years is to allow our committees to work, to take the good ideas from energy-producing States such as Alaska and Louisiana, and to work with colleagues from the interior of the country with views and ideas that are perhaps different than ours, building consensus with energy policy, with resources, with access. We did it. We have been that textbook example of regular order process.

I am actually told that they have a training course or a training program offered in the Congress that walks committee staff through examples of

how a bill should be moved through a committee. Just the other day, I was told that our bill, the Energy bill, is the model that is being used as what to do in that training program.

This is quite the compliment; however we still have to get it over the finish line. This is where Senator CANTWELL and I are so frustrated. This is where we are so frustrated because, after 2 years of work and being this close to the finish line, we are being denied that opportunity to share this success and all because of lack of action over in the other Chamber.

We started this Energy bill by convening ideas. We held hearings in Washington, in Alaska, and other places in between. We gathered the ideas for what we hoped was going to be the first major Energy and Natural Resources bill signed into law in nearly a decade. We held oversight hearings and legislative hearings. We reviewed over 115 separate bills. We spent weeks negotiating a base text of the bipartisan bill. We held markups where our bill drew support from nearly all of our Members. Then we brought it here to the floor.

Yes, we had some bumps along the way. Flint, which certainly needed to be addressed, was part of it. That seems like ancient history now. But we persevered. We worked through all of the issues. We added more priorities for our Members, to the point where over 80 different Senators had their priorities incorporated into our bill.

Then, in April, 85 Members of this body—85 Members—voted in favor of passage of this bill. When we think of all that was contained in it, to gain that level of consensus, I think the Senator from Washington and I were doing something positive, to get everybody on board.

Then the House responded to our Energy bill in late May, and in July, we went to a formal conference. We began work right away. The negotiations started just about immediately, even before the first formal meeting of our conference.

So think about it. We have been working this conference between the two bodies since July—and not just on an occasional basis; rather, we have been working this aggressively. During this conference, we have held more than 75 bipartisan and bicameral negotiating sessions at the staff level. There have been countless more meetings and daily interactions amongst our staff. The final conference report includes provisions from 74 Members of the Senate and 224 Members of the House. That means there is input from almost 60 percent of the U.S. Congress included in the conference report. This is not a bill where we are cramming it through; this is a measure of considerable consensus.

The chairmen and the ranking members of the committees of jurisdiction, whether it is here in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources, the House Natural Resources Committee, the House

Science Committee, the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee—we have been meeting to resolve our differences. Again, staff has been working around the clock. Just this weekend, we went through hundreds of pages to close out all of the issues. Again, we did it by the book. We did what we were supposed to be doing. We were the team players here. We adhered to the regular order process.

Senator CANTWELL said we were doing the “normal” process. But I think what we are doing now is extraordinary. It is not normal—because it seems that, if there is guerilla warfare that is going on, that seems to be the way to move a bill nowadays. That does not send a very powerful message nor set a good example for how to advance a consensus measure such as we have with the Energy bill.

We were really on the right track until just a couple of weeks ago when it became pretty apparent that the House was, plainly stated, just done. They were finished. They stopped negotiating in good faith. They stopped trying to work to reach agreement.

So we are at that point where we have the House going out. We are told we here in the Senate are going to be wrapping up shop. But, as Senator CANTWELL has outlined, what colleagues need to know is what is being left behind on the table. It is not just the guts of this conference bill that we have been negotiating that is on the table; what is on the table a tremendous amount of time and effort put forth into a good committee process that has built a consensus and a good product. That is a problem, and I think it is something we are going to have to work on. It looks like we are going to have to work on this aggressively in the next year.

There has been a lot of speculation about what is really going on. What is the problem? Why can't you get a deal? Well, I mentioned that we have closed out every aspect of this bill with the exception of two issues, but there have been a lot of excuses out there that we don't have enough time; the bill is too complicated; there is not enough in it; then suddenly, there is too much in it. So we worked to address all of that, and we got it down to two issues. Both of those issues can be easily resolved in plenty of time for us around here if everybody is willing to sit down and work through them in good faith. In fact, on both of those issues, the Senate has already written—we have already proposed the modifications that were necessary to reach the final agreement. What happened when we sent them over? We wait. It is going to be half an hour, an hour, and now it is half a day. That is not good faith.

I will give one specific example. This relates to LNG export projects. This is something, quite honestly, that folks had agreed was going to be a part of the bill. We have included it in every Senate offer. It was taken out by the House. Then, when the House says,

“Your bill doesn’t seem to have enough in it. What happened to LNG?” we say “You took it out.” Let’s not be moving the goalpost.

What we have is vitally significant for many in our Western States. It includes forest management reform with the potential for a fire budget fix, for our sportsmen and women who care about accessing our public lands for hunting and fishing and recreational shooting. It includes a water package to help boost our water storage and management in some of our most drought-stricken Western States. It has a robust public lands title with more than 50 bills in it that provide everything from the expansion of a VA cemetery in South Dakota to high-priority land exchanges in places like Colorado. We have language related to the National Park Service Centennial that really sets our national parks on track for a second century. It includes a range of nuclear, cyber security, and hydroelectric innovation policies. These are good things that will help our country move forward and produce more energy that is affordable, reliable, and free of any form of pollution. We have worked so hard.

To be here on the 8th of December and say we are out of time—well, tell that to the sportsmen who have been working for 6 years to get a legislative package. And here we are on December 8 saying we are done. Tell that to those—particularly from the West—who are concerned about wildfire threats year after year and whether the funds are going to be there not only to address fire but to be there for the other accounts that our agencies are worried about. Tell them that we ran out of time on December 8.

Mr. President, I have to say that we have not run out of time; we have, unfortunately, run out of a desire to work together to finish important work for this country. We have plenty of time and should not be making excuses. Now is not the time to run down the clock. We must recognize that we have worked for 2 long years and this work deserves to be placed into law.

I urge my friends and my colleagues in the other Chamber to work with us on this. Let’s not give up on energy policy.

With that, I yield the floor. I thank my colleague for the indulgence of some additional time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the good work Senator MURKOWSKI does in cooperation with people in this institution.

REMEMBERING JOHN GLENN

Mr. President, today our country lost an American hero, Col. John Glenn, Senator John Glenn. I will be back on a later date to deliver a more formal tribute with my colleague Senator PORTMAN, but I wish to share some initial thoughts as I, along with my wife Connie and so many Ohioans, mourn for John Glenn and join so many people

around the country who loved him and cared for him and respected him.

It has been one of the great lessons of my life to get to know John Glenn and for Connie and me to count him and Annie as mentors and friends. We remember just a few short years ago, on the 50th anniversary of his flight into space, the night before, we had dinner with John and Annie, Connie and I and his children, David and Glen, and his daughter-in-law, David’s wife, and how interesting and joyous it was to hear him recount his experiences and so much of what he has done. We loved him. We will miss him. We will continue to draw strength and wisdom from the lessons he shared with us over the years.

The first time I met John Glenn was in 1969. It was Colonel Glenn then, long before he was elected to the Senate. Colonel Glenn spoke at an Eagle Scout dinner in Mansfield, OH. Only a few short weeks earlier, in my court of honor, I was awarded the Eagle Scout award. I was 16 years old. I got to meet Colonel Glenn. His words inspired us. They stayed with me as I grew up and looked for ways to serve community and country.

Thirty years later, John granted me the honor of walking me down this center aisle. When Senators are sworn in, any term they serve, they are often accompanied by a Senator from their State or a former Senator—whomever that Senator-elect or that Senator who is soon to be sworn in chooses—and I chose to walk down with my friend and former Senator, at that point, John Glenn.

John had a humility and a kindness unusual, perhaps, in this business and in, perhaps, somebody of his level of accomplishment. His kindness and intelligence, his courage—we know about that—and his commitment to service set an example that our country needs today more than ever. His legacy will live on not just in the pages of history books, it will live on through the Americans he inspired, whether it was a passion for exploration that led him to join NASA, a dedication to country that called him to the Armed Forces, or a desire to make the world a better place that led him to public service.

John will live in the hearts of everyone who knew and loved him, including his beloved wife Annie and his wonderful children, Glen and David.

I spoke with Annie and John on their 73rd wedding anniversary, and Annie told me the story that—I knew they knew each other in grade school. They dated beginning—I don’t know exactly when. I asked Annie if they wanted to marry in high school, and she said yes, but her parents said they couldn’t do that because it wouldn’t last. So they waited until after Pearl Harbor, when I believe John was 20 and Annie was 21, and they were married for 73-plus years.

Ohio and the United States have lost a great light today, but that pales in comparison to what we gained over his

95 years on Earth. I hope my colleagues will join me in sending out our love and prayers to John’s family at this difficult time during the holidays.

I heard John Glenn stories even today at the ceremony unveiling the portrait of our Democratic leader HARRY REID, which took place in the Russell Building, and a number of former colleagues of John’s came up to me and they had just heard of his death that happened midafternoon today. So I thank them for their memories.

MINERS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. President, last night Senator MANCHIN and I were on the floor of the Senate with Senators WYDEN and DONNELLY and CASEY, and we were again asking our colleagues to honor the commitment Harry Truman made seven decades ago to the mine workers of this country, to the retired mine workers, and to their widows. We all know that the life expectancy of mine workers is often less than the life expectancy of a teacher or an elected official or an insurance agent or someone who works in many other kinds of businesses. They are more likely to be injured on the job. They are more likely, in some cases, to perish on the job. They are more likely to contract an illness from the air they breathe and the conditions in the mines, whether it is black lung or whether it is some kind of heart disease. So this is particularly important to mine workers and the widows, that we take care of their insurance.

Most of the mine workers I know got a notice in late November or early this month saying their insurance would be cut off at the end of December. What a Christmas present. We have asked Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, who seems to be the only one standing in the way, month after month after month to fix this so these widows and these retired miners don’t get this notice saying: Your insurance will be cut off.

Finally, Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, asked us to make it bipartisan. We did. We have a number of Republican cosponsors, including Senator PORTMAN from my State, Senator CAPITO from West Virginia, and a number of others. We did that.

Then Senator MCCONNELL said: Go through regular order; put a bill through committee. We did that 18 to 8 in the Senate Finance Committee—every Democrat joined by a third or so of the Republicans. We did that.

Then he said: That is not good enough; now we want you to find a way to pay for it. We did. No tax dollars involved. This is money in the abandoned mine funds assessed against the mine companies, accumulated over the years.

We did all three of those things. Still, Senator MCCONNELL, because of his antipathy, apparently, toward the United Mine Workers union—if he wants to have antipathy towards the union, if he

hates unions, that is his business. I would rather he didn't, but that is his business. But to stand in the way of these widows and these retired mine workers because of his animosity toward the union is pretty troubling.

Last night, Senator MANCHIN and I, issue after issue after issue, continued to object to other generally non-controversial bills that we support—some I cosponsored—until this body does its job. But if this Senate doesn't act—it looks like a number of Senators, as House Members, apparently have already gone home for Christmas, so I will have plenty of colleagues go home and celebrate the holidays. Regardless of their faith, they will celebrate the holidays in the 3 upcoming weeks. But these thousands of mine workers and thousand of mine worker retirees and thousands of widows of mine workers—their Christmas isn't going to be so good because now—Senator MCCONNELL offered a little bit and said: We will give you a 4-month extension. But do you know what that means? That means they will get the letter. They have already gotten the first letter saying their insurance runs out at the end of December. Now they will get a second letter, if we do the 4-month extension, in January or February saying: Sorry, it is going to run out again in April.

How would we like to live that way? You are going to have insurance until this date, and then we will give you a little extension and you can have it until that date. That is simply not fair. Maybe it is OK for us because we have good benefits and we have good insurance, but it is not OK with them.

So I am hopeful that Senator MCCONNELL and Republican leaders will bring this to the floor, will support a 1-year—we want more. We would like to see the pension problem fixed too. But before the holidays, let's do a 1-year extension on the insurance. It is a commitment President Truman made and Presidents of both parties for seven decades have honored. It is the least we can do. I think we should stay here and work up until Christmas if it doesn't happen.

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

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with Senator MCCAIN when he arrives.

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Right on cue, so I will start off here.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for a colloquy between myself and the Senator from South Carolina.

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Just to make sure.

JASTA

Very briefly, I will let Senator MCCAIN lead off, but I want to talk about the way forward regarding JASTA.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to join my friend and colleague on this issue that is of transcendent importance to America's relationship with our friends and allies—literally placing Americans and American companies and corporations and governments in great danger—particularly governments.

I would just like to mention in passing, if my colleague will indulge me very quickly, because I have here in front of me—and I will ask that it be included in the RECORD—statements from the President of the United States, the Director of the CIA, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense, all on this issue we are talking about.

The leaders of our government, from the President on down, including the heads of our most important defense agencies, have expressed—and I will quote them in just a minute.

My friends, Congress passed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, or JASTA. It was well-intentioned to allow claims against foreign governments that might be complicit in terrorist attacks against the United States. The spirit behind the legislation is noble. Any foreign government behind the attack on our homeland or our citizens must be held accountable. But it has become clear that the unintended consequences of this legislation are quite grave.

As it exists now, JASTA presents a significant risk to the United States and our military and diplomatic personnel serving across the globe.

As it currently exists, as my colleague from South Carolina will explain in greater detail, JASTA undermines a fundamental international norm of sovereign immunity that protects governments from being sued in court except in narrow circumstances. If this law is not narrow—and please, my colleagues, understand, the Senator from South Carolina and I are not for abolishing this law; we are for putting in a scope that protects the United States of America; that is, if we allow our laws to target governments indiscriminately, we will expose our country to grave risk and undermine our ability to pursue justice in a complex world.

No country in the world stands to lose more from an erosion of these legal standards than the United States of America. The United States has more bases and more forward-deployed personnel protecting peace and security than any other country. JASTA now gives these countries an incentive to bring these brave men and women to court to answer for U.S. counterterrorism policies.

If other countries pass similar legislation, it means the United States and

American soldiers, diplomats, and intelligence officers serving in some of the world's most dangerous and difficult countries will be forced to justify their actions and defend the policies we have made to defend this country before courts that may not share our standards of due process and fairness. Our allies will wonder if it is wise to join our coalitions to fight terrorism if they, too, will face legal liability in courts around the world. Thus, we are faced with the twisted irony that the men and women who put themselves in harm's way to bring the 9/11 attackers to justice and to defeat those who still seek to attack the United States are the people placed directly at risk by JASTA.

We must be concerned with the diplomatic and economic fallout of this law. Our allies and partners around the world, particularly those who struggle with terrorism at home, now wonder when they might be hauled in to courts for terrorist actions. They face potential court-ordered damages and asset seizures. Their citizens and companies doing business in the United States are at risk. It is only reasonable that these countries will consider pulling their assets and resources out of the United States out of fear.

In short, JASTA could cause our allies in the fight against terrorism to distance themselves from us as a country that most needs their support against those who mean to do us harm.

Now I would like to provide some quotes. Our Nation's top national security officials have issued statements and written to Congress to warn us about the unintended consequences of JASTA.

Let's begin with President Obama. I will quote from his letter from White House. He wrote:

JASTA . . . would neither protect Americans from terrorist attacks nor improve the effectiveness of our response to such attacks. Doing so would instead threaten to erode sovereign immunity principles that protect the United States, including our U.S. Armed Forces and other officials, overseas.

I will admit that Senator GRAHAM and I have a special relationship with the men and women who are serving—his 22 years as a member of the U.S. Air Force Reserve and every year going to Iraq or Afghanistan; I obviously have sons who have served. I don't want to see my sons or anybody else's sons in court because they might have violated a sovereign nation the way that we are saying JASTA affects our country.

Enacting JASTA into law, however, would neither protect Americans from terrorist attacks nor improve the effectiveness of our response to such attacks. Doing so would instead threaten to erode sovereign immunity principles that protect the United States, including our U.S. Armed Forces and other officials, overseas.

The Secretary of Defense wrote:

U.S. Servicemembers stationed here and overseas, and especially those supporting our counterterrorism efforts, would be vulnerable to private individuals' accusations that

their activities contributed to acts alleged to violate a foreign state's law.

He continued to say that, whether guilty or innocent, "the mere allegation of their involvement could subject them to a foreign court's jurisdiction and the accompanying litigation and intrusive discovery process that goes along with defending against such lawsuits. . . . Our servicemembers might be required to testify about or provide documents on operations that they are obligated under U.S. law not to disclose, exposing them to punishment for contempt by the foreign court, including imprisonment."

According to the Secretary of Defense, we could be risking imprisonment for the men and women who are serving in our military overseas.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—I think we all respect the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Here is his view:

Any legislation that risks reciprocal treatment by foreign governments would increase the vulnerability of U.S. Servicemembers to foreign legal action while acting in an official capacity.

In those cases . . . the Servicemember could be held in civil, or criminal, contempt should he or she refuse to appear or otherwise comply with the foreign court's orders.

The Secretary of State, John Kerry, wrote:

JASTA could encourage foreign courts to exercise jurisdiction over the United States or U.S. officials.

The same thing.

The Director of CIA wrote:

(JASTA) will have grave implications for the national security of the United States. The most damaging consequence would be for those US Government officials who dutifully work overseas on behalf of our country. The principle of sovereign immunity protects US officials every day, and is rooted in reciprocity. If we fail to uphold this standard for other countries, we place our own nation's officials in danger. No country has more to lose from undermining that principle than the United States—and few institutions would be at greater risk than the CIA.

Which certainly makes sense.

So here we have the Director of the CIA, the Vice President of the United States, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense—all want us to narrow the interpretation of this law. What does it require? Whose word more do you want?

All I am saying is that we need to narrow the law. We must make it clear that countries will not be held responsible for rogue actions of their citizens. Unless we can show that a nation knowingly assists a terrorist group, sovereign nations should not be dragged into our courts.

If we don't fix JASTA, our ability to defend ourselves will be undermined and the people we ask to go into harm's way on our behalf will be placed in jeopardy. America must pursue justice, but in the long run, JASTA will make it harder, not easier, to bring terrorists to justice and prevent terrorism in the first place.

We need to fix this law.

I ask my colleague, let's make it clear, are we asking to have this law repealed? Are we asking that people in countries that are responsible for acts of terror to be let off the hook? Are we trying to say committing acts of terror can be sponsored by any nation and we will turn the other way? That is basically the argument that is being mounted in sometimes hysterical fashion, and what we are trying to do is to ensure that a government must knowingly—maybe not even have done it themselves but knowingly. Isn't that the key, particularly coming from someone with your background as an officer trained in the Uniform Code of Military Justice and the International Rule of Law?

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you, Senator MCCAIN. Your overview was excellent about the perils we face as a nation if we don't modify the law. I will try to give you a couple of minutes of how did we get to here. After 9/11—the most horrific attack on our homeland, maybe ever, I guess, since the Civil War—the bottom line was that we responded as a nation in many ways. The 9/11 families have a special place in American history and our hearts. They have been pursuing legal claims against those responsible for the attack.

Sovereign immunity is a concept that protects our government and every other government from doing business because if you don't have the sovereign immunity, you can't function as a government. There are waivers to that concept—a tort. If somebody in Saudi Arabia is driving a car down the streets of New York and they are working for the Embassy and consulate and they hit you, there is a process where you can sue. You can sue your own Federal Government—the Federal Tort Claims Act—if you are injured as a result of being hit by a military vehicle. Even though sovereign immunity applies, we waived that to allow citizens who have been injured tortuously to bring claims in a very controlled process.

The 9/11 families, for well over a decade now, have been pursuing nation-states like Saudi Arabia in court, trying to hold them liable for the act of terrorism of the 19 hijackers. Under our law, a tort does not include acts of international terrorism. I was very open-minded to say, certainly, that is a tort. If you are injured or killed because of an act of international terrorism, you have been harmed, and I don't mind holding somebody responsible who caused that harm.

Now you are getting into the operation of a nation-state. If you believe the Saudi Government collaborated with the 19 hijackers and they knew or should have known about the attack and assisted in the attack, not only should they be held liable in our courts as probably an act of war under international law. Unfortunately, the way we have structured this law, that requirement does exist.

Let me give you an example of how that can come back to haunt us. We are engaged in a conflict in Syria today. We are training, providing weapons, and training a lot of groups inside Syria to destroy ISIL. One of those groups is the WPG Kurds. They are literally the cousins of the PKK, a terrorist organization inside Turkey. There is friction between the Kurds and Syria and the Turkish Government, and it is beginning to bubble up.

We are knowingly providing training to Kurdish elements inside Syria for the express purpose of enlisting them in the fight against ISIL. What I don't want to have happen is that the CIA officer, the special forces soldier, anybody in our government who is working in the training, equipping process to be held liable if that training and those weapons are used to go into Turkey or some other place where we didn't intend for it to happen and didn't know about it.

As this law is written now, it is my fear the very act of helping them do one thing could make you liable for everything they do. We are trying to narrow the scope, and we are trying to make sure that whatever claim against a foreign government lies for the 9/11 attack, that we don't open the door to lawsuits, imprisonment, criminal complaints, liability by us as a nation-state for all of the activities we are doing throughout the world.

We are training people in Mosul, in Iraq today. We have been training the Iraqi Security Forces. We have been training tribal militia. The one thing I don't want to have happen is the people who provide the weapons and training—that if a Sunni group, for some reason out of our control, goes into a Shiite village and commits a genocide or the reverse or we are helping the Shiites and they go on a sectarian binge, I don't want us to be held liable unless you can prove that we knowingly engaged in the act in question; that it wasn't enough just to help the tribal leaders, Sunni tribal leaders, fight Al Qaeda; that if they do something outside of what we intended, the only way we can be liable and people working for us can be liable is if we knew about it and we are involved in it. That is what is missing.

It may be harder for the lawyers representing the 9/11 families to prove the case, but if we don't make the standard as I described, we are opening ourselves up as a nation and all of those throughout the world.

Nobody understands the world better than Senator MCCAIN. I promise you, we are providing aid and assistance to groups who are very questionable at best, but that is the world we live in. The Mideast is a complete mess. I don't want my country, our country, and those who serve under our flag to ever be hauled into a foreign court because they were doing the training and the equipping that our Nation ordered them to do, and I don't want us as a nation to be responsible for acts we did

not know about or intend to happen. Just simply helping somebody doesn't make you liable for all the things they might do down the road.

If there is evidence that the Saudi Government knowingly or should have known about the attacks of 9/11 and aided that attack, you can bring a claim. If it is any less here for the 9/11 attack, then that lesser standard would be used against us because countries, as I speak, are adopting their version of JASTA. The one thing we don't want to do is open up the international legal system to claims against America based on what we did here at home and not have thought it through very well.

I would end on this. We all voted for it because we are sympathetic to the cause and want to make sure the 9/11 families can proceed in court to hold those accountable for the horrific acts against their families. I don't think we are helping those families by passing a law that is not well thought out and putting other families at risk who are in the fight today.

This is not suing for a war that is over. The damage is done after the war. The war on terror is very much alive and well. As far as the eye can see, America is going to be involved in equipping, training, aiding, and assisting groups. I don't want our country to be held liable and the people we ask to do the training and equipping to find themselves in a foreign court unless we as a nation knew and intended the consequence in question.

If we don't change this law, we will have not served those in the fight very well. We can modify this law in a way to allow claims to go forward post-9/11. All of us agreed to a process to allow the 9/11 families to move forward. I hope all of us can agree, or at least most of us, to modify that process to make sure we don't have unintended consequences that everybody in the national security infrastructure of the United States is telling us we created.

No Member of the Senate, in wanting to help 9/11 families, I believe, wants to expose other families and those who serve this Nation to being hauled into foreign courts and being accused of a crime and being sued. We have a chance to fix it. I will tell you this. If we don't fix it, we are going to regret it because the activities we are engaged in today, I am afraid, could be a basis of action against our Nation under the law we passed.

If you did exactly what this law allows in another country and the terrorist organization was helped by the United States, even if you view them as terrorists, even though we didn't know about what they did, we could be liable, and I don't want that.

Mr. MCCAIN. May I ask my colleague one additional question?

We have heard from literally every Middle Eastern country on this issue. No threats have been made. The conversation between us and Ministers of various countries in the Middle East have been of grave concern of support

for the fundamentals of this law but also a deep concern about the ramifications my colleague from South Carolina just described.

Let's for a moment put yourself in their position. You face now the possibility of a lawsuit brought against your country because some acts of terror have taken place by citizens of your country without your knowledge or assistance. You are about to go into court in the United States of America, and you have significant assets—and you are the lawyer and I am not, but it seems to me the first thing a good lawyer is going to want to do is freeze the assets, pending the outcome of the suit that is being brought. By the way, I have received no threats in our conversations with these countries. Wouldn't anybody in their right mind say, Hey, I am not going to risk having my assets frozen there and maybe spend years in litigation in the courts.

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes. I think the foreign policy of nations and the willingness to assist us as a nation is very much up in the air if we don't somehow modify this law because if you are doing business in the United States—let's pick Saudi Arabia. The claims can be brought against the Saudi Government. If there is a judgment, those assets can be attached and they can be taken. If you are not doing business here, you don't have to worry about your assets being taken by a court.

I want to stress this. There can be a claim, but that claim has to be able to prove that the nation-state—example, Saudi Arabia—knew or should have known of the attack itself and aided the attack. If you can prove that, we not only should allow all lawsuits, we should rethink our relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Here is what the Saudis tell me. If we actually did that, I don't blame you for rethinking the relationship with us. What you say is very true, Senator MCCAIN. If this law stands in the United States—and this is an emotional time in the world. Juries render justice, but Mideastern nations are not very popular right now, for sometimes good reason. The Saudis are helping people in Yemen. They are helping people in Syria. Sometimes they are helping people differently than we are helping because they are more worried about Iran than Assad.

It is a complex world, and I think nation-states are going to be reluctant to do business in America if they come from a complex part of the world if we don't modify this law because all of their assets are subject not only to being confiscated through a court process, it would no longer be a safe place to do business.

I would stress this. The same thing could happen to us in other countries. If some groups we are helping in Syria somehow want to take on Saudi Arabia because they don't like their government, I don't want us to be sued in Saudi court and the American business assets that lie in Saudi Arabia be

seized or attached if we didn't know the people in question were actually going to attack Saudi Arabia and collaborate in that attack.

Mr. MCCAIN. I have another scenario—drone strikes. We commit drone strikes literally everywhere in the Middle East where we find there are terrorists who are capable of mounting attacks on the United States of America. They are precision strikes, but on many occasions, civilians, as collateral damage, have also been killed. Those are just facts.

What exposure are we subject to now?

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, that is a really good question because the purpose of this legislation is to hold nation-states responsible for aiding terrorist organizations. The YPG Kurds, in the eyes of Turkey, could be a terrorist group. Al Qaeda is certainly considered a terrorist group in the eyes of everybody. We are now chasing terrorists all over the world. We are receiving information from one organization, taking that information, militarizing it, using it in a lethal fashion, and hitting people we don't intend to hit.

Here is what would solve this problem. For a liability to exist on any nation-state, including the United States, the only time you can be sued is if you intended and knowingly engaged in the activity, partnering with a terrorist group or separately, with the knowledge that you meant for this to happen. If we don't have that knowing requirement, we are going to open ourselves up to a lot of heartache throughout the world.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, isn't it logical to say that you shouldn't hold a government of a country liable if something happened by attack from their country or by one of their citizens that we didn't know about? I mean, this is why I am confused as to why that just doesn't have a logical aspect to it. We don't want to hold people who are not guilty liable for damages.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, this is a really good question. One of the concepts we want to introduce into the new modification is discretionary decisions by nation-states. The original bill said you couldn't sue based on a discretionary decision—a planning activity, a strategic decision. Apparently, there is some evidence that lower-level Saudi officials or people in Saudi Arabia provided some money, helped people get passports, helped people do this, helped people do that. We don't want to be held liable if we have a rogue employee in a consulate somewhere. It has to be that the nation-state at the highest level of government—to be liable for the torturous act—knew or should have known. If we don't want to be guilty by association, you don't want to be held liable as an entire nation-state because you have one part of the government doing a function that was not approved by the government as a whole.

All I can say is we are making strategic decisions today. I don't know how

much money we have given to the Kurds and other allies in Syria fighting ISIL, but I can tell you some of these groups in the eyes of other people in the region are terrorists, and they have an agenda outside of fighting ISIL. I don't want to be liable because we helped them in the cause of fighting ISIL if they go and do something else to harm somebody else, some other nation, unless we knew about it, because it will stop our ability to have partners. Unfortunately, in the war on terror, you are not going to win the war if you don't make alliances, and sometimes these alliances are with pretty unsavory people.

Saudi Arabia is in the same position we are. If you open the floodgates and the United States is liable because of the activity that occurred, people from your country are involved, but you don't have the requirement of saying you knew about it and you wanted it to happen. Then we are opening ourselves up to a liability all over the globe because, unlike Saudi Arabia, we are all over the place. We are everywhere—in the Philippines. I can't think of a region in the world where there are not American operatives, intelligence officials, or military officials who are not somehow joined in the fight against different forms of terrorism, and all I am asking is that we modify this law. You can bring a claim against anybody you think caused 9/11, including a country like Saudi Arabia, but you have to prove that the government knew about it, should have known about it, and aided in the actual act. That is not in the law, and if we don't put that in the law, it will bite us all, and everybody fighting this war is trying to tell us we have gone too far.

Next year Senator McCAIN, Senator GRAHAM, and hopefully others, will make it a top priority to modify this law so we can conduct foreign policy as a nation and not put our warfighters at risk and those we rely upon to win this war, because we are not helping the 9/11 families by putting people at risk for no good reason who are out there all over the world trying to protect us. That is exactly what we have done if we don't modify this law.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, this is not the opinion of the Senator from South Carolina and myself. This is the opinion of the President of the United States. This is the opinion of the Secretary of Defense. This is the opinion of the Secretary of State. This is the opinion of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. This is the opinion of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

I have had a lot of support in my time on various issues. I cannot remember a time in the last 30 years where literally every leader in government has come out in the strongest possible fashion not to do away with JASTA but to fix it so the United States of America itself is not put in jeopardy as other nations adopt this same law.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letters from the President of the United States, the Secretary of State of the United States, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Secretary of Defense be printed in the RECORD.

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

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: Thank you for speaking with me about the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, or JASTA. As I noted in my message vetoing the bill and reiterated on our call yesterday, I strongly believe that enacting JASTA into law would be detrimental to U.S. national interests.

I am firmly committed to assisting the families of the victims of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11) in their pursuit of justice. Over the last eight years, my Administration has continued and expanded upon the U.S. Government's unprecedented response to the 9/11 attacks. We have relentlessly pursued al-Qa'ida, killed Osama bin Laden, supported and signed legislation that provides treatment for first responders and other survivors, and declassified additional information on the attacks so the families of 9/11 victims can better understand the information investigators gathered following that dark day.

Enacting JASTA into law, however, would neither protect Americans from terrorist attacks nor improve the effectiveness of our response to such attacks. Doing so would instead threaten to erode sovereign immunity principles that protect the United States, including our U.S. Armed Forces and other officials, overseas. This is why I vetoed the bill and why I believe you should vote to sustain that veto.

In general, JASTA would allow lawsuits in U.S. Federal Courts against foreign countries for actions taken abroad that are alleged to have contributed to acts of terrorism in the United States, notwithstanding long-standing principles of sovereign immunity. We already have ways of addressing state-sponsored terrorism. In fact, under existing law, lawsuits may be brought for actions taken abroad that contribute to acts of terrorism only against countries that have been designated as state sponsors of terrorism. Under JASTA, this very limited class of potential foreign state defendants would be expanded to encompass every country in the world. JASTA therefore threatens to upset immunity protections that benefit the United States more than any other Nation.

The consequences of JASTA could be devastating to the Department of Defense and its Service members—and there is no doubt that the consequences could be equally significant for our foreign affairs and intelligence communities, as well as others who work in furtherance of U.S. national security. The United States relies on principles of immunity to prevent foreign litigants and foreign courts from second-guessing our counterterrorism operations and other actions that we take every day. Other countries could attempt to use JASTA, however, to justify the creation of similar exceptions to immunity targeted against U.S. policies and activities that they oppose. As a result our Nation and its Armed Forces, State Department, intelligence officials, and others may find themselves subject to lawsuits in foreign courts—for example, Service mem-

bers stationed here and overseas, including those supporting our counterterrorism efforts, would be vulnerable to accusations that their activities contributed to acts that allegedly violated foreign laws. Without immunity, we could be forced to defend ourselves in foreign courts regardless of whether the United States or its officials had in fact provided support for terrorist acts or committed acts in violation of foreign laws. Such lawsuits could subject the United States and its officials to intrusive and time-consuming discovery, including demands from foreign litigants and courts for sensitive U.S. Government information or intelligence. Such lawsuits could also lead to sizeable money damages and efforts to attach U.S. Government property to satisfy those judgments—efforts to which we would be particularly vulnerable given our substantial worldwide presence. And foreign states could create exceptions to sovereign immunity that do not directly mirror those created by JASTA, which would exacerbate these risks.

The JASTA also threatens to expose even our closest allies and partners to litigation in U.S. courts. JASTA would go well beyond 9/11 or the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and a number of our allies and partners have expressed serious concerns about the bill. I am concerned that the enactment of JASTA would risk eroding the cooperation we must have from partners and allies to defend the Nation. And as I noted in my veto message, JASTA threatens to take decisions concerning potential foreign state involvement in terrorist attacks out of the hands of national security and foreign policy professionals and to place such decisions instead in the hands of private litigants and courts. This is neither a coordinated nor an effective way to respond to such concerns.

To be clear, my opposition to JASTA is based primarily on its potential impact on the United States. Sovereign immunity principles do protect all Nations. But the United States has a larger international presence, by far, than any other country—we are active in a lot more places than any other country, including Saudi Arabia. This means we benefit more from the principles that JASTA threatens to erode than any other country and have more to lose if those principles are eroded than any other country.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
Washington, April 15, 2016.

Hon. LINDSEY O. GRAHAM,
Chairman, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to express the Department of State's concerns regarding S. 2040, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA).

We deeply sympathize with all victims of terrorism and appreciate the motivation behind this legislation. The U.S. government condemns all acts of terrorism, and the Department has long supported efforts of U.S. terrorism victims to pursue compensation while also leading international efforts to combat terrorism and prevent more attacks and more victims.

However, as it presently stands, JASTA would strip sovereign immunity protections from all nations (not just designated state sponsors of terrorism as under current law) for a wide range of actions taken outside the United States that lead to injury or loss in the United States, including but not limited to acts associated with terrorism. This broad expansion of the Foreign Sovereign Immunity Act's jurisdictional provisions will be of deep concern to many foreign governments with potentially grave repercussions for U.S. national security interests. The United

States benefits significantly from the protection afforded by foreign sovereign immunity given its extensive diplomatic, security, and assistance operations around the world. JASTA could encourage foreign courts to exercise jurisdiction over the United States or U.S. officials—including members of our military and intelligence community—for actions taken here which may cause injury outside our borders. JASTA could also expose U.S. allies and partners to litigation in U.S. courts that will raise significant foreign policy sensitivities and could limit their cooperation on key national security issues, including counterterrorism initiatives. It could also generate concerns about the security of foreign state assets in the U.S. financial system.

I ask you to consider the unintended consequences of passing this legislation in its current form. We remain prepared to work with Congress on appropriate changes that would mitigate the harmful impacts on U.S. foreign policy and national security.

Thank you for your leadership on so many critical national security issues.

Sincerely,

JOHN F. KERRY.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF,

Washington, DC, 7 December 2016.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN, *Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for the opportunity to offer advice on congressional efforts to mitigate concerns I expressed regarding legislation that may expose U.S. Service members to the jurisdiction of foreign courts.

On 27 September 2016, I forwarded concerns regarding the potential second- and third-order consequences of legislation that erode the long-standing principle of sovereign immunity. These were:

Any legislation that risks reciprocal treatment by foreign governments would increase the vulnerability of U.S. Service members to foreign legal action while acting in an official capacity.

In those cases where a foreign government decides to exercise jurisdiction over a U.S. Service member, the Service member could be held in civil, or criminal, contempt should he or she refuse to appear or otherwise comply with the foreign court's orders.

If a U.S. Service member were to be sued in a foreign court, it would be up to the foreign court to decide whether classified or sensitive U.S. Government information would be required as part of the litigation process. This could put the United States in the position of choosing between the disclosure of classified or sensitive information, and subjecting a U.S. Service member to an adverse foreign court ruling.

While any attempt to alleviate the above risks is commendable, increasing the burden of proof required to prevail in a civil matter would not alleviate the above concerns as victims may still file suit against a foreign state. If a foreign government enacted reciprocal legislation, suits could be brought against the United States and may implicate U.S. Service members. While at the end of a trial such a suit may not prevail if the victim is not able to meet a heightened standard of proof—a heightened standard may not stop a suit from being filed. In such a situation, Service members may be subpoenaed to appear in court and prevented from departing the country.

My concerns would only be hilly alleviated by legislation that restores the principle of sovereign immunity and protects U.S. Service members from reciprocal legislation that

may subject them to the jurisdiction of a foreign court.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, Jr.,
General, U.S. Marine Corps.

STATEMENT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ASH CARTER, DECEMBER 7, 2016.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide views on the potentially harmful consequences that the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA) may have on the United States, the Department of Defense, and Service members.

As I stated in my testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on September 22, 2016, I agree with the intent of JASTA, which is to honor the families of 9/11 victims. However, the potential second- and third-order consequences of JASTA could be devastating to the Department and its Service members and could undermine our important counterterrorism efforts abroad.

In general terms, JASTA allows lawsuits in U.S. Federal Courts against foreign states for actions taken abroad that are alleged to have contributed to acts of terrorism in the United States, notwithstanding longstanding principles of sovereign immunity. Under the law that existed before JASTA was enacted, similar lawsuits were available for actions only against designated state sponsors of terrorism. JASTA has extended the stripping of immunity to states that are not designated sponsors of terrorism, potentially subjecting many of the United States' allies and partner nations to litigation in U.S. courts.

We have concerns that JASTA may cause foreign governments to enact legislation to create exceptions to immunity for conduct by the United States and its personnel. Such legislation may not directly mirror, and may be more expansive than, the exceptions created by JASTA. This is likely to increase our country's vulnerability to lawsuits overseas and to encourage foreign governments or their courts to exercise jurisdiction over the United States or U.S. officials in situations in which we believe the United States is entitled to sovereign immunity. U.S. Service members stationed here and overseas, and especially those supporting our counterterrorism efforts, would be vulnerable to private individuals' accusations that their activities contributed to acts alleged to violate a foreign state's law. Such lawsuits could relate to actions taken by members of armed groups that received U.S. assistance or training, or misuse of U.S. military equipment by foreign forces.

The implications of JASTA are severe. I will highlight a few of them.

First, whether the United States or our Service members have in fact provided support for terrorist acts or aided organizations that later commit such acts in violation of foreign laws is irrelevant to whether we would be forced to defend against lawsuits by private litigants in foreign courts. Instead, the mere allegation of their involvement could subject them to a foreign court's jurisdiction and the accompanying litigation and intrusive discovery process that goes along with defending against such lawsuits. This could result in significant consequences even if the United States or our personnel were ultimately found not to be responsible for the alleged acts. For example, our service members might be required to testify about or provide documents on operations that they are obligated under U.S. law not to disclose, exposing them to punishment for contempt by the foreign court, including imprisonment.

Second, there would be a risk of sizeable monetary damage awards in such cases,

which could lead to efforts to attach U.S. Government property to satisfy those awards. Given the broad range of U.S. activities and significant presence around the world, including our Department's foreign bases and facilities abroad, we would have numerous assets vulnerable to such attempts.

Third, it is likely that litigants will seek sensitive government information in order to establish their case against a foreign state under JASTA in U.S. courts or against the United States or U.S. personnel in a foreign court. This could include classified intelligence data and analysis, as well as sensitive operational information.

Furthermore, if the United States or U.S. personnel were to be sued in foreign courts, such information would likely be sought by foreign plaintiffs, and it would be up to the foreign court whether classified or sensitive U.S. Government information sought by the litigants would be protected from disclosure. Moreover, the classified information could well be vital for our defense against the accusations. Disclosure could put the United States in the difficult position of choosing between revealing classified or otherwise sensitive information or suffering adverse rulings and potentially large damage awards for our refusal to do so, and could even result in the imprisonment of U.S. personnel for refusing an order of a foreign court to disclose such classified or sensitive information.

Finally, foreign lawsuits will divert resources from mission crucial tasks; they could subject our servicemembers and civilians, as well as contractor personnel, to depositions, subpoenas for trial testimony, and other compulsory processes both here and abroad. Indeed, such personnel might be held in civil or even criminal contempt if they refused to appear or to divulge classified or other sensitive information at the direction of a foreign court.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to pay attention to the most respected individuals in this country and pay attention to why they object, not to the entire bill but to the provisions that would, as Director Brennan said, cause the most damaging consequences for those U.S. Government officials who dutifully work overseas on behalf of our country.

The Director of the CIA said that the principle of sovereign immunity protects U.S. officials every day and is rooted in reciprocity. If we fail to uphold the standard for other countries, we place our own Nation's officials in danger. No country has more to lose from undermining that principle than the United States. Mr. Brennan adds that few institutions would be at greater risk than the CIA.

I urge my colleagues not to abolish JASTA, but let's fix it because the people we respect and admire the most and to whom we give the responsibilities to defend this Nation have unanimously agreed that we need this fixed.

I say to the President: I fear the profound consequences that may arise if we, with the best of intentions, do great, great damage to this Nation and its security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for their thoughtful and informed analysis of an important national security issue.

I ask unanimous consent to speak briefly, and I thank my colleague from Delaware for allowing me to do so.

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

REMEMBERING JOHN GLENN

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today on a sad occasion, and that is to talk about the loss of an American icon. He is a fellow Ohioan. He held this seat in the Senate. He is one of our true heroes, as an astronaut, fighter pilot, successful business person, Senator, and later someone who helped young people throughout the State of Ohio by establishing his own school at Ohio State University. I am talking about John Glenn. We lost him today at age 95.

I was watching some of the coverage on television about his career, and it focused a lot on his being the first to orbit the Earth on *Friendship 7*, a capsule you can see at the Air and Space Museum. It is not much bigger than two of these desks put together, but somehow he wedged himself in and did something heroic and important at the time. In a spaceflight competition with the Soviets, he was one who succeeded.

What I didn't hear too much about was his career before being a famous astronaut and that amazing flight that ended up with him addressing a joint session of Congress or what he did after that amazing feat. So I want to talk about that for a second and say that I appreciate that tomorrow my colleagues will help me in joining to pay tribute to him through a Senate resolution.

But prior to his being a famous astronaut, he was a famous American hero in my mind because he was a fighter pilot who signed up after Pearl Harbor, the 75th anniversary of which we celebrated this week. He flew 59 missions as a fighter pilot in World War II. He later flew about 90 missions in Korea. He was highly decorated as a fighter pilot. He then was a test pilot, and actually he broke the transcontinental flight time record as a test pilot. Then he decided to join the astronaut corps. He was part of that group of friendship astronauts who became famous later as being called "The Right Stuff." He was the right stuff.

He then had a successful career in business. He decided he loved public service, and he wanted to be in the Senate. He won election to the Senate and was actually reelected with historic numbers in my home State of Ohio. I got to serve with him during part of his time here. I was in the House; he was in the Senate. We worked on projects together.

He was on the same committee my colleague from Delaware was on, and both of them have chaired it, the Governmental Affairs Committee. He loved good government. One of his big issues was stopping unfunded Federal mandates. I was the House sponsor on the Republican side; he was the Democratic sponsor here. We ended up in the Rose Garden together for a ceremony.

He was tenacious. This was, by the way, an issue that not all Democrats agreed with him on; yet he did what he felt was right in the name of good government.

We also worked on other projects together, and I always found that his focus was on his State, the people he represented, and how to make their lives better.

After his Senate career, he started a new project. It was called the Glenn School of Public Affairs at the Ohio State University. I had the honor of teaching there for a few years before running for the Senate. I was a co-teacher for four different courses and got to know John Glenn in an entirely different way. He asked me to join their advisory board, which I did join. I am still on the advisory board for now the Glenn College. Last year we elevated the school to a college. This was John Glenn's greatest single accomplishment in the latter years of his life—creating an institution where young people can go and be inspired to go into public service and given the tools to be able to succeed. He loved that school. He loved those students. He chaired a board meeting only last month. He did it with humor, as he always did, and passion.

One of his big issues he talked about last month was how he wanted to have a leadership institute to ensure that more young people could understand the importance of government service, which he felt was a noble undertaking—military service, government service, service for your country, service greater than yourself. We lost an American icon.

He was also a man who loved his family. His wife, Annie Glenn—many of us here in this Chamber know her, and we love her because she is an amazing woman in her own right. For 73 years, they were married. They knew each other as little kids. They virtually grew up from the crib until now together. Annie Glenn was at his side constantly. That relationship, their partnership, is an example for my wife Jane and me and for all of us here in this Chamber.

Earlier this year, my staff and I had a retreat in Ohio. We brought all of our DC staff and Ohio staff together to talk about how to better serve our constituents, how to define the mission. I asked John Glenn to come address that group. What a treat. Our staff had the opportunity to sit and talk to John Glenn about his career, but more importantly, to talk about his passion for public service. The mission he gave us was one of honor and respect and decency for our constituents and to serve the people. That was his life.

John Glenn's life story touches our hearts today, and his life story is also part of American history.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I just want to thank our colleague from Ohio

for recalling the memory, the life of John Glenn and his wife Annie. I was privileged to know him. I am an Ohio State graduate, Navy ROTC. I am a retired Navy captain and a huge admirer of John Glenn and his bride.

One of my fondest memories of them was at an Ohio State football game a few years ago. As the Senator from Ohio knows, one of the big attractions at an Ohio State football game at halftime is to script "Ohio," where the band spells out the word "Ohio." Usually one of the tuba players kind of dances around for a while and then dots the "i." So fans are used to that happening. On this particular occasion, no tuba player came forward to dot the "i," but John Glenn and Annie went onto the field and dotted the "i," to the amazement and delight of 100-and-some-thousand fans. Later on, they came up. I was up in the President's box with President Gordon Gee. I am not sure; maybe my friend from Ohio was there as well. But what a joyous memory that was.

He ran for President briefly too. I was pleased to support him. He didn't stay in the race for long. I thought he was a great marine, great pilot, great astronaut, great Senator, and would have been a great leader for our country.

The last thing I will say is this. Who is it that said this? Maybe—Alan Simpson, former Senator from Wyoming. He used to say this about integrity: If you have it, nothing else matters. If you don't have it, nothing else matters.

When you look up the word "integrity" in the dictionary—and "courage" as well—you see John Glenn's picture.

Thank you for your kind and wonderful words about John Glenn and Annie. Thanks for letting me say a few words as well.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Mr. President, I have been coming to the floor, as the Senator from Ohio knows, for months—a couple of years, actually. I come maybe once a month. The Presiding Officer and I serve together, along with Senator PORTMAN, on a committee called Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Part of our job is to do oversight over the Department of Homeland Security.

I started doing something a couple of years ago. Instead of coming to the floor to talk about some controversy or things we disagree on with our colleagues across the aisle, I came to the floor for a different purpose. I came to the floor in order to say thank you to some of the 240,000-some men and women who are part of the Department of Homeland Security, who work hard to help secure our country and make it safer in many ways.

Over the last 4 years, I have been privileged to serve with our Presiding Officer and a number of others—Senator PORTMAN and others—as the senior Democrat on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, first as chairman for a couple of years with Tom Coburn from Oklahoma as our ranking member and for

the last 2 years as ranking member of the committee while RON JOHNSON has been our chairman.

I am incredibly proud of the fact that our committee is filled with hard-working men and women, Democrats and Republicans, who work across the aisle and party lines to bolster our national security and to help agencies and programs across government work better. We follow what I call the three C's: Communicate. Compromise. Collaborate.

Those are things we do in Delaware, and on our committee I am happy to report that the three C's hold forth as well.

Serving as the senior Democrat on our committee has truly been one of the great honors of my 16 years in the Senate. During my time as chairman and ranking member, I have had literally thousands of Department of Homeland Security employees—I have seen firsthand the exceptional work they do 240 hours a day—it probably feels that way—24 hours a day, 7 days a week across our country and even around the world. I am pictured here with some of them. They do extraordinary things that some of us don't even know about.

What we do is every week we come to the floor, and one of the best things you can do when people do great work is thank them. That is what I like to do. Since my first speech on this front a couple of years ago, I have come to the floor almost every month the Senate has been in session just to say thanks to a lot of deserving individuals, to teams, even entire agencies at the Department of Homeland Security that are doing extraordinary work quietly, behind the scenes, without a lot of attention, to enable the Department to carry out its vital missions—actually its many vital missions.

To everyone who has allowed me to share their stories with our colleagues here in Congress and the American people, thank you so much. To all of those folks at DHS who I have not had an opportunity to talk about or any agency I have missed, I want you to know that the work you do every day makes a real difference and is truly appreciated. While some of your accomplishments are hard to measure, they are nonetheless important. They are reflected in lives saved, tragedies prevented, and a sense of security that Americans feel as they go about their day.

Across the Department of Homeland Security, there is so much good work going on each and every day that if I stood here every day for the next 2 years, I would have no shortage of remarkable public servants to highlight.

As some of you may recall, the Department of Homeland Security employs over 240,000 Americans doing everything from securing our cyber network from cyber attacks, to guarding our ports of entry, to helping communities recover from natural disasters. Their mission is one of the most diverse and challenging, I think, of any

agency, any department in the Federal Government. The diversity of the employees I have highlighted these past many months is the best illustration of the challenges facing the Department of Homeland Security every day and facing our country every day.

Last month, I highlighted a U.S. Secret Service officer named Codie Hughes, who patrols the White House grounds as a uniformed Secret Service officer, and also Special Agent Tate Jarro, who protects Americans from cyber criminals and financial schemes that are designed to cheat those Americans out of their hard-earned dollars.

In January, I highlighted a fellow named Milo Booth who serves as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's tribal affairs officer, ensuring our Native American communities are prepared for natural disasters too.

In September, I thanked Tito Hernandez, who travels around this country—and he does that about 9 months out of the year—in the aftermath of natural disasters to coordinate the support of State and local officials as they work through some of the most trying situations.

Last year, last July, I spoke of the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate and the state-of-the-art research work being done by Dr. Michelle Colby and Jon McEntee, who are researching how to protect us against, among other things, emerging diseases, such as avian flu and foot-and-mouth disease, while helping the Department develop the technologies of tomorrow.

This past July, I thanked LCDR Tiana Garrett and Ingrid Hope with the Office of Health Affairs for their work to prepare our border agents, doctors, medical professionals, and first responders for the emerging threats posed by the Zika virus.

From the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, which tracks radiological materials across our country, to the National Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Center, which monitors cyber security attacks and coordinates Federal cyber security efforts with the private sector, the Department of Homeland Security is truly remarkable in its ability to work together as one cohesive unit to achieve its common mission.

While it has not always been easy, the Department of Homeland Security has matured by leaps and bounds in order to become more than the sum of its parts in the 14 years since its creation. The Department remains the youngest Cabinet-level agency in the Federal Government. It is also the third largest agency in our Federal Government, behind only the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. It was created by bringing together more than 22 different Federal agencies. Let me say that again—22 agencies sort of glommed together a dozen or so years ago into one big Department, DHS.

The sheer scope of the extraordinary challenge DHS and its employees face

means that leadership across the Department is vital to the success of that organization, as it is to any other organization but especially one this large and unwieldy. I have always said that the key to success for any organization, no matter what size, is leadership. Just like integrity—if you have it, nothing else matters; if you don't have it, nothing else matters.

SECRETARY JEH JOHNSON

Thankfully, the Department of Homeland Security has been blessed with enlightened, committed leaders since its creation. I, for one, cannot begin to say enough about the leadership shown these past 3 years by DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson, pictured here on my left.

Soon after being sworn in, Secretary Johnston immediately made clear that his highest priority would be management reform—he called it the Unity of Effort Initiative—intended to promote the coordination and cohesion throughout the Department. He also focused on employee engagement and the Department's hiring practices. He wanted to make sure that the good work at the Department was not going unnoticed.

Through his steady leadership, DHS has begun to slowly but surely turn—kind of like an aircraft carrier in the Navy—improving morale by 3 percent across the Department in the last year alone—the first increase in the Department I think in some 6 years. We are happy to see them bottom out and the improvement of the morale—the Department is heading in the right direction again. Jeh Johnson and his team deserve a lot of credit for that. I think, frankly, so does our committee, the Homeland Security Committee, and the good work we have done to try to make sure there is a good leadership team in place at DHS and that we convey clearly our gratitude to those men and women who work there—240,000 of them.

Being a change agent in the Federal Government can oftentimes be difficult, but I am confident that Secretary Johnson's dedication and his perseverance will make a lasting impact on the agency's greatest assets—its dedicated employees.

To Secretary Johnson, to his family, to his bride, I just want to say thank you for your extraordinary service. Every American is safer thanks to your leadership and your tireless efforts. Thank you, Jeh.

ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS

Until recently, Secretary Johnson's right-hand man was a fellow named Alejandro Mayorkas, a native of Cuba who came here a long time ago with his family, on the run, if you will. I like to call him Ali; so do most other people.

Ali recently stepped down as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security—that is the No. 2 slot there—but for 7 years, including one-third or so as the No. 2 person, Ali was working tirelessly to improve the security of our Nation and improve the operations of the Department before he

became Deputy Secretary. In that role, he was instrumental in strengthening the Department's cyber security policies, as well as developing critical immigration programs that cut down on fraud and helped promote economic growth.

Ali was a dedicated and thoughtful leader. His impact on the Department will continue to be felt for years to come in streamlined DHS operations that allow employees to spend less time on paperwork and more time on protecting Americans.

RUSS DEYO

When Ali left the Department a month or two ago to return to the practice of law, the Department's Under Secretary for Management, a fellow named Russ Deyo—rhymes with Rio—stepped in to fill his shoes.

As Under Secretary for Management, Russ has proved to be an effective leader also. With a strong but quiet demeanor, he is not afraid to make tough decisions.

Russ has been responsible for overseeing the Department's efforts to get the Department off of GAO's high-risk list. What is that? Well, the high-risk list is something the GAO puts out every other year. It is a high-risk list of wasting taxpayer money.

DHS, as well as a lot of other agencies, has been on it for quite a while. Russ has made very clear, with the support of Jeh Johnson and Ali Mayorkas, that they want to get off of that list the best they can. I think one of the greatest accomplishments may have been overseeing the creation of employee satisfaction programs in each and every component. I think they also got a clean audit. I think the Department of Defense, which has been around since the late 1940s, has never gotten a clean financial audit. I think for each of the last 4 years, the Department of Homeland Security has set a great example. It has gotten a clean financial audit.

I wish to say if you can't manage your finances, how do you expect to manage your whole department? That is just one aspect of the improvements being made.

With this information, Secretary Johnson and his leadership team across the Department can ask every single DHS employee: How are we doing? How can we help? What can we do better?

CRAIG FUGATE

Another DHS leader whom we all admire for his leadership and steady hand during some of those challenging times is the Administrator of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. His name is Craig Fugate and he hails from Florida.

For the last 8 years, Administrator Fugate has admirably led Federal responses and efforts through numerous disasters, including Superstorm Sandy, which landed a direct hit on the east coast, including a hit to my own State of Delaware. Throughout his tenure, Craig has used his whole community approach to strengthen our national

resiliency and help millions get back on their feet after a disaster. I know I speak for countless Americans when I say: Craig, thank you for your dedication to the mission of FEMA, for your years of leadership to our country, and the leadership you provided for a very good team across America.

PETER NEFFENGER

At the Transportation Security Administration, affectionately called TSA, retired Coast Guard VADM Peter Neffenger has helped his agency respond quickly and effectively to a historic surge in airline travel and navigate some of the busiest travel days in American history. Last month, over the course of just 7 days, TSA helped 16.5 million Americans travel safely to visit family and friends over the Thanksgiving holiday. His continued efforts to innovate while ensuring uniform training for all TSA officers—we call them TSOs—have streamlined security screening at our airports and ports of entry without compromising passenger security. The millions of Americans who travel through our airports each week are measurably safer, thanks to Vice Admiral Neffenger's service and that of the men and women he leads.

I just wish to say about the folks at TSA that whenever I go through airport security, I always thank them. I tell them who I am, tell them who the Senator is—the junior Senator from Nebraska—and tell them how much we appreciate the work they do. When you see people doing a good job, when you are going through an airport, just take a minute and thank these folks. Thank these men and women. It goes a long way. They have had a very tough job because over the course of Thanksgiving weekend, they had 16.5 million people trying to get through security—actually, get to the airport, get their families packed up, in their vehicles, cab, Uber, or a transit bus, and try to get to the airport, get a place to park, get through security, get on a plane—make their plane.

For the folks at TSA, their job is to make sure that nobody with malintent gets through security. You have all these people trying to get through as fast as they can, get on their plane, and get going. Then you have folks at TSA who are trying to make sure that nothing tragic happens in the meantime. That is a tough job. It is a tough job, and I urge you to give them a little bit of love and thank them for what they are doing from time to time.

Every time I speak on the floor about TSA, I encourage people to say thank you, and I have just done it one more time.

Our Nation is truly fortunate to have the Department of Homeland Security we have today. The few men I mentioned just now are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to truly great public servants at the helm of DHS. There are many more. A number of them are charged with organizations that work behind the scenes, quietly accom-

plishing their missions so that the rest of us can go about our lives uninterrupted every day.

SUZANNE SPALDING AND PHYLLIS SCHNECK

At something called the National Protection and Programs Directorate, Under Secretary Suzanne Spalding works with her great team to protect our Nation from ever-evolving cyber attacks. Her diligent team includes her deputy at the Directorate, Deputy Under Secretary Phyllis Schneck. I kid her. She is from Georgia Tech. I call her "Ramblin Wreck"—Phyllis Schneck, the Ramblin Wreck from Georgia Tech. She is a dynamo. She left the private sector where she was making a lot of money to come to serve her country and help lead the cyber security efforts of the Department of Homeland Security.

JOSEPH CLANCY

Also over at the Secret Service, we have a Director named Joe Clancy, who leads an organization of men and women who performed flawlessly as the agency has protected dozens of officials during the recent election season.

KATHY BRINSFIELD

Over in the Office of Health Affairs, Chief Medical Officer Kathy Brinsfield leads some of the best and brightest scientists in the world in their cutting research into emerging diseases.

REGGIE BROTHERS

At the Science and Technology Directorate, Reggie Brothers has led efforts across the Department to make smart investments in research and development for DHS and their State and local partners.

To all of you and to your agencies, again, a big thank you. These are just a few of the incredible leaders at the Department of Homeland Security, just a few.

SARAH SALDANA, GIL KERLIKOWSKA, LEON RODRIGUEZ, ADMIRAL PAUL ZUKUNFT

There are so many more who deserve our thanks for steady leadership, leaders such as Sarah Saldana, who leads Immigration and Customs Enforcement, known as ICE.

Gil Kerlikowski at Customs and Border Protection is a terrific leader.

Leon Rodriguez—I call him "Leon Red Bone"—is director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

We have the commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, ADM Paul Zukunft, whom everyone understandably simply calls "Admiral Z."

We say a very big thank you to all of you for your service and the hard work of those across your agencies. A retired Navy captain salutes the Coast Guard.

After 4 years as the lead Democrat on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, having met thousands of DHS employees, I believe our country is in many more ways more secure today than it was yesterday. However, given the evolving nature of the threats we face, this is not the time to spike the football; this is not the time to become complacent. We need to remain vigilant, continue

to work smarter, and continue to work harder.

With that thought in mind, I close by expressing the gratitude of all Americans to the Presiding Officer and to everyone at the Department of Homeland Security. I wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and a joyous holiday, as well as a more peaceful New Year for all of us. Keep up the good work. We are proud of you. Stay safe. God bless you all.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, my friend the Senator from Delaware has spoken very eloquently about the need to say thank you to our Members who work within TSA. I wish to speak in terms of members of the Armed Forces and to remind the people of America that we are free and we will be able to enjoy a very precious holiday season coming up because the men and women who wear that uniform are on the frontlines. It is their families who are making that sacrifice as they are away from home. We should keep all of them in our prayers and remember to say thank you to their families for the sacrifices they have made. Thank you to the men and women on the frontlines who keep us safe.

With that, as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I am pleased that we came together once again to pass the National Defense Authorization Act, a vital piece of legislation. It is a testament to the leadership of the chairmen and ranking members in the House and Senate that Members on both sides of the aisle have continued to work together to pass the NDAA again this year, and I thank them for their leadership.

It is important to continue this 55-year-plus tradition of passing the NDAA to show our troops and their families that they have our full support. As in years past, this year's NDAA includes policies to support our wounded warriors, our troops, and their families. It also provides our military with the tools needed to combat our enemies around the globe.

However, it is also the most significant defense reform legislation in decades. An example is its significant provisions to reform how the Department of Defense acquires new weapons.

Given that the No. 1 responsibility of the Federal Government is the defense of our Nation to keep Americans safe, it is reassuring that Congress has continued to pass the NDAA every year for over half a century.

To many Americans and even Members of Congress, the most visible manifestation of our NDAA is our combat vehicles, ships, and combat aircraft that have, with our outstanding serv-

icemenbers, made our Armed Forces second to none. Less visible are things such as training, maintenance, and adequate munitions, without which success on the battlefield would be in doubt.

I am pleased that this year's NDAA adequately authorizes funds for the DOD's operations and maintenance account, which provides the dollars for these vital but less visible functions.

The NDAA also stops the Department of Defense's proposed drawdown of an additional 15,000 soldiers, 2,000 marines, and approximately 4,000 airmen for fiscal year 2017.

Additionally, it addresses munitions shortfalls and provides funds for depot maintenance and facilities sustainment.

Importantly, it does not require women to register for the Selective Service and does not contain TRICARE prescription drug co-pay increases, both of which have been of concern to me and many other South Dakotans.

I am pleased it includes a number of provisions which I offered to address the serious cyber threat our Nation faces. One of those requires the President to define when an act in cyber space requires a military response. Another requires training for DOD hiring officials on how to use the special authorities Congress gave them to expedite the hiring of cyber security professionals and pay these civilian employees more than what is normally authorized for civil service.

I am also pleased that the conference report includes my mental health measure requiring the Department of Defense to more carefully monitor prescriptions dispensed at military treatment facilities for the treatment of PTSD.

I join my colleagues in urging the President to continue the decades-long tradition of signing the NDAA into law. While we champion this year's bill, the most significant defense reform legislation in decades, we must extend our view beyond fiscal year 2017.

For the past 2 years, I have served as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, bearing witness to potential challenges that could threaten our national security if we do not address them now, including arbitrary budget caps. These arbitrary budget caps have forced the kinds of false choices that are potentially so devastating for our Armed Forces. In particular, we must avoid the false choice of paying for readiness while assuming risk for modernization or vice versa.

The American people expect us to adequately defend America next year and for every year to come. Job one in that regard is to remove the arbitrary budget caps and the threat of sequestration. Only by doing so can Congress fulfill its No. 1 responsibility—keeping Americans safe.

In closing, I thank Chairman MCCAIN, Ranking Member REED, my Armed Services Committee colleagues, and all of our staffs for the great legis-

lation we had the honor to vote for today.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to associate myself with the objections raised by my colleague from Arizona, Senator JEFF FLAKE, concerning the 2016 Water Resources Development Act, WRDA, conference agreement.

I must express my dissatisfaction with the WRDA conference agreement. While I applaud the hard work by the conferees to advance a number of worthwhile flood control projects—some of which are located in my home State of Arizona—my objection centers around the inclusion of a massive drought relief package for California at the expense of drought priorities for Arizona.

For the past 2 years, Senator FLAKE and I have been negotiating with the committees of jurisdiction and certain offices of the California delegation to ensure that any drought legislation that comes to the Senate floor would be applicable to all Western States. We won provisions in the Senate-passed WRDA bill and the energy bill to expedite salt cedar removal and increase storage capacity for reservoirs across the West. Unfortunately, our WRDA provisions have been stripped by the conferees.

I cannot support a drought package that is overly California-centric while my home State and other Western States are also suffering under an oppressive 16-year drought.

MORNING BUSINESS

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EGYPT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have visited Egypt many times, and I have voted for billions of dollars in U.S. assistance for Egypt to support economic and security programs in that country. I have recognized positive developments in Egypt when they occur, such as the recent decision by the government to undertake economic reforms, including by reducing some subsidies.

I also recognize the security challenges Egypt faces from instability and violence in Libya and in the Sinai. The U.S. has an interest in helping Egypt confront these challenges by addressing the underlying causes in a manner that is consistent with international law.

Today I want to speak briefly about the Egyptian Parliament's recent passage of a restrictive new law on non-governmental organizations, NGOs, that would effectively cripple Egypt's civil society for years to come. Rather than sign this legislation, I hope President Sisi calls for a new version to be drafted in cooperation with independent NGOs. If President Sisi does sign this law, it will be yet another step in the wrong direction by a government that professes to be making progress on civil and human rights when the facts indicate otherwise.

Such a development would be further evidence of the need to strengthen existing democratic and human rights conditions on U.S. aid for Egypt.

According to information I have received, the law passed by parliament on November 29 would place all NGOs in Egypt, both local and foreign, under the supervision and control of a committee that would be dominated by representatives of the Defense, Interior, and Justice Ministries, as well as the General Intelligence Service, the country's top spy agency. Among other things, the law would criminalize work that harms "national security, national unity, public morals or public order" but leaves those terms undefined, allowing the authorities to bring such charges against any group they choose. Anyone convicted of violating the law would face sentences of up to 5 years in prison and a fine of up to \$56,000.

The proposed law comes at a time when independent voices in Egypt are facing an existential crisis. Instead of passing a new NGO law that would allow both domestic and international groups to operate without burdensome restrictions, the Egyptian authorities have escalated their crackdown on independent NGOs, particularly against groups that focus on human rights, the rule of law, and democratic norms.

Over the past year, a court has frozen the assets of human rights groups and the personal assets of human rights defenders. At least 15 NGO founders, leaders, or staff—many from prominent groups—have been banned from leaving the country. An investigation into the foreign funding of dozens of local NGOs could result in criminal charges carrying sentences of up to 25 years in prison. This pattern of harassment and arrests is not a new phenomenon. It has been happening for years, and, contrary to representations of Egyptian officials, it is getting worse.

I urge the Egyptian authorities to adhere to their constitution, and the pledges they have made in international fora such as the United Nations Human Rights Council, by guaranteeing freedom of expression and association. I urge President Sisi to reject this draconian legislation.

I also want to reiterate what I said in this chamber on September 27, 2016, when I spoke about Aya Hijazi, a young Egyptian American social worker currently being detained in Egypt.

Ms. Hijazi, along with her Egyptian husband and five employees of their NGO Belady, has been accused of salacious crimes—accusations that the government has yet to corroborate with credible evidence in a court of law. Ms. Hijazi has been jailed and denied due process since May 21, 2014. She and the other defendants should be released immediately or provided a fair, public trial so they can defend themselves.

REMEMBERING DAVID BUDBILL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is saddened by the death of the poet David Budbill, whose poetry celebrated the simple pleasures of life in Vermont and highlighted the lives of working Vermonters. He died on Sept 25, at the age of 76.

In the State that gave the world Robert Frost, Vermonters know and love our authentic poets. Through David Budbill's 10 books of poetry, 7 plays, an opera libretto, 2 children's books, and many public performances and readings, he became the most widely known and loved Vermont poet since Robert Frost.

He was born in Cleveland, OH, in 1940, and after attending Union Theological Seminary in New York City and teaching at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, he moved to Vermont—to Wolcott—in 1969.

He then learned to use a chainsaw and worked in the woods to make a living, while also writing poems about the people he met and about his experiences there. His first book of poems, "The Chain Saw Dance," was published in 1976.

Other poems and books of poems followed, and David gradually created a fictionalized version of his own community, which he called Judevine—a place where rough-hewn loggers, sawyers, farm wives, gas station attendants, and shattered Vietnam veterans struggled to make a living amid the rugged beauty of rural Vermont. That material was later shaped into a play, also entitled Judevine, which was widely produced, both in Vermont and nationally.

Then in the 1990s, Budbill's focus deepened. He began writing poems about his own life in Walcott, thinly disguising himself as "Judevine Mountain," an old Chinese sage, who somehow was settled on a nearby Vermont hillside. He wrote with the spareness, directness and clarity of the ancient Asian poets he admired. One short example is "What Issa Heard." Issa is an 18th century Japanese haiku poet. Here is what David wrote:

"WHAT ISSA HEARD"

Two hundred years ago Issa heard the morning birds
singing sutras to this suffering world.

I heard them too, this morning, which must mean,

since we will always have a suffering world,
we must also always have a song.

David wrote poetry and plays that tapped into and expressed the essence of northern Vermont, and he plumbed these subjects so deeply that they became universal through his pen. His rural characters, Antoine, Grace, Tommy, and others, are quintessential Vermonters, but they are also vivid human beings with the same sorts of hopes, fears, triumphs, and disappointments that we all experience. Similarly, his "Judevine Mountain" poems were expressions of his own life, but they continue to resonate deeply with

the lives of everyone who has read and loved his poems.

In short, David Budbill's poetry and plays accurately, meaningfully and profoundly depict rural Vermont—his place, that is also our place. They have a universality that have and will enrich lives in Vermont and in the larger world forever.

TRIBUTE TO HENRY JARECKI

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Henry and Gloria Jarecki are two of my longest and best friends. I speak, of course, both because of our personal friendship, but also of their efforts with the important Scholar Rescue Fund, a program designed to provide fellowships for scholars whose are persecuted or threatened at home for the important work they do. This commitment is especially poignant, when considering that, as a child, Henry fled the Holocaust in Germany, ultimately settling in the United States.

Both Henry and Gloria have worked to bring about recognition and understanding of people of different races, religions, and cultures. To me, Henry has been more than just a friend. He has been a mentor and a confidant. Some of the happiest times for Marcelle and me have been with Henry and Gloria.

Dr. Henry Jarecki recently received the Order of Merit, Officer's Cross, in Heidelberg, Germany. The Order of Merit is the only federal decoration in the Federal Republic of Germany. This high honor is befitting not only of Henry's history, but of his long dedication to promoting the simple but sometimes difficult principles of freedom and liberty.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of Dr. Henry Jarecki's moving remarks upon receiving this prestigious honor be printed in the RECORD.

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

DR. HENRY JARECKI: ACCEPTANCE OF ORDER OF MERIT, OFFICER'S CROSS—NOVEMBER 17, 2016

OPENING THANKS

It is a great honor to receive this award from the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Joachim Gauck, a leader honored by Germany for transforming his experiences with totalitarianism into support for freedom, human rights, and democracy. Thank you, Minister Bauer and Mayor Würzner, for presenting it to me. Thanks also to Rektor Eitel for his thoughtful welcome. Let me also thank two special individuals who have played a prominent role in this award: the former Consul General of Germany to New York, Busso von Alvensleben, who is here with us tonight, and the current Consul General of Germany to New York, Brita Wagener.

I am of course thrilled to have so many friends and members of my family here with me at this special event, including my sons Andrew, Tom, and Nick and my grandsons Alexander and Tyler. Most of all, I acknowledge my wife, Gloria. It was on this very day in 1957 that the lovely Gloria Friedland became my wife. After 59 years of marriage, I think she deserves her own award!

SYMMETRY

This is a very personal moment for me. When I look at my life, I see that it has been defined by one thing: the desire to make unruly things symmetrical, to smooth over the bumps of life, and to identify and align the parts that do not fit.

This is how I made sense of the events that first took me away from Germany and have now brought me back, accepting an award in this most distinguished Alte Aula.

Over 75 years ago, I had to flee in fear from this very country that is now presenting me with this great honor. The Hitler regime had come to power less than three months before my birth, gaining strength by finding scapegoats for the troubles of the German people that were caused by World War I and the peace treaty, and from the ensuing inflation and depression. The Nazis alleged that the country's defeat, hunger, and chaos were due to traitors and to Jews, whom they called foreigners despite the fact that they had been in Germany ever since the Romans drove them here in the 70th year of the Christian Era. My family, which could trace itself back for generations, was unwilling to believe that this land of Goethe and Heine could be governed by a nativist group of criminals: "Surely they can't mean us," my family said. But they did.

We didn't believe it until we had all been arrested and stripped of almost everything we owned. Only then did we flee, first to England and then to America. America welcomed us, as it usually does welcome refugees, despite the occasional internal bigot. This rescue and welcome gave us the opportunity to transform ourselves into hard-working patriots.

The Nazis had forced us out of Germany but they couldn't force the German out of us. We held on to our roots. We held on to some of the language, especially after we heard our parents lapse into German when telling each other secrets. "Aber nicht vor den Kindern." Our father taught us skat and told us about Heidelberg, where he had studied before going to the front in the First World War.

Unlike some of our fellow refugees, we made sense of what had happened not by rejecting Germany but by re-engaging with it as soon as we possibly could. In fact, my brother and I returned to Heidelberg in 1951 to pursue the same medical studies as our father had.

Doing so was our way of re-assuming our character as Germans. Philipp Schwartz, the Frankfurt professor of pathology who fled to Zurich in 1933 and rescued over 1,000 dismissed German scholars, years later said of his work: "We committed ourselves to represent the true spirit of the German nation to the world."

This re-engagement, which brought my past and present into alignment, is the reason for my award today. In seeking to make the different parts of my life fit, I have engaged actively with both the city of Heidelberg and the city of New York. I have looked for ways to further strengthen the U.S.-Germany relationship. And I have felt perfectly at home in both places, perhaps, as my wife and closest friends would say, just a bit more exuberantly in Germany, like the eighteen-year-old I was when I found myself in my lost homeland.

REFUGEES

My U.S.-German outlook, as well as my own personal experience as both a refugee and an academic, give me a unique perspective on what is happening in Germany today and have brought me to a new initiative, about which I will tell you in a few minutes.

Germany finds itself at the center of a new refugee crisis, and this time the country is

courageously doing what it can to help. There were 60 million people displaced after the Second World War, 21/2% of the world's then-prevailing population. Today, there are 65 million refugees among the world's 7 billion people, less than 1%. The proportion makes today's situation sound better than it is, however. After World War II, most refugees were resettled within a few years. Today, a refugee's average stay in a camp is over 15 years.

During both times, refugees (we called ourselves "refs") remained controversial. Some people think of them only as weak, poor, and burdensome. Others think they are smart opportunists or terrorists just waiting for the chance to become violent or, at the very least, take our jobs.

We need an alternative narrative. I propose this: Germany's new incoming refugees are smart, strong, ambitious, and young. Our support of them now will yield great results for Germany into the future.

Throughout history, such refugee flows have always been with us. The world has in fact made the best of them; it has come to use them like an accelerated form of Darwinian natural selection. Faced with the turmoil and xenophobia that is a never-ending part of our flawed psyches and world, only the strongest and smartest, the most resilient and the hardest workers, are able to re-establish themselves. The philosopher Lin-Manuel Miranda, speaking of Alexander Hamilton, said it well: "Immigrants get the job done."

Their youth is part of their strength. Over two-thirds of them are below the age of 33. Germany's rapidly aging population makes these migrants just the people Germany needs for its future. They are, moreover, ambitious, smart, and anxious to learn.

COMMITMENT TO HEIDELBERG

My own life serves as an example of the accelerated natural selection premise.

As I mentioned before, Heidelberg readily welcomed me and my family and gave me an education that made me thrive. We have done what we could to reciprocate. Soon after he came to office, I asked the Mayor what I could do to express my gratitude. He suggested that I help to develop a dilapidated rail yard into a science campus that would attract talent from all over the world.

Over the past few years and through the Max Jarecki Foundation, Tony and I have worked with a dedicated team to develop a whole new part of the city—the Bahnstadt. I thank Mayor Würzner, his chief of staff Nicole Huber, Giles Hemmings, who manages the Max Jarecki Foundation, Tobias Wellensiek, who is not only our legal advisor but also the son of my friend of 60 years Jobst Wellensiek, and city officials who have helped make our Bahnstadt project a reality—including Mr. Mevius, Mr. Dietz, and Mrs. Friedrich—for their help. The Bahnstadt is one of the greenest developments in this country, with full access to new technologies, and within minutes of Heidelberg's preeminent educational institutions. This project is a great example of Heidelberg's successful integration of tradition and innovation, science and business, the past and the future. As the British writer G.K. Chesterton said, "Tradition means not that the living are dead; it means that the dead come alive."

I am fortunate to have had an outstanding team facilitating our efforts. This team has been led by the talented Tony Detre, who took the ideas proposed by the Mayor and helped to make them a reality. I simply could not have done this work without him.

Today, I would like to make several new commitments to the city and the university and to undertake a new partnership with the state.

Earlier today, we dedicated a new creativity-oriented adventure playground in the Emmertsgrund, a part of the city in which many families of modest means live, many of them from immigrant and refugee backgrounds.

Just as Mayor Würzner repeatedly looks for new ways for us to help our city, Rektor Eitel finds new ways for us to collaborate in the development of the university. He started by taking me to see the dilapidated Anatomy building and asked me to help restore it. He now asks for help in refurbishing the University's Max Weber House, an important part of Heidelberg's recent intellectual history. I point out to my many American guests that this university, my alma mater, founded in 1386, is the oldest university in Germany. It is indeed one of the oldest in the world. It, too, owes its existence to refugees: it was the Great Schism of 1378 that made it possible for Heidelberg, a small city at the time, to gain its own university. Two popes were elected that year—one in Avignon by the French, and one in Rome by the Italians. When Germany supported Rome and not France, German students and teachers in Paris were thrown out, becoming (yes, we see this again) academic refugees. This led to the founding of the university, bringing to full circle its willingness to take in today's refugees.

SCHOLAR RESCUE

This brings me quite neatly to my final topic of the evening: a scholar rescue partnership I wish to create with the state of Baden-Württemberg.

My own scholar rescue work started in 2002. Drawing upon my own background as an academic and a former refugee, I joined together with several other trustees of New York's Institute of International Education, or IIE, to form a new entity that would respond to what seemed like an ever-present need to rescue persecuted scholars. With IIE's long history of this work in mind, and with the blessing of IIE's President, Dr. Allan Goodman, who is here with us tonight, we formed the Scholar Rescue Fund.

Over the past 14 years, IIE's Scholar Rescue Fund has saved the lives and work of nearly 700 professors from 56 countries, placing them in over 350 safe haven universities in more than 40 countries around the world, including Germany. It was this work that led us, last year, to partner with the Philipp Schwartz Initiative, fostered by Foreign Minister Steinmeier and managed by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation with federal resources. I am pleased to see its Director-General, Dr. Enno Aufderheide, and Director of Strategy, Dr. Barbara Sheldon, here with us tonight. This program enables German universities to host threatened scholars from around the world, thus further emphasizing Germany's role and status as a safe haven country.

As evidenced by the history of the University of Heidelberg, this is a very old story. From the burning of the great library of Alexandria, scholars have fled persecution to safe havens, bringing their knowledge and skills with them and greatly enriching academic life in their new homes. The sack of Constantinople in the year 1204 caused its best scholars to flee from Turkey to Europe, and is said to have produced the European Renaissance. More recently, the U.S. benefited greatly from scientists and scholars expelled by the Nazis, as did the Turkish higher education system, which was rebuilt in the 1930s and 1940s by over 1,000 German scholars. As collaborators of the Scholar Rescue Fund for the past 10 years, Jordan's Prince Talal and Princess Ghida valiantly made their country into a safe haven for Iraqi scholars, welcoming hundreds of talented academics into their universities. And now Germany has stepped up to help.

The need today is very great. Scholars around the world are facing fresh repression and conflict. More scholars are fleeing Iraq and Syria, a new crisis looms in Turkey, and increasing threats to academics have emerged in countries as diverse as Bangladesh and Ethiopia.

Today, I would like to tell you about developing a new partnership. Over the past few weeks, several colleagues and I have met with Theresia Bauer, Minister of Science, Research and Art for the state of Baden-Württemberg, of which Heidelberg is a part. We have discussed an innovative idea to add to Germany's current scholar rescue efforts by joining together SRF, private funds, and the state of Baden-Württemberg. We are happy to have the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung as a partner who, with the Ministry, will support a new group of persecuted academics to be placed specifically in this state. The supervisory board of the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung just decided last week to join the program. I am happy to welcome the Executive Director, Christoph Dahl, today.

While the details of such a unique multi-lateral partnership remain to be confirmed, and we all look forward to guidance from our friends at the Humboldt Foundation, I can say a few things. First, this very much follows in the tradition of Baden-Württemberg, under Minister Bauer, showing leadership on such issues, most recently with a new program to provide scholarships to refugee students. Second, such a new program makes best use of SRF's power to find and vet persecuted academics from any country and every field. Third, it shows both the power and promise of private philanthropy to bring different groups together to find creative solutions to urgent problems. It is just this type of collaborative thinking that we need in our inter-connected world.

What we see now as a refugee problem may well become an even greater deluge in the near future as climate change devastates ever more of our planet, and technology enables tyrants to maintain power more cruelly.

We live on a tiny ball spinning through a largely empty space. And if we don't share this small world that we inhabit, it will be its end. Building walls is futile; equally bad, they put the people on each side into prisons, no matter how prettily they are wall-papered.

We in the so-called first world are, with our ferocious energy consumption, deeply implicated in the changes we see today, and the greater ones we will see tomorrow. More and more people will come to us, dragging their young children across the seas and the mountains to come to a place they don't know a continent away. We should feel deeply honored, but we must live up to it. If we don't, the liberties they hope we have will be lost to us all.

"Giess Wasser zur Suppe und heiss alle willkommen" ("Add water to the soup and make everyone welcome") is an old German folk saying. Those ancestors well understood that a meal cannot be enjoyed, a peace not maintained, and one's own not protected without sharing and compromise. It is a bit of German folk wisdom that has survived all imperializing regimes and their detriments.

Once again, I thank you for the great honor of this award and commit myself, in the spirit of true and authentic partnership, to do this critical and urgent work together.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT PAQUIN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Robert Paquin is retiring after 40 years working as a dedicated public servant in

Vermont and on Capitol Hill in Washington. Bob has committed his entire career to making the Federal Government a positive force in the lives of individuals and communities. He has accomplished much, particularly on behalf of our State of Vermont.

Bob, as Marcelle and I have always known him, was my longest serving staff member and is among the longest serving personal staff members in U.S. Senate history. He began in my Washington office in 1977 and then moved to Vermont to serve as one of my outstanding field representatives. He ended his congressional staff service 32 years later, in 2009, to take a leadership role at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA, in the Obama administration.

On my staff in Washington, Bob worked on defense, foreign policy, and appropriations, and in Vermont, he supported my work on agriculture, conservation, energy, and environmental protection. He also helped to manage my Vermont offices and provided constituent services to countless Vermonters.

Bob brought Vermont values on conservation, sustainable and organic agriculture, dairy, and rural development to my work on many farm bills, affecting national agricultural practices, policy, and economics to this day.

Bob also helped to develop the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act of 1990, worked on its reauthorization in 2001, and supported my efforts every year to maintain sufficient Federal support for the Lake Champlain cleanup efforts. He worked day in and day out to nurture and grow important partner organizations in Vermont, including the Lake Champlain Basin Program, Lake Champlain Sea Grant, the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, the Lake Champlain sea lamprey control program, and many more that have helped to leverage Federal investments in conservation and the cleanup of Lake Champlain.

I strongly believe that land conservation is an important part of the heritage of every Vermonter. Bob worked on the ground to help establish the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, the Nulhegan/Conte National Wildlife Refuge and the Upper Missisquoi and Trout National Wild and Scenic Rivers. He also helped me as I fought for the addition of more than 100,000 acres to the Green Mountain National Forest, protection of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and establishment and expansion of eight Federal wilderness areas in Vermont. He also worked on the delivery of Capitol Christmas trees from Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest to Washington, DC.

Time does not allow me to catalogue all of Bob's accomplishments while on my staff, but his greatest impact may have been his simple and honest interactions in helping thousands of Vermont constituents with problems and requests over so many years. Bob

is known for his troubleshooting and advocacy for Vermonters in every corner of the State.

In 2009, I gave my highest recommendation to the incoming administration of President Obama for Bob to be appointed as executive director of the Farm Service Agency in Vermont. Bob has distinguished himself in that role—helping Vermont farmers recovering from Tropical Storm Irene, implementing new programs under the 2014 farm bill, assisting new Americans from the refugee community to start farms, supporting our dairy farmers through tough times, and nurturing his dedicated USDA staff across Vermont.

Robert Paquin has been a truly exceptional and dedicated public servant for Vermont and the Nation for four decades. I will continue to seek his advice, and Marcelle and I wish him and his wife, Theresa, all the best in the future.

TRIBUTES TO HARRY REID

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as a young man growing up in Searchlight, Nevada, HARRY REID was an accomplished amateur boxer. During his 30 years of service in this Chamber, Senator REID has demonstrated time and again the qualities of skill, hard work, and determination that he learned in the ring all those years ago.

Prior to joining the Senate in 1987, Senator REID established a deep commitment to public service in the House of Representatives and in State and local offices. And before that, he served Congress and supported his young family working nights as a Capitol police officer while attending law school at George Washington University. As a Senate leader, serving as Democratic whip, majority leader, and, currently, Democratic leader, he has been a formidable advocate for his caucus.

In the Senate, Senator REID has been a passionate voice for education, environmental protection, health care, and renewable energy. His commitment to those who serve our Nation in uniform is evident through his support for military readiness and for our veterans.

The great Jack Dempsey defined a champion as "someone who gets up when he can't." In his many years of service to the people of Nevada and to our nation, Senator HARRY REID has proven himself to be a fighter who always answers the bell. I wish him and his wife, Landra, health and happiness for many more years to come.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I have had the honor and privilege of serving with HARRY REID for all of my 16 years in the Senate. He has been a resolute leader for our Caucus, a fearless legislator who has brought landmark legislation to the floor and a tireless advocate for Nevadans and all Americans. More importantly, I am proud to call HARRY a friend.

We all know the story of HARRY's journey to elected office from that small mining town in Nevada. The

humble way he grew up inspired him to help others who faced similar hardships his family had faced. He carried that perspective with him from Searchlight, NV, to the halls of the Capitol, where he became a champion for causes meant to improve the lives of all Americans.

HARRY is a fighter. That has been said by so many of his friends and colleagues over the years, and it is truer of him than almost anyone I have ever worked with. That title, of course, has more than one meaning for HARRY. His years of amateur boxing taught him strategy and relentless willpower in the face of his opponents. His years in the Senate have been no different. He has had to fight for historical legislation in an increasingly vitriolic political climate, things like the Affordable Care Act and the stimulus bill, legislation that gave millions of Americans hope for their futures.

HARRY has also been a very powerful ally for me and my fellow Floridians, specifically in the fight to protect the State's fragile environment. He has always been right there with me in pushing for Everglades funding and vigorously defended our coastline from drilling proposals that threatened Florida's economy and unique environment.

His leadership has been a source of guidance and great strength for me during my time in the Senate. I am honored to have served with him and wish him and his family well in his retirement.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the many accomplishments of my friend, Senator HARRY REID, my colleague from Nevada, during his storied career in the U.S. Senate.

Growing up in a modest household without an indoor bathroom, hot water, or a telephone, HARRY learned the values of family, faith, and education. HARRY understood that it is the most vulnerable in society that need the strongest champions, someone to fight for them.

HARRY's service to the people of Nevada began long before he came to Congress. After attending law school at George Washington University, Leader REID returned home and served as Henderson's City Attorney. At the age of 28, he was elected to the Nevada State Assembly. Two years later, Leader REID became the youngest Lieutenant Governor in Nevada history. HARRY experienced political losses early in his career, but he never let that hold him back. After 5 years as chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission, HARRY won election to the U.S. House in 1982. He served two terms before winning his first U.S. Senate race in 1986.

HARRY's stint as an amateur boxer taught him to never back down from a fight, no matter how big. Throughout his Senate career, the people of Nevada have been able to count on HARRY to fight for them.

He has spearheaded investments in clean energy, established Nevada's first national park, Great Basin National

Park, and led passage of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill of Rights.

As majority leader, he shepherded landmark legislation through the Senate—The Affordable Care Act, Wall Street Reform, the Recovery Act, and many more. Despite the powerful interests lining up to defeat these efforts, HARRY didn't back down. He worked hard and got things done. As a result, millions of Americans have health care.

We have fought our way back from the Great Recession of 2008. Consumers now have more protection against powerful companies. It is fair to say, HARRY's leadership has improved our country and our families' lives.

Today I want to focus on a few issues where I was particularly proud to have worked with him. Leader REID has been a longtime champion for the Filipino World War II Veterans. This group of over 260,000 Filipino veterans answered President Roosevelt's call during World War II and fought heroically under the U.S. flag. Unfortunately, they have had to endure another fight over the course of seven decades—the fight for the recognition and benefits they were promised. Leader REID has been at the forefront of this fight. He has helped secure compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs. We have worked together to reunify the remaining veterans with their children. And just last week, the House passed and sent the President my legislation awarding Filipino World War II veterans the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor Congress can bestow. Leader REID was instrumental in getting this bill through the Senate, and I deeply appreciate his support.

Nevada is home to a vibrant Filipino-American community. Leader REID is deeply familiar with the experiences and struggles of Filipino veterans and their families. He worked with Hawaii's late Senator Dan Inouye to create the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund within the VA in 2009. The fund's creation was a significant step forward in recognizing the dedicated service and sacrifice of these veterans. I was proud to have Leader REID join me in our successful effort to secure appropriations language prohibiting any attempts to direct these funds to other programs.

This past May, the Obama administration finalized a parole program that would allow family members of Filipino World War II veterans to come to the United States to be reunited with their aging parents and siblings. These veterans had already waited decades to be reunited with their children in the Philippines.

Speaking at my press conference announcing the program, HARRY honored the veterans' sacrifice saying, "in those islands where MacArthur left, the Filipinos were left there with some of our troops and they fought valiantly and were not recognized."

Finally, I want to highlight Leader REID's work on immigration. In 2009,

while campaigning in Nevada, a young woman named Astrid Silva slipped a note to HARRY. Astrid was brought to the United States when she was 4 years old. Unable to work legally, Astrid babysat to earn money. She excelled at school but feared deportation if she applied to college. In the following years, Astrid and HARRY corresponded, and he learned of the hopes, dreams, and struggles of the DREAMers.

In a 2013 interview hours before the Senate passed comprehensive immigration reform, HARRY said, "This is why I did this . . . because of some things she said."

Later, when speaking on the floor before the vote, HARRY said, "I appreciate every one of those letters she sent me, because each was a reminder of what is at stake in this debate." A testament to HARRY's character, even while serving in one of the most powerful roles in Washington, HARRY never forgot who he was fighting for.

Aloha, HARRY. As we say in Hawaii, a hui hou, "until we meet again."

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about my longtime friend and colleague BARBARA BOXER, who is retiring from this body along with me this year.

Senator BOXER will be remembered as an inspiration to young women across our country. Her career is a textbook of how to get involved in public service. Starting at the local level, she came out of the antiwar movement and got involved in the environmental movement and local causes. Taking lessons from grassroots organizing, she ran for the Marin County Board of Supervisors. She lost that first race, but she didn't give up. She ran again and won and became the first female chair.

Eventually, she made her way to the U.S. House of Representatives. Along the way, she heard a lot of "no," but always turned it into a "yes." She never quit, never lost faith in herself, and never stopped trying.

When it looked like the accusations of Anita Hill would be swept under the rug, I spoke out in the Senate against it, but I was only one female voice. BARBARA BOXER came to my aid. Even though she was in the House, she led a troop of fierce House women running up the steps to the Senate to face down the Judiciary Committee and demand they shed light on the accusations of sexual harassment. BARBARA had the crack team of ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, Pat Schroeder, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, NITA LOWEY, Jolene Unsoeld, and Patsy Mink to back her up. They marshalled the press and marched right up these steps. They knocked on the door and were going to be turned away because they weren't Senators. But they pointed to that group of photographers and said, "We are going to tell them that you turned us away, what do you think will happen then? So they were let in and made their case. Those Senators couldn't face the calculation and

fury of BARBARA BOXER and the House women, and those hearings were convened. The Anita Hill hearings made an indelible mark on this country.

It really woke America up as to what was going on in the workplaces around the country for women and how little representation women really got in Congress. Watching that all-male Judiciary Committee tear into Professor Hill for daring to accuse her boss of sexual harassment, the women of America took action and elected BARBARA BOXER, DIANNE FEINSTEIN, Carol Mosely Braun, and PATTY MURRAY to the U.S. Senate.

I was thrilled when BARBARA came to me thinking about running for the Senate. I told her it was the perfect time: she can do more in the Senate and be heard in the Senate. I said would be worth the fight to get her here with me, even if just to have someone I could see eye-to-eye with on a daily basis.

BARBARA even started an exercise program in the House when we were there together. She showed up in colorful leotards, and Geraldine Ferraro came looking like a photo op for Vanity Fair, and Olympia Snowe wore this gorgeous outfit. I show up, chunky yet funky, and the instructor is yelling, "Go for the burn! Put your hands on your waist and bend, bend, bend!" And I turned to BARBARA and said, "If I had a waist, I wouldn't be here." Well, those exercise classes may not have lasted long for me, but her energy just couldn't be beat.

Her zip and zest is pure California sunshine, and Californians have more sunshine in their spirit because of her work. Her energy has brought light to California and light to the sometimes dreary Capitol hallways.

I am going to miss my good friend and irreplaceable political partner. Democrats have had a lot of tough fights over the last 25 years, and the two BARBARAS have always been there, side by side. We voted against the war in Iraq, both believing it was a mistake. We were in the minority, but both of us still believe it was one of the best votes we have ever taken as Senators. We stood up for what we believed in and what we thought was right—which is exactly what our constituents sent us here to do.

BARBARA BOXER has been there for our children, leading the way for after school programs and making sure they are kept safe. She has fought against wasteful spending in the Pentagon—the \$400 hammer and the \$7,000 coffee pot. She has defended women's right to choose and protected women against domestic violence. She has held the feet of polluters to the fire as the champion of clean air, clean water, and our natural resources. It is too hard to pinpoint just one thing the Senate will miss about her: her political prowess, her dedication and determination, her undying loyalty and friendship. All of those and more will be missed.

As we end this session of Congress and our careers in the Senate, I wish

BARBARA and her husband, Stewart, many happy days ahead as they start writing this new chapter in their lives. Even if we are on opposite sides of the country, I know I will always have a friend in California.

TRIBUTE TO MARK KIRK

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, on January 3, 2013, Senator MARK KIRK climbed the 45 steps to the U.S. Capitol, triumphantly returning to work after a year of intensive recovery from a stroke. To the cheers of colleagues and friends, he called it one of the greatest moments of his life.

It was a moment of courage and determination that defined a life dedicated to serving the people of Illinois and of our Nation. From his service in the Navy Reserve as an intelligence officer, to the World Bank, the State Department, the House International Relations Committee, and five terms representing the 10th Congressional District of Illinois, Senator KIRK brought to this chamber a wealth of experience, wisdom, and commitment.

I had the pleasure of working alongside Senator KIRK on the Appropriations, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and Aging Committees. His approach to legislating has been in the highest traditions of the Senate: Informed, passionate, and always civil. He looked at the issues before the Senate not through the lens of a political partisan, but rather through the lens of a pragmatic problem solver and consensus builder.

Senator KIRK has been a valued ally on many fronts. We introduced the REGROW Act to accelerate the development of new therapies for patients living with such diseases as Alzheimer's disease and diabetes and to achieve breakthroughs in stroke recovery. I was proud to be named with him to serve on the Women's and Family Global Health Task Force so that the United States will continue to be a leader in preventing maternal and childhood deaths from treatable causes. We joined together on vital legislation to keep firearms out of the hands of terrorists and in addressing our Nation's opioid addiction crisis. He has always had a deep commitment to good government and was a strong voice for accountability through independent, effective inspectors general.

As chairman and former ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, Senator KIRK has worked tirelessly on behalf of the men and women who serve our country. Following in the tradition of Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen, who helped pass the Civil Rights Act a half-century ago, Senator KIRK has been a leader in ensuring the rights of America's LGBT community.

The past election brought disappointment, but it also revealed character. Senator KIRK ran a vigorous but honorable campaign and never compromised

his principles. When the decision went against him, he conceded graciously, reminding Americans that what unites us is far stronger than what divides us.

It has been an honor to serve with Senator KIRK in the U.S. Senate. It has been a joy to develop our friendship, one I will cherish always. I wish him all the best in the years to come, and I know that he will meet any challenges that lie ahead with the strength and fortitude he brought to those 45 steps of the U.S. Capitol.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, today I wish to honor my friend, colleague, and mentor from Maryland, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, who is retiring at the end of this year. BARBARA has an impressively long and distinguished career in public service, representing her home State of Maryland in Congress for nearly 40 years.

Since I came to the Senate in 2013, it has been a pleasure to serve alongside titans like Senator MIKULSKI. As a matter of fact, my first official Senate office was tucked in-between hers and then-Senator Rockefeller's on the fifth floor of Hart. As neighbors we formed a friendly bond, and I oftentimes would stop by to chat with her or sometimes just Mrs. O'Malley, who runs a tight ship. On occasion, Senator Rockefeller and I would overstay our welcome, and Mrs. O'Malley would kick us out and send us back to our offices. For those of you who don't know, Mrs. O'Malley has played a critical role in Senator MIKULSKI's office for nearly 30 years and has helped instill the values of hard work and dedication to a generation of Hill staffers.

As the longest serving woman in Congress, Senator MIKULSKI has inspired a generation of women to pursue careers in public service and run for higher office. As dean of the women Senators, BARBARA worked to mentor new women Senators on how to be effective legislators and build coalitions across party lines to advance landmark legislation. The bipartisan women's group has met regularly under her leadership, helping bridge partisan divides that so often plague this Chamber by getting Senators to know each other on a personal level over her homemade Maryland crabcakes.

One cannot mention Senator MIKULSKI without also mentioning her fierce advocacy and determination to make Maryland and our country a better place to live, work, and raise a family. One of the first bills I cosponsored when I came to the Senate was the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, VAWA, which BARBARA played a critical role in originally passing. Since its passage in 1994, VAWA has been effective in responding to domestic violence. Additionally, she has worked tirelessly in the fight to close the pay gap for women, who currently earn about three-quarters of what men

earn, by advancing the Paycheck Fairness Act, which I have proudly cosponsored twice now. Women shouldn't make 77 percent of what men earn for the same job. This hurts families who are just looking to take care of their kids, put food on their table, and keep a roof over their heads.

Just as Senator MIKULSKI has been an advocate for families, she also understands the critical role science, research, and innovation play in creating economic growth in the United States. Maryland is home to several great institutions, such as the Goddard Space Flight Center, which I had the pleasure of visiting last fall, that are at the forefront of their respective fields. When I was at Goddard, the Director showed me the fascinating work their researchers and engineers are engaged in and how NASA's various missions help us enhance crop production and be better stewards of our planet. Her work on the Senate Appropriations Committee has helped keep the United States at the forefront of scientific discovery and technological innovation.

Senator MIKULSKI is the best of American public service. She is smart, honest, empathetic, and outrageously funny. She has earned her reputation as a force to be reckoned with. And on her next chapter, I wish her Godspeed—and may the force be with her.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY AYOTTE

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, today I wish to honor my dear friend and colleague from New Hampshire, Senator KELLY AYOTTE, who is departing from the Senate at the end of this year. Over the last 4 years, I have been consistently impressed with KELLY's pragmatic approach to her role as a U.S. Senator. Time and time again, I have seen her be a strong advocate on behalf of her State and have admired her willingness to forge the tough, bipartisan compromises that our country needs.

Senator AYOTTE started her career clerking for an associate justice of the New Hampshire Supreme Court. After about a year of clerking, she started practicing law. She eventually moved on to be a prosecutor for the New Hampshire Attorney General's office, quickly gaining experience and know-how to become the first female attorney general of her State—something we have in common.

When I came to the Senate in 2013, KELLY and I were the only female former attorneys general in the Chamber at the time. She had been elected to her first term 2 years before me, so as new Senators, we bonded through our common experience that later pushed us to pass laws and create real change. Our shared knowledge of the issues, dedication, and common interests led us to become good friends. I am also proud to say that our relationship extended beyond the Senate Chamber, as we played together on the congressional women's softball team.

KELLY and I worked with each other to make real and substantial progress on many issues using common sense and our desire to do what is best for our States and the country. We both came to the Senate with an understanding of rural America. As the wife of a small business owner, KELLY understands the real life implications policy can have on small businesses, which she displayed as we worked together on the Small Business Committee. We also sat next to each other on the dais for 4 years as we served together on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. Her commitment to keeping our Nation safe shined through time and time again as our committee worked on border security, cyber security, and improving our Federal Government's efficiency and effectiveness.

Together we passed two bills, one of which has been signed into law and the other which awaits the President's signature. The first was the Breast Cancer Awareness Commemorative Coin Act, which created a commemorative coin to help fund the Breast Cancer Research Foundation's efforts to fight breast cancer. Her dedication to help the one in eight women who will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of their lifetimes will not be forgotten. The second bill was the Northern Border Security Review Act to ensure that our Nation's northern border gets the attention and resources it needs to keep our communities safe. I am extremely proud to have worked with her on these issues.

Senator AYOTTE has been an outstanding public servant for the people of New Hampshire and this country. I know that she is proud of her accomplishments in her time as a Senator, and I am proud to be a part of some of those accomplishments. The women's softball team will definitely miss her because, let's face it, she is a better softball player than I am. I know KELLY will continue to be a champion for New Hampshire no matter what she does. And since we each have taken our turns in the batting cages, we never step down from the plate. I guess imitation truly is the best form of flattery. I truly wish her the best.

TRIBUTE TO VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, in a political world getting more contentious by the day, with even greater divisions and an increasing lack of civility, JOE BIDEN has always stood out.

The reason so many Republicans and Democrats appreciate him is because he has touched us all in a special way. When it comes to JOE BIDEN, his word is his bond. He is a fierce competitor, but never takes the fight too far. If he can help you, he always will. He tries, as much as possible, to ensure every decision is a win-win.

As Vice President, he served President Obama extremely well with un-

questionable loyalty. He has proven to be one of the most successful negotiators for the President.

I have traveled the world with JOE and the private man is exactly what you see in public. JOE BIDEN is articulate, determined, kind, gracious, funny, and an eternal optimist. I am confident he will continue to serve the nation he loves so much.

Vice President JOE BIDEN stands out in all the right ways.

21ST CENTURY CURES BILL

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I wish to address the 21st Century Cures Act legislation, which the Senate passed yesterday with my support. I voted for this bill and support many of its provisions. However, I also have some serious concerns regarding the manner in which the bill is funded.

I would like to congratulate two of my Senate colleagues for their remarkable commitment to this bill: the senior Senator from Tennessee, LAMAR ALEXANDER, and the senior Senator from Washington, PATTY MURRAY, who worked long hours in good faith to forge a bipartisan compromise on both sides of the Capitol.

Washington State is a laboratory for health care innovation. From Spokane to Seattle, my State has a culture of collaboration and inventiveness in which the entire health care community—including researchers, providers, insurers, employers, policymakers, and others—come together to find better ways of preventing, managing, and treating disease. This collaboration makes my State unique and on the cutting edge of developing innovative health care delivery.

That is why Washington is the original home of the Basic Health Plan, a State-run option that gives working people without employer-sponsored health care the negotiating leverage to get a better deal on health insurance.

It is why the Boeing Company has partnered directly with health care providers like the Everett Clinic to reduce sick days and improve the health of its workers.

It is why community leaders in Yakima and Spokane have banded together to break ground on new medical schools to fill unmet primary care needs in their regions.

And it is why so many lifesaving medical discoveries and treatments, including immuno-oncology, dialysis, and the mapping of the brain have their roots in our State. Many of these discoveries started with NIH-supported basic research at public research universities like the University of Washington and Washington State University.

The 21st Century Cures legislation gives a big boost to Washington's health care innovators.

First, the bill's investment in President Obama's Precision Medicine Initiative will help get the right treatment into the hands of patients, building on the longtime work of renowned

researchers like Dr. Leroy Hood and the Institute for Systems Biology. Tools like big data and sophisticated blood analysis can predict effective therapies based on a patient's unique biology, reducing ineffective prescriptions, and lowering health costs over time.

Second, the bill's funding commitment to Vice President BIDEN's Cancer Moonshot will advance groundbreaking research at organizations like the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. By directing the body's own immune system to attack cancer cells, new cancer treatments can save lives for patients who may not respond to traditional interventions.

Third, the bill's support for President Obama's Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies, BRAIN, Initiative will continue the leadership of organizations like the Allen Institute for Brain Science in unlocking the mysteries of the brain. Neuroscience is one of the final frontiers of medicine, and future revelations in this field hold immense promise to better treat conditions affecting the brain, such as Alzheimer's and traumatic brain injury.

In addition to my strong support for research into future medical miracles, many of my constituents need treatment for acute and chronic conditions now.

That is why I am encouraged that the 21st Century Cures legislation takes positive steps to combat the dual crises of mental health care and opioid addiction.

The legislation includes a \$1 billion funding commitment to combat the opioid and heroin epidemic. In recent years Washington has experienced a doubling in heroin-related deaths, according to data from the Washington State Department of Health. Earlier this year, PBS's "Frontline" profiled the courageous stories of some of my constituents who are battling addiction, as well as new public responses that municipalities like the city of Seattle are deploying to address this public health crisis.

The reality in too many Washington communities is that needed addiction services are simply out of reach for those in the throes of acute withdrawal, relapse, or in need of ongoing recovery supports. The Cures legislation helps by authorizing much-needed State grants for treatment services, prescription drug monitoring, prevention, and health professional training programs, which will bolster efforts by public health departments like the Spokane Regional Health District to meet urgent community needs. This funding is far from sufficient, given that 90 percent of people who need addiction treatment in the United States do not receive it, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA. However, given that Senate Democrats have been calling for real money for the opioid epidemic throughout this

Congress, the funding in Cures is indeed welcome.

The 21st Century Cures legislation also contains positive new policies that aim to improve access to mental health care, including efforts to better integrate mental health and physical health as well as strengthen rules to ensure health insurance companies cover mental and physical health equally. Unfortunately, many of these policies are not funded and require future appropriations.

Washington communities continue to confront a severe mental health treatment shortage at all levels of the care continuum, including community clinics and psychiatric units. A 2015 report by Mental Health America, a national advocacy group, ranked Washington State 48th in the Nation when it comes to mental health treatment, due to a high prevalence of mental illness and poor access to care. In the face of overwhelming emergency room admissions and a State legal ruling on psychiatric "boarding," community partnerships like the Alliance for South Sound Health in Pierce County have stepped up to build more treatment capacity. And Governor Jay Inslee and the State of Washington have announced ambitious goals to integrate mental health with chemical dependency and physical health.

I will continue to fight for real money for mental health, including policies to ease the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Diseases, IMD, exclusion, an archaic barrier to needed inpatient care for people in crisis, as well as policies to improve mental health delivery.

I am also pleased that the 21st Century Cures legislation includes a provision I sponsored, S. 2261, the Rural ACO Provider Equity Act, to drive coordinated health care in medically underserved areas, as well as legislation I have cosponsored to preserve access to vital outpatient therapeutic services at small rural hospitals. Medical facilities in these remote communities—such as Forks, Brewster, and Newport—need our support to keep essential health services accessible in the face of doctor and clinical staff shortages. I thank the senior Senator from South Dakota for his partnership and support on these important issues.

While I supported the Cures legislation, the package incorporates troubling budget offsets that are concerning.

First, the Cures legislation finances itself in part by selling millions of barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

The use of this budget offset steadily weakens the energy security of the United States and again uses the reserve as a piggy bank to pay for non-energy priorities. In its November 29, 2016, Statement of Administration Policy on the Cures legislation, the White House Office of Management and Budget concurred, noting this offset "... continues a bad precedent of selling off

longer term energy security assets to satisfy near term budget scoring needs."

Second, the Cures legislation pays for its investments in part by cutting disease prevention funding. While I appreciate current legislative realities, this policy approach is not sustainable especially in light of dwindling public health resources throughout my State.

Third, the final version of the Cures legislation omits a widely supported and bipartisan child welfare reform bill, the Family First Preventive Services Act, which I have been proud to cosponsor with my colleague Senator RON WYDEN. Washington State is currently using a Federal waiver, which I helped secure, to do a better job of keeping families together and reducing unnecessary foster care placements. This approach is better for kids and families, and it can save States money. The Senate's failure, up to this point, to pass this bill is a lost opportunity for children in Washington and throughout the Nation.

Last, I note that the funding authorized by the Cures legislation must be appropriated by future Congresses. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to fund these important health care priorities.

I view the funding and policies in the Cures legislation as a step forward that continues to support Washington's health care innovation and pave the way for future medical breakthroughs. The mental health and opioid response provisions in the legislation are welcome in addressing these crises, but are far from sufficient. Moving forward, I will work to ensure that appropriators make good on the funding commitments in Cures, and I will fight to open up greater access to health care for Washingtonians.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to four servicemembers from California or based in California who have died while serving our country in Operation Freedom's Sentinel and in Operation Inherent Resolve since I last entered names into the record.

STAFF SERGEANT JOHN W. PERRY

SSG John W. Perry, 30, of Stockton, CA, died November 12, 2016, of injuries sustained from an improvised explosive device in Bagram, Afghanistan. Staff Sergeant Perry was assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER JASON C. FINAN

CPO Jason C. Finan, 34, of Anaheim, CA, died October 20, 2016, in northern Iraq, of wounds sustained in an improvised explosive device blast. Chief Petty Officer Finan was assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Three.

STAFF SERGEANT MATTHEW V. THOMPSON

SSG Matthew V. Thompson, 28, of Irvine, CA, died August 23, 2016, in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, of injuries caused by an improvised explosive device that detonated near his patrol while conducting dismounted operations. Staff Sergeant Thompson was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA.

PETTY OFFICER FIRST CLASS CHARLES H.

KEATING IV

PO1 Charles H. Keating IV, 31, of San Diego, CA, died May 3, 2016, in Tall Usuf, Iraq, of combat related causes. Petty Officer First Class Keating was assigned to a West Coast-based Navy SEAL Team.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD GIL KERLIKOWSKE

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my friend from the Department of Homeland Security—U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Richard Gil Kerlikowske, who is retiring in January 2017. I have known Gil since his days as Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, during which time he worked tirelessly to promote policy reforms, particularly in the area of substance abuse treatment. In 2013, he visited North Dakota at my request and saw firsthand the substance abuse dilemma that we were experiencing in the western part of the State. He worked with me to direct Federal resources to assist our State partners in reducing drug abuse, and for that, I will always be grateful.

Gil was appointed Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, in 2014, and, as a Senator on the committee that oversees CBP, I saw firsthand the dedication he brought to the position. On his retirement, it is fitting that we recognize the successes achieved under his leadership.

Gil worked to counter terrorism and transnational crime by creating a counter-network capability to identify and disrupt illicit networks and adapt to emerging threats along the border and abroad, placing under one roof the National Targeting-Center Passenger and Cargo facilities to enhance the agency's efficiency and effectiveness in identifying potential high-risk individuals and freight.

He made efforts to enhance transparency and accountability by implementing the CBP Integrity Strategy, enhancing the agency's ability to address corruption and misconduct in the workforce; initiating a review and redesign of CBP's complaint and discipline system to promote a timely, transparent, and accountable dispute resolution process; fostering the agency's commitment to respond to use of force incidents by creating an incident team to conduct investigations and by initiating a National Use of Force Review Board to assess policy compliance and best law enforcement practices;

implementing firearms and less-lethal use of force simulator training; implementing National Standards on Transport, Escort, Detention, and Search, the first nationwide standards that govern interaction with detained individuals.

He engaged stakeholders and partners globally to enhance U.S. border security. Such actions include signing new preclearance agreements with Sweden and the Dominican Republic; creating increased security, economic growth opportunities, and an improved passenger experience with CBP performing the same immigration, Customs, and agriculture inspections of air passengers on foreign soil prior to boarding a direct flight to the United States; assisting the Government of Tanzania in establishing a sophisticated canine program to combat the smuggling of contraband; and sponsoring ten Customs Mutual Assistance Agreements with various countries.

He worked to advance border security and management by addressing the surge of unaccompanied alien children and family units by enhancing the agency's capabilities and coordination with Federal partners while sustaining all border security responsibilities; deploying advanced technological solutions to provide additional layers of surveillance; initiating a Naloxone pilot program, becoming the first Federal law enforcement agency to train and equip officers with the potentially lifesaving drug for the treatment of overdoses; installing facial comparison technology in two airports and continuing work towards a comprehensive biometric exit system; establishing the Missing Migrant Initiative in the south Texas corridor—a proactive program to establish preventative procedures in order to preserve human life.

He worked to enhance economic competitiveness through lawful trade and travel with a continued commitment to the strong partnership between the U.S. and Canada by leading CBP to deliver on key Beyond the Border Action Plan commitments related to joint commerce and travel facilitation and security initiatives; transitioning to the Automated Commercial Environment, which serves as the "single window" for the electronic transmission of import and export information for 47 agencies; streamlining the import-export process and eliminating more than 200 forms; developing ten centers for excellence and expertise to facilitate trade for compliant importers; achieving positive results in CBP's Traveler Satisfaction Survey administered at the top 25 airports between September 2015 and February 2016.

He promoted organizational integration, innovation, and agility by raising levels of engagement and commitment higher than at any other time since 2011, according to the 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. He led creation of advanced hiring hubs and other recruitment initiatives that re-

duced overall costs and hiring delays for CBP officers and Border Patrol agents. The agency was recognized by Monster.com and Military.com's "Best Companies for Veterans 2016" as the second best organization for veterans among government and private sector employers.

I would like Congress to recognize the significance of these accomplishments and to express my appreciation and the appreciation of the American people for Gil Kerlikowske's selfless dedication to service. I wish him the best of luck as he pursues the next chapter of his life.

HONORING OFFICER JOSE GILBERT VEGA

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Police Officer Jose Gilbert Vega, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and uncle who was tragically killed in the line of duty on October 8, 2016.

Jose "Gil" Vega was born in Texas to a family of migrant farm workers. When Gil was 6 years old his family relocated to Coachella, CA, where he graduated from Indio High School. In 1979, Gil began his career in law enforcement by serving as a reserve police officer for the Indio Police Department. He was hired as a community service officer by the Palm Springs Police Department in 1982, and the following year, he accepted additional responsibilities as a jail and reserve field training officer. Gil's hard work and dedication was recognized in 1985 when the city of Palm Springs hired him as a police officer trainee. Upon completion of his program at the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Academy, Gil was promoted to police officer.

Officer Vega worked on various assignments throughout his career, including serving as a detective for the Riverside Auto Theft Interdiction Detail, RAID, and the Palm Springs Crimes Against Property Unit. Over the course of three decades, Officer Vega mentored over 30 police officers and was consistently recognized for his commitment to his job and the community. He was awarded a lifesaving medal for performing CPR on an infant in 2010 and received the Medal of Merit in 2013. He is also the only officer in the history of the Palm Springs Police Department to have been selected twice by his peers as "Officer of the Year," in 1992 and 2011.

Officer Vega truly embodied the very best of law enforcement and his courageous service will be forever remembered. On behalf of the people of California whom Officer Vega served so bravely, I extend my heartfelt condolences to his wife, Susana; his eight children; and his entire extended family.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN LEWIS LARKIN O'HERN III

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize U.S. Army CPT Lewis Larkin O'Hern III for his extraordinary dedication to duty and

honorable service to our Nation. During his exemplary career with the Army from May 2008 to January 2017, Captain O'Hern made an immense impact on those he worked with both in the Army and here in Congress.

Captain O'Hern was born at Madigan Army Medical Center at Fort Lewis, WA, and grew up in a military family before graduating from Belton High School in Belton, Texas, in 2004. He received his commission from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 2008. After completing the infantry office basic course, airborne school, and Ranger school at Fort Benning, GA, he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, at Fort Campbell, KY, where he served as a rifle platoon leader. He deployed to Kandahar in June 2010 and, after 7 months in Afghanistan was severely wounded, suffering the loss of both legs and a hand. In the course of his 2 and a half year recovery, Captain O'Hern completed the Defense Strategy Course and worked as a future operations planner at U.S. Army North. In 2013, Captain O'Hern was accepted into the Army's prestigious Congressional Fellowship Program. He earned a master's degree in legislative affairs from George Washington University and in 2014 served as my defense legislative fellow. Following his fellowship, Captain O'Hern continued to serve as an Army legislative liaison in the Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison.

Captain O'Hern has performed at the top of his profession throughout his career, providing motivation and serving as a role model for his fellow servicemembers and colleagues. Captain O'Hern demonstrated his impressive intellect in all duties, questioning assumptions and pushing team members to achieve their highest potential. He easily grasped the complexities of policymaking and the appropriations processes, greatly contributing to both while in my office.

Part of what makes Captain O'Hern such a remarkable leader is that his great intellect is coupled with incredible humanity and compassion. I witnessed his inexhaustible drive to provide assistance to fellow servicemembers and veterans, which is in the image of some of the Army's greatest leaders. I was privileged to have Captain O'Hern as an enormously important member of my legislative team. His contributions continue to resonate today.

Captain O'Hern models resilience and determination. His story is a testament to the power of a positive can-do attitude and a shining of example of the refusal to let obstacles stand in his way. Captain O'Hern's inspirational journey would not have been possible without the unfailing support from his exceptional wife. Mrs. Rachel Brooks O'Hern was an integral partner in Captain O'Hern's recovery. In addition to undertaking her substantial caregiver role, Rachel also built an impressive career of her own, serving the wider veteran community.

It is my honor to recognize this remarkable couple and congratulate Captain O'Hern on his military retirement as he proceeds to the next chapter of his life. I ask the entire country to thank him for his service and dedication.

TRIBUTE TO AYO GRIFFIN

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, for many years, the Judiciary Committee and the Senate have been well served by the distinguished service of Ayo Griffin. Ayo is a talented lawyer and a principled public servant, respected and admired by his peers, who has ably guided some of my most significant legislative initiatives.

Ayo's career has always demonstrated what Victor Hugo called "conscience in the service of justice." By the time Ayo joined my Judiciary Committee staff in 2011, he had already taken on difficult work conducting foreign corruption investigations in private practice. He had volunteered with human rights litigation and anticorruption training in Cambodia. In the important tradition of making legal aid available to all people, even unpopular defendants, he had represented pro bono detainees at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base detention center in Cuba.

Here in the Senate, Ayo took on legislation to improve our prisons and strengthen law enforcement, to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault, to reform our immigration regime, to curb gun violence, and to undo the damage done to our campaign finance system by the Citizens United Supreme Court decision. In the wake of the flood of secret money unleashed by Citizens United, Ayo helped me craft the DISCLOSE Act to require groups spending large amounts to influence our elections to identify their donors and to prevent corporations and other wealthy interests from using shell corporations to funnel secret money to super PACs.

Ayo worked closely with good governance advocates, campaign finance experts, and our colleagues here in Congress to build a strong coalition behind the legislation. When Republicans blocked the legislation from proceeding in 2012, Ayo helped me coordinate a midnight vigil, with the bill's Democratic sponsors holding the Senate floor into the morning hours until we secured a vote on the measure. In the end, the DISCLOSE Act twice won support from a majority of Senators in votes before this body. Ayo's contribution to that effort not only channeled a groundswell of popular support, but shone a bright light on an issue at the very heart of our democracy.

Today Ayo is facing a much different challenge. Some time ago, he was diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer, requiring intensive therapy. He has tackled his treatment with signature determination, working intently with his specialists and therapists to stay

ahead of the disease. His wife, Mary Dewhurst, has shown great love and courage through this trying time and is Ayo's steadfast partner in every winding step of their journey.

"You must work very hard," Maurice Ravel once wrote to a fellow composer, "because someone who is gifted must work harder than someone who is not." I am grateful for both the ample gifts and hard work of Ayo Griffin.

I thank Ayo for his faithful service. My entire staff and I offer our unending support. And I wish him and Mary health and much happiness in their days to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LISA M. CLINE

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I wish to recognize educator Lisa M. Cline for over 30 years of service as a K-6 STEM educator throughout the State of Montana. Mrs. Cline's love of STEM, particularly biology, was inspired by her mother, Nancy Yonkee, who grew up on a ranch during the Great Depression era and was among the first women to study premedicine at her university in the 1950's.

Mrs. Cline grew up on a ranch near Broadus and studied animal science at Montana State University, with the goal of becoming a veterinarian. Later, Mrs. Cline decided that she could have the greatest impact on her communities by sharing her love of STEM with children and earned an additional degree, also from MSU, in education. In her time as an educator throughout the State, including in the communities of Bozeman, Plevna, Great Falls, and Cut Bank, Mrs. Cline has passionately brought to her students a love for the STEM disciplines that is grounded in her agricultural upbringing, her background in biology, and her genuine excitement about asking tough questions, solving tricky problems, and learning along the way.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Cline strived to bring a rigor to her classroom that prepares her students to become the best scientists, engineers, and mathematicians. She does this both inside and outside of the classroom, working tirelessly over the years to organize innovative, inquiry-based assignments, student debates, local science fairs, field trips to archaeological sites, and voyages into the mountains. Most recently, she brought her sixth graders to Glacier National Park, where they learned about its intricate ecosystems and rich geological history.

I want to express my deep gratitude to Mrs. Cline for her dedication and service to educating our country's youth, particularly for cultivating within them a love for STEM and inquiry-based learning. And a big thank you to Dr. Angela Person for her nomination of Mrs. Cline as Montanan of the Week.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVE RAU

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize Lewis and Clark County undersheriff Dave Rau who announced his retirement after 20 years of service to the people of Montana. Dave is the prime example of law enforcement's tireless efforts to protect and serve Montanans at any cost.

Undersheriff Rau launched his law enforcement career in Texas as a prison guard, and after 7 years he came to the last best place. He began serving Montanans with the East Helena Police, then his path led to the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office. Throughout the last two decades, Dave has garnered countless advocates in the Helena community. Sheriff Leo Dutton has said, "There will never be another Dave Rau."

Dave is a husband to Tammy and father to their children, Aaron and Whitney. He is unsure what his next adventure will entail, but he is sure he will remain active in the community that he loves.

Undersheriff Rau, the U.S. Senate commends you for your service to the people of Helena and Lewis and Clark County. Thank you for your diligent work in keeping the people of Montana safe. I hope that your path continues to be blessed with success.●

TRIBUTE TO TIM SANDERS

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to the public service of Tim Sanders, a longtime clerk of the Courts for Madison County, FL. Tim has served admirably as county clerk and comptroller for six consecutive terms and will retire after 24 years, which is an incredible achievement.

His contributions to Madison County and Florida long predate the start of his tenure as county clerk. He began his career at Madison County Memorial Hospital, where he worked on the floor, in the emergency room, and in the x-ray department. After earning a second degree from the University of Florida, Tim spent time surveying in Madison and nearby counties for a business that he later acquired himself. Tim accomplished all of this before starting his career in public service as county clerk.

A true man of the community, Tim currently serves on the board of trustees at the Madison First United Methodist Church, as well as on the boards of directors at Big Bend Hospice, the Madison County Foundation for Excellence in Education, and the Treasures of Madison County Museum.

Tim was born, raised, and attended public schools in Madison. In fact, he has devoted a great deal of time supporting public education and children in Madison County. To give a sense of this man's character, Tim has performed as the American folk hero Johnny Appleseed for elementary school children in Madison and surrounding counties each fall for 20 years.

Dedicated and selfless in his approach to public service, this son of Madison County has surely left a lasting mark on the people of his community and his State. I am honored to acknowledge his retirement from public service and recognize this great Floridian.●

REMEMBERING TONY REYNA

• Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Taos Pueblo Governor Tony Reyna, who passed away December 5, 2016, at the age of 100, in Taos, NM.

Governor Reyna's life was defined by service to others: he served his country, his State, his community, his Pueblo.

Governor Reyna was born February 1, 1916, to Helario and Crucita Reyna of Taos Pueblo. He was given the name "Chuta," which means "Hunter's Call." According to Governor Reyna, "It was so important, the care my father and mother gave us, their commitment to us they said, 'Don't take. Give something back.' That's the philosophy we live by."

Governor Reyna was raised in the traditional pueblo of Taos—occupied for 1,000 years and considered the oldest continuously inhabited community in the United States. The five-storied adobe pueblo—dramatic and picturesque—lies at the base of the Mo-ha-loh or Ma-ha-lu, which we call the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Governor Reyna maintained a home there, where the family gathered for pueblo ceremonies.

Governor Reyna attended the Taos Pueblo Day School as a young boy. "By the time we could carry a bucket, we were carrying water and wood for mother to cook. We would run home from school to water and feed the horses. We would ride into town bareback to get kerosene. Those were very enjoyable days. We thought it was very hard, but looking back, it was very worthwhile. We learned to work and to take responsibility."

He attended Santa Fe Indian School and graduated from Santa Fe High School in 1936. After high school, he taught woodworking at Albuquerque Indian School.

Governor Reyna was a member of the New Mexico National Guard in 1941 when he was shipped to the Philippines. At that time, Native Americans were not considered full citizens. They served in the military with bravery and distinction, yet did not have the right to vote. Governor Reyna was captured by the Japanese, along with 10 other servicemen from Taos Pueblo. He endured and survived the 65-mile Bataan Death March and 3 and one-half years of brutal captivity. He was tortured and forced to bury hundreds of his fellow servicemen, including his best friend. "I was raised a farm boy from sunrise to sundown, so I was tough enough to survive starvation," he said. "Determination kept me going. I had a family, a home to come

back to." Five from Taos Pueblo survived till the end of the war, and Governor Reyna was the last surviving of them. His American Legion garrison hat—honoring his service—bears an eagle feather in the band. According to Governor Reyna, "This feather represents all the Indian veterans, men and women."

Today marks the 75th anniversary of the Bataan invasion, which began on December 8, 1941—just hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor—when soldiers from the 200th Coast Artillery Regiment became the "first to fire" to defend the Philippines from Japanese bombers. It is fitting that we Honor Governor Reyna today.

After the war, Governor Reyna returned to Taos Pueblo and, as he said, "... got busy." He married, and he and his wife, Annie Cata Reyna, had four children, Diane, John Anthony, Phillip, and Marie.

Governor Reyna wanted to open an art shop in Taos, but banks would not loan to a Native American, even a veteran. "I went to the bank, but they weren't interested in loans to Indians because they had nothing in the way of security," he said. He found two businessmen in town who would lend to him, and over the next 2 years, he hand-built an adobe shop and home and paid the men back in full.

"I opened the doors to the shop May 1, 1950," he said. "There was no shop like this at the Pueblo at the time. I felt I had a responsibility to promote Indian craft." At the time, Governor Reyna's shop—Tony Reyna Indian Shop—was the only Native-owned store dealing strictly in Native-made crafts. The shop is open to this day—run by Governor Reyna's son Phillip—and is the oldest shop in Taos selling Native-made art.

Governor Reyna served Taos Pueblo as secretary for the Governor's office in 1975 and Lieutenant Governor in 1977. He served two terms as pueblo Governor, in 1982 and 1992, and was a lifetime member of the tribal council. "I served in the Army, I served the state of New Mexico, and I served the city of Taos, but the most important of all was serving my people as governor."

Governor Reyna was instrumental in the successful effort to return Blue Lake to Taos Pueblo. Nestled in the mountains northeast of the pueblo, the lake is sacred to the pueblo. It and 48,000 acres were taken from the pueblo and appropriated as Federal lands in 1906. After much work, the area was returned to the pueblo in 1970.

As Governor, Governor Reyna was instrumental in securing Taos Pueblo's designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992. He secured that status without compromising the pueblos' conditions for privacy. After the designation, he convinced the U.S. Air Force to change flight patterns of supersonic jets over Taos Pueblo. The flights were damaging the structure of the buildings. As a veteran, Governor

Reyna had credibility and assured the Air Force he understood the need for national security, but firmly demanded the damaging flights stop. The Air Force rerouted the flights.

Governor Reyna served as police commissioner for the town of Taos, as a member of the Taos Municipal School Board, as a trustee for the Millicent Rogers Museum in El Prado, and as a tribal judge at the Santa Fe Indian Market.

In 1992, he was honored as a Santa Fe Living Treasure. The Heard Museum gave him the Spirit of the Heard Award in 2010. The chair of the advisory committee stated that Governor Reyna was selected “. . . because he dedicated his life to the betterment of Indian people and, in particular, to helping preserve the culture, resources and traditions of his tribe.” And, “[h]e is a man who has given much, but has asked for little in return.” The New Mexico Legislature proclaimed his 100th birthday, February 1, 2016, as “Tony Reyna Day.”

Governor Reyna was buried December 5, 2016, dressed in a deerskin robe and with full military honors, at the Taos Pueblo cemetery, following a mass at the pueblo's San Geronimo Church.

War hero, husband, father, businessman, pueblo leader, community leader—Governor Reyna's contributions to arts, culture, politics, community, and the Nation are astounding. His life demonstrates the value of service to others. He will be missed.●

TRIBUTE TO TOM M. PHELPS

● Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Tom M. Phelps on his retirement as chief executive officer, CEO, of Plateau Telecommunications, New Mexico's oldest telecommunications company. Tom leaves Plateau after a distinguished career of more than 20 years in my home State of New Mexico and more than 50 years in the telecommunications industry.

Plateau began as Eastern New Mexico Rural Telephone Cooperative in 1949 when a group of civic leaders, farmers, and ranchers responded to the need of rural New Mexico for affordable, reliable telephone service. The next year, the cooperative received its first Federal loan of \$581.00 to construct and operate telephone lines and facilities in Curry, De Baca, Quay, Roosevelt, and contiguous counties.

Tom joined Plateau in 1995 as assistant general manager. However, it was not long before he took the helm in 1997 as general manager. The title changed to CEO in 2001.

During his 21 years of leadership at Plateau, he has improved the quality of life for those in our rural communities through deployment of modern telecommunication services, community economic development partnerships, and participation in many local philanthropic projects, community events, and educational enterprises.

Tom oversaw the company as it grew and changed—when it first offered high

speed DSL internet service and a fiber-to-the-home program. He managed expenditure of \$116 million to install over 5,200 miles of fiber-optic cable across eastern and central New Mexico and to expand high-speed internet access to critical community institutions. This facilitated distance learning so children in rural schools can access resources that are not available in their hometowns. And it has enabled hospitals to use telehealth to improve care and provide services they can't offer in person. Plateau's service area now extends in 25 counties in New Mexico and western Texas, covering 25,000 square miles. Under his leadership, Plateau's technology has been and continues to be state-of-the-art. In 2015, Plateau was the fastest home internet service provider in New Mexico.

Bringing affordable and reliable telephone service to rural areas is key to economic development. Plateau brought service to rural New Mexico when larger, national companies would not. Its investments in telecommunication services created many business opportunities in rural Eastern New Mexico, supporting and enhancing economic stability in the region.

When Plateau decided to sell its mobile wireless operations, the company anticipated having to lay off 70 employees. At that time, Tom was eligible to retire, but he stayed until he made sure his employees were taken care of. As the company transitioned, he provided early retirement for employees and made sure there were no layoffs.

Under Tom's management, Plateau continually contributed to the communities it served. Plateau collected school supplies for local school children, provided economic development grants for new businesses, and annually gave over \$70,000 in scholarships to area high school students.

Tom has been active in many local, State, and national activities. He received the New Mexico Distinguished Public Service Award in 2014, which recognizes those who have made “unusual contributions to the public service and to the improvement of government at all levels by both government employees and private citizens.” His service as a member of the Clovis Committee of 50, Cannon Air Force Base support groups, and the Plains Regional Medical Center Board, as well as his continued support for the Clovis/Curry County Chamber of Commerce and United Way of Eastern New Mexico contributed to his selection.

Tom's dedication, leadership, and business acumen—and personal commitment to Plateau employees and his community—have made a difference in the lives of many people across our State.

We wish him continued success and that he and his wife Candyce enjoy retirement.●

RECOGNIZING IDEA VILLAGE

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, the city of New Orleans has served as an eco-

nomic engine since its founding in 1718. Its location at the mouth of the Mississippi River, influential and innovative population, and unique accessibility to natural resources have allowed the Big Easy to prosper, but it wasn't until recently that New Orleans has become a hub of new technology and entrepreneurship. A major part of that success is due to Idea Village, an independent nonprofit organization that is dedicated to driving economic growth in and around New Orleans.

In 2000, a group of New Orleans-based technology entrepreneurs came together to discuss how to spark economic growth for small businesses and entrepreneurs in the Crescent City, in order to make New Orleans the hub of entrepreneurship in the South. Allen Bell, Sally Forman, Sam Giberger, Darin McAuliffe, Michele Reynoir, Tim Williamson, and Robbie Vitranio all agreed that in order to see a lasting change, they should create a business accelerator program that partners with the local community in order to reinvest in New Orleans-based businesses. Idea Village was officially established in 2002 and immediately went to work in identifying, supporting, and retaining local entrepreneurs. That year, each founder contributed \$2,000 to the first business plan competition and successfully raised a total of \$125,000 to award to the winning business.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina destroyed much of southeast Louisiana and parts of Mississippi. Several New Orleans businesses were damaged and closed, putting an enormous strain on the local economy. In 2006, Idea Village launched IDEAcorns in partnership with local universities, including Tulane University, to help New Orleans businesses rebuild and reopen their doors. Following the success of IDEAcorns, Idea Village since has launched over 25 initiatives to provide strategic guidance and resources to access capital to local businessowners, including IDEApitch, IDEAINstitute, among others. One of its most successful ventures is the annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, NOEW, a festival celebrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and new thinking and which awards thousands of dollars to several entrepreneurs through various pitch competitions and challenges. Each year NOEW engages thousands of entrepreneurs, investors, professionals, students, and community members to showcase regional startup ventures in industries important to New Orleans, including technology, water, education, energy, healthcare, and food. Going into its 10th year, NOEW has become an important part of New Orleans' festival season.

Since its inception, Idea Village has provided direct support to more than 5,794 entrepreneurs and invested \$25 million in New Orleans businesses. Currently, entrepreneurial activity in New Orleans is 64 percent higher than the national average, and much of that success can be attributed to the efforts

of Idea Village. I would like to recognize the entire team at Idea Village and look forward to their continued leadership and success in supporting New Orleans entrepreneurs and our economy.●

RECOGNIZING KREWE DU OPTIC

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, whether it is our food, architecture, or drawl, New Orleans is undoubtedly home to one of the more unique cultures across America. However, while we are not necessarily known for our contributions to the fashion industry, one young entrepreneur is changing that with his popular Crescent City-inspired eyewear line Krewe du Optic. I would like to recognize Stirling Barrett's Krewe du Optic as Small Business of the Week. Barrett's artistic designs have earned him not only tremendous success in the last 3 years, but they have also caught the attention of the national fashion industry, helping to develop New Orleans' role and reputation in national and international fashion.

New Orleans native Stirling Barrett is an artist, designer, and entrepreneur who launched Krewe du Optic in 2013. The unique eyewear line combined Barrett's love of art, fashion, and the Crescent City and has been embraced by the fashion industry across the United States and around the world. Two years after his initial investment into the New Orleans-inspired eyewear concept, Barrett cemented his commitment to the industry and his hometown by opening a flagship brick and mortar store on the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's historic landfall. Despite the geographical challenges of running a designer line from New Orleans, Barrett has been quoted as saying, "Krewe is about doing something from somewhere no one expected." This philosophy rings true since New Orleans, which certainly serves as a hub for entrepreneurship, has not been historically associated with the fashion industry. Earlier this year, Krewe expanded its operation by opening a second store in Savannah, GA.

Most recently, the growth of the Krewe brand has reached historic proportions, becoming the first New Orleans-based top-10 finalist for the prestigious Council of Fashion Designers of America/Vogue Fashion Fund. Krewe received the runner-up award for technological creation of sunglasses that double as a camera and are able to capture memories in a natural way.

For their unique creativity and commitment to community, Stirling Barrett and the entire team at Krewe du Optic have made New Orleans proud. Congratulations for being named Small Business of the Week, and I wish you continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING RUSTON ANIMAL CLINIC

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, during the month of November, our Nation

comes together to honor and commemorate the service and sacrifices of our veterans. The week of October 31 through November 4, 2016, is officially National Veterans Small Business Week. When our brave men and women in uniform return to civilian life, some turn to entrepreneurship. In fact, there are more than 2,500,000 veteran-owned small businesses, employing nearly 6,000,000 individuals, in the United States. This week, I would like to recognize the veteran-owned Ruston Animal Clinic as Small Business of the Week.

The Ruston Animal Clinic first opened its doors in 1970 to provide preventative medicine, dental care, orthopedic surgery, bathing, and boarding for animals in north Louisiana and over the decades has become an integral part of the local community.

Following a 4-year stint in the U.S. Marine Corps, Marion Sewell moved to Louisiana to earn an undergraduate degree from Louisiana Tech University and a doctorate in veterinary medicine from Louisiana State University's School of Veterinary Medicine. In 2007, Dr. Sewell moved to Ruston, began working at the Ruston Animal Clinic, and 2 years later took ownership of the small business. In the dual role of small business owner and veterinarian, Dr. Sewell has taken a leadership role in the Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association and currently serves as president-elect.

Worthy of recognition is Dr. Sewell's work during the deadly, historic August flooding disaster in south Louisiana. In the wake of one of the Nation's worst natural disasters over the last decade, Dr. Sewell traveled across the State to lend her time and talents to assist in animal evacuation and rescue efforts.

Today Ruston Animal Clinic has established a strong social media presence in order to update north Louisiana pet owners and animal lovers with pet adoption notices, missing animal alerts, and helpful information on proper pet care.

Congratulations to Dr. Sewell and the entire team at Ruston Animal Clinic for being selected as Small Business of the Week. I look forward to your continued success.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

SOCIAL SECURITY TOTALIZATION AGREEMENT WITH BRAZIL, TITLED "AGREEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL," AND A RELATED AGREEMENT TITLED "ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY"—PM 58

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95-216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith a social security totalization agreement with Brazil, titled "Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil," and a related agreement titled "Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security" (collectively the "Agreements"). The Agreements were signed in Washington, D.C., on June 30, 2015.

The Agreements are similar in objective to the social security agreements already in force with most European Union countries, Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, and Switzerland. Such bilateral agreements provide for limited coordination between the United States and foreign social security systems to eliminate dual social security coverage and taxation and to help prevent the lost benefit protection that can occur when workers divide their careers between two countries.

The Agreements contain all provisions mandated by section 233 of the Social Security Act and other provisions that I deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of section 233, pursuant to section 233(c)(4) of the Social Security Act.

I also transmit for the information of the Congress a report required by section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act on the estimated number of individuals who will be affected by the Agreements and the Agreements' estimated cost effect. The Department of State and the Social Security Administration have recommended the Agreements to me.

I commend the Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, December 8, 2016.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 11:05 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerics, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 817. An act to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon.

S. 818. An act to amend the Grande Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes.

S. 2873. An act to require studies and reports examining the use of, and opportunities to use, technology-enabled collaborative learning and capacity building models to improve programs of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

S. 3076. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish caskets and urns for burial in cemeteries of States and tribal organizations of veterans without next of kin or sufficient resources to provide for caskets or urns, and for other purposes.

S. 3492. An act to designate the Traverse City VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Traverse City, Michigan, as the "Colonel Demas T. Crow VA Clinic".

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 11:46 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 1632. An act to require a regional strategy to address the threat posed by Boko Haram.

S. 3028. An act to redesignate the Olympic Wilderness as the Daniel J. Evans Wilderness.

S. 3183. An act to prohibit the circumvention of control measures used by Internet ticket sellers to ensure equitable consumer access to tickets for any given event, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 329. An act to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1219. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land and appurtenances of the Arbuckle Project, Oklahoma, to the Arbuckle Master Conservancy District, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3711. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special re-

source study of Chicano Park, located in San Diego, California, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4298. An act to direct the Secretary of the Army to place in Arlington National Cemetery a memorial honoring the helicopter pilots and crew members of the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5099. An act to establish a pilot program on partnership agreements to construct new facilities for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 5143. An act to provide greater transparency and congressional oversight of international insurance standards setting processes, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6076. An act to require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish a program for the medical monitoring, diagnosis, and treatment of astronauts, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6130. An act to provide the victims of Holocaust-era persecution and their heirs a fair opportunity to recover works of art confiscated or misappropriated by the Nazis.

H.R. 6400. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in New Jersey.

H.R. 6431. An act to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives.

H.R. 6435. An act to authorize the Directors of Veterans Integrated Service Networks of the Department of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with appropriate civilian accreditation entities or appropriate health care evaluation entities to investigate medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 181. Concurrent resolution directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a certain correction in the enrollment of S. 1635.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, with amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 2854. An act to reauthorize the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007.

S. 2971. An act to authorize the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:28 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 34. An act to accelerate the discovery, development, and delivery of 21st century cures, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 3:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 2974. An act to ensure funding for the National Human Trafficking Hotline, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4919. An act to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of

1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, with amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bill, with amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 612. An act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the "George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

At 5:20 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 6450. An act to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to strengthen the independence of the Inspectors General, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6451. An act to improve the Government-wide management of Federal property.

H.R. 6452. An act to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6477. An act to amend chapter 97 of title 28, United States Code, to clarify the exception to foreign sovereign immunity set forth in section 1605(a)(3) of such title.

H.R. 6480. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 183. Concurrent resolution directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a correction in the enrollment of the bill S. 612.

At 6:00 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to section 201(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431) and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the Commission on International Religious Freedom for a term ending May 14, 2018: Dr. Tenzin Dorjee of Fullerton, California, to succeed Ms. Hannah Rosenthal.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 4 of the Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial

Commission Act (Public Law 114-224), and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Minority Leader appoints the following individual to the Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission: Ms. Stacey Plaskett of the United States Virgin Islands.

The message further announced that pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1011c, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, the Speaker appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity to fill the existing vacancy thereon: Mr. Brian Jones of Washington, DC.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 3516. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a best-practices peer review of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the efficacy of health care delivered at each such medical center.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, December 8, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 817. An act to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon.

S. 818. An act to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes.

S. 2873. An act to require studies and reports examining the use of, and opportunities to use, technology-enabled collaborative learning and capacity building models to improve programs of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

S. 3076. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish caskets and urns for burial in cemeteries of States and tribal organizations of veterans without next of kin or sufficient resources to provide for caskets or urns, and for other purposes.

S. 3492. An act to designate the Traverse City VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Traverse City, Michigan, as the "Colonel Demas T. Craw VA Clinic".

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-7831. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tau-Fluvalinate; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 9954-33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7832. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Quizalofop ethyl; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 9950-89) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7833. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oxathiapiprolin; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 9954-69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7834. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Muscodor albus strain SA-13 and the volatiles produced on rehydration; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9952-88) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7835. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Bicyclopnyrone; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9954-63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7836. A communication from the Deputy Secretary, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Commodity Pool Operator Financial Reports" (RIN3038-AE47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-7837. A communication from the Honors Attorney, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Truth in Lending (Regulation Z)" (RIN3170-AA67) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7838. A communication from the Honors Attorney, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Consumer Leasing (Regulation M)" (RIN3170-AA66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7839. A communication from the Honors Attorney, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans Exemption Threshold" (RIN3170-AA68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-7840. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Renewable Fuel Standard Program: Standards for 2017 and Biomass-Based Diesel Volume for 2018" (FRL No. 9955-84-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7841. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Determination of Attainment by the

Attainment Date for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards; Pennsylvania; Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley" (FRL No. 9955-91-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7842. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Quality Plans; Kentucky; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard" (FRL No. 9955-96-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7843. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Kentucky; Revisions to Louisville Definitions and Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9955-90-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7844. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Application of Section 108(a)(1)(E)(ii) to the Federal Housing Finance Agency's (FHFA's) Principal Reduction Modification Program (PRMP) and the Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP)" (Notice 2016-72) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7845. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Applicable Federal Rates—December 2016" (Rev. Rul. 2016-27) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7846. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "SB/SE Fast Track Mediation—Collection" (Rev. Proc. 2016-57) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7847. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Treatment of Amounts Paid to Section 170(c) Organizations Under Employer Leave-Based Donation Program" (Notice 2016-69) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7848. A communication from the Director, Civil Rights Center, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act" (RIN1291-AA36) received during adjournment of the Senate in the office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7849. 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 "Submission of Food and Drug Administration Import Data in the Automated Commercial Environment" ((RIN0910-AH41) (Docket No. FDA-2016-N-1487)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7850. 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 "Food Additives Permitted in Feed and Drinking Water of Animals; Guanidinoacetic Acid" (Docket No. FDA-2015-F-2337) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7851. 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 "New Animal Drugs for Use in Animal Feed; Category Definitions; Confirmation of Effective Date" (Docket No. FDA-2016-N-1896) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-7852. A communication from the Treasurer, National Gallery of Art, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Gallery's Performance and Accountability Report for the year ended September 30, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7853. A communication from the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7854. A communication from the Treasurer, National Gallery of Art, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Gallery's Performance and Accountability Report for the year ended September 30, 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7855. A communication from the Director, Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7856. A communication from the Director, Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-7857. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Report on the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-7858. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Report on the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-7859. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission,

transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's twelfth annual report on ethanol market concentration; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7860. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Used Motor Vehicle Trade Regulation Rule" (RIN3084-AB05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7861. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Labeling Rule" (RIN3084-AB15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 1, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7862. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Arkansas River, Little Rock, AR" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0992)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7863. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Great Egg Harbor Bay, Marmora, NJ" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-1011)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7864. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Illinois River mile 69.3 to 69.8; Meredosia, IL" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0678)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7865. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zones; San Francisco, CA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0154)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7866. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Tennessee River, Knoxville, TN, MM TNR 646.9-647.1" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0845)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7867. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Local Regulation; Arkansas River; Little Rock, AR" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0887)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7868. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Local Regulation; Ouachita River, Monroe, LA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0666)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7869. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Local Regulation; Saint Andrew Bay; Panama City, FL" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0932)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7870. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Anchorage Grounds; Delaware Bay and River, Philadelphia, PA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0110)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-7871. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Security Zone; Potomac River and Anacostia River, and adjacent waters; Washington, DC" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2016-0675)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2852. A bill to expand the Government's use and administration of data to facilitate transparency, effective governance, and innovation, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-396).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 3520. A bill to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to clarify report dates, modify the criteria for determinations of whether countries are meeting the minimum standards for elimination of trafficking, and highlight the importance of concrete actions by countries to eliminate trafficking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 3521. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide students with disabilities and their families with access to critical information needed to select the right college and succeed once enrolled; to

the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 3522. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modify the payment amount for direct graduate medical education costs for certain hospitals; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 3523. A bill to amend the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 to extend the jurisdiction of tribal courts to cover crimes involving sexual violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 3524. A bill to amend Rule 611 of the Federal Rules of Evidence to prohibit cross-examination by the accused of minor victims of sexual assault; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 3525. A bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and the stability of the transportation security workforce by applying a unified personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration who are responsible for screening passengers and property, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 3526. A bill to provide incentives for States to invest in practices and technology that are designed to expedite voting at the polls and to simplify voter registration; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 3527. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent high net worth individuals from receiving tax windfalls for entering government service; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 3528. A bill to provide for mandatory training for Federal Government supervisors and the assessment of management competencies; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 3529. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a progressive consumption tax and to reform the income tax, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 3530. A bill to allow the use of claims, eligibility, and payment data to produce reports, analyses, and presentations to benefit Medicare, and other similar health insurance programs, entities, researchers, and health care providers, to help develop cost saving approaches, standards, and reference materials and to support medical care and improved payment models; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RISCH:

S. 3531. A bill to designate certain National Forest System land in the State of Idaho as wilderness; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. Kaine, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 3532. A bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to provide funds to States and Indian tribes for the

purpose of promoting economic revitalization, diversification, and development in economically distressed communities through the reclamation and restoration of land and water resources adversely affected by coal mining carried out before August 3, 1977, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 3533. A bill to amend the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to discourage litigation against the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management relating to land management projects; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. FISCHER:

S. 3534. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to permit the Secretary of the Treasury to locate and recover certain assets of the United States Government; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 3535. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from employing any individual who has been convicted of a felony and medical personnel who have had their medical licenses or credentials revoked or suspended, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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

S. 3536. A bill to impose sanctions on persons that threaten the peace or stability of Iraq or the Government of Iraq and to address the emergency in Syria, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 539, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 627

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 627, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to revoke bonuses paid to employees involved in electronic wait list manipulations, and for other purposes.

S. 742

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 742, a bill to appropriately limit the authority to award bonuses to employees.

S. 803

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 803, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide employees in the private sector with an opportunity for compensatory time off, similar to the opportunity offered to

Federal employees, and a flexible credit hour program to help balance the demands of work and family, and for other purposes.

S. 1200

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1200, a bill to promote competition and help consumers save money by giving them the freedom to choose where they buy prescription pet medications, and for other purposes.

S. 1559

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1559, a bill to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets.

S. 1588

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1588, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend projects relating to children and violence to provide access to school-based comprehensive mental health programs.

S. 1714

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1714, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan and the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 1866

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1866, a bill to establish the veterans' business outreach center program, to improve the programs for veterans of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 1911

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1911, a bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 2175

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2175, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2725

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2725, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the ballistic missile program of Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 2726

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2726, a bill to hold Iran accountable for its state sponsorship of terrorism and other threatening activities and for its human rights abuses, and for other purposes.

S. 2957

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2957, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the first manned landing on the Moon.

S. 2962

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2962, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes.

S. 2989

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2989, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States merchant mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

S. 3052

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 3052, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for an operation on a live donor for purposes of conducting a transplant procedure for a veteran, and for other purposes.

S. 3177

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3177, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax-exempt financing of certain government-owned buildings.

S. 3237

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 3237, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes.

S. 3384

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 3384, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for middle-income housing, and for other purposes.

S. 3448

At the request of Mr. HELLER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 3448, a bill to provide for the creation of the Missing Armed Forces Personnel Records Collection at the National Archives, to require the expeditious public transmission to the Archivist and

the public disclosure of Missing Armed Forces Personnel records, and for other purposes.

S. 3478

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3478, a bill to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

S. 3491

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3491, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act and the Electronic Fund Transfer Act to provide justice to victims of fraud.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 3525. A bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and the stability of the transportation security workforce by applying a unified personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration who are responsible for screening passengers and property, and for other purposes; and to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, the legislation I will introduce shortly focuses on a small sector of the Federal workforce. But there is a broader message that I would like to deliver as well today. There is something I want to say to all Federal workers: I have got your back.

We have all been hearing statements by politicians in the halls of Congress, in the news, and even on Twitter threatening to gut the Federal workforce, cut earned benefits, reduce paychecks, make it easier to fire people at will, and other destructive and misguided actions.

To Federal employees, these statements must be particularly hurtful. Some may feel anxious and disheartened. But I want to assure all Federal workers that I am on your side. Your contributions are integral to our Nation. You live and work in small towns, in urban centers, and around the country. You do crucial work for our government and for the American people.

As the capital of the United States, Washington, D.C., is often mistaken as the primary location for Federal workers. But this is patently false. Eighty-

five per cent of Federal workers actually live and work outside of the D.C. area. Federal workers live and work in every town, city, and State. In many places, the Federal Government is the main employer—and those jobs are vital to the local economy. The Federal workforce represents the diversity of our country.

Since 1960, the GDP has multiplied five times, new agencies have been added to the government, and the responsibilities of Federal workers have grown exponentially, and yet hiring has stagnated. The civilian workforce, not including Postal Service employees, is roughly the same size it was during the Kennedy administration, at around 2 million.

Pledges from short-sighted politicians about privatizing government services and programs like Medicare and Social Security would cause many Federal jobs to vanish and impair access to Federal services. This would put real Americans out of work and cause measurable economic hardship to local and State economies.

In addition, the government is the number one employer of veterans, particularly disabled veterans who have trouble finding jobs in the private sector. Freezing hiring or cutting the workforce means fewer opportunities for America's heroes.

That is why I want the next administration to understand the importance of Federal workers. Their jobs cannot be outsourced, replaced by machines, cut, or consolidated. I would urge the next administration to stop using our Federal workforce for purposes of partisan rhetoric and political games.

I want to let Federal workers know that I will continue to work in the Senate to fight efforts to undermine you and the work that you do. I will look for opportunities to improve the Federal workplace and strengthen the Federal workforce. So keep up the good work across America. You can count on me for support.

Today I also rise to introduce the Strengthening American Transportation Security Act of 2016, SATSA. This bill would extend to Transportation Security Officers, TSO, the same worker rights and protections under Title 5 of the U.S. Code that most other Federal workers enjoy and that TSOs are currently denied.

TSOs are Federal employees who work on the frontlines of aviation security, and make up 70 percent of the Transportation Security Administration's workforce. They provide essential protection to all Americans by screening passengers and baggage at our airports.

Every day TSOs stop eight guns from getting on our airplanes. That's nearly 3,000 guns a year. They hold life-saving jobs and TSOs deserve parity under Title 5 of the U.S. Code. My bill would provide fair treatment to TSO's and, in doing so, would improve passenger

safety and enhance the overall capacity of the Federal workforce responsible for protecting our aviation transportation system.

I am proud to introduce SATSA, which would improve the morale and stability of TSOs, the Federal workers keeping our airports and aviation travel safe. I want to thank my colleagues that have joined as original cosponsors of this bill: Senators BROWN, MERKLEY, WARREN, FRANKEN, PETERS, TESTER, and HEINRICH.

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. 3525

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 “Strengthening American Transportation Security Act of 2016”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings; sense of Congress.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.
- Sec. 4. Conversion of screening personnel.
- Sec. 5. Transition rules.
- Sec. 6. Consultation requirement.
- Sec. 7. No right to strike.
- Sec. 8. Regulations.
- Sec. 9. Delegations to Administrator.
- Sec. 10. Authorization of appropriations.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) On September 11, 2001, 19 terrorists, who underwent airport security screening prior to boarding domestic flights, were able to commandeer 4 airplanes and use those airplanes to perpetrate the most deadly terrorist attack ever to be executed on United States soil.

(2) In the aftermath of those attacks, Congress passed the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Public Law 107-71), which was signed into law by President George W. Bush on November 19, 2001—

(A) to enhance the level of security screening throughout our aviation system; and

(B) to transfer responsibility for such screening from the private sector to the newly established Transportation Security Administration (referred to in this section as “TSA”).

(3) By establishing TSA, Congress and the American public recognized that the highest level of screener performance was directly linked to employment and training standards, pay and benefits, and the creation of an experienced, committed screening workforce.

(4) Section 111(d) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 44935 note) authorizes the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security to “employ, appoint, discipline, terminate, and fix the compensation, terms, and conditions of employment of Federal service for such a number of individuals as the Under Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out the screening functions of the Under Secretary under section 44901 of title 49, United States Code”. The functions of the TSA were transferred to the Department of Homeland Security by section 403 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 203).

(5) TSA has interpreted the authorization set forth in paragraph (4) as applying to the

majority of the Transportation Security Officer workforce performing screening functions, while all other Transportation Security Administration employees, including managers, are subject to title 5, United States Code, as incorporated in title 49 of such Code.

(6) In November 2006, the International Labor Organization ruled that the Bush Administration violated international labor law when it prohibited Transportation Security Officers from engaging in collective bargaining.

(7) After the Federal Labor Relations Board approved a petition for the election of an exclusive representative, on February 4, 2011, TSA Administrator John Pistole issued a binding determination stating that “it is critical that every TSA employee feels that he or she has a voice and feels safe raising issues and concerns of all kinds. This is important not just for morale; engagement of every employee is critically important for security.”.

(8) This determination was superseded by a second determination issued on December 29, 2014, which changed the previous guideline for collective bargaining and resulting in limitations in the subjects that can be bargained, issues in dispute that may be raised to an independent, third-party neutral decision maker (such as an arbitrator or the Merit Systems Protection Board), and barriers to union representation of the Transportation Security Officer workforce.

(9) The 2011 and 2014 determinations both cited TSA’s authority under section 111(d) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 44935 note) to create a personnel system that denies the Transportation Security Officer workforce the rights under title 5, United States Code, that are provided to most other Federal workers, including—

(A) the right to appeal adverse personnel decisions to the Merit Systems Protection Board;

(B) fair pay under the General Services wage system, 2011;

(C) fair pay and raises under the General Services wage system, including overtime guidelines, access to earned leave;

(D) the application of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.);

(E) fair performance appraisals under chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code; and

(F) direct protections against employment discrimination set forth in title 7, United States Code.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the personnel system utilized by the Transportation Security Administration pursuant to section 111(d) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 44935 note) provides insufficient workplace protections for the Transportation Security Officer workforce, who are the frontline personnel who secure our Nation’s aviation system; and

(2) such personnel should be entitled to the protections under title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term “Administrator” means the official within the Department of Homeland Security who is responsible for overseeing and implementing transportation security pursuant to the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, whether designated as the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, the Undersecretary of Transportation for Security, or otherwise.

(2) **AGENCY.**—The term “agency” means an Executive agency, as defined by section 105 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) **CONVERSION DATE.**—The term “conversion date” means the date as of which paragraphs (1) through (3) of section 3(b) take effect.

(4) **COVERED EMPLOYEE.**—The term “covered employee” means an employee who holds a covered position.

(5) **COVERED POSITION.**—The term “covered position” means—

(A) a position within the Transportation Security Administration; and

(B) any position within the Department of Homeland Security, not described in subparagraph (A), the duties and responsibilities of which involve providing transportation security in furtherance of the purposes of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Public Law 107-71), as determined by the Secretary.

(6) **EMPLOYEE.**—The term “employee” has the meaning given such term by section 2105 of title 5, United States Code.

(7) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(8) **TSA PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.**—The term “TSA personnel management system” means any personnel management system established or modified under—

(A) section 111(d) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 44935 note); or

(B) section 114(n) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 4. CONVERSION OF SCREENING PERSONNEL.

(a) **TERMINATION OF CERTAIN PERSONNEL AUTHORITIES.**—

(1) **TSA PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.**—Section 114 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (n).

(2) **TERMINATION OF FLEXIBILITY IN EMPLOYMENT OF SCREENER PERSONNEL.**—Section 111 of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (49 U.S.C. 44935 note) is amended by striking subsection (d).

(3) **HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 9701 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(i) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i); and

(ii) by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

“(h) **LIMITATION.**—The human resources management system authorized under this section shall not apply to covered employees or covered positions (as such terms are defined in section 3 of the Strengthening American Transportation Security Act of 2016).”.

(B) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subparagraph (A) shall take effect on the date set forth in subsection (b).

(b) **COVERED EMPLOYEES AND POSITIONS MADE SUBJECT TO SAME PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AS APPLIES TO CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES GENERALLY.**—On the earlier of a date determined by the Secretary or 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(1) all TSA personnel management personnel policies, directives, letters, and guidelines, including the Determinations of February 2011 and December 2014 shall cease to be effective;

(2) any human resources management system established or adjusted under section 9701 of title 5, United States Code, shall cease to be effective with respect to covered employees and covered positions; and

(3) covered employees and covered positions shall become subject to the applicable labor provisions under title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 5. TRANSITION RULES.

(a) **NONREDUCTION IN RATE OF PAY.**—Any conversion of an employee from a TSA personnel management system to the provisions of law referred to in section 4(b)(3) shall be effected, under pay conversion rules prescribed by the Secretary, without any reduction in the rate of basic pay payable to such employee.

(b) **PRESERVATION OF OTHER RIGHTS.**—The Secretary shall take any necessary actions to ensure, for any covered employee as of the conversion date, that—

(1) all service performed by such covered employee before the conversion date is credited in the determination of such employee's length of service for purposes of applying the provisions of law governing leave, pay, group life and health insurance, severance pay, tenure, and status, which are made applicable to such employee under section 4(b)(3);

(2) all annual leave, sick leave, or other paid leave accrued, accumulated, or otherwise available to the covered employee immediately before the conversion date remains available to the employee, until used, while the employee remains continuously employed by the Department of Homeland Security; and

(3) the Government share of any premiums or other periodic charges under the provisions of law governing group health insurance remains at the level in effect immediately before the conversion date while the employee remains continuously employed by the Department of Homeland Security.

SEC. 6. CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.

(a) **EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATIVE.**—The labor organization certified by the Federal Labor Relations Authority on June 29, 2011, or successor organization shall be deemed the exclusive representative of full- and part-time nonsupervisory personnel carrying out screening functions under section 44901 of title 49, United States Code under chapter 71 of title 5, United States Code, with full rights under such chapter 71.

(b) **CONSULTATION RIGHTS.**—Not later than 14 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the exclusive representative for employees under chapter 71 of title 5, United States Code, on the formulation of plans and deadlines to carry out the conversion of covered employees and covered positions under this Act; and

(2) provide final written plans to the exclusive representative on how the Secretary intends to carry out the conversion of covered employees and covered positions under this Act, including with respect to—

(A) the proposed conversion date; and

(B) measures to ensure compliance with section 5.

(c) **REQUIRED AGENCY RESPONSE.**—If any views or recommendations are presented under subsection (b)(2) by the exclusive representative, the Secretary shall consider the views or recommendations before taking final action on any matter with respect to which the views or recommendations are presented and provide the exclusive representative a written statement of the reasons for the final actions to be taken.

(d) **SUNSET PROVISION.**—The provisions of this section shall cease to be effective as of the conversion date.

SEC. 7. NO RIGHT TO STRIKE.

Nothing in this Act may be construed—

(1) to repeal or otherwise affect—

(A) section 1918 of title 18, United States Code (relating to disloyalty and asserting the right to strike against the Government); or

(B) section 7311 of title 5, United States Code (relating to loyalty and striking); or

(2) to otherwise authorize any activity which is not permitted under either provision of law cited in paragraph (1).

SEC. 8. REGULATIONS.

The Secretary may prescribe any regulations that may be necessary to carry out this Act.

SEC. 9. DELEGATIONS TO ADMINISTRATOR.

The Secretary may, with respect to any authority or function vested in the Secretary under any of the preceding provisions of this Act, delegate any such authority or function to the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration under such terms, conditions, and limitations, including the power of redelegation, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 3529. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a progressive consumption tax and to reform the income tax, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce the Progressive Consumption Tax Act of 2016.

We need a tax code that is fair for American employers and fair for American families. We need a tax code that makes our U.S.-based businesses more competitive. Finally, we need a tax code that allows us to responsibly and reliably collect reasonable revenues.

I introduced a version of this bill in the 113th Congress to provide an opening for discussion and a first opportunity to review legislative language for this type of comprehensive tax reform.

Since the introduction of the Progressive Consumption Tax Act, many policymakers, including in Congress, have become increasingly interested in moving to a border-adjustable consumption tax base.

As we move towards consideration of comprehensive tax reform in 2017, I wanted to reintroduce an updated version of this bill, which I think shows what progressive, fiscally responsible, pro-growth tax reform could look like.

As many of my colleagues recognize, the extent to which we rely on income taxes is very out of step with the rest of the world.

Compared to other countries that are in the OECD—developed countries with advanced economies, countries that we want to be competitive with—all taxes as a percentage of GDP in the United States are low.

But, the U.S. is not a low income tax country. Our income tax revenues as a percentage of GDP are higher than the OECD countries. We have some of the highest statutory income tax rates in the world.

What accounts for the difference is that all OECD countries except the U.S. have a consumption tax. In fact, about 150 countries now have a consumption tax, many of which were enacted decades ago.

Unlike the U.S., these countries can tax imports and subsidize exports by rebating their consumption taxes for exports—without violating current World Trade Organization, WTO, rules.

As important, these countries can sustain reductions in their corporate income tax rates, because they have an alternative and more pro-growth revenue source—a consumption tax.

The Progressive Consumption Tax Act puts this country on a competitive playing field by providing for a broad-based progressive consumption tax, or PCT, at a rate of 10 percent. The PCT would generate revenue by taxing goods and services, rather than income.

This is not simply an add-on tax. The revenues generated by the act would be used to eliminate an income tax liability for most households. This bears repeating: instead of paying an income tax, most Americans households, under this bill, would only pay a consumption tax.

Those who do still have an income tax liability would see a much simplified income tax with their marginal rates reduced—the top marginal individual income tax rate, applying to taxable income over \$500,000 for joint filers, would be 28 percent. The current top marginal rate, applying to taxable income over approximately \$450,000 for joint filers, is 39.6 percent.

Four important tax benefits remain: the charitable contribution deduction, the state and local tax deduction, health and retirement benefits, and the mortgage interest deduction.

The act would also slice our corporate rate by more than half, to 17 percent.

Finally, the act would provide rebates to lower- and moderate-income families to counteract their consumption tax burden and to replace essential support programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. Like the EITC and CTC, Individuals and families who do not have an income tax liability would still be able to receive these rebates.

A key part of the act is progressivity. By eliminating an income tax liability for a significant number of households and providing rebates, the act is meant to be at least as progressive as the current system.

The act is also meant to responsibly raise reasonable revenues. I know that some have concerns that the act would just provide a new lever for the government to raise funds. That is why the act contains a revenue “circuit breaker” mechanism that returns excess PCT revenues to taxpayers if a certain threshold is met. The PCT is not meant to be a means to quickly raise revenues while disregarding the effects of higher consumption taxes on U.S. families and employers.

Overall, the Progressive Consumption Tax Act has many advantages compared to past reform efforts.

First, it encourages saving. Under current law, families and individuals are taxed on income, which includes savings. Under the act, most households would be exempt from the income tax, and thus would be able to save tax free.

The act enhances U.S. economic competitiveness. The U.S. corporate income tax rate would be lowered to 17

percent, encouraging multinational corporations to locate here, not abroad. OECD countries currently attracting U.S. multinationals often impose higher consumption or corporate tax rates than those envisioned by the act.

In fact, if the Progressive Consumption Tax Act became law, every top statutory rate in the United States—our individual income tax rate, our corporate tax rate, our consumption tax rate—would be at least five percentage points lower than the OECD average.

The act encourages economic growth. In a study that examined 35 years of data on 21 OECD countries, consumption taxes were found to be more growth-friendly than both personal income taxes and corporate income taxes. Corporate income taxes, especially, appear to have the most negative effect on GDP per capita. Growth-oriented tax reform should move away from income tax revenues and towards consumption tax revenues, as the act does.

The act also enhances U.S. trade competitiveness. Countries with consumption taxes can adjust their taxes at the border by rebating exports. That means that these countries can agree to reduced tariffs under trade agreements, can still tax imports with their consumption taxes, and can export their own goods without a full tax load. Because the PCT is border-adjusted, the U.S. would be able to maintain export and import tax parity in the same way as these other countries. In addition, the PCT is designed to achieve these benefits while being compliant with WTO rules.

The act reduces income tax compliance costs. Most households would not have an income tax liability under the act—although they would need to provide key pieces of information to the IRS in order to obtain their rebates.

Finally, the act protects low- and middle-income families from an unfair tax burden. Through the income tax exemption and rebate feature, the Progressive Consumption Tax Act aims to ensure that this new tax system is at least as progressive as the current income tax system.

When my colleagues and others talk to me about comprehensive, responsible, pro-growth tax reform, this to me is what we need to do.

That is why I am pleased to reintroduce the Progressive Consumption Tax Act in this Congress. This newest version of the act responds to input from stakeholders that we received last year. As important, the act shows exactly what serious, comprehensive consumption-based tax reform legislation looks like.

As this Congress closes and the new Congress convenes, I hope we will stand for what is right in our tax code, and enact the type of reform that allows our country to have among the lowest tax rates in the industrialized world, and the fairest system for all Americans.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 5139. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

SA 5140. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5139 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 2028, *supra*.

SA 5141. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2028, *supra*.

SA 5142. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5141 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 2028, *supra*.

SA 5143. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5142 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the amendment SA 5141 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 2028, *supra*.

SA 5144. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the “George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse”.

SA 5145. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5144 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 612, *supra*.

SA 5146. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 612, *supra*.

SA 5147. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5146 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 612, *supra*.

SA 5148. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5147 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the amendment SA 5146 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 612, *supra*.

SA 5149. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 612, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5150. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 5139. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end add the following:

“This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment.”

SA 5140. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5139 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike “1 day” and insert “2 days”.

SA 5141. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending Sep-

tember 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end add the following:

“This act shall be effective 3 days after enactment.”

SA 5142. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5141 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike “3 days” and insert “4 days”.

SA 5143. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5142 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the amendment SA 5141 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike “4” and insert “5”.

SA 5144. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the “George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; as follows:

At the end add the following:

“This act shall be effective 1 day after enactment.”

SA 5145. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5144 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the “George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; as follows:

Strike “1 day” and insert “2 days”.

SA 5146. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the “George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; as follows:

At the end add the following:

“This act shall be effective 3 days after enactment.”

SA 5147. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5146 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the “George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; as follows:

Strike “3 days” and insert “4 days”.

SA 5148. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5147 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the amendment SA 5146 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the

“George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; as follows:
Strike “4” and insert “5”.

SA 5149. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the “George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse”; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 2113 and insert the following:

SEC. 2113. TAXPAYER-PRODUCED IRON AND STEEL IN PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS.

Section 1452(a) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-12(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) REQUIREMENT FOR THE USE OF AMERICAN MATERIALS.—

“(A) DEFINITION OF IRON AND STEEL PRODUCTS.—In this paragraph, the term ‘iron and steel products’ means the following products made, in part, of iron or steel:

- “(i) Lined or unlined pipe and fittings.
- “(ii) Manhole covers and other municipal castings.
- “(iii) Hydrants.
- “(iv) Tanks.
- “(v) Flanges.
- “(vi) Pipe clamps and restraints.
- “(vii) Valves.
- “(viii) Structural steel.
- “(ix) Reinforced precast concrete.
- “(x) Construction materials.

“(B) REQUIREMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in subparagraph (C), none of the funds made available by a State loan fund authorized under this section shall be used for a project for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public water system unless all the iron and steel products used in the project are produced in the United States.

“(C) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (B) shall not apply in any case or category of cases in which the Administrator finds that—

- “(i) applying subparagraph (B) would be inconsistent with the public interest;
- “(ii) iron and steel products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or
- “(iii) inclusion of iron and steel products produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

“(D) PUBLIC NOTICE; WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION.—

“(i) PUBLIC NOTICE.—If the Administrator receives a request for a waiver under this paragraph, the Administrator shall—

“(I) make available to the public on an informal basis, including on the public website of the Administrator—

- “(aa) a copy of the request; and
- “(bb) any information available to the Administrator regarding the request; and
- “(II) provide notice of, and opportunity for informal public comment on, the request for a period of not less than 15 days before making a finding under subparagraph (C).

“(ii) WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION.—If, after the period provided under clause (i), the Administrator makes a finding under subparagraph (C), the Administrator shall publish in the Federal Register a detailed written justification as to why subparagraph (B) is being waived.

“(E) APPLICATION.—This paragraph shall be applied in a manner consistent with United

States obligations under international agreements.

“(F) MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT.—The Administrator may use not more than 0.25 percent of any funds made available to carry out this title for management and oversight of the requirements of this paragraph.”.

SA 5150. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . NO BUDGET NO PAY.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “No Budget, No Pay Act”.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “Member of Congress”—

- (1) has the meaning given under section 2106 of title 5, United States Code; and
- (2) does not include the Vice President.

(c) TIMELY APPROVAL OF CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET AND THE APPROPRIATIONS BILLS.—If both Houses of Congress have not approved a concurrent resolution on the budget as described under section 301 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632) for a fiscal year before October 1 of that fiscal year and have not passed all the regular appropriations bills for the next fiscal year before October 1 of that fiscal year, the pay of each Member of Congress may not be paid for each day following that October 1 until the date on which both Houses of Congress approve a concurrent resolution on the budget for that fiscal year and all the regular appropriations bills.

(d) NO PAY WITHOUT CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET AND THE APPROPRIATIONS BILLS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds may be appropriated or otherwise be made available from the United States Treasury for the pay of any Member of Congress during any period determined by the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate or the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives under subsection (e).

(2) NO RETROACTIVE PAY.—A Member of Congress may not receive pay for any period determined by the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate or the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives under subsection (e), at any time after the end of that period.

(e) DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) SENATE.—

(A) REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATIONS.—On October 1 of each year, the Secretary of the Senate shall submit a request to the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate for certification of determinations made under clause (1) and (ii) of subparagraph (B).

(B) DETERMINATIONS.—The Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate shall—

- (i) on October 1 of each year, make a determination of whether Congress is in compliance with subsection (c) and whether Senators may not be paid under that subsection;
- (ii) determine the period of days following each October 1 that Senators may not be paid under subsection (c); and

(iii) provide timely certification of the determinations under clauses (i) and (ii) upon the request of the Secretary of the Senate.

(2) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(A) REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATIONS.—On October 1 of each year, the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives shall submit a request to the Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives for certification of determinations made under clause (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (B).

(B) DETERMINATIONS.—The Chairpersons of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives shall—

(i) on October 1 of each year, make a determination of whether Congress is in compliance with subsection (c) and whether Members of the House of Representatives may not be paid under that subsection;

(ii) determine the period of days following each October 1 that Members of the House of Representatives may not be paid under subsection (c); and

(iii) provide timely certification of the determinations under clauses (i) and (ii) upon the request of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply on and after the date on which the One Hundred Sixteenth Congress convenes.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I have one request for a committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committee is authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE DEPARTMENT AND USAID MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, AND BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 8, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “State Department and USAID Management Challenges and Opportunities for the Next Administration.”

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Army defense fellow for Senator TOM UDALL, Mr. Shawn Brown, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

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

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ryan Bodge, my militarily liaison, be granted floor privileges for the rest of this weekend.

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

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER
9, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Friday, December 9; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the

two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 2028.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:41 p.m., adjourned until Friday, December 9, 2016, at 10 a.m.