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## Senate

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

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, today, teach our lawmakers to do things Your way, embracing Your precepts and walking in Your path. Lord, remind them that the road less traveled usually leads to life, and few find it.

As our Senators receive guidance from You and follow Your leading, replace anxiety with calm, confusion with clarity, and despair with hope. Use these legislators to transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. May Your peace guard their hearts. Guide them to find workable solutions for the problems of our Nation and world.

And, Lord, bring healing to Senator JOHN McCAIN.

We pray in Your merciful 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. YOUNG). The majority leader is recognized.

### WISHING SENATOR McCAIN A SPEEDY RECOVERY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I spoke to Senator McCAIN this morning and let him know the Senate continues to send its thoughts to him. Our friend

from Arizona is a pretty tough guy, as we all know. He will be back with us soon. We will continue to offer him best wishes for a speedy recovery in the meantime, and we will continue to keep Cindy, their family, his staff, and the people of Arizona in our thoughts.

### NOMINATION OF PATRICK SHANAHAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. We will also continue to work on items before the Senate. As we all know, the nomination before the Senate today is of particular concern to Senator McCAIN. Just a few days ago, as chairman of the Armed Services Committee, he came to the floor to underline the importance of confirming the nominee before us. Here is what he said.

"In order to rebuild the military," he said, "the Pentagon needs to ramp up readiness programs and embark on an ambitious plan for modernization to make sure our servicemembers are given the training, resources, and capabilities they need. To do that, the Department of Defense must have senior leadership."

For instance—this is Senator McCAIN last week—the nominee before us, Patrick Shanahan, who has been nominated to be Secretary Mattis's Deputy at the Department of Defense.

"The position of Deputy Secretary of [Defense]," Chairman McCAIN continued, "is one of the most critical positions in our government. It is essentially the chief operating officer of the largest, most complex organization in the world—the Department that is entrusted with ensuring our national security."

Yet, as Senator McCAIN noted, the position is now vacant. Friday was the last day of work for the previous Deputy Secretary of Defense, and Democrats, who do not oppose Shanahan's confirmation on the merits, are throwing up procedural hurdles that guarantee this critical national security po-

sition will remain vacant for a while longer. Why? To change an outcome? No, not to change an outcome. As I said, many Democrats actually support Shanahan's nomination. He commands the bipartisan support of the Armed Services Committee, which reported his nomination out on a voice vote—a voice vote—and he has earned praise from across the aisle. As one Democratic Senator put it, "[Patrick Shanahan's] entire career has been about solving problems no one else can solve, and these skills would be invaluable at DOD." Well, she is certainly right. Then why is her party playing games with the nomination?

These are the same games we have seen before. Take the Ambassador to China. Democrats voted with us to confirm him 82 to 12. Yet they still forced the Senate to waste days on useless procedural votes getting there. Take the Ambassador to Japan we considered last week. Democrats voted with Republicans to confirm him 86 to 12. Yet they still forced unnecessary procedural hurdles all along the way. Perhaps the most egregious example of this was the noncontroversial judicial nominee from Idaho we considered just last week. Like the nominee before us, the committee of jurisdiction reported out his nomination on a voice vote. Yet, also like the nominee before us, Democrats threw up unnecessary procedural hurdles on his nomination. When we took the vote to end debate on the judicial nominee from Idaho, they all joined with us—every single one of them—to say that debate on his nomination was not necessary and then insisted on 2 more days of "nondebate" before voting with us to confirm him 100 to 0.

So it doesn't really matter whether the nominee has been nominated to serve in the judiciary or work as an Ambassador or serve in the Treasury Department or head an intelligence agency or sit on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Democrats have

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



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shown time and time again they are willing to force needless procedural votes on nominees they actually support in order to waste the Senate's time—and presumably with the simultaneous goal of impeding the President's ability to make almost any appointments at all. If this trend continues, it will take us more than 11 years to confirm the remaining Presidential appointments. Let me repeat that. More than 11 years. A Presidential term lasts 4 years.

The level of obstruction exhibited by Senate Democrats on these nominees is simply breathtaking. It is often leaving key Departments without the senior leadership needed to guide our country through the various challenges we face. It needs to stop.

The Senate needs to confirm Mr. Shanahan quickly, and we need to do that for the sake of our national security. And our colleagues need to stop this immediately, for the sake of the country.

#### HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, ObamaCare has been hurting the people we represent for many years now. That is why the Senate has been working hard to move beyond its failures. Costs were supposed to go down under ObamaCare, but they skyrocketed. Premiums have already increased by an average of more than 100 percent on the Federal exchange. Next year, they could rise by as much as 50 percent or more in States as diverse as Georgia, New Mexico, and Maryland.

Look, we need to tackle this problem. The revised discussion draft we released last week contains many different reforms designed to make insurance more affordable and more flexible so it is something Americans actually want to buy. It gives Americans more choices for managing their care. It also takes aim at ObamaCare's taxes that target the middle class and drive up premiums—taxes on everything from health insurance to over-the-counter medication.

Choice was supposed to go up under ObamaCare, but of course it plummeted. Americans living in 70 percent of counties have little to no options for ObamaCare insurance today. Next year, nearly 40 percent fewer insurers have filed to offer plans. Many Americans face the real possibility of having no options at all and could find themselves trapped, forced by law to purchase ObamaCare insurance but left by ObamaCare without any means to do so.

We need to tackle this problem. The revised discussion draft is designed to stabilize the collapsing insurance markets and encourage more insurers to participate. It will transfer many healthcare decisions away from Washington bureaucrats and politicians and put them back with Americans and their doctors. It will also give Americans the freedom to decide their own

healthcare, allowing them to purchase the insurance they actually want, rather than just forcing Americans to buy what ObamaCare is selling.

There are other healthcare problems that need to be tackled as well. We need to strengthen Medicaid, for instance, so it can deliver better care at a better cost today and remain available to future generations tomorrow.

Our legislation contains important reforms to move our country forward in all of these areas. These are the kinds of reforms Americans deserve—not the status quo of ObamaCare, not a multibillion-dollar bandaid, not a piling on of even more ObamaCare, but real, patient-centered reforms that can finally move us beyond the pain of this law. The only way we will get there is with continued hard work. That is just what we intend to do.

#### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 2430

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

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2430) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs, medical devices, generic drugs, and biosimilar biological products, and for other purposes.

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 is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Shanahan nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on Thursday, after two additional weeks

of consultation and input from Senators, we released an improved version of the bill we call the Better Care Reconciliation Act, which represents our efforts to address the failing status quo of ObamaCare.

We have said all along that even if Hillary Clinton were elected President, we would have to revisit ObamaCare because we have seen in a number of States that insurance companies are fleeing, leaving people with few, if any, options. People in the individual and small group market are seeing their premiums skyrocket 105 percent, nationwide, since 2013 alone—a 105-percent increase in premiums.

For many of these folks, even though they paid the higher additional premium, their deductibles are so high that, effectively, they are being denied the benefit of any insurance whatsoever. I guess, perhaps, it is no surprise that 28 million Americans would simply be willing to pay the fine that goes along with the individual mandate for not buying government-approved health insurance or claim some sort of hardship exemption.

ObamaCare was sold under the premise that, if you like your policy, you can keep your policy, and, if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor and, oh, by the way, your premiums are going to go down \$2,500, but what people have experienced has been the opposite of that, with premiums going up on average \$3,000.

We simply believe that we have to act to save the millions of people who are being hurt by the status quo. That would be true whether Hillary Clinton were President or Donald Trump were President.

Our first goal in the Better Care Reconciliation Act is to stabilize the insurance markets, to make sure that people actually have an insurance company they can buy from.

Our second goal is to get premiums down. The reasons premiums are not down are mainly twofold. One is that you have younger, healthier people simply forgoing insurance, leaving only sicker, older people in the risk pools. Under adverse selection, that means everybody pays higher premiums when younger, healthier people simply don't purchase the product because they can't be part of that risk pool. The second reason why premiums are so high is the mandates. People are simply being ordered by their own government to buy coverage they don't want or need, which drives up premiums, not to mention the fact that young people are subsidizing older people's health insurance premiums the way that ObamaCare was constructed.

We are going to do everything we can to get the premiums down. The first Congressional Budget Office report said that long term you would see premiums go down by as much as 30 percent by the year 2020, but we want to do even better than that if we can.

The third thing we said we wanted to do was that we wanted to protect people with preexisting conditions. When

people are forced to keep a job they really don't want because they don't want to lose their employer-provided health coverage due to preexisting conditions, we don't want people to be stuck at a job they don't want or be unable to quit their job and look for something else because they are worried about not being covered due to preexisting condition exclusions. We maintain the current status of the law with regard to protecting people with preexisting conditions.

The fourth thing that we try to do in this bill is that we try to take one of the large entitlement programs, Medicaid, which is an important safety net for low-income Americans, and we put it on a sustainable path. There are some people who think you can spend hundreds of billions of dollars more for Medicaid over time and we can continue to deliver those services to the poor people in our country, and we don't need to worry about crowding out defense spending or education or some other priority. We simply cannot do it. What we have done is put it on a responsible growth rate and delegate more of that authority to the States to come up with innovative programs.

Our plan will remove costly mandates and will help provide more options and drive down some of the exorbitant costs. We will soon have a chance to rescue the American people from the failures of the ObamaCare experiment. This is a critical moment for the Senate.

I want to go over a few updates to the discussion draft, perhaps in the hopes that some of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will realize that, when faced with the choice of our reform plan or the status quo, the choice is clear.

After listening to a number of Senators, we made some important updates. For example, to combat the opioid epidemic that is ravaging the country, our new draft includes an additional \$45 billion for substance abuse and recovery.

As this chart indicates, the number of people with HIV has gone down to 6,400, thanks to innovations and drug therapy, principally. As to car accidents, 37,000 people a year die in the United States as a result of car accidents, but 52,000 people—and growing—lose their lives due to opioid and other drug overdoses.

This is an epidemic that has to be dealt with. The abuse of heroin and prescription painkillers is devastating families and communities all across the country, but, particularly, we hear from our colleagues in Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky that this is an urgent and unmet need.

These additional resources will be critical for providers, for advocates, and for families on the front lines of this crisis. As I said, our colleagues from Ohio, West Virginia, New Hampshire, and other places advocated for something called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act last year,

which we were able to pass to address this crisis, and we passed additional legislation called the 21st Century Cures Act in December, which, again, added additional resources. But this represents the single largest allocation or appropriation of Federal dollars to deal with this crisis than has ever occurred before. I think it is because it is necessary, and I thank our colleagues for bringing this to our attention. This is a shocking statistic, when you think about it—that more people die of drug overdoses in America today than die in car accidents—and we are going to do something about that in this legislation.

We are also introducing a provision that, for the first time, would allow people to use pretax dollars to pay for their insurance premiums. Let's say you paid 25 percent of your income to taxes. If you can use pretax dollars, then, basically, that effectively lowers your out-of-pocket cost if you can use pretax dollars rather than the net of tax.

We expand the use of health savings accounts to give people that ability, which effectively lowers the cost of their premiums, again, and provides them more flexibility in terms of determining how to provide for their healthcare. Some people may decide—and we want to give them the freedom to do so—to say: Maybe, all I need is a hospitalization policy in addition to a health savings account, where I will put pretax dollars in there and save them and use those to pay for doctors' visits.

That is the kind of thing that we have seen in States like Indiana and elsewhere, which have been used very effectively to provide additional choices for consumers and their physicians on how they address their healthcare needs and their costs. As I say, allowing consumers to use pretax dollars to pay for their health insurance premiums will help bridge the coverage gap.

Both the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation have affirmed that this will help boost access to healthcare coverage.

Another improvement this latest discussion draft brings forward is more options to buy lower premium plans. Under the Better Care Act, anyone in the individual market is allowed to purchase a lower premium health insurance plan, like the one I mentioned.

While those plans have lower monthly costs with a higher deductible, they will still cover up to three primary care visits a year and, ultimately, limit an individual's out-of-pocket costs. Coupled together with the health savings account, this may well be the most affordable way for people to address their healthcare.

Not everybody is the same. That was part of the problem with ObamaCare. It treated us all like we were widgets and not human beings with unique needs, depending on our family circumstances or our health condition or what part of

the country we lived in. This allows people to personalize and individualize their own healthcare plan.

I think this is great news for otherwise healthy adults previously barred from purchasing these plans under ObamaCare. Young people, whom we need in the insurance pool in order to bring down premiums for everybody else, don't want to have to subsidize older folks' health coverage. They want to pay the freight for their own costs, but this will allow them access to a lower cost plan that will allow them to be covered for an unexpected hospitalization or other catastrophic event.

In addition to this freedom of choice, these plans will now also be eligible for tax credits. In other words, what we provide is a refundable tax credit, which essentially is a check from the Federal Government to the insurance company to pay your health insurance premium.

Under ObamaCare, people enrolled in these sorts of catastrophic plans were prohibited from receiving tax credits like the ones we are offering, even when they met all other eligibility requirements. That doesn't make any sense, and our legislation fixes that.

We have also made several revisions to Medicaid. I might mention that there is a lot of discussion about whether we are cutting Medicaid. I have said before that only in Washington, DC, can you spend more money year after year and be accused of cutting.

Honestly, fairly, what we do is to reduce the rate of growth for Medicaid, this uncapped entitlement program that contributed more than \$20 trillion to the national debt. We put it on a reasonable budget and a rate of growth. Actually, from the beginning until the end, we will see Medicaid spending go up by the Federal government by \$71 billion.

Ultimately, for Medicaid to work more efficiently for the people it is intended to serve—primarily, the children, the blind, the disabled, and the elderly frail—we need to give the States more flexibility to implement Medicaid spending based upon the unique needs of people in their States.

One of the big problems with ObamaCare is that it expanded Medicaid to otherwise healthy adults. We have a better way to deal with that, using the tax credit, the State innovation and stability funds, and something called the 1332 waivers, where the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services essentially is giving the States the opportunity to innovate and use the money and the tax credit to come up with something that suits the needs of their population.

Really, what we need to do is to get Medicaid focused again on the most vulnerable populations, which are the disabled, the blind, the frail elderly, and children. To improve the management of vulnerable populations such as this, now States can apply for a waiver

to utilize existing funds as they see fit to improve community-based services that these folks rely on.

Our Medicaid provisions allow the States flexibility to route funds to regions impacted by public health emergencies, which include disastrous weather events like hurricanes. Instead of being applied as a block grant or based on per capita caps, under our legislation, emergency funding will be applied where and when it is needed.

Lastly, under our Medicaid revision, States can add expansion populations under existing block grants if they choose to do so. Medicaid will always be as it has been—a Federal-State shared expense. By allowing States to be flexible in their Medicaid application, we can help them fill the gaps that the mandates under ObamaCare chose to merely gloss over. For example, in Texas, we were not a Medicaid expansion State. So young adults between 100 percent of poverty and 138 percent of poverty will now get access to a tax credit with the innovation and stability funds and these waivers, which will allow them, for the first time, to get access to private health insurance. That is good for them, and I think represents a vast improvement on the status quo—about 600,000 in Texas alone.

Our new draft includes an additional \$70 billion to encourage States and help them implement these new reforms. What I have come to learn is, people don't really trust Washington, DC. Certainly, based on the experience of ObamaCare—this failed experiment where people were promised certain things that ended up not being true and created the problems we now are having to fix—I think people will have a lot more confidence in a plan that lets the Governors and lets the State leaders manage this money and address the healthcare needs of their population by people who are closest to those people rather than out of Washington, DC.

Our bill does that in a dramatic way. It takes that authority and power grabbed by ObamaCare and gives it back to the Governors and the States to manage. Based on the polling I have seen, people certainly have greater confidence in the States and their leadership at the local level to deal with this than they do under ObamaCare. If Governors want to try to come up with unique healthcare products to drive down premiums, cost sharing, or increased funding for health savings accounts, this legislation gives them greater flexibility and gives them additional funding through the Innovation and Stability Fund to do just that.

Many of us have quoted Louis Brandeis, who served on the U.S. Supreme Court, who said: States are the "laboratories of democracy." It is true. You don't see any innovation at the Federal level. It is more like dealing with the Politburo. It is all command and control—central planning, which we know doesn't work very well. The States are the laboratories of democ-

racy. If we give them the freedom to innovate and the resources to do so, I think we can expect our healthcare system to move forward.

Soon we are going to have a critical vote, one that has been 7 years in the making. While our plan is not perfect, it is certainly better than the status quo, which is why we call it the Better Care Act. This is not the end, as Dr. Tom Price, of Health and Human Services, points out. This is just the next step. We know we are going to have other opportunities to address healthcare, most notably in September, when we reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program, but this, by any measure, represents an improvement over the status quo.

I think there are some very useful parts of this bill that people will like if they look at it objectively and consider it fairly, but if we don't take up the bill, well, it can't be changed, and millions of Americans will continue to be harmed by the status quo. That is a decision we all have to make when we move to the bill.

Do we have enough confidence that we can make it better or are we simply going to throw our hands up and say, "Well, I give up," before we even start, leaving people with the failure of the status quo?

I would like to encourage our colleagues to work with us to make this legislation better. It is unfortunate that healthcare has become such a polarizing and partisan issue. It doesn't need to be that way, but it started off with ObamaCare, which was passed along purely party lines, creating a situation where there is not bipartisan support for healthcare, generally, which is a real tragedy, given the importance this has to all of us and all of our families. Given the hand we have been dealt, we are going to plow ahead and do the best we can.

I sat down at my computer this morning, and I started to write a list of things I liked about the Better Care Act that perhaps most people haven't heard much about. No. 1, it repeals the individual mandate. This is the fine that has been imposed on people for not buying government-approved health insurance. It repeals the job-killing employer mandate. This bill will lower premiums, repeal burdensome taxes, and restore choices. It will help stabilize insurance markets and protect people with preexisting conditions. It will allow people to use pretax dollars to pay for their healthcare costs, including insurance premiums. It provides substantial resources to fight opioid and other substance abuse. It provides better quality coverage to low-income Americans that will improve medical outcomes for low-income Americans, and it puts Medicaid on a sustainable path.

I would like to encourage all of our colleagues to work with us to help make this legislation even stronger. Everybody will be able to offer an amendment and get a vote on the

amendment when this bill comes to the floor. I believe the alternative is a disaster for our country, and we simply can't afford to let it stand.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I came to speak on a different subject and will not speak at length about the healthcare bill because this Senator has spoken on a number of occasions about the healthcare bill. Suffice it to say, in light of what the majority whip has just said; that if we really did want to seek a bipartisan solution to the healthcare situation in expanding healthcare for as many people as we possibly can, then what we do, in a bipartisan way, is start saying: We have a current law. Let's fix what needs fixing.

This Senator can say there are a number of discussions going on between Democratic Senators and Republican Senators about doing just that—about such items as a reinsurance fund to ensure companies against catastrophe, the likes of which, in a proposal this Senator has filed, has been costed out. In my State of Florida, it would reduce insurance premiums for health insurance 13 percent. Ideas like that—in a bipartisan way—will solve and bring stability to the marketplace. That is why insurance companies, in fact, are being vigorous in their opposition to the Senator CRUZ part of the bill that basically destabilizes the market by taking all of the older and sicker people and putting them in one pot and putting the younger and healthier people in another pot, which is exactly the opposite of what the principle of insurance is. The principle of insurance is, you spread the risk over as many people as you can and thereby can bring down the per-unit cost.

If we really wanted to fix it in a bipartisan way, we would be able to, but still, as you can see, there is not the appetite for that in this highly polarized, highly ideological, and highly partisan atmosphere we find ourselves in on this particular topic.

#### PROTECTING THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

Mr. President, this Senator came here to talk about another thing that is equally disturbing because there is a blatant, coordinated effort by some elected officials to muzzle the scientific community. When you start muzzling scientists, you don't come up with the facts, and you don't come up with the truth. What is being presented as facts doesn't really match the truth, and certainly the rhetoric doesn't match what is happening.

For example, just last month in the State of Florida, the Florida Legislature passed, and the Governor signed into law, a bill that allows any resident of the State—regardless of whether they have a student in school—any resident can challenge what is being taught in the public schools. So if a single resident objects to a certain subject that students are being taught

having to do with science, a subject such as what is happening in the climate and the changes; the fact that the Sun's rays come in and reflect off the Earth and go back—reflect out and radiate the heat back into space—but when you start putting what are known as greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, up there, they suddenly act as a ceiling, a greenhouse gas ceiling having a greenhouse effect, trapping the heat and causing the Earth to heat up. Two-thirds of the Earth is covered with water. Most of that heat is absorbed in the oceans. What happens to water when it is heated? It expands. That is a fact. Sea level rise in South Florida is a fact. It is a measurement over the last 40 years. The seas have risen 8 inches in South Florida. That is a fact, but if there are some who object to that climate science, then under this new law just signed by the Governor, they are going to be able to object to that subject being taught in our public schools. A single hearing officer will determine—Lord only knows whom that officer is appointed by—that single person will determine, under the new law, if the objection is justified. They can force a local public school to remove the subject from its curriculum.

Does that sound a little bit strange? Does that sound a little bit scary? It seems like this is the most brazen attack on science we have seen in a long time. It is a blatant attempt to cover up the truth. Instead of accepting the fact that the seas are rising and what is going to be a very real threat—and already is to a coastline like Florida's—they want to literally rip the subject right out of our children's textbooks, while at the same time silencing the teachers and the scientists. I don't think we can sit back and allow our public schools to become political battlegrounds, and we shouldn't allow politicians to silence our teachers and scientists just because they don't happen to like that part of the science.

While this bill was just enacted in Florida, it may be one of the most egregious examples of hiding the truth. Unfortunately, I am sad to report, it is not the only one. In fact, in 2015, Florida's Governor went so far as to reportedly ban State officials from even using the term "climate change" in their reports. Doesn't that sound like muzzling? Yet the effect of sea level rise is still painfully evident in South Florida. What about the water washing over the curbs on Miami Beach at the seasonal high tide? What about the water that is coming over the streets in the Las Olas section of Fort Lauderdale at the seasonal high tide?

In just a month, the new head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency fired several members of the Board of Scientific Counselors—the very people responsible for overseeing the Agency's science and research programs. These were scientists at the top of their fields working on behalf of the American people, and suddenly, in one fell swoop,

the new head of the EPA fired them all and wants to replace them with—you guessed it—industry representatives, scientists from the very industries that the EPA is supposed to monitor and oversee. If this is not what completes the picture of putting the fox in charge of the henhouse, I don't know what is.

The henhouse is not just climate science, but it includes basic research in all fields, including healthcare—NIH. By the way, thank goodness we have a head of NIH who is a guy who broke the code on the human genome, Dr. Collins. It includes the fields of astronomy—how about NASA—and it includes the origin of the universe—quantum physics in multiple agencies.

This disturbing trend of hiding the truth if it doesn't match their rhetoric is a trend that is spreading across all levels of government. If information can't be removed from the public domain altogether, then guess what they try to do: They try to discredit it.

For example, look at what has been done now in an effort to pass this disastrous Republican healthcare bill. Instead of—as I have just made comments preparatory to this science subject—trying to work together on a bipartisan bill aimed at improving our Nation's healthcare system, some on the other side of the aisle have resorted to attacking whom? Attacking the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office after it said that the bill will take healthcare coverage away from tens of millions of people.

The nonpartisan CBO is just that; it is nonpartisan. It is responsible for estimating the costs and effects of nearly every bill that Congress considers. Yet suddenly, when the conclusions of CBO don't match the rhetoric coming from one side, they turn their attacks on the scientists and the mathematicians who release the findings.

Listen to these quotes:

"I have a lot of questions about the accuracy of the CBO," one of our Republican colleagues said here in the Senate.

CBO's time has "come and gone," the White House Budget Director said earlier this year.

"We disagree strenuously with the report," HHS Secretary Price said. "The CBO report's coverage numbers defy logic."

"If you're looking at the CBO for accuracy, you're looking in the wrong place," said the Press Secretary at the White House.

If that is not enough, just last week, the White House itself released a video saying that the CBO's score of the Republican healthcare bill is based on "faulty assumptions and bad math."

It is clear what is going on. This administration's war on science is not a myth. It is not fake news. If you want to know an administration's true priorities, you need to look no further than their budget, and if you look at the President's most recent budget request, you will see dramatic cuts to some of our most important scientific

agencies. This Senator has seen that in the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee—in the NOAA programs and in the NASA programs.

The President's budget calls for more than a 30-percent cut to EPA. It calls for the firing of nearly one-quarter of its staff and the elimination of all funding for programs aimed at fighting climate change. Climate change isn't just about Florida nor is it a coastal State problem; it is a problem of the entire country. The extreme weather events caused by climate change affect us all. Droughts become more frequent, floods become more severe, and major storms like hurricanes and tornadoes become stronger and even more deadly.

The scientists at NOAA, the National Weather Service, NASA, and most of the other agencies, including our military, who study climate change aren't trying to create a mythical problem that doesn't exist. They are trying to solve real-life problems that affect all of us and that affect them in the carrying out of their duties.

They work at Federal agencies across the country with one goal in mind—to make credible, valid data publicly available for researchers, academic institutions, and businesses that use the information to better understand things.

I see the leader is here to speak. I will conclude with just a couple of thoughts.

These scientists know that we can't just stick our heads in the sand. Science doesn't work like that. Facts are facts. And the fact is that the Earth is heating up, and there is a reason for that, which I explained. If we don't do something about it, the communities that are already affected in my State are going to be communities all over the world. These are not alternative facts.

Yet, instead of helping these scientists do their work, some political leaders are using their positions to hide this information and to make it unavailable. We ought to be speaking out against it, and that is what this Senator is trying to do.

I have filed legislation to protect scientists' rights to speak publicly about their research—not to let them be muzzled—and to ensure that all agencies maintain their scientific integrity.

I hope we can stop this nonsense of hiding the truth. Let's stop this war on science. Let's accept facts as they are and then debate the issues, the policy. The American people deserve an open and honest government that works for them, not a government that distorts the truth to match its rhetoric.

I thank the Senate for indulging me, and I thank the leader for listening patiently.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

THANKING THE SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I want to tell my colleague from Florida

that it is always a pleasure to listen to him. He is erudite, well-researched, and passionate—always about a subject that matters.

On the subject he just spoke about, no State in our entire Nation has more experience with the frailties of this planet, given that it is heating up, as the Senator from Florida, given all the low-lying, heavily populated areas on the oceanside and the Gulfside. I thank him for his continued pursuit of these issues that are very important to every one of us.

#### WISHING SENATOR MCCAIN A SPEEDY RECOVERY

Mr. President, before I begin, for once I would like to express my hope—and I think the hope of every Member of this Chamber—that the senior Senator from Arizona, my good friend JOHN MCCAIN, has a full and speedy recovery from his recent surgery. There is no one who has done more to serve this country in this Chamber than JOHN MCCAIN. There is no one who is more passionate in his defense of our soldiers and our defense than JOHN MCCAIN. He is just an outstanding man and a very, very good friend. I admire him very much, treasure his friendship, and wish him the best. Godspeed to Senator MCCAIN and his family.

#### HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. President, because of Senator MCCAIN's recent illness, it seems that it will be at least another week until the Republican majority forces a vote on the Republican TrumpCare bill. I would suggest to my good friend, the Republican leader, that he use this time to hold public hearings on the bill.

My Republican friends propose to pass legislation that would reorganize one-sixth of our economy and touch the lives of every American without a single hearing. Is that amazing? There has not been one hearing, even though we have been on the bill for 7 months now. There has been no opportunity to hear from experts in a public setting, let alone consider amendments.

So I say to my friend, Senator MCCONNELL: Let's use this extra week or extra weeks to do what Republicans should have done a long time ago. Hold public hearings and allow the stakeholders to come in and express their concerns.

Today we Democrats sent the leader a letter to make this request formally, and we will include a list of non-partisan stakeholders we believe should have a chance to air their views on the Senate Republican healthcare bill. These are groups known for their followings and for the good they do, known for not being political at all, like the American Cancer Society, the American Lung Association, the American Hospital Association, AHIP—the largest trade group for insurers—to name a few. Let's have these groups testify on the policies in this bill so that the American people will have a chance to hear what experts and patient advocates have to say.

I say to my friend, the leader: When you don't have hearings, when you try

to hide a bill, it usually results in poor legislation. That is what is happening now: a bill done behind closed doors by a handful of Senators—even Republican Senators didn't know what they were putting together. It doesn't work.

The wisdom of the Founding Fathers, the wisdom of this body through the centuries is to do it in public, have a discussion, have a debate, and the crucible of the legislative process will make it better. The suggestion we are making—obviously we oppose many parts of the bill; obviously so do the American people. But maybe something that would be said at a hearing would change things around.

Additionally, we ask the majority leader to wait for a complete score from the Congressional Budget Office before proceeding to his bill. The Republicans now have a week—maybe more—to get their bill scored by the nonpartisan CBO. They have no excuse to proceed to a bill of this significance without knowing its cost or consequence. Now that they have plenty of time to get that done, we Democrats hope there will be a full CBO score before a vote on the motion to proceed. We make these requests respectfully.

Let me just say one more thing about the CBO. The White House has had an awful tendency—when they don't like a fact, they call it fake, and they try to discredit the fact giver. We have never seen a Presidency like this. I say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Don't let this infection spread to you.

CBO is a nonpartisan organization. The head of CBO was appointed by the Republican leaders of the House and Senate. To discredit CBO simply because you don't like the answer they give is not the American way. The American way is to debate the facts, not deny them, not call them fake because you don't like them.

Unfortunately, our President has made this a hallmark of his Presidency. Anything he doesn't like is fake, even though it is real. His son gives an email, gives a statement, and he says that is fake—what was said is fake. Let it not spread to this body. CBO is a respected organization, as I said, with leaders appointed by Republicans, not by us. Let's hear what they have to say, and let's take it seriously, even though we may not agree with the outcome of where their facts lead.

I would like to make some additional points on one of the more controversial parts of the Republican TrumpCare bill—the Cruz amendment. The Cruz amendment, by allowing insurers to sell junk insurance, would actually increase out-of-pocket costs on average Americans. Premiums might come down for some plans because insurers wouldn't have to cover very much, but the reduction in premiums would be more than offset by skyrocketing deductibles and copays. So the average American would be paying more, not less. The average American, or so many of them, would likely get junk insurance.

My friend Senator COONS of Delaware put it best when he said: Yes, we will sell you a car. It will be cheaper, but it will have no bumper, no steering wheel, and no carburetor. It will be cheaper, but it will not serve its purpose. It will not get you where you have to go. On these Cruz insurance policies, the insurer can say: no hospitalization, no payment for drugs. What good are they? It is a talking point, but it doesn't help people. It hurts them.

The Cruz amendment would also make insurance unaffordable for Americans who need it most, creating what even the very conservative American Action Forum says would be a death spiral in the marketplace. My friend the senior Senator from Iowa said the Cruz amendment would “annihilate the preexisting condition requirement.” That is not CHUCK SCHUMER or BILL NELSON speaking. That is CHUCK GRASSLEY, one of the most senior Republican Senators from the great State of Iowa, who says that. It is not fake. It is real, what he said. You can't wash it away.

The Cruz amendment winds back the clock in America to the days of the worst practices of insurance companies. It seems that the *raison d'être* of the Cruz amendment is to let insurance companies do whatever they want. In the 1890s, that philosophy may have governed, but America has learned under Republican and Democrat alike that it doesn't protect them. It would allow insurers to sell policies without the ban on preexisting exclusions, without covering essential health benefits, and without lifetime limits on out-of-pocket costs. It would even allow insurers to sell policies that include excessive waiting periods of more than 90 days.

If your kid has cancer, this policy in its fine print says that you have to wait 90 days while you watch your child suffer. What kind of freedom is that? It is freedom for the insurance company. It sure isn't freedom for the family with a child who is suffering.

I find that the Cruz amendment—and sometimes my good friend from Texas cares about freedom for very wealthy people, for millionaires. What about average people? You need freedom to be able to have your insurance company pay when your kid has cancer. You need to be free of that—that they can't pay or will not pay or that you have to wait 90 days. But the Cruz amendment blesses those kinds of restrictions. Remember, the Cruz amendment was added to a bill that slashes Medicaid in a way that would shatter protections for Americans in nursing homes, those struggling with opioid addictions, and Americans in rural parts of the country. The Cruz amendment is a cruel insult adding to a devastating injury.

We have another week or more before the Senate will vote on this bill. The Republican leader can spend that time trying to find new or ever more cynical ways to buy off necessary votes with

bailouts and giveaways to certain States, or he can do what he has promised to do repeatedly as majority leader—return this body to regular order, go through the committee process, have hearings and a robust amendment process—and, I dare say, the resulting product will be a lot better than the one we have before us. I dare say that is why the Founding Fathers set up a Congress—not to have a few people get in a room and rush through a bill that affects a huge percentage of the American economy.

#### “MADE IN AMERICA” WEEK

On another matter, Mr. President, the administration has termed this week “Made in America” Week. So I would urge every American to use this opportunity to look at the administration’s and this President’s “Made in America” record.

President Trump said in his inaugural address that his administration would follow two simple rules: “buy American” and “hire American.” But President Trump’s own businesses don’t even follow those rules. If you are going to preach something, start at home. Start at home.

Trump shirts and ties are made in China. Trump furniture is made in Turkey. While President Trump and his administration are importuning others to make it in America, maybe he should demand it of his businesses first.

The American people should also take a hard look at the Trump administration’s policies on the issues of trade and outsourcing. Again, the words in the President’s inauguration and his actions contradict each other, just as do the actions of his company. Earlier this year, President Trump refused to insist that pipelines and water infrastructure be made with American Steel. Buy American, hire American—why did he refuse to do that? We Democrats wanted it done. I think many Republicans wanted it done. If President Trump were serious about the “Made in America” Week, he would demand that Senate Republicans put Senator BALDWIN’s bill requiring that infrastructure be made with American Steel on the Senate floor.

Another example is the upcoming National Defense Authorization Act, prepared by the Republican majority. It includes rollbacks—actual rollbacks—to the “Buy American” rules. If President Trump was serious about “Made in America” Week, instead of a lot of show and a lot of talking, why doesn’t he oppose those rollbacks and threaten to veto any bill that dilutes or rescinds “Buy American” rules, which the Defense bill coming to the floor does.

So, again, as “Made in America” Week commences, I urge the American people to study the policies of this President and the practices of the businesses that bear his name, because, at least thus far, the Trump administration’s push for “Made in America” is a bit like Mr. Putin’s proposing a cyber security task force.

#### RECOGNIZING FRENCH PRESIDENT MACRON’S REMARKS ON ANTI-ZIONISM

Mr. President, I would like to applaud French President Emmanuel Macron for his comments over the weekend about anti-Semitism. “We will yield nothing to anti-Zionism,” he said, “because it is the reinvented form of anti-Semitism.”

President Macron is absolutely right. Anti-Semitism is a word that has been used throughout history when Jewish people are judged and measured by one standard and the rest by another—when everyone else was allowed to farm and Jews could not, when everyone else was allowed to live in Moscow and Jews could not, when others could become academics or tradesmen, and Jews could not. Praise God, it has not happened in America, but it was a hallmark of Europe.

The word to describe all of these acts is anti-Semitism. So it is with anti-Zionism. The idea that all other people can seek or defend their right to determination but the Jewish people cannot, that other nations have a right to exist but the Jewish State of Israel does not is also a modern form of anti-Semitism, just as President Macron of France said this weekend. Anti-Zionism, unfortunately, continues to bubble up in many different forms.

There is perhaps no greater example than the pernicious effort to delegitimize Israel through boycotts, divestment, and sanctions. The BDS movement is a deeply biased campaign that I would say, in similar words to Mr. Macron’s, is “a reinvented form of anti-Semitism,” because it seeks to impose boycotts on Israel and not any other nations, most of whose practices are abhorrent, far worse than the democracy of Israel, which recognizes people’s rights.

I hope that the States across this country will continue to push back against the BDS movement by boycotting the boycotters, as my home State of New York has done. I know that my fellow Senators on both sides of the aisle—this is an issue that has, thank God, not lent itself to partisanship—will join me in condemning this modern brand of anti-Semitism, as President Macron did this weekend.

Mr. President, once again, my thoughts go to Senator JOHN MCCAIN, to his speedy recovery, and to the respect that every single Member of this body has for him. We pray that his recovery is speedy, full, and permanent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The majority leader.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 170, John Kenneth Bush.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Dan Sullivan, John Barrasso, John Cornyn, Orrin G. Hatch, Ron Johnson, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, Richard Burr, James Lankford, Lamar Alexander, John Kennedy, Cory Gardner, James M. Inhofe, Michael B. Enzi, John Thune, Todd Young, Mitch McConnell.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 100, David Bernhardt.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby



move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Tim Scott, John Hoeven, Pat Roberts, Orrin G. Hatch, Tom Cotton, John Barrasso, Thom Tillis, Michael B. Enzi, John Boozman, James M. Inhofe, John Cornyn, James Lankford, Mike Rounds, Cory Gardner.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the cloture motions be waived.

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

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

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

#### NOMINATION OF PATRICK SHANAHAN

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination of Mr. Patrick Shanahan to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

The Department of Defense is going through historic changes in its organizational structure. These much needed changes are thanks to the chairman of the Armed Services Committee and his unwavering commitment to strengthening our Nation's security and ensuring that American taxpayers get the best return on their investment. We should all applaud the chairman for his efforts.

But even as we make these reforms, we should also heed the lessons of the past. History shows us that the Department of Defense runs best under a Secretary who is a strong policy leader and a Deputy Secretary who is a dynamic business manager. The most obvious example of this preferred structure was when David Packard, the former CEO of the Hewlett-Packard corporation, was confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Defense. Thanks to Deputy Secretary Packard's considerable business acumen, his term in office is still regarded as the model of effective management at the Department of Defense.

That leads us to today and our once-in-a-generation opportunity to replicate this efficiency and success at the Department of Defense. The pieces are now in place. Chairman McCain has provided the statutory catalyst, and I am sorry he has had some difficulty healthwise over the last few days. We can't wait to get him back. Secretary Mattis is a brilliant thinker and a master strategist who is providing the critical leadership we need during this period of uncertainty, and today he is seeking to replicate the Packard model by choosing as his Deputy a man of proven business and management skill.

I understand that things could have gone a bit better during Mr. Shanahan's confirmation hearing, but I

believe we all should remember that Mr. Shanahan has not been nominated for a position in public affairs—far from it. He has been nominated to be a strong manager who can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department of Defense. In this role, I believe Mr. Shanahan will excel. I think everybody who knows him believes that.

Currently, Mr. Shanahan is a senior vice president at the Boeing corporation, where he has been responsible for designing and producing some of the world's most complex machines. For example, when the Boeing Company's latest aircraft, the 787, was experiencing developmental difficulties, Mr. Shanahan was one of the key leaders tasked to solve these issues, earning himself the nickname "Mr. Fix-it."

As further evidence of his leadership, I was particularly impressed with one of Mr. Shanahan's written answers to the Armed Services Committee's questions. He wrote:

In my three decades of experience, I have developed and practiced a formula to create change at scale in large, complex organizations. I believe leadership is essential to changing the status-quo—setting a compelling vision, establishing ambitious goals and realistic intermediate objectives, and converting strategy into action.

Is that not exactly the type of person we want to be managing and reforming the Department of Defense? I personally think it is.

Finally, I believe Mr. Shanahan's most important credential is that he is Secretary Mattis's choice to be the Deputy Secretary of Defense. I firmly believe Secretary Mattis will be remembered as one of our Nation's premier national security leaders. The Secretary does not fool around. He demands the best in himself and those around him. If Secretary Mattis wants Mr. Shanahan, then I believe the Senate should speed his confirmation so the good work can continue.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Mr. Shanahan, especially to ensure that the Department of Defense maintains our current statutory requirements regarding our defense logistics capabilities. I strongly believe Mr. Shanahan will play a critical role in leading the Department of Defense to a new era of effectiveness and efficiency.

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

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

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

##### CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

##### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Mitch McConnell, Joni Ernst, Tom Cotton, Thom Tillis, Lindsey Graham, Mike Crapo, John Boozman, Roger F. Wicker, Dan Sullivan, John Cornyn, John Thune, Steve Daines, John Barrasso, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, John McCain.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) would have voted "yea".

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 88, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 161 Ex.]

##### YEAS—88

Alexander	Franken	Paul
Baldwin	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Portman
Blumenthal	Hassan	Reed
Blunt	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Brown	Heitkamp	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Isakson	Schumer
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Cochran	King	Stabenow
Collins	Klobuchar	Strange
Coons	Lankford	Sullivan
Corker	Leahy	Tester
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tillis
Cotton	McCaskill	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Udall
Cruz	Menendez	Van Hollen
Daines	Merkley	Warner
Donnelly	Moran	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murkowski	Wyden
Enzi	Murphy	Young
Feinstein	Murray	
Fischer	Nelson	

##### NAYS—6

Booker	Harris	Sanders
Gillibrand	Markey	Warren



## NOT VOTING—6

Duckworth	Flake	McCain
Ernst	Heller	Wicker

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 88, the nays are 6.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I want to talk a little bit about what is going on here on the Senate floor. We were just considering the nomination of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, trying to move him along—a very important job—and it has taken some time. As a matter of fact, it has taken a long time, as the Presiding Officer knows, to get nominees from the White House confirmed by this body to run the government.

Running the government is a very important job. We not only need Cabinet Secretaries—which, by the way, took months for this body to confirm. They slowed down the confirmation of the choices of the White House to run the Federal agencies—no real explanation why—and now, Under Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Federal judges—delay, delay, delay.

We are supposed to be trying to put people in place to run the government, which is the job of the Senate, but it has taken a very long time to do it, and it shouldn't be this way. It shouldn't be this way.

When we look at U.S. history, typically, enabling a President to fill the key positions of government has not been a partisan issue. An election happens. Yes, there could be some debate on Cabinet officials, but you typically want to fill the government and start running the government on behalf of the American people. It has not been a partisan issue in America. Well, unfortunately, it is becoming a partisan issue due to what by any measure is historic obstruction on the nominations coming from the White House to run the Federal Government—historic obstruction.

The people did elect us, and they elected a new President, and implicit in the election was that they wanted us to get to work, to do things that, in my view, are very bipartisan. What are some of those things? Growing the economy. We haven't had 3 percent GDP growth in almost 15 years. That is a bipartisan issue—growing the economy. So are rebuilding our military, unleashing energy that we have in this great Nation in enormous abundance, investing in infrastructure, streamlining regulations that are strangling small businesses, and, yes, enacting policies to address the spiraling costs of health insurance and healthcare costs across the country.

Throughout history, the party in the minority understood this after an election and would vote to confirm new members of an administration—not just Cabinet Secretaries but Under Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and judges. In fact, the current minority leader said the fol-

lowing in 2013: “Who in America doesn't think a President, Democrat or Republican, deserves his or her picks for who should run the agencies? Nobody.”

“Nobody,” he said.

Those were wise words in 2013. I just wish he would remember them in 2017 because apparently he has forgotten those words. He has forgotten those words, because right now there is pure obstruction in terms of trying to seat the people to run the government.

Sometimes it is important to try to explain to the American people what is going on here on the Senate floor because it can be confusing. I still get confused sometimes. There are arcane rules. Let's give an example of what just happened here right now.

We had the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the No. 2 official at the Department of Defense. That is a pretty darn important job. After he came out of the Armed Services Committee, on which I sit, we voted to end debate on his nomination. The vote just happened, and I believe it was 88 to 6, so very bipartisan.

By the way, we need people at the Department of Defense. Whether you are a Democrat or a Republican, regardless of whom you voted for in the November elections, most Americans want us to have good people running the Department of Defense right now. We have very few there—very few—because of this obstruction.

For the Deputy Secretary, the cloture vote just happened, 88 to 6. That is a very strong bipartisan vote. In previous times, in a Democratic or Republican administration, the Senate would normally say: Let's move him. He needs to get over there. Let's unanimously agree to moving that nomination more quickly so he can help run the Department of Defense—a pretty important job.

Well, unfortunately, we are not in that era right now. So what our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been doing for every single nomination for this administration is now we will have an additional 2-day waiting period, an additional 30 hours of debate. Those are Senate rules, but normally on someone this noncontroversial, those rules get waived. But we have a minority leader who wants to drag out every single official from being seated. He really hasn't explained why. I haven't heard an explanation why. But it is happening for every single official—three to four days on one official. Someone did an estimation that if they keep this up, if they do this for every single Senate-confirmed job, it will take 11 years. It will take 11 years to seat the officials in the Trump administration. How is that helping the American people? It is not. Yet, nobody comes to the floor to explain why they are doing it. The press doesn't report on it.

Let me provide some other facts on this issue. Normally, when we waive these rules, we can have a voice vote.

For a noncontroversial nomination like the Deputy Secretary of Defense, as we just had, normally that would be voice-voted.

At this point in President Obama's Presidency—so the first 6 months of his Presidency—the Senate had allowed more than 90 percent of his nominees to be confirmed by simple voice vote. The Senate asked for procedural votes only eight times on eight nominees—that was it—in the first 6 months of President Obama's administration. That was actually normal. Democrats or Republicans would do something along those lines.

For the Trump administration's first 6 months, the minority leader and his colleagues have demanded cloture votes for every single nominee, no matter what the position, no matter how noncontroversial, no matter how bipartisan. The courtesy extended to President Obama to get his team together so that he could run the country has not been extended here. That is just a fact.

Let me give another fact. According to the nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service, at about this point in President Obama's first term, he had 183 of his nominations confirmed—183. Getting people in their positions in government to run the country—it doesn't matter what party you are in; this is to run the country. But while President Trump's administration at this point has made 178 nominations to the Senate, only 46 have been confirmed. So for President Obama at this point, 183 nominations were confirmed; for this President, 46. This is historic obstruction.

No one comes here and says: Why? Why are you doing this? What is the point? What is the point?

This isn't by accident. The head of a leading Democratic think tank told the press recently that they intended to hold up, delay, tie up floor time for every single nomination for Senate-confirmed positions. But what they don't do—they don't say: And here is why.

Why do they want to do that? It is not going to help us grow the economy. It is not going to help us with infrastructure. It is not going to help us rebuild our military when we keep the Deputy Secretary from coming in to his position.

Just last week, we had a judge who was nominated from the State of Idaho, a district court judge who was confirmed unanimously, and it took almost the entire week to get him confirmed on the Senate floor because the minority leader was delaying, delaying, delaying—even someone who got 100 percent of the Senators to vote for him. Again, it is not clear why they are doing this.

Some of the other noncontroversial nominees that are being delayed are the Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs and two nominees to review pipelines and other projects at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Do you think we

need that for our country to grow the economy? We do.

These are important positions to do the work of the Federal Government. Yet they are all delayed, and nobody in the press even asks any questions. This is historic obstruction right now, and no one is even asking: Why are you doing it?

It would be great to have the minority leader come to the Senate floor and tell us why. I want to know why. I want to grow the economy. We need these people in positions of authority to help us do the things—bipartisan things—that the American people sent us here to do, not delay, not obstruct.

Something else is happening on the Senate floor right now. It is not just the historic obstruction of nominees. The other side, for whatever reason, is now deciding they are going to shut down any movement of anything on the Senate floor. Let me give one example, which is actually quite important.

A lot of what we do here moves by what we call unanimous consent on the Senate floor. There are rules to move things. It can take a lot of time. But a lot of times the leadership of the Senate will get together and say: OK, we can have a unanimous consent agreement to move things faster. It is not just nominees. Sometimes it is actually legislation. As a matter of fact, a lot of things move on the Senate floor through unanimous consent, which is, essentially, a voice vote where everyone, all 100 Senators, say: We agree with that. It is a bill that is really important, very bipartisan. Let's move it. Let's move it fast. It came out of committee. It is not controversial, but maybe it is important, so let's move it.

For whatever reason, it still doesn't explain to the American people why the minority leader would say that we are not going to move anything by unanimous consent right now either. Not only will we hold up every nominee as long as possible—even the non-controversial ones—nothing is going to move in the Senate by unanimous consent.

Again, why? How does that help the American people? How does that help the American people when you are just blocking things?

#### POWER ACT

Let me give one specific. It is an issue I feel very passionate about. I had a bill introduced last year. It passed the Senate by unanimous consent, and we are trying to pass it right now by unanimous consent this Congress. Unfortunately, it didn't pass out of the House. I think it will. It has passed out of committee again. It is called the Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent Act, the POWER Act. It is very bipartisan. A number of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, including Senators Heitkamp, Shaheen, Leahy, and Warren, are cosponsors.

Here is what it does: I come to the Senate floor every week to talk about what a great State I live in—Alaska.

One thing we actually aren't proud of in Alaska is that we have a real big problem with domestic violence and sexual assault in my State. One of the best ways to deal with that issue, one of the best ways to help victims and survivors break the cycle of violence that occurs with way too many families and way too many women and children in Alaska—and across the country—is to get attorneys to represent them.

Here is a startling fact. It is a little harsh when you say it, but it is true: If there is someone who commits a rape or is accused of committing a rape, that person gets a Sixth Amendment right to counsel. That is in our Bill of Rights. Guess what the victim gets in terms of legal representation: nothing. There is no right. But that is a really important way to help break the cycle of violence—to get survivors and victims an attorney and get the resources to do that. That is what the POWER Act does, and that is why it passed by unanimous consent last year.

We have a big problem in the country in terms of domestic violence and sexual assault. This would help. We are trying to move it right now by unanimous consent. It will pass. But it is not going to pass now because the minority leader is blocking every unanimous consent agreement on the Senate floor. Why? Why?

Does he think that women in America don't need the resources to represent themselves in these kind of horrendous crimes? They do. Trust me. Thousands of them—tens of thousands of them do. So why are we blocking this? Why don't we move it? We are shutting down the whole Senate, trying to shut down the Federal Government's ability to seat itself, to do the work of the American people. This is historic obstruction, and no one explains it. The press doesn't ask about it. I think the American people need to know about it.

We were elected to move this country forward. The election happened in November. Let's come together. There is a lot of bipartisan work to do. We have our differences on healthcare and other issues, but there are so many things about which we don't have differences—growing the economy, rebuilding our military, infrastructure. We need people in the Federal Government who can do that, and we need leaders in the Senate who can move things forward by unanimous consent—like the POWER Act—when they are not controversial. We don't have those leaders right now, and we need them. We need to get this country moving again. The way things are happening on the Senate floor, it is not happening that way at all.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

#### TRIBUTE TO STEFANIE MOHLER

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Oregon, Senator MERKLEY, for allowing me a

few extra minutes of his time ahead of his speech. I appreciate his courtesy, and I will pay him back.

Ironically, I am thanking him for giving me time to make a speech I have never wanted to make. In fact, I have three times canceled the time I had asked for to make this speech in the last month because when it came time to make it and I opened those doors to come down here, I couldn't quite do it. I couldn't quite do it because, every once in a while, something happens in your career with a loved one or friend or cohort who is so close to you and so meaningful to you that to talk about it is an emotional thing to do.

Such is the occasion tonight for me to pay tribute to Stefanie Mohler, who is my scheduler and has been for years. She came to work for me when I was a Member of the Senate. She has worked for me time and again in the U.S. Senate, except for the one time she left me to go work for George Bush—and I understand that. That was a higher pay grade than mine.

Stefanie was a young lady working for a Congressman from her hometown in Florida when I came to Washington. She wasn't married. She had a wonderful family and lived at home with her folks. She applied for a job as a scheduler for me and came to work for us.

I ran a pretty large company. I had about 1,000 independent contractors and 250 employees. I know a good worker when I see one. Stefanie was the best. But she had that quality beyond just being the best. She cared about every single thing she did and every single person whom she helped and every single person whom she couldn't help. She grew in the job, and she made me a better Congressman and, later, a better Senator.

She came to me about 18 months ago and said: I have some news for you. I am pregnant. I am pregnant with identical twins.

I was so excited for her and her husband because she wanted more than anything else in the world to have a family. My wife and I had a party for her at Christmas in December, and the two babies came in the early part of this year. They are beautiful. She is a wonderful mother. But she has stayed, and she has worked. Her mom has come in and helped her do the chores at home as she continued to fulfill her commitment to me. I thank her so much on the floor of the Senate today for that.

She is married to a great guy named Chase Mohler. Let me tell you a little bit about Chase.

All of us at one time or another in our lives have fallen in love. You know what it feels like to fall in love. You also know what it looks like to see somebody who is in love. You can't describe it, but there is a glow. It is just something that is there.

I was in Jacksonville, FL, with Saxby Chambliss, waiting to come back to Washington when Stefanie was

coming back from taking Chase to meet her family in Florida. When she turned the corner in an airport concourse coming toward the planes, I could tell from the glow on her face and the look on her face that something special had happened in her life.

I said: Stefanie, what are you so happy about?

She said: I have found a husband. I am going to marry him. He asked me to marry him.

I was so happy for her and so happy for Chase because I had met him. They had dated while she was working in my office and later married. Chase works for the State Department and has been serving here in Washington. But he got a promotion, and he is going to the North Carolina coast, and he is going to take Stefanie with him.

I am losing the best person I have ever had doing what Stefanie has done for me. He married the best person I have ever seen, and she is doing everything in the world for him.

So I thought I would come to the floor tonight, not to list the accolades—which I could in the thousands—not to say all those platitudes we always love to hear said about ourselves or about somebody important, but to make a confession. I am in love. I am in love with Stefanie Mohler because for most of her adult life she gave her time and her effort to make me a better Member of the U.S. Senate. She supported my wife when she needed it, and I couldn't help. She supported our office when they needed it, and they couldn't help. She did all of the little things that you never ask someone to do because you think it is too little, but it is so important to make a difference in every day that goes by.

When she leaves in about 3 months, I am going to be sad. I will shed a tear or two. I will probably shed one for her before the night is over. But when she leaves, I want her to know and I want the whole Senate document to record that once in a while—every once in a while—somebody special comes along and makes a difference in your life, your effort, and your ability. Stefanie Mohler has been that for me. I will never forget her for all that she has done for me, and I will always be there for her if she ever needs me.

May God bless Stefanie Mohler, and may God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

#### CLIMATE DISRUPTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, climate disruption is the seminal challenge of our generation. It is the most significant test that human civilization on our planet has faced, and there are a lot of questions about how we are going to be able to come together as a community of nations and community of cultures to address this very significant threat to our beautiful blue-green planet.

It affects everything from our farms to our forests to our fisheries. We see

the impact in terms of disappearing glaciers, shrinking ice sheets, melting permafrost and dying coral. We see the impact on our farms, our trout streams, and our forests. We see the impact with migrating animals, migrating insects, and more powerful storms.

In response, communities across the globe are taking action. They are transforming their energy economies. They are developing aggressive strategies to save energy in their buildings, in their vehicles, and in their appliances. They are working to replace their fossil fuel energy supplies with clean and renewable energy.

How much do you know about the changes underway? Let's find out. Welcome to episode 3 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. The first question we have is, Why did American Airlines cancel 57 flights between June 20 and 22? Was it extreme temperatures? Was it a pilot strike? Was it severe storms? Was it a fuel shortage? The answer is A, extreme temperatures.

How is that the case?

When air gets hotter, it gets thinner. Thinner air provides less lift for planes to take off, and eventually the runway isn't long enough for the plane to go fast enough to get enough lift to clear the runway. Therefore, all of these flights got canceled.

It is not the first time it has happened. It happened in 2013 in Phoenix, with 18 flights canceled, but this was a pretty dramatic incident attributable to very extreme temperatures.

Let's turn to question No. 2. How long was the recent streak of record-setting monthly temperatures—meaning, for example, that a given month like May was the hottest May ever, June was the hottest June ever, and July was the hottest July ever? How many months in a row did this happen? Did it happen for 6 months in a row? Or for 12 months in a row? Is it conceivable that this streak extended beyond a year to 16 months or perhaps even for 2 years, to 24 months? Lock in your answer.

The correct answer is C, 16 months. From May 2015 through August 2016, each and every month was the hottest month on record. In September, 2016, the streak was broken, but only by a few hundredths of a degree. In fact, in September 2016, the temperature was still 1.6 degrees Fahrenheit above the 20th century average.

I have a math question to put in here. If you had climate data and temperature data for 50 years, what are the odds that, by chance, 16 months in a row would be the hottest—each one the hottest among the 50 previous months? What are the odds of that? Pull out your calculators, and take 1 out of 50, and take it to the 16th power. What do you get? You get that the odds are less than 1 out of a trillion trillion. That is the odds. In other words, this didn't happen by chance.

Let's turn to question No. 3. Where in the world is the largest floating solar

project? Maybe you have never even heard of a floating solar project. There is one. In fact, there are several. Where is the world's largest? Is it in China? Is it in Brazil? Is it in India? Or is it in Australia?

By the way, here is a hint. All four of these actually have floating solar projects. Lock in your answer. Here is the answer.

The answer is A, China.

India has a small floating solar project, and it generates about 100 kilowatts. Australia's is 40 times larger, at 4 megawatts, and it is roughly the equivalent of two wind turbines. Brazil's is yet larger, at 10 megawatts. The largest floating solar project by far is in Liulong, China. The 40-megawatt solar plant is able to provide enough energy to 15,000 homes. Because it floats, it uses less energy than most solar farms because the water acts as a natural coolant.

There is something very symbolic about this largest-in-the-world floating solar project, and that is that it sits on a lake caused by the collapse of abandoned coal mines. It is as if it is saying to us: Let's transition from a fossil fuel economy to a clean, renewable energy economy, like electrons produced by solar power.

Question No. 4, last year plug-in hybrids and fully electric vehicles made up less than 1 percent of global car sales. It is a very small amount. What was the percentage in Norway?

Was it half a percent behind the world average? Was it 15 percent? Was it 37 percent? Or, perhaps, was it even more than one out of two cars sold in Norway? Lock in your answer.

Here is the right answer. The answer is C, 37 percent. When the world average is under 1 percent, it is pretty impressive that Norway is at 37 percent.

In 2016, plug-in hybrids and fully electric cars made up 37 percent of the new car sales in Norway. That is a huge increase in just a couple of years. Three years earlier, the electric vehicles—the plug-in hybrids and fully electric vehicles—accounted for only 6 percent of Norway's sales. In a short 3 years, it went from 6 percent to 37 percent. This growth is a combination of fees on gas-powered and diesel-powered cars and subsidies for electric vehicles.

Let's look at what else is happening with cars in the world. Volvo has announced that all of its new models from 2019 forward will have some form of electric drive. Then you see the growth of companies like Tesla, which only produces electric cars. It is becoming increasingly clear that the future of the global auto industry is electric.

Let's turn to question No. 5, our final question. This one hits close to home for me as a Senator from Oregon. What killed billions of baby oysters in Oregon in 2007 and 2008? Was it red tide? Red tide occurs when an algae blooms, and it is a red bloom. It discolors the water, turns it red, and releases toxins that are absorbed by the clams and

other sea life, so that we can't go out and dig up our clams and eat them for fear of getting poisoned.

Was it red tide that killed the oysters? Or was it the POMS virus, or the Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome virus, which affects Pacific oysters and can cause up to 100 percent mortality within days of initial detection? Was it sea lice—tiny jellyfish larvae that are tiny, almost invisible specks that are no larger than a grain of pepper? Or was it rising ocean acidity, caused by the emission of billions of tons of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air that get absorbed by the ocean through tidal action? Lock in your answer.

The correct answer is D, rising ocean acidity. How is this possible? How can you stand on the coast of Oregon and look out at the Pacific Ocean and envision that humankind has burned so much fossil fuel—so many fossil fuels—and that it has created so much carbon dioxide in the air and tidal action has absorbed that into the ocean and turned it into carbonic acid that it has changed the acidity of the ocean? It seems completely impossible. Yet over the last 150 years, the burning of fossil fuels by human civilization has increased the acidity of the ocean by 30 percent.

In 2007, when I was running for the U.S. Senate for the first time, the oysters started dying. The scientists got involved. They said: What is going on? They said: Is it a virus? Is it a bacterium?

It wasn't a virus. It wasn't a bacterium. After some time, they nailed it down simply to that the ocean water had become too acidic, that there was too much carbonic acid in the ocean from carbon dioxide pollution in the atmosphere. Where did that come from? From the burning of fossil fuels.

Now, the water comes into the Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery in a very large pipe, and then it has to be buffered; that is, the acidity has to be decreased before that water continues into the vats with the baby oysters. For all we know, they will have to do this forever more, until we can turn the clock back on global climate disruption.

If the oysters are being affected, what else is going to be affected in the sea chain? What is the impact on our coral reefs, which provide the foundation for many of the world's fisheries? That is something that we should rightly be very concerned about.

There you have it, folks, episode 3 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. How did you do? How many of those questions did you get right? The facts on the ground are changing very quickly as climate disruption increases and communities across the globe respond. Together we are racing the clock, and there is no time to spare. So stay engaged in the fight.

In the near future, I will bring you episode 4 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. In the meantime, if you have

a good idea for a climate disruption question, please tweet that question to me at @SenJeffMerkley, using the hashtag ClimateQ4Jeff. Together, let's keep fighting to save our planet.

Henry David Thoreau said: What use is a home if you don't have a tolerable planet to put it on?

Let's work together to make sure we have a tolerable planet, a healthy planet, not just for this generation but for our children and our great-grandchildren and the generations to follow.

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

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

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 12 noon on Tuesday, July 18, there be 15 minutes of postcloture debate, equally divided in the usual form, on the Shanahan nomination; that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the nomination; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate immediately resume consideration of the Bush nomination.

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

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

#### REMEMBERING DAVID DUFF

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to remember David Duff, a well-respected coal operator from Perry County, KY. David passed away on July 3 in Snowmass, CO, at the age of 67. He will be remembered by many for his kindness and generosity, especially toward the elderly, children, and our Nation's veterans.

David owned Pine Branch Coal Company, employing hundreds of miners in eastern Kentucky and serving as a leader in the industry. He was dearly loved by many in his community, as was shown by the many signs posted along the road leading to his home in the days after his passing.

Elaine and I send our condolences to David's wife, Susan, their children Lori and Ryan, their grandchildren, and all

of their family and friends. We hope that their memories of David will help them through this time of grief.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHIP HUTCHESON

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate my friend Chip Hutcheson, publisher of the Times Leader in Princeton, KY, on his retirement after more than four decades in the newspaper business. Throughout Chip's long career, he was the quintessential community journalist who saw, as one colleague noted, "the newspaper as both a champion for and a guardian of the community." When he retired at the end of June, Chip was named the recipient of the National Newspaper Association's James O. Amos Award. He was only the second Kentuckian to ever win what is known as one of the two "highest and most distinguished tributes in community journalism."

Chip's relationship with the Princeton-based paper began at only 10 months old when his parents purchased the then-Princeton Leader and began to instill in him a love of the trade. Beginning at the age of 8, Chip spent time at the paper, watching his parents work. In junior high, Chip joined the team to proofread a section of the paper before it was sent to the printer. Later, he proudly wrote that, "Newspaper ink runs in my veins." During high school and college, Chip honed his skills writing for local and campus papers. After graduation, he entered the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam. When he returned, Chip went back to his trade and began a decades-long career of journalistic excellence.

Chip became the publisher of the Princeton Leader upon his parents' retirement in 1976. As local papers merged, Chip became the publisher of the Times Leader in 1992, continuing his family legacy. Chip admitted that his columns may have been a little "old school," but he proudly followed the tradition set by his father and his other role models of local community journalism. He used his writings to give readers an inside look into the lives of his family and community.

Although his efforts were always dedicated to readers in western Kentucky, Chip was recognized across the Commonwealth and the Nation for his outstanding work. He served on the board of directors of the Kentucky Press Association, including 1 year as its president in 2010. The Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame inducted Chip into its elite ranks in 2012, in recognition of his distinguished career of leadership and service. More recently, Chip served as president of the National Newspaper Association.

Chip has also been a great advocate for families seeking to adopt children internationally. With his wife, Karen, and grandchildren, Lemlem and Kashiku, Chip came to my office several years ago asking for relief from the many regulatory burdens in the

adoption process. I was thankful to know of the Hutcheson family's story. By working with my colleagues in the Senate, we passed the bipartisan Accuracy for Adoptees Act, which was then signed into law. Thanks in large part to the efforts of Chip and Karen, more families across the country are able to more easily navigate the rewarding yet often difficult process of bringing a child into a loving home through adoption.

Chip's unwavering dedication to his work and his community left a mark on the readers of Caldwell County. His writings not only brought the news, but he also served as a voice for people in his community by expressing the beauty and joy of western Kentucky life. After decades of hard work, Chip has earned his retirement. Along with his readers, I will miss his observations about life and current events. I would like to join with the Princeton community and all of the supporters of the Times Leader who congratulate Chip on his retirement and wish his family many relaxing and enjoyable years together. Further, I would like to ask my colleagues in the Senate to join me in commemorating Chip Hutcheson on a distinguished career in community journalism.

#### THE GLOBAL CRISIS OF KILLINGS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on July 13, Global Witness, a widely respected international nongovernmental organization that reports on corruption and other criminality involving the exploitation of natural resources, released a report entitled, "Defenders of the Earth—Global Killings of Land and Environmental Defenders in 2016."

According to the report, 2016 was the worst year yet for environmental and land rights defenders. At least 200 were killed in what has become a global crisis, pitting local communities, particularly impoverished indigenous groups, against multinational mining, logging, agribusiness, hydroelectric, and hydrocarbon companies that are often supported with foreign financing.

The report says the number of such killings is increasing, up from 185 in 2015 and spreading to new countries—24 in 2016 compared to 16 in 2015. However, because many of these attacks occur in remote areas, the actual number is likely much higher. The number of killings is also only part of the appalling story. Death threats, arbitrary arrests, sexual assaults and other forms of abuse, and misuse of the legal process are among the tactics used to try to intimidate environmental activists.

Often, when faced with peaceful resistance to the construction of dams that displace people from their homes and to logging and mining operations that destroy the forest and pollute the water, the response of the companies, backed up by local security forces, is to accuse the protestors of being "against development," try to divide them with

bribes and promises that are later broken, and eventually to silence them with force. The companies get rich and move on, local officials collect payoffs, the electricity or minerals are exported to cities or other countries, and the people whose land was destroyed or water contaminated are immeasurably worse off.

As one activist, who has for years spoken out against Latin America's largest open pit mine, told Global Witness, "[t]hey threaten you so you will shut up. I can't shut up. I can't stay silent faced with all that is happening to my people. We are fighting for our lands, for our water, for our lives."

The report states, "[t]he battle to protect the planet is rapidly intensifying and the cost can be counted in human lives. More people in more countries are being left with no option but to take a stand against the theft of their land or the trashing of their environment. Too often they are brutally silenced by political and business elites, while the investors that bankroll them do nothing. . . . Almost 40 percent of those murdered were indigenous, as land they've inhabited for generations is stolen by companies, landowners or government officials. Projects are typically imposed on communities without their free, prior and informed consent, backed up by force: police and soldiers are suspected perpetrators in at least 43 murders. Protest is often the only option left to communities exercising their right to have a say about the use of their land and natural resources, putting them on a collision course with those seeking profit at any cost."

The report notes the criminalization of these courageous activists, including in the United States. "They are often painted as criminals, facing trumped-up criminal charges and aggressive civil cases brought by governments and companies seeking to silence them."

It is the responsibility of governments to defend the lives and rights of their citizens. Instead, too many governments are violating their own laws and aiding and abetting in these attacks and assassinations—either by the conduct of their security forces or by their failure to conduct credible investigations of these crimes and to bring those responsible to justice.

Honduran activist Berta Caceres is but one example. Instead of protecting her, the government and the company treated her like a criminal. She was killed for having the courage to defend the rights and territory of the Lenca people. In Honduras alone—a country the size of Kentucky with just 8 million people—more than 100 environmental defenders have reportedly suffered similar fates since 2009, for which no one has been convicted and punished.

I hope this report will spur governments, companies, foreign banks, and international financial institutions to take far stronger action to respect the territorial rights of affected people, to

defend freedom of speech and association, to protect the environment, and to uphold the rule of law.

#### RECOGNIZING NASA'S LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and the senior Senator from Virginia, MARK WARNER, we want to commemorate an important, early step in our Nation's emergence as a world leader in flight, space exploration, and atmospheric science.

One hundred years ago today on July 17, 1917, NASA's Langley Research Center was founded in Hampton, VA. What was once a quiet expanse of farmland and marsh on a riverbank near the Chesapeake Bay has helped transform our Nation's transportation system and the world's understanding of our universe.

That date in 1917 represents the beginning of a journey that would eventually take Americans to the moon and American technology to Mars and beyond.

Born in the days of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, the precursor to NASA, Langley was the agency's first field center and our Nation's first civilian aeronautics laboratory.

The groundbreaking and sky conquering research conducted during Langley's early days led to major advances in aeronautics and, in the years after World War I, helped our Nation cement its status as a pacesetter in flight research. Langley's important work also served as a foundation for America's burgeoning aviation industry.

Langley won the first of its seven Collier trophies, awarded for the highest achievements in aeronautics or astronautics in our Nation, in 1929. That trophy, won for development of cowling for radial air-cooled engines, honored a high level of technical excellence that Langley has maintained ever since.

Over the decades, Langley has evolved into a research center supporting all of NASA's areas of emphasis, from human space exploration to Earth science and from aeronautics to technology development.

NASA Langley's legacy of discovery and innovation is truly remarkable. Researchers at the center helped refine technologies and designs across all flight regimes—subsonic, transonic, supersonic, and hypersonic—revolutionizing the shape and performance of today's aircraft and spacecraft.

This year, we all witnessed some of NASA Langley's contributions to the space race through the lens of the Oscar-nominated film, "Hidden Figures." The film told the story of the many contributions of NASA Langley employees, especially African-American women, to the Mercury 7 mission involving America's first astronauts.

Beyond that, Neil Armstrong and other Apollo astronauts learned how to land on the moon by training at

Langley's Lunar Landing Research Facility, now known as the Landing and Impact Research Facility.

Langley led the first successful robotic landing on Mars with the Viking 1 mission, which gave humanity its first glimpse of the landscape of another world. The center's technical expertise in a field called Entry, Descent and Landing—the study of how a spacecraft can safely move through a planet's atmosphere and reach the surface—has been a key to every fully successful robotic landing on the surface of Mars.

Those are just a few highlights among many, many accomplishments.

Over the decades, NASA Langley has contributed technologies that have improved people's lives around the globe.

For example, the grooved pavement that makes our highways safer evolved from research into runway surfaces at Langley. The winglets—the upturned tips of wings seen on commercial aircraft—have saved fuel and reduced pollution for years. Their use is a result of research done by Richard Whitcomb, one of Langley's legendary aerodynamics experts.

Based on what we have seen when visiting the center, we predict this legacy of excellence and innovation will continue—even accelerate—over the next 100 years.

We have been proud to work closely with the center on improving the safe use of unmanned aerial vehicles, better known as drones.

We have also proudly partnered with the center's efforts on groundbreaking materials research, including the Advanced Composites Initiative, to work toward developing lighter, safer, and more fuel-efficient vehicles for air and space.

We have seen Langley's critical involvement in development of the Orion crew module, which was tested at Langley's Landing and Impact Research Facility to ensure that astronauts can safely splashdown in the ocean after future missions.

Langley's test facilities are being used by companies who have partnered with NASA through its Commercial Crew Program. By working with Boeing and Space X, Langley is helping to boost our Nation's growing space industry.

Other current projects include new aircraft designs intended to change the sonic boom to a sonic thud, opening the way for a revolutionary new generation of faster aircraft that will bring vast improvements for the traveling public.

When it comes to serving the public's interest, Langley's work studying the Earth's atmosphere and how it absorbs and radiates heat tops the list. It is critical that NASA's work in earth science research continues. Wise policy decisions rely on high-quality data. Without solid data, we are essentially flying blind in the area of environmental policy.

Coincidentally, the Hampton Roads area of Virginia—where Langley is lo-

cated—is second only to New Orleans in susceptibility to sea-level rise. NASA Langley is one of many national assets—including military, industrial, and academic institutions—located there. It is an important region of our Nation and Langley's work to study earth's atmosphere will safeguard Hampton Roads, as well as our planet as a whole.

When you consider exciting new capabilities offered by the center's Measurement Systems Laboratory, now under construction, and its Katherine G. Johnson Computational Research Facility, which is set to open later this year, it is clear that we can expect to see more improvements and discoveries from NASA Langley.

As Virginia's Senators, we take great pride in the fact that NASA's original field lab—sometimes called the agency "Mother Center"—resides in the great Commonwealth of Virginia. We firmly believe that the boundary-pushing spirit displayed over the last 100 years represents some of the best traits of our national character: innovation, exploration, hard work, and the quest to make life better for us all.

We look forward to seeing more amazing innovations from Langley and NASA as our Nation continues its push to solve the great problems of our age and as we extend humanity's reach ever deeper into the universe.

NASA Langley is a remarkable place—and has been for 100 years. As a center for aerospace innovation, technological discovery, and scientific inquiry, Langley continues to lead the way.

We should all cheer them on as they pass this big milestone and rocket ahead into a bold, new century.

#### DRY EYE AWARENESS MONTH

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, in the spirit of the "Decade of Vision," I am pleased to recognize July as Dry Eye Awareness Month. In 2009, while serving in the House of Representatives, I was proud to sponsor the successfully passed H. Res. 366, which recognized the 40th anniversary of the National Eye Institute and designated 2010–2020 as the "Decade of Vision." This resolution sought to bring awareness to our Nation's challenges in vision health, especially as our population ages and the incidence of chronic diseases that may cause vision impairment grows.

Dry eye is one of these growing vision health challenges that affects more than 30 million people in the United States. It occurs when the eye does not produce tears properly or they are not of the correct consistency and evaporate too quickly. It can range from discomfort to a painful chronic and progressive condition that leads to blurred vision or even vision loss. Dry eye is one of the most frequent causes of patient visits to eyecare providers. It is a particularly burdensome issue for our brave soldiers who were engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom

and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Veterans Administration reports that upwards of 70 percent of traumatic brain injury-exposed veterans have dry eye symptoms.

Research supported by the National Institutes of Health and its National Eye Institute has improved our understanding of this condition. Dry eye can have many causes, including environmental exposure, side-effects from medications, eye surgery, eyelid disorders, immune system disorders, contact lens wear, cosmetic use, aesthetic procedures, and an increasingly common cause: staring at computer or video screens for too long without blinking, which may have a disproportionate impact on our younger generations.

I want to recognize an important educational opportunity during Dry Eye Awareness Month this year. The Tear Film & Ocular Surface Society's "Dry Eye Workshop II Report" will be published in "The Ocular Surface Journal," updating the definition of dry eye and addressing its greater impact on vision health—the first such reexamination since 2007. Report highlights were presented at a July 12, 2017, congressional briefing, accompanied by a "Test Your Tears" screening and presentation of research posters.

The vision community and its coalition partners are uniting to recognize this growing vision health problem, and I stand in support of these awareness and educational efforts.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO EMMETT CHASSANIOL, JR.

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend Emmett Chassaniol, Jr., and the Chassaniol family of Greenwood, MS, for 100 years of service and contributions to the U.S. cotton industry.

Mr. Chassaniol and his family are the subject of a profile published recently by the Delta Business Journal. The profile not only reviews a century of influence by an agricultural family in the Mississippi Delta but also the changes in the cotton industry over the decades. Mississippi remains one of the leading cotton-producing States in the country. Farmers in my State produced more than 1 million bales of cotton in 2016.

Since its founding in 1917, the Chassaniol and Company has helped producers move cotton from the farm to the marketplace. Three generations of the Chassaniol family have engaged in the business of buying, shipping, or selling cotton. I am pleased to recognize their continuous role in meeting the needs of cotton farmers in this important and challenging industry.

Today Emmett Chassaniol, Jr., continues the family cotton business established by his grandfather. Since 1996, he has expanded Chassaniol and



Company's reach, selling cotton for producers in Arkansas, Louisiana, and areas of the State beyond the Mississippi Delta. Emmett, Jr., like his grandfather, father, and other family members, has served in leadership positions that have helped to maintain cotton as an important commodity crop in my State.

I am pleased to join cotton producers throughout my State in commending Emmett Chassaniol, Jr., and the Chassaniol family for 100 years of business in the cotton industry.

I ask that the June 15, 2017, article from the Delta Business Journal magazine, titled "A Century of the Cotton Business—The Chassaniol Family," be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

[From the Delta Business Journal, June 15, 2017]

A CENTURY OF THE COTTON BUSINESS—THE CHASSANIOL FAMILY

(By Mark H. Stowers)

Cotton has been king in Mississippi since the early 1800s but has seen its reign diminish since the late 1980s. The majestic crop has seen a rise in its ranks with an increase in acres planted the past decade. For the past century, the Chassaniol family of Greenwood has been part of the cotton kingdom and its rise and fall and rise again. Emmett Chassaniol Jr., still works in the family cotton business his grandfather started in the early 1900s. He explained the family history in the cotton business by gathering correspondence from his grandfather, family input and his own recollection.

In 1917, the Chassaniol and Company cotton business opened its doors in the Cotton Capital city when the transplanted cotton shipper Herbert Spencer (H.S.) "Pop" Chassaniol decided to stay in his adopted home town. His original office was on 117 Front street but then he later moved to 110 Main Street—the corner of Ramcat Alley and Main Street in the "Cotton Row" area. He stayed in that building until he retired in 1963 and then he passed away in 1966. In 1968, the family sold the building to Mr. Charles Swayze.

In 1956, H.S. recounted his career in a letter he wrote to the vice president of the Hibernia National Bank in New Orleans. H.S. had known the VPs father and uncles in the cotton business in the New Orleans Cotton Exchange.

"My first job was at the age of 12, with Kline Wilson and Company and your Uncle Peter J. Stoube was the manager of the New Orleans office. Through my mother's family, Mr. Stoube gave me my first job as his office boy."

From there Chassaniol worked his way up from the bottom of the cotton business to owning his own cotton business. Emmett's grandfather was later moved to the Delta in 1910—first to Greenville and then Greenwood with the English firm, Alexander Eccles and Company. But they then decided to close that office and move Chassaniol to Tennessee. But H.S. knew he had found a business home, so he stayed in Greenwood and opened up the Chassaniol and Company cotton business in 1917.

The Greenwood Cotton Exchange got its charter in 1927 and H.S. was the first president serving the 1927–1928 term. He later served again from 1940–1941.

Since then, H.S.'s sons—Pershing and Emmett (Sr.)—a cotton buyer—each worked the business together before Pershing started his own company—The Pershing Chassaniol Cot-

ton Factor—in 1955 after serving time in World War II. He also served as president of the Greenwood Cotton Exchange for the 1970–1971 term. Pershing was then joined by his nephew Emmett Jr. and Pershing's daughter, Sally Chassaniol McSpadden. Emmett Jr. served as the Greenwood Cotton Exchange president on three occasions—1992–1993, 1999–2000 and 2006–2007. The Cotton Exchange's final year of existence was in 2009 and then it was dissolved.

"Pershing was in that business from 1955 to 1995," Emmett Jr. said. "My dad was in with my grandfather at Chassaniol and Company. Sam Adams came in as partner with my grandfather in 1931 but they never changed the name. That lasted until 1953 when they dissolved the partnership. My grandfather retired in 1963 and passed away in October of 1966."

One of H.S.'s sons, Herbert Chassaniol, Jr., worked with him in the business until June of 1939, when at the age of 25, he died in a diving accident on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Also, one of Pop's sons, Lloyd, worked in the cotton business for different companies but never with Pop.

"Uncle Lloyd went to work for the George B. Wolfe and Company in Greenwood representing J.P. Stevens out of South Carolina. In 1963, they moved Uncle Lloyd, his wife and four daughters to Greenville, South Carolina where he stayed with them until he retired. He passed away in January of 2000. His widow and four daughters all still live in South Carolina," Emmett Chassaniol said. "Doris Chassaniol Mallette, one of my grandfather's daughters, worked for him as well. My grandfather's son-in-law, J.E. McCurdy was married to Blanche, was a cotton factor but didn't work for my grandfather. Also, my grandfather's nephew, Herbert Chassaniol, ended up as sales manager over at Stapicoton and retired in 1965."

Pershing retired in 1995 and sold his building to Viking Range. Then in January of 1996, Emmett Jr. incorporated his business, Chassaniol and Company and moved into the historic McBee building that dates back to 1880.

For more than a century, the Chassaniol family has blessed farmers and the family alike as the Chassaniols kept to the foundational value as stated by Pershing quite often to his daughter.

"He said it doesn't matter if the farmer comes in and has one bale of cotton or if a farmer comes in and brings in 100 bales of cotton—you treat them just the same because they are both cotton farmers," she said. "That was one of the things I always remembered."

McSpadden, like the rest of the family, grew up in the cotton office as well.

"We would be up there working with them, especially during the busy season," McSpadden said. "I came back in 1979 and took momma's place doing the bookkeeping and worked until 1997."

With no computers, McSpadden had plenty of paperwork to tend to that she included her children's help with as well.

"I would bring work home at night and we'd be sitting in the middle of the living room floor—me and my two boys—and we would have all the class cards spread out and they would help me put them in order," she said. "But just to be able to work with your daddy every day for 18 to 19 years is a true blessing," she said. "We had a wonderful relationship and I went home every day with him to each lunch with momma."

McSpadden invoiced and paid famers while Emmett graded out and sold the cotton.

"I can't say enough nice things about the farmers, the buyers and the other sellers," McSpadden said. "They were true to their word and it was just a pleasure to be in the cotton business as long as I was."

Emmett Jr. explained his job as "I sell cotton for the farmers. That's all I've ever done as well as my Uncle Pershing. My father and grandfather were shippers and buyers but I don't buy a bale of cotton. I just represent the farmer and get the price for him and sell cotton for him."

Three generation of the Chassaniol family have worked with the Bank of Commerce and continue do so today, according to Emmett Jr. The Chassaniols have experienced plenty of technology changes on the cotton selling side as farmers have seen in the field. As field hands used to pick cotton by hand, all of the bookkeeping and cotton samples were all done by hand with what now would seem to be primitive tools.

"The buyers would actually come by, look at the cotton and grade it themselves and pull the staple on it and give you a bid on it," Emmett said. "Now, I don't ever see a farmer come by the office. It's all done electronically. We get our data electronically and we get our warehouse receipts electronically. I've done business with a guy down in Louisiana for 30 years and we've only seen each other twice."

McSpadden's early days involved two daily trips to the bank with cotton receipts.

"I invoiced every bale of cotton. In a year's time, we're talking thousands of bales of cotton. In the beginning the receipts were kept at the bank (in the main safe) and every morning we would have to go to the bank and pick up all the cotton receipts and bring them back to the office and I would invoice them out. The ones I didn't finish with, I had to take back to the bank before they closed at 2:00 p.m.," she said.

But then Pershing got his own safe so his daughter could work a few more hours each day.

"That way we couldn't stop and talk to people on the way to the bank every day," she said.

For Emmett Jr., the introduction of technology made selling cotton a 24/7/365 business pretty much.

"When I first started, the cotton market would open up at 9:30 a.m. and close at 1:30 or 2:00 p.m. Now it opens at 8:00 p.m. at night and closes at 1:15 the next day. While I'm sleeping, the foreign markets are trading cotton. Sometimes when I wake up at night and punch my phone to see what the markets doing. It's really changed," he said. "In 2008, they went to electronic trading and its changed the cotton business for ever and ever. They used to trade it manually in the pits in New York but now it's just punching a button."

Chassaniol is gearing up for a busier year this year as more farmers are adding acreage.

"One thing in the cotton business is that no two years are alike weather-wise or marketwise," he said. "In 1963 and '73 we had good falls and big crops. In '73, we had the flood and two million acres of the Mississippi Delta under water. The price of cotton was around 28 cents and with the flood it shot up to around 90 cents. But in February of '74 it fell pretty good. When the water fell, people started planting cotton and beans. We also had a lot of crawfish that year."

Chassaniol's reach extends beyond the Cotton Capital as he's sold cotton out of Louisiana and Arkansas and in the hills of Mississippi beyond the Delta.

"My favorite part of the business is in the fall when we're busy but with the markets it's a year-round business and you have to watch it every day. When my father and grandfather did it, it was three months—October to December," he said. "It's been a challenge as I've seen my acres decrease over the years but I've got some people coming back who haven't planted cotton in five

years. You're going to lose some customers and you're going to pick some up."

As the Chassaniol women married, many of those joined the cotton business including the McCurdy part of the family. McSpadden knows that the kingly crop brought and kept her Chassaniol family close together.

"I am extremely proud of my entire Chassaniol family. They are wonderful people and we've stayed close over the years. Daddy had six brothers and sisters. We have all stayed close. There were 22 grandchildren. Even though we are scattered around we always know what's going on and we keep in touch."

With the parents working long hours in the business, they made sure the kids made it to their extracurricular events over the years as well.

"They had this older man, Sidney Matlock (a porter who worked in the sample room) started with momma and daddy. He was somebody that was big in our lives. Momma couldn't get away to take us to Girl Scouts, well they'd send Sidney to take us," she said.

"I worked with Sidney for a number of years and he was there until his health failed and he retired. We probably opened 100s of thousands of samples of cotton," Emmett Jr. said. "That's how you sold cotton back then. He was a pretty good judge of cotton himself."

Chassaniol has relied on his secretary, Penny Kesterson for the past 16 years to keep his office a success and running smoothly.

"She is invaluable in the office she pulls in our electronic data warehouse receipts and classing info. She does the recaps invoicing and sees to wire transfers, plus other clerical duties," he said. "I could not do without her."

100 years of working in the cotton business with plenty more to come—the Chassaniol family of Greenwood.●

#### TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN RANDY DOPP

● Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I wish to honor an outstanding American, Captain Randy Dopp, on his retirement from American Airlines.

Captain Dopp distinguished himself with over 31 years of safe commercial airline flying for Piedmont, USAirways, and American Airlines. He has been well-known for his commitment to airline pilots and to the flying community.

Over the years, I have relied on Captain Dopp's knowledge and insights on issues relating to airlines, pensions, and aviation safety. I know that his wisdom and service will be greatly missed.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Captain Dopp on his accomplishments and congratulating him on his retirement.●

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2430. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs, medical devices, generic drugs, and biosimilar biological products, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-2201. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Titanium dioxide; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9961-82) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2202. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pyroxsulam; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9962-60) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2203. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oxirane, 2-methyl, polymer with oxirane, hydrogen sulfate, ammonium salt and potassium salt; Tolerance Exemption" (FRL No. 9962-97) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2204. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Indaziflam; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9962-61) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2205. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Flubendiamide; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9962-13) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2206. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Difenoconazole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9962-05) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2207. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Buprofezin; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 9962-06) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2208. 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; Wisconsin; Site-specific Sulfur Dioxide Requirements for USG Interiors, LLC" (FRL No. 9964-49-Region 5) received during adjournment of the

Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2209. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 9962-53-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2210. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Labeling Relief; Formaldehyde Emission Standards for Composite Wood Products" (FRL No. 9963-05) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2211. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Compliance Date Extension; Formaldehyde Emission Standards for Composite Wood Products" (RIN2070-AK35) (FRL No. 9963-74) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2212. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Establishment of a Nonessential Experimental Population of the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly in Northwestern Oregon" (RIN1018-BB74) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2213. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Population of Grizzly Bears From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife" (RIN1018-BA41) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2214. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removal of the Hualapai Mexican Vole From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife" (RIN1018-AX99) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2215. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reinstatement of Removal of Federal Protections for Gray Wolves in Wyoming" (RIN1018-BC04) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2216. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and

Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Part D Plans Generally Include Drugs Commonly Used by Dual Eligibles: 2017”; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2217. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Medicaid/CHIP Program; Medicaid Program and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP); Changes to the Medicaid Eligibility Quality Control and Payment Error Rate Measurement Programs in Response to the Affordable Care Act” ((RIN0938-AS74) (CMS-6068-F)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 30, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2218. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the United Arab Emirates to establish a Patriot Weapon System Additional Equipment and Spares Program in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 16-130); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2219. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for the Division of Regulatory Services, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Rosa’s Law” (RIN1801-AA11) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2220. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Office of General Counsel, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Premerger Notification; Reporting and Waiting Period Requirements” (16 CFR Part 803) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 12, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2221. 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; Dunkirk Lakeshore Air Show; Lake Erie, Dunkirk, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0277)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2222. 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; Kosciuszko Bridge Construction, Newtown Creek, Brooklyn and Queens, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-1048)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2223. 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; Pacific Ocean, Mamala Bay, Oahu, Hawaii—Hokulea Arrival” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0421)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2224. 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; City of Valdez July 4th Fire-

works, Port Valdez; Valdez, AK” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0092)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2225. 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; Potomac River, Newburg, MD” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0357)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2226. 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; United Illuminating Company, Housatonic River Crossing Project; Milford and Stratford, CT” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0825)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2227. 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; Annual Fireworks Displays within the Sector Columbia River Captain of the Port Zone” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0149)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2228. 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; Delaware River; Dredging” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0279)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2229. 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; Sector Upper Mississippi River Annual and Recurring Safety Zones Update” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0272)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2230. 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; Cleveland Construction Super Boat Grand Prix, Lake Erie, Fairport, OH” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0201)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2231. 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; Vengeance Sunken Barge, San Francisco, CA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0310)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2232. 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; San Francisco Independence

Day Fireworks Display, San Francisco Bay, San Francisco, CA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0321)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2233. 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; City of Benicia Independence Day Fireworks Display, Benicia, CA” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0323)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2234. 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; City of Oswego Independence Day Celebration; Lake Ontario, Oswego, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0324)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2235. 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; Garlock Wedding; Saint Lawrence River, Alexandria Bay, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0558)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2236. 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; Canalside’s 4th of July Celebration; Buffalo Outer Harbor, Buffalo, NY” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0476)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2237. 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; Navy Underwater Detonation (UNDET) Exercise, Apra Outer Harbor, GU” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0502)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2238. 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; Verdigris River, Catoosa, OK” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0514)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2239. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Cerritos Channel, Long Beach, CA” ((RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0473)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2240. 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; Lower Mississippi River

below Baton Rouge, LA, including South and Southwest Passes; New Orleans, LA" ((RIN1625-AA01) (Docket No. USCG-2014-0991)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2241. 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; Ohio River, New Martinsville, WV" ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0435)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2242. 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; Washburn Board Across the Bay, Lake Superior; Chequamegon Bay, WI" ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0169)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2243. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Coast Guard Sector, Marine Inspection Zone, and Captain of the Port Zone Structure; Technical Amendment" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2017-0436)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 5, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

## 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. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 1568. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of President John F. Kennedy; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 1569. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to eliminate the non-application of certain State waiver provisions to Members of Congress and congressional staff; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARPER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1570. A bill to improve Federal population surveys by requiring the collection of voluntary, self-disclosed information on sexual orientation and gender identity in certain surveys, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1571. A bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 167

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 167, a bill to designate a National Memorial to Fallen Educators at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas.

S. 198

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 198, 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. 497

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 512

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 512, a bill to modernize the regulation of nuclear energy.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 623, a bill to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes.

S. 683

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 683, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the requirement to provide nursing home care to certain veterans with service-connected disabilities.

S. 916

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

S. 978

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 978, a bill to direct the Secretary of Education to establish an award program recognizing excellence exhibited by public school system employees providing services to students in pre-kindergarten through higher education.

S. 981

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 981, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an energy efficiency materials pilot program.

S. 1051

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1051, a bill to encourage visits between the United States and Taiwan at all levels, and for other purposes.

S. 1106

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1106, a bill to designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health.

S. 1113

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1113, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety of cosmetics.

S. 1132

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1132, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the removal of the rental cap for durable medical equipment under the Medicare program with respect to speech generating devices.

S. 1221

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1221, a bill to counter the influence of the Russian Federation in Europe and Eurasia, and for other purposes.

S. 1312

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1312, a bill to prioritize the fight against human trafficking in the United States.

S. 1327

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1327, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to clarify how controlled substance analogues are to be regulated, and for other purposes.

S. 1354

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 1354, a bill to establish an Individual Market Reinsurance fund to provide funding for State individual market stabilization reinsurance programs.

S. 1462

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1462, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to improve cost sharing subsidies.

S. 1498

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1498, a bill to establish in the Smithsonian Institution a comprehensive American women's history museum, and for other purposes.

S. 1514

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1514, a bill to amend certain Acts to reauthorize those Acts and to increase protections for wildlife, and for other purposes.

S. 1526

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1526, a bill to appropriate amounts to the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve the provision of health care to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1560

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1560, a bill to ensure the integrity of border and immigration enforcement efforts by requiring U.S.

Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to administer law enforcement polygraph examinations to all applicants for law enforcement positions and to require post-hire polygraph examinations for law enforcement personnel as part of periodic reinvestigations.

S. 1564

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1564, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit legally married same-sex couples to amend their filing status for returns outside the 3-year limitation.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. HATCH. 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:

#### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, July 17, 2017 at 5 p.m., to hold a hearing entitled "A Review of the State Department Reauthorization Bill for FY 2018 and the State Department Reorganization Plans."

#### APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic

leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 115-31, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission: the Honorable Barbara Mikulski of Maryland and Karen V. Hill of New York.

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, July 18; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Shanahan nomination; finally, that the Senate recess following resumption of the Bush nomination until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

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 7:06 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, July 18, 2017, at 10 a.m.