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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 17, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SCOTT TAYLOR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE, LIU XIAOBO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of the Chinese human rights advocate and Nobel Prize Laureate, Liu Xiaobo, who died last Thursday in China, under guard.

The world has lost an incomparably courageous advocate who was dedicated to advancing human rights and the rule of law, and paid for them with his own freedom and life.

Liu's passing last week in Chinese custody marked a tragic end to over a decade of persecution by the Chinese authorities who relentlessly mistreated him as he gradually became a symbol of the pro-democracy movement around the globe.

In 2010, the Nobel Peace Committee awarded him the Peace Prize for his thoughtful advocacy for reform and for his courageous support of the pro-democracy document Charter 08.

A year prior to the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to Liu, in 2009, Chinese authorities tried him for subversion of state power, for which he received an 11-year sentence. Given his rising stature in the international community, they imprisoned him in secret locations away from family, supporters, or international media. They kept him from receiving the Peace Prize and put pressure on the committee to rescind the award, in addition to doing everything they could to prevent Liu's supporters from attending the ceremony in Norway.

They routinely censored and continue to censor the internet for references to Liu and other pro-democracy advocates and ideas.

China was so afraid of the power of his words and the bravery of his actions that while Liu was suffering from severe illness, Chinese authorities adopted the ultimate cruelty of not letting him leave China for medical help that experts said might save his life. For China, the supreme goal was his silence.

The more we care about human rights and freedom, the more we must now mark his death and remember him not by being silent ourselves.

I first came to know about Liu's work a few years after the Congressional-Executive Commission on China was created as part of the debate over China's ascension to the World Trade Organization and concerns from Members of Congress over China's human rights record.

In 2000, I coauthored the legislation that created the China commission to help advance and monitor human rights abuses in China. The commission continues to do important work and continues today by shining a spotlight on many issues such as abuses in labor, environment, and freedom of speech and association.

While he was the most prominent voice in China against its repression of human rights and democratic values, Liu was not as well known in his life as another brave voice, Andrei Sakharov. His voice and action occurred during the Cold War, where there was a full press against the Soviet Union, including its suppression of freedom. He supported numerous efforts for freedom, including those of another noble warrior for freedom, Natan Sharansky. Like Sakharov, Liu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, but both were kept in virtual imprisonment and not allowed to go to Stockholm.

Liu's battles for freedom occurred when China's economic and political power were rising. The United States and other nations were wrestling with how to adapt, and relations with China have been increasingly infused with concerns about security, including the nuclearization of North Korea. So there has been a tendency for concerns in other nations about human rights and freedom in China to take a back seat.

This is a major change from the days of Tiananmen Square, and events elsewhere then in China. My son, Andy Levin was in Chengdu during demonstrations there for freedom and he managed amidst all the dangerous turbulence to cable a vivid article about the struggle for freedom there to the Detroit News.

Chinese authorities have also relentlessly harassed his widow, Liu Xia (Lew Tsia), by keeping her in isolation, under house arrest for weeks at a time, and monitoring her every move. For as long as she remains there, the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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authorities will continue to see her as a symbol of dissent, and continue to harass her in every way imaginable.

The U.S. government at all levels, including the highest, must speak up clearly for her freedom.

I end today by leaving you with Liu words to his wife on the last day before his trial for subversion of state power in 2009:

"Even if I am crushed into powder, I will embrace you with ashes. I will calmly face the impending trial, with no regrets for my choices, and will look forward with hope to tomorrow."

HONORING FORMER SENATOR BOB DOLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish former Kansas Senator Bob Dole a happy 94th birthday, which he celebrated this weekend.

Born in Russell, Kansas, 94 years ago, Senator Dole dedicated his life to being a public servant. In 1945, after nearly giving his life in World War II, then-2nd Lieutenant Bob Dole earned two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star for his combat valor in Italy. He would later, of course, win the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

After serving as the Representative for the First District, the district I represent, he became Senator Bob Dole in 1968. I well remember sitting in my own classroom of third grade in Ms. Hileman's class at Jefferson grade school and reading our weekly reader, reading about a very contentious race involving Bob Dole. And, of course, Senator Dole went on to win that race and to serve Kansas until his 1996 Presidential run.

To date, Senator Dole has the record for the longest serving Republican leader in the Senate. Currently, Senator Dole keeps a very busy schedule working here in Washington, D.C., and continues public service in a variety of ways. On many Saturdays, he can be seen greeting veterans at the World War II Memorial, something I have had the pleasure of doing with him.

His international impact is still felt in programs like the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education program, which helps fight childhood hunger and poverty by providing nutrition to more than 22 million school children in 41 developing countries.

Mr. Speaker, as this body debates legislation and its impacts, we would do well to keep in mind leaders like Senator Dole, who never forgot about the human impact of each bill, who has embodied public service his entire life, and who never forgot where he was from, Russell, Kansas.

Happy 94th birthday to my friend, our mentor, our fellow Kansan, Senator Bob Dole.

WELCOME HOME FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome home our First Infantry Division Headquarters, who have been stationed in Iraq for the last

9 months, advising and assisting Iraqi security forces.

Approximately 150 soldiers in the division returned home this weekend, with the rest returning to Fort Riley later this month. Major General Martin, the commanding general of the First Infantry Division at Fort Riley, was among the soldiers who returned home recently. We thank him for his service abroad and are looking forward to working with him at Fort Riley.

This marks the first time that almost our entire division is back home together on one post. However, one aviation battalion is still currently deployed in the Republic of Korea. These soldiers and their families, especially their families, sacrifice greatly, and it certainly does not go unnoticed.

They are part of a distinguished division, the Big Red One, and return home just in time for celebrations of the division's 100th anniversary.

Welcome home to General Martin and the rest of his troops.

HONORING AMELIA EARTHART

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge one of Kansas' most well-known natives, Amelia Earhart.

Amelia was raised in Atchison, Kansas, and would be 120 years old this month, and this month also is the 80th anniversary of her disappearance.

After taking her first plane ride in 1920, she soared to the top of the aviation world attempting to accomplish the audacious flight around the world. Amelia's history has helped shape the future Kansas would have in aerospace industry today.

Her numerous accomplishments, such as being the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic and being elected president of The Ninety-Nines, a women's aviation club, has helped pave the way for Kansans today and make her print in history.

Thanks, in part, to Amelia, 67 percent of the general aviation fleet has been manufactured in Kansas since 1919. It is an honor to have her from Kansas, and on her birthday, to recognize all she has done for Kansas, aviation, women, and our national pride.

WHO HAS CONTROL OVER OUR SKIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a very critical issue that has occurred concerning our skies and the control thereof.

Our U.S. airspace is the busiest airspace in the world and, alone, is the safest and most successful. We have over 87,000 flights per day in the United States airspace. Our wonderful friends from Canada, just to the north, have only a mere fraction of that.

For decades, our air traffic control has been successfully managed under the FAA with the oversight of Congress

and the American taxpayer. Like any system, there is always room for improvement and modernization. However, there are some who think that the only way to get to modernization is through privatization. This could not be further from the truth.

Congress will soon begin debating an FAA reauthorization bill. Chairman SHUSTER and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure have done a commendable job and worked tirelessly to craft a bill that brings much-needed reforms to the FAA. However, I strongly disagree with the idea to give control of air traffic services to a private corporation governed by a board made up of special interests. There are just too many reasons why this is a bad idea.

Under the plan, the corporation would operate air traffic control by charging flyers user fees. A private corporation concerned with raising money from user fees will be heavily incentivized to prioritize air traffic services where it can raise the most money.

This incentive would be very harmful to constituents like mine in rural areas who could very well see a reduction in air traffic services.

Further, a private user fee model would undoubtedly reduce revenues to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, as the administration's own budget predicts. This fund is critical for upgrades and maintenance in small- and medium-sized airports across the country.

Reliable air traffic services and airport infrastructure are essential for rural areas to attract business, for economic growth, and for Americans to have access to safe and efficient travel. This plan is bad for rural America.

Spinning off air traffic control to a private corporation is also a major liability for the American taxpayer. The administration's budget predicts that privatization of air traffic control would cost almost \$46 billion over 10 years. These costs would be compounded by the fact that the private corporation will be required to hire all current Federal air traffic employees, continue to contribute to their Federal benefits and healthcare, and continue to collectively bargain with their union representatives. This is hardly privatization and hardly modernization.

Even more concerning, the taxpayers would likely be on the hook if the corporation took on more debt than it can pay for and is unable to safely operate our skies.

Yes, the bill says there is no Federal guarantee for the corporation, but this hasn't stopped the Federal Government from being forced to bail out other so-called private corporations to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

Our airspace is a public resource and a great national treasure. Control over it should not be handed over to a private board with no oversight from Congress and, therefore, no obligation to

represent the best interests of the citizens of the United States.

□ 1215

Modernization should continue to be our goal, and Congress can get there without jeopardizing control and safety of our national airspace.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and the President to modernize our airspace while making sure that it remains the safest and most accessible in the world.

RECOGNIZING APPOINTEES TO MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, every year, I have the pleasure of nominating outstanding young men and women from the 27th Congressional District of Texas to the United States military service academies.

Recently, I held a lunch for this year's ten appointees and their families, who have received an appointment to one of the five service academies. I enjoyed visiting with these young folks and their families and would like to recognize each of them for their commitment to protect our great Nation.

They are:

Jose Aguirre, from Corpus Christi, Texas, a 2017 graduate of Foy H. Moody High School, who will attend the United States Naval Academy;

Aaron Jeffrey Frahm, from Corpus Christi, Texas, a 2017 graduate from Marine Military Academy, who will attend the United States Merchant Marine Academy;

Specialist David Zane Ledbetter, United States Army, from Victoria, Texas, a graduate of Victoria West High School, who will attend the U.S. Military Academy, West Point;

Kaila Celiene Lusson, from Corpus Christi, Texas, a 2017 graduate of Aviano High School, Aviano Air Base, Italy, who will attend the Air Force Academy;

Caleb Michael McCann, from Sinton, Texas, a 2016 graduate of Flour Bluff High School, who will attend the Air Force Academy;

John T. McNiff, from Corpus Christi, Texas, a 2017 graduate of Incarnate Word Academy, who will attend the U.S. Coast Guard Academy;

Kalista Courtney Schauer, from Corpus Christi, Texas, a 2017 graduate of Richard King High School, who will attend the U.S. Military Academy, West Point;

Clayton Daley Thompson, from Corpus Christi, Texas, a 2016 graduate of Flour Bluff High School, who will attend the United States Naval Academy;

Cassandra Hamer, from Corpus Christi, Texas, a 2017 graduate of Richard King High School, who will attend the U.S. Coast Guard Academy; and

Josh Smith, from Victoria, Texas, a 2017 graduate of Victoria West High School, who will attend the United States Air Force Academy.

Each of them brings great pride to all of us in the 27th District of Texas. I wish them the best of luck in their academies, and I look forward to hearing great things about their service to our Nation.

RECOGNIZING DREW SCOTT

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I was walking along the Cannon tunnel and was looking at all of the art from the Congressional Art Competition. As Members know, each year, thousands of high school students from every congressional district submit their artwork to their Member of Congress for the annual Congressional Art Competition. Helping inspire these young people to become active in the things they are passionate about, like art, is one of my favorite parts of my job.

Today, I would like to recognize Drew Scott, the winner of this year's Congressional Art Competition for the 27th District of Texas. She is a junior at Rockport-Fulton High School, and she won this year's contest with an original colored pencil drawing "Complimentary Calico." It is a drawing of one of her friend's cats.

Earlier this year, I visited Rockport-Fulton High School to announce Drew as the winner, and I recently had the pleasure of hosting Drew and her family when they traveled to Washington for the unveiling of her artwork in the Cannon tunnel.

I thank everyone who submitted their artwork for this year's competition. It was an extremely hard decision for the judges. And congratulations to Drew. I look forward to seeing next year's entrants. I would like to encourage all high school students to participate in this wonderful opportunity.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FERGUSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Strengthen the constitutional commitments of the Members of this people's House as they return to the Capitol today. Guide and sustain them in Your wisdom and inspire all, especially those in leadership, with the insights needed to assist our Nation at this time.

During these warm days of summer, may the discourse on the floor and in

committees be noted more for light than heat, that the important work to be done might redound to the benefit of all Americans.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

HOUSE OVERWHELMINGLY PASSES THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the National Defense Authorization Act with a bipartisan vote of 344–81. This bill represents a strong commitment to enacting accounting reforms and rebuilding our military.

As chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, I am grateful that this bill modernizes our forces and begins to close the readiness gap facing our servicemembers, fulfilling President Donald Trump's pledge to rebuild the American military.

This legislation also supports military families by providing the largest pay raise in 8 years and by giving military families greater flexibility when relocating during the school year.

The primary function of the national government is to provide for our national defense, to ensure that our servicemembers have the training, equipment, and resources they need to achieve the goal as established by Senator Barry Goldwater, "Why Not Victory."

I appreciate the determined leadership of Chairman MAC THORBERRY, and I look forward to continuing to work with him to advance the legislation through the conference process.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

CONGRATULATING COMMANDER
HUGGAN ON HIS CAREER

(Mr. DUNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an exceptional member of the United States Navy on the event of his retirement, Commander Doug Huggan.

On Friday, July 14, Commander Huggan completed his tour as the commanding officer of the Naval Support Activity Florida. This caps a long and distinguished career.

His service to the Navy started as an E-6 airborne command pilot and has taken him around the world, from the European Command to Japan, and finally to Panama City.

While at NSA Panama City, Commander Huggan led over 3,000 Active-Duty and civilian personnel in performing critical missions, including surface warfare training, explosive ordnance disposal, salvage training, and experimental diving.

His leadership over the last 2 years in the Second District is a testament to the core values instilled upon all those who serve in the Navy.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in saying thank you to Commander Huggan and his family for their years of service and sacrifice, and wish them luck as they move on to enjoy a new chapter in their life.

NORTH KOREA IS A SLAVE
TRADER

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a new soccer stadium in St. Petersburg, a luxury apartment complex in Moscow, all brought to Russia by North Korean slaves. That is right. These slaves get almost no wages, no holidays, with little food or sleep.

Little Kim not only enslaves his own people at home, he runs an international slave trade. The slave network brings in \$2 billion to \$3 billion every year to the North Korean military complex and helps little Kim evade sanctions. This is state-sponsored human trafficking and slavery.

The slaves are not just sent to Russia. It is troublemakers like China and Qatar, too, that are slave destinations.

Secretary Tillerson has called upon all countries to fully implement U.N. Security Council resolutions to sever or downgrade diplomatic relations with North Korea in order to financially isolate that country. It is time these countries comply with the United Nations resolutions, and we must send a united message to North Korea: End your slave trade and stop the saber rattling.

And that is just the way it is.

IF DONALD TRUMP, JR., WERE A
DEMOCRAT

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if Donald Trump, Jr., were a Democrat, the media would be defending him for doing what every campaign does: conducting opposition research. The media would be praising him for ending a meeting when it became obvious there was no evidence to back up an informant's allegations. The media would be pointing out that many countries' leaders openly supported Barack Obama for President, including those from the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, and Nicaragua.

Maybe the real crime is the media's double standard. In their irrational obsession with destroying the Trump Presidency, the liberal media have forgotten journalism's profound responsibility: to be fair and objective.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4:45 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1645

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BACON) at 4 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SERGEANT JOSEPH GEORGE
KUSICK VA COMMUNITY LIVING
CENTER

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2210) to designate the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2210

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Sergeant Joseph George Kusick of Bruin, Pennsylvania, was assigned to the command and control detachment of the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) of the Army during the Vietnam War.

(2) On November 8, 1967, Kusick distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions while serving as a radio operator of a special forces reconnaissance team on a combat mission deep in hostile territory.

(3) During an enemy ambush, Kusick, though seriously wounded, refused aid and radioed the forward air controller to advise him of the critical situation.

(4) While the team leader led a withdrawal to a landing zone, Kusick maintained contact with the controller and requested emergency extraction.

(5) Realizing the importance of having a radio operator on the ground to direct landings, Kusick refused evacuation by the first helicopter.

(6) After the second helicopter was shot down, and in the midst of enemy fire, Kusick continued to maintain radio contact and called for a hoist extraction of the men still remaining on the ground.

(7) The last helicopter, which Kusick boarded, was shot down by intense Viet Cong fire and crashed in flames, resulting in Kusick's death.

(8) On December 22, 1967, Kusick was posthumously awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action.

(9) The citation to accompany the award of the Silver Star Medal stated that "Kusick's gallantry in action, at the cost of his life, was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army".

SEC. 2. SERGEANT JOSEPH GEORGE KUSICK VA
COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the community living center referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DUNN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2210, a bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Community Living Center in Butler Township, Pennsylvania, as the Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center.

Sergeant Kusick, a native of Bruin, Pennsylvania, served in the United States Special Forces during the Vietnam war. During a combat mission, deep in hostile territory, on November 8, 1967, Sergeant Kusick was seriously wounded during an ambush by enemy forces.

Wounded, yet refusing aid and initial evacuation, he remained in the midst of battle to help secure emergency extraction for his fellow soldiers. The helicopter that Sergeant Kusick finally boarded was shot down by Viet Cong fire and Sergeant Kusick's life was lost. He was just 22 years old.

Sergeant Kusick was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for ". . . gallantry in action, at the cost of his life . . . in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army."

It is only fitting and appropriate that we honor Sergeant Kusick's service and sacrifice by naming the VA Butler Healthcare's Community Living Center after him.

H.R. 2210 is sponsored by Congressman MIKE KELLY, from Pennsylvania, and I am grateful to him for introducing it and allowing us to honor and forever remember this great American hero. This legislation satisfies all of the committee's naming criteria and, as such, is supported by the entire Pennsylvania congressional delegation, as well as by many veterans service organizations.

Once again, I thank Congressman KELLY for sponsoring this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2210, a bill to designate the Community Living Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center.

Sergeant Joseph George Kusick was awarded the Silver Star for sacrificing his life in an effort to ensure that as many of his comrades as possible made it home from Vietnam. The resulting recovery effort was to be recorded by the squadron as one of the largest and most hazardous on record.

As a radio operator, Sergeant Kusick served as the connection between the 5th Special Forces Group, who found themselves under enemy ambush, and the forward air controller charged with coordinating their evacuation.

Although Sergeant Kusick was seriously injured during the ambush, he refused multiple offers to evacuate, ultimately refusing two helicopters, only to board a helicopter that was then shot down by intense Viet Cong fire.

His bravery and sacrifice earned him a posthumously awarded Silver Star with the following citation: "Kusick's gallantry in action, at the cost of his

life, was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army."

Mr. Speaker, I salute Sergeant Kusick for his selfless bravery, and I support the passage of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2210. This bill will designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Community Living Center in my hometown of Butler, Pennsylvania, as the Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center.

This is something you have heard already, but I want you to understand something, and if we can look for a minute outside of the people's House into thinking of who we actually are as a people. This is a young guy, 22 years old, at the very beginning of his life. At a time when most of us are looking forward to so many great things happening to us, he put himself in harm's way.

Now, when you think of what Sergeant Kusick did, it is incredible that this young man, on a hillside in Vietnam under heavy Viet Cong fire, and being seriously wounded himself, when asked: Listen, Sergeant, get on the helicopter. We can get you out of there.

He said: "No, because if I leave, my comrades cannot be saved." What an incredible place to put yourself in, a 22-year-old who just a couple of years earlier was in Butler, Pennsylvania, enjoying all that life has to offer, and all of the potential of that life, and putting the welfare of others and the safety of others before himself. That is an incredible position to put yourself in.

We have already talked about the medal that Sergeant Kusick was given, and what it meant to everybody. But there is just so much about Sergeant Kusick, and all of these veterans, and all of these folks who have put themselves in harm's way. The one thing that comes out all the time is, there is no place quite as unique as the United States of America; there is nothing quite as unique as our men and women in uniform; there is nothing quite as unique as people who are willing to put themselves second and put the lives and safety of others first.

That is just not something people normally do. Sergeant Kusick did that on that hillside, seriously wounded, working on the radios. He knew that if he didn't stay, the other people wouldn't get extracted. He stayed there, under heavy enemy fire, and watched what was going on, watched the helicopters come in to extract his teammates.

And I think of it all the time: Where do people like Sergeant Kusick come from? And do you know where they come from? They come from all of these small towns and cities across

America. They don't think of themselves as being unique. They don't think of their sacrifice as being exceptional. They don't think of what they have done as being out of the ordinary because it is just who we are as Americans.

As I think about these things, I am called to bring out something that I have read, and this is in a different war at a different time. It is a dedication stone at the Korean War Memorial, not too far from our Nation's steps. At the point of the triangle leading to the American flag is a dedication which reads: "Our Nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met."

A country they never knew, and a people they never met, and they put their life on the line to defend those lives. That is incredible. I would just suggest to people, you can go around this world and hunt for other people like this, and you will find them, but you will not find them in as great numbers as you find right here in the United States of America.

I don't know if Sergeant Kusick was a Republican or a Democrat. I don't know how he voted. I knew where he grew up, because that is where I grew up. I knew who he was because he is from the same area I am from. The only difference in all of us may be the town we grew up and our last name, but the rest of it is all the same.

The same blood that coursed through Sergeant Kusick's veins is the same blood that courses through all of our veins. And he was so willing, so willing to sacrifice his life for saving others. Well, this didn't happen by chance. I have got to tell you that what we are doing today to honor Sergeant Kusick was due to the work of The American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and especially the tireless effort of the Third Congressional District Military-Veterans Advocacy group, and my friend, Sergeant Art Greathead, who tirelessly did the research on this.

We ran through all of the things we have to run through, and for those folks who don't know, this is not an easy thing to do. This is hard work to get this done, to honor a hero. But that work was done by all of these folks in a way of saying "thank you" to one of America's fallen heroes; "thank you" to one of American's heroes who has been long forgotten in some circles, but not back home.

We remember Sergeant Kusick. We honor Sergeant Kusick. We thank him for his sacrifice, and we point to a country that is forever grateful to our women and men in uniform for the great sacrifice that they make. But I want to go back to one other thing: 22 years old. Twenty-two, at a time when life is just starting, never again to be able to celebrate a birthday; never again to celebrate Christmas, or Thanksgiving; never again to celebrate a family reunion, but forever lost—but

lost for a good reason. He gave his life so that others may survive.

The way they were able to identify Sergeant Kusick's remains—by the way, the helicopter he finally got in after everybody else would have been extracted was shot down, went down in flames. There were dog tags on two of the remains that were recovered. The other body that was recovered did not have dog tags on, but do you know what Sergeant Kusick had? He had his radio pack.

To the very end, Sergeant Kusick was doing what he was required to do and what he wanted to do, and he not only gave up his life but gave up his entire future.

I can't tell you how much I appreciate this, and I can't tell you how much this means to the people of Butler, Pennsylvania, but more than anything else, to Sergeant Kusick for the sacrifice of a life.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Pennsylvania. I am very thankful that the gentleman has brought Congress' attention to Sergeant Kusick's deed on behalf of our Nation. I was reflecting on his youth, 22 years old, and to think that so many younger, his age, step forward to defend our Nation and to give up their lives.

I think it is well for all of us in this Chamber to reflect on that sacrifice as we struggle to reach across the aisle and to come to agreement to serve our country, to note the ultimate sacrifice that they put forward. I thank you very much for the effort you have taken to remember a great American hero.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman—our colleagues—for his kind comments, and also especially Representative KELLY for bringing forward this outstanding bill. I encourage all Members to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DUNN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2210.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1700

GRANTING CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF CONGRESS TO AMEND WASHINGTON AREA TRANSIT REGULATION COMPACT

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 92) granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 92

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Congress in title III of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (section 3026, Public Law 114-94) provided sole authority to the Secretary of Transportation to appoint Federal Directors to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and required the signatory parties to the Compact to amend the Compact as necessary.

(2) Legislation enacted by the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia contains the amendments to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact pursuant to section 3026(b) of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (Public Law 114-94).

SEC. 2. CONSENT OF CONGRESS TO COMPACT AMENDMENTS.

(a) CONSENT.—Consent of Congress is given to the amendments of the State of Maryland, the amendments of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the amendments of the District of Columbia to section 5, of title III of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—The amendments referred to in subsection (a) amending section 5 of such Compact are substantially as follows:

“(a) The Authority shall be governed by a Board of eight Directors consisting of two Directors for each Signatory and two for the Federal Government (one of whom shall be a regular passenger and customer of the bus or rail service of the Authority). For Virginia, the Directors shall be appointed by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission; for the District of Columbia by the Council of the District of Columbia; for Maryland, by the Washington Suburban Transit Commission; and for the Federal Government, by the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation. For Virginia and Maryland, the Directors shall be appointed from among the members of the appointing body, except as otherwise provided herein, and shall serve for a term coincident with their term on the appointing body. A Director for a Signatory may be removed or suspended from office only as provided by the law of the Signatory from which he was appointed. The non-Federal appointing authorities shall also appoint an alternate for each Director. In addition, the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation shall also appoint two non-voting members who shall serve as the alternates for the Federal Directors. An alternate Director may act only in the absence of the Director for whom he has been appointed an

alternate, except that, in the case of the District of Columbia where only one Director and his alternate are present, such alternate may act on behalf of the absent Director. Each alternate, including the Federal non-voting Directors, shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. In the event of a vacancy in the Office of Director or alternate, it shall be filled in the same manner as an original appointment.

“(b) Before entering upon the duties of his office each Director and alternate director shall take and subscribe to the following oath (or affirmation) of office or any such other oath or affirmation, if any, as the Constitution or laws of the Government he represents shall provide: ‘I,

_____ hereby solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution and Laws of the state or political jurisdiction from which I was appointed as a Director (alternate director) of the Board of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and will faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter.’”

SEC. 3. RIGHT TO ALTER, AMEND, OR REPEAL.

The right to alter, amend, or repeal this joint resolution is expressly reserved. The consent granted by this joint resolution shall not be construed as impairing or in any manner affecting any right or jurisdiction of the United States in and over the region that forms the subject of the Compact.

SEC. 4. CONSTRUCTION AND SEVERABILITY.

It is intended that the provisions of this Compact shall be reasonably and liberally construed to effectuate the purposes thereof. If any part or application of this Compact, or legislation enabling the Compact, is held invalid, the remainder of the Compact or its application to other situations or persons shall not be affected.

SEC. 5. INCONSISTENCY OF LANGUAGE.

The validity of this Compact shall not be affected by any insubstantial differences in its form or language as adopted by the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This joint resolution shall take effect on the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.J. Res. 92, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.J. Res. 92, introduced by my Virginia colleague, Representative COMSTOCK, concerns the Washington-area transit system. The resolution makes needed administrative amendments to the longstanding Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact.

These amendments are required under section 3026 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation, or FAST, Act. That section transferred from the Administrator of General Services to the Secretary of Transportation sole authority to appoint Federal directors to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority board of directors. It further required Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia to adopt any necessary conforming amendments to the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact.

The jurisdictions adopted the needed amendments as required. H.J. Res. 92 accordingly grants Congress' approval to the amendments.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I thank Members on both sides of the aisle, including Congresswoman COMSTOCK, for their good work on this.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 92. I thank my colleague from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), the chairman of the committee, for leading this measure, and I am very happy to lend my support to the resolution.

This resolution would grant congressional consent to amendments to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact Authority pursuant to legislation already enacted by the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, respectively.

Established in 1967, the WMATA is an interstate compact agency responsible for operating the mass transit system for the Washington Metropolitan area.

As part of a broader effort to promote safety and efficiency in the WMATA Metrorail system, Congress transferred appointment authority for the WMATA board of directors to the Secretary of Transportation through enactment of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act in 2015, the so-called FAST Act. Under the FAST Act, Congress also directed the WMATA jurisdictions to adopt conforming compact amendments.

H.J. Res. 92 is a bipartisan measure that would grant Congress' consent to these amendments to the WMATA compact.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), who is the chief sponsor of the legislation.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my resolution, H.J. Res. 92, which lends congressional approval to an amendment made to the WMATA interstate compact.

As was mentioned, the last iteration of the highway bill, the FAST Act, contained a provision that directed Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. to amend the compact to change appointment authority for the Federal directors on the

WMATA board from the administrator of the GSA to the more appropriate Secretary of Transportation.

This was a very commonsense change that was made in light of recent incidents and accidents and the real need to have a top priority for safety.

The Secretary of Transportation, I believe, is in a much better position to appoint directors to the Metro board than the administrator of the GSA. The States of Virginia and Maryland as well as D.C. complied with this directive and amended the compact, and we are all in agreement here.

The previous Secretary of Transportation last year appointed two very well-qualified candidates to serve as the Federal directors on the WMATA board.

The final legal step that we are taking today here in this equation is for Congress to lend its approval to the change, and that is what this resolution does.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my very good friend Representative JAMIE RASKIN for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I was ranking member of the subcommittee that had jurisdiction over the FAST Act when we received the request from the region—the Maryland, District of Columbia, and Virginia region—to transfer the authority to appoint directors to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority board from the GSA to the Department of Transportation.

For the life of me, I can't remember why this authority was given to the GSA in the first place. But it may have been because WMATA was considered simply an agency of interest to the Federal Government.

On consideration, under the FAST Act, we agreed that the Department of Transportation was, by far, the more appropriate agency to appoint Federal directors—understand there are local directors—but Federal directors to WMATA. There are also Federal directors to the WMATA board.

This is of great interest to the region. I recognize it is not monumental for the Congress, but the region very much needs this joint resolution. All three jurisdictions—the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia—have made their administrative changes, but these changes need to be confirmed by this body.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mrs. COMSTOCK for her leadership with this joint resolution, and I ask that the entire body approve it.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I simply want to, again, commend Mrs. COMSTOCK for her leadership on this legislation. I thank all of our fellow members in the regional delegation in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia for their collaborative work on this issue, and House Judiciary Committee

Chairman GOODLATTE for facilitating the resolution's consideration by both the committee and the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this fine legislation.

I thank everybody for their good work, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 92.

This Resolution would grant Congress' consent to certain amendments to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact Authority pursuant to legislation enacted by the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, respectively.

Congress originally consented to this Compact in 1960 and—from time-to-time—the Compact has been amended with Congress' consent, as needed.

The current necessity for H.J. Res. 92 is prompted by the enactment of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act of 2015.

In pertinent part, this Act gave sole authority to the Secretary of Transportation to appoint federal directors to the board of directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact.

To implement this directive, each of the Compact participants had to enact legislation amending the Compact.

H.J. Res. 92 grants Congress' consent to these amendments to the Compact as approved by each of the participating states and the District of Columbia.

This bipartisan measure, which effectuates Congress' directive of 2015, is cosponsored by all of the Congressional Members representing jurisdictions affected by the Metrorail system.

I support this commonsense measure and I urge its swift passage. I commend Representative COMSTOCK for her leadership on this important legislation and I thank House Judiciary Chairman GOODLATTE for facilitating its timely consideration by both the Committee and the House.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I support H.J. Res. 92 granting consent and approval from Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact.

As Houston is a major transportation hub, I understand and appreciate the importance of this legislation.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), an interstate compact agency, provides transportation services to millions of people each year.

It is imperative that the WMATA be safe and effective because it is essential to the commerce and prosperity of the National Capitol Region.

The District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland intend to create the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission to act as the state safety oversight authority for the WMATA system under 49 U.S.C. 5329.

In title III of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (section 3026, Public Law 114-94), the Congress provided sole authority to the Secretary of Transportation to appoint Federal Directors to the Board of Directors of

the WMATA and required the signatory parties to the Compact to amend the Compact as necessary.

This compact is created for the benefit of the people of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland so that there may be an increase in their safety, commerce, and prosperity.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.J. Res. 92.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 92.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GRANTING CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF CONGRESS TO ESTABLISH WASHINGTON METRO-RAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 76) granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 76

Whereas the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, an interstate compact agency of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland, provides transportation services to millions of people each year, the safety of whom is paramount;

Whereas an effective and safe Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority system is essential to the commerce and prosperity of the National Capital region;

Whereas the Tri-State Oversight Committee, created by a memorandum of understanding amongst these 3 jurisdictions, has provided safety oversight of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority;

Whereas 49 U.S.C. 5329 requires the creation of a legally and financially independent state authority for safety oversight of all fixed rail transit facilities;

Whereas the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland intend to create a Washington Metrorail Safety Commission to act as the state safety oversight authority for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority system under 49 U.S.C. 5329; and

Whereas this compact is created for the benefit of the people of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland and for the increase of their safety, commerce, and prosperity.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF CONGRESS

SECTION 1. The consent and approval of Congress is hereby given for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact for the safety oversight of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Metrorail system (known as the Metrorail Safety Commission Interstate Compact), which has been negotiated by representatives of the State, the Commonwealth, and the District, substantially as follows:

“ARTICLE I “DEFINITIONS

“1. As used in this MSC Compact, the following words and terms shall have the meanings set forth below, unless the context clearly requires a different meaning. Capitalized terms used herein, but not otherwise defined in this MSC Compact, shall have the definition set forth in regulations issued under 49 U.S.C. § 5329, as they may be revised from time to time.

“(a) ‘Alternate Member’ means an alternate member of the Board;

“(b) ‘Board’ means the board of directors of the Commission;

“(c) ‘Commission’ means the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission;

“(d) ‘Member’ means a member of the Board;

“(e) ‘MSC Compact’ means this Washington Metrorail Safety Commission Interstate Compact;

“(f) ‘Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan’ means the comprehensive agency safety plan for a rail transit agency required by 49 U.S.C. § 5329 and the regulations issued thereunder, as may be amended or revised from time to time;

“(g) ‘Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program’ means the federal certification training program, as established and amended from time to time by applicable federal laws and regulations, for federal and state employees, or other designated personnel, who conduct safety audits and examinations of public transportation systems, and employees of public transportation agencies directly responsible for safety oversight;

“(h) ‘Safety Sensitive Position’ means any position held by a WMATA employee or contractor designated in the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for the WMATA Rail System and approved by the Commission as directly or indirectly affecting the safety of the passengers or employees of the WMATA Rail System;

“(i) ‘Signatory’ means the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia;

“(j) ‘State’, ‘state’, or ‘jurisdiction’ means the District of Columbia, the State of Maryland, or the Commonwealth of Virginia;

“(k) ‘Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority’ or ‘WMATA’ is the entity created by the WMATA Compact, which entity is responsible for providing certain rail fixed guideway public transportation system services;

“(l) ‘WMATA Compact’ means the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact, approved November 6, 1966 (80 Stat. 1324; D.C. Official Code § 9-1107.01 et seq.); and

“(m) ‘WMATA Rail System’ or ‘Metrorail’ means the rail fixed guideway public transportation system and all other real and personal property owned, leased, operated, or otherwise used by WMATA rail services and shall include WMATA rail projects under design or construction by owners other than WMATA.

“ARTICLE II

“PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

“2. The Signatories to the WMATA Compact hereby adopt this MSC Compact pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 5329. The Commission created hereunder shall have safety regulatory and enforcement authority over the WMATA Rail System and shall act as the state safety oversight authority for WMATA under 49 U.S.C. § 5329, as

may be amended from time to time. WMATA shall be subject to the Commission’s rules, regulations, actions, and orders.

“3. The purpose of this MSC Compact is to create a state safety oversight authority for the WMATA Rail System, pursuant to the mandate of federal law, as a common agency of each Signatory, empowered in the manner hereinafter set forth to review, approve, oversee, and enforce the safety of the WMATA Rail System, including, without limitation, to:

“(a) Have exclusive safety oversight authority and responsibility over the WMATA Rail System pursuant to federal law, including, without limitation, the power to restrict, suspend, or prohibit rail service on all or part of the WMATA Rail System as set forth in this MSC Compact;

“(b) Develop and adopt a written state safety oversight program standard;

“(c) Review and approve the WMATA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan;

“(d) Investigate hazards, incidents, and accidents on the WMATA Rail System;

“(e) Require, review, approve, oversee, and enforce Corrective Action Plans developed by WMATA; and

“(f) Meet other requirements of federal and State law relating to safety oversight of the WMATA Rail System.

“ARTICLE III

“ESTABLISHMENT AND ORGANIZATION

“A. Washington Metrorail Safety Commission
“4. The Commission is hereby created as an instrumentality of each Signatory, which shall be a public body corporate and politic, and which shall have the powers and duties set forth in this MSC Compact.

“5. The Commission shall be financially and legally independent from WMATA.

“B. Board Membership

“6. The Commission shall be governed by a Board of 6 Members with 2 Members appointed or reappointed (including to fill an unexpired term) by each Signatory pursuant to the Signatory’s applicable laws.

“7. Each Signatory shall also appoint or reappoint (including to fill an unexpired term) one Alternate Member pursuant to the Signatory’s applicable laws.

“8. An Alternate Member shall participate and take action as a Member only in the absence of one or both Members appointed from the same jurisdiction as the Alternate Member’s appointing jurisdiction and, in such instances, may cast a single vote.

“9. Members and Alternate Members shall have backgrounds in transit safety, transportation, relevant engineering disciplines, or public finance.

“10. No Member or Alternate Member shall simultaneously hold an elected public office, serve on the WMATA board of directors, be employed by WMATA, or be a contractor to WMATA.

“11. Each Member and Alternate Member shall serve a 4-year term and may be reappointed for additional terms; except that, each Signatory shall make its initial appointments as follows:

“(a) One Member shall be appointed for a 4-year term;

“(b) One Member shall be appointed for a 2-year term; and

“(c) The Alternate Member shall be appointed for a 3-year term.

“12. Any person appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term.

“13. Members and Alternate Members shall be entitled to reimbursement for reasonable and necessary expenses and shall be compensated for each day spent meeting on the business of the Commission at a rate of \$200 per day or at such other rate as may be adjusted in appropriations approved by all of the Signatories.

“14. A Member or an Alternate Member may be removed or suspended from office only for cause in accordance with the laws of such Member’s or Alternate Member’s appointing jurisdiction.

"C. Quorum and Actions of the Board

"15. Four Members shall constitute a quorum, and the affirmative vote of 4 Members is required for action of the Board. Quorum and voting requirements under this paragraph may be met with one or more Alternate Members pursuant to section 8.

"16. The Commission action shall become effective upon enactment unless otherwise provided for by the Commission.

"D. Oath of Office

"17. Before entering office, each Member and Alternate Member shall take and subscribe to the following oath (or affirmation) of office or any such other oath or affirmation as the constitution or laws of the Signatory he or she represents shall provide:

"I, _____, hereby solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution and the laws of the United States as a Member (or Alternate Member) of the Board of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission and will faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter.

"E. Organization and Procedure

"18. The Board shall provide for its own organization and procedure. Meetings of the Board shall be held as frequently as the Board determines, but in no event less than quarterly. The Board shall keep minutes of its meetings and establish rules and regulations governing its transactions and internal affairs, including, without limitation, policies regarding records retention that are not in conflict with applicable federal record retention laws.

"19. The Commission shall keep commercially reasonable records of its financial transactions in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

"20. The Commission shall establish an office for the conduct of its affairs at a location to be determined by the Commission.

"21. The Commission shall adopt 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)-(d) and (g), and 5 U.S.C. § 552b, as both may be amended from time to time, as its freedom-of-information policy and open-meeting policy, respectively, and shall not be subject to the comparable laws or policies of any Signatory.

"22. Reports of investigations or inquiries adopted by the Board shall be made publicly available.

"23. The Commission shall adopt a policy on conflict of interest that shall be consistent with the regulations issued under 49 U.S.C. § 5329, as they may be revised from time to time, which, among other things, places appropriate separation between Members, officers, employees, contractors, and agents of the Commission and WMATA.

"24. The Commission shall adopt and utilize its own administrative procedure and procurement policies in conformance with applicable federal regulations and shall not be subject to the administrative procedure or procurement laws of any Signatory.

"F. Officers and Employees

"25. The Board shall elect a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer from among its Members, each for a 2-year term and shall prescribe their powers and duties.

"26. The Board shall appoint and fix the compensation and benefits of a chief executive officer who shall be the chief administrative officer of the Commission and who shall have expertise in transportation safety and one or more industry-recognized transportation safety certifications.

"27. Consistent with 49 U.S.C. § 5329, as may be amended from time to time, the Commission may employ, under the direction of the chief executive officer, such other technical, legal, clerical, and other employees on a regular, part-time, or as-needed basis as it determines necessary or desirable for the discharge of its duties.

"28. The Commission shall not be bound by any statute or regulation of any Signatory in

the employment or discharge of any officer or employee of the Commission, but shall develop its own policies in compliance with federal law. The MSC shall, however, consider the laws of the Signatories in devising its employment and discharge policies, and when it deems it practical, devise policies consistent with the laws of the Signatories.

"29. The Board may fix and provide policies for the qualification, appointment, removal, term, tenure, compensation benefits, worker's compensation, pension, and retirement rights of its employees subject to federal law. The Board may also establish a personnel system based on merit and fitness and, subject to eligibility, participate in the pension, retirement, and worker's compensation plans of any Signatory or agency or political subdivision thereof.

"ARTICLE IV

"POWERS

"A. Safety Oversight Powers

"30. In carrying out its purposes, the Commission, through its Board or designated employees or agents, shall, consistent with federal law:

"(a) Adopt, revise, and distribute a written State Safety Oversight Program;

"(b) Review, approve, oversee, and enforce the adoption and implementation of WMATA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan;

"(c) Require, review, approve, oversee, and enforce the adoption and implementation of any Corrective Action Plans that the Commission deems appropriate;

"(d) Implement and enforce relevant federal and State laws and regulations relating to safety of the WMATA Rail System; and

"(e) Audit every 3 years the compliance of WMATA with WMATA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan or conduct such an audit on an ongoing basis over a 3-year time frame.

"31. In performing its duties, the Commission, through its Board or designated employees or agents, may:

"(a) Conduct, or cause to be conducted, inspections, investigations, examinations, and testing of WMATA personnel and contractors, property, equipment, facilities, rolling stock, and operations of the WMATA Rail System, including, without limitation, electronic information and databases through reasonable means, which may include issuance of subpoenas;

"(b) Enter upon the WMATA Rail System and, upon reasonable notice and a finding by the chief executive officer that a need exists, upon any lands, waters, and premises adjacent to the WMATA Rail System, including, without limitation, property owned or occupied by the federal government, for the purpose of making inspections, investigations, examinations, and testing as the Commission may deem necessary to carry out the purposes of this MSC Compact, and such entry shall not be deemed a trespass. The Commission shall make reasonable reimbursement for any actual damage resulting to any such adjacent lands, waters, and premises as a result of such activities;

"(c) Compel WMATA's compliance with any Corrective Action Plan or order of the Commission by such means as the Commission deems appropriate, including, without limitation, by:

"(1) Taking legal action in a court of competent jurisdiction;

"(2) Issuing citations or fines with funds going into an escrow account for spending by WMATA on Commission-directed safety measures;

"(3) Directing WMATA to prioritize spending on safety-critical items;

"(4) Removing a specific vehicle, infrastructure element, or hazard from the WMATA Rail System; and

"(5) Compelling WMATA to restrict, suspend, or prohibit rail service on all or part of the WMATA Rail System with an appropriate notice period dictated by the circumstances;

"(d) Direct WMATA to suspend or disqualify from performing in any Safety Sensitive Position

an individual who is alleged to or has violated safety rules, regulations, policies, or laws;

"(e) Compel WMATA's Office of the Inspector General, created under WMATA Board Resolution 2006-18, or any successor WMATA office or organization having similar duties, to conduct safety-related audits or investigations and to provide its findings to the Commission; and

"(f) Take such other actions as the Commission may deem appropriate consistent with its purpose and powers.

"32. Action by the Board under section 31(c)(5) shall require the unanimous vote of all Members present and voting. The Commission shall coordinate its enforcement activities with appropriate federal and State governmental authorities.

"B. General Powers

"33. In addition to the powers and duties set forth above, the Commission may:

"(a) Sue and be sued;

"(b) Adopt, amend, and repeal rules and regulations respecting the exercise of the powers conferred by this MSC Compact;

"(c) Create and abolish offices, employments, and positions (other than those specifically provided for in this MSC Compact) necessary or desirable for the purposes of the Commission;

"(d) Determine a staffing level for the Commission that is commensurate with the size and complexity of the WMATA Rail System, and require that employees and other designated personnel of the Commission, who are responsible for safety oversight, be qualified to perform such functions through appropriate training, including, without limitation, successful completion of the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program;

"(e) Contract for or employ consulting attorneys, inspectors, engineers, and such other experts necessary or desirable and, within the limitations prescribed in this MSC Compact, prescribe their powers and duties and fix their compensation;

"(f) Enter into and perform contracts, leases, and agreements necessary or desirable in the performance of its duties and in the execution of the powers granted under this MSC Compact;

"(g) Apply for, receive, and accept such payments, appropriations, grants, gifts, loans, advances, and other funds, properties, and services as may be transferred or made available to it by the United States government or any other public or private entity or individual, subject to the limitations specified in section 42;

"(h) Adopt an official seal and alter the same at its pleasure;

"(i) Adopt and amend by-laws, policies, and procedures governing the regulation of its affairs;

"(j) Appoint one or more advisory committees; and

"(k) Do such other acts necessary or desirable for the performance of its duties and the execution of its powers under this MSC Compact.

"34. Consistent with this MSC Compact, the Commission shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of this MSC Compact.

"ARTICLE V

"GENERAL PROVISIONS

"A. Annual Safety Report

"35. The Commission shall make and publish annually a status report on the safety of the WMATA Rail System, which shall include, among other requirements established by the Commission and federal law, status updates of outstanding Corrective Action Plans, Commission directives, and on-going investigations. A copy of each such report shall be provided to:

"(a) The Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration;

"(b) The Governor of Virginia, the Governor of Maryland, and the Mayor of the District of Columbia;

"(c) The Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia;

“(d) The President of the Maryland Senate and the Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates;

“(e) The President of the Virginia Senate and the Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates; and

“(f) The General Manager and each member of the board of directors of WMATA.

“36. The Commission may prepare, publish, and distribute such other safety reports that it deems necessary or desirable.

“B. Annual Report of Operations

“37. The Commission shall make and publish an annual report on its programs, operations, and finances, which shall be distributed in the same manner provided by section 35.

“38. The Commission may also prepare, publish, and distribute such other public reports and informational materials as it deems necessary or desirable.

“C. Annual Independent Audit

“39. An independent annual audit shall be made of the financial accounts of the Commission. The audit shall be made by qualified certified public accountants selected by the Board, who shall have no personal interest, direct or indirect, in the financial affairs of the Commission or any of its officers or employees. The report of audit shall be prepared in accordance with generally accepted auditing principles and shall be distributed in the same manner provided by section 35. Members, employees, agents, and contractors of the Commission shall provide access to information necessary or desirable for the conduct of the annual audit.

“D. Financing

“40. The Commission’s operations shall be funded, independently of WMATA, by the Signatory jurisdictions and, when available, by federal funds. The Commission shall have no authority to levy taxes.

“41. The Signatories shall unanimously agree on adequate funding levels for the Commission and make equal contributions of such funding, subject to annual appropriation, to cover the portion of Commission operations not funded by federal funds.

“42. The Commission may borrow up to 5% of its last annual appropriations budget in anticipation of receipts, or as otherwise set forth in the appropriations budget approved by all of the Signatories, from any lawful lending institution for any purpose of this MSC Compact, including, without limitation, for administrative expenses. Such loans shall be for a term not to exceed 2 years, or at such longer term approved by each Signatory pursuant to its laws as evidenced by the written authorization by the Mayor of the District of Columbia and the Governors of Maryland and Virginia, and at such rates of interest as shall be acceptable to the Commission.

“43. With respect to the District of Columbia, the commitment or obligation to render financial assistance to the Commission shall be created, by appropriation or in such other manner, or by such other legislation, as the District of Columbia shall determine; provided, that any such commitment or obligation shall be approved by Congress pursuant to the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 774; D.C. Official Code § 1–201.01 et seq.).

“44. Pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C. §§ 1341, 1342, 1349 to 1351, and 1511 to 1519, and D.C. Official Code §§ 47–105 and 47–355.01 to 355.08 (collectively, the ‘Anti-Deficiency Acts’), the District cannot obligate itself to any financial commitment in any present or future year unless the necessary funds to pay that commitment have been appropriated and are lawfully available for the purpose committed. Thus, pursuant to the Anti-Deficiency Acts, nothing in the MSC Compact creates an obligation of the District in anticipation of an appropriation for such purpose, and the District’s legal liability for the payment of any amount under this MSC Compact does not and may not arise or obtain in advance of the lawful availability of appropriated funds for the applicable fiscal year.

“E. Tax Exemption

“45. The exercise of the powers granted by this MSC Compact shall in all respects be for the benefit of the people of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland and for the increase of their safety, commerce, and prosperity, and as the activities associated with this MSC Compact shall constitute the performance of essential governmental functions, the Commission shall not be required to pay any taxes or assessments upon the services or any property acquired or used by the Commission under the provisions of this MSC Compact or upon the income therefrom, and shall at all times be free from taxation within the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland.

“F. Reconsideration of Commission Orders

“46. WMATA shall have the right to petition the Commission for reconsideration of an order based on rules and procedures developed by the Commission.

“47. Consistent with section 16, the filing of a petition for reconsideration shall not act as a stay upon the execution of a Commission order, or any part of it, unless the Commission orders otherwise. WMATA may appeal any adverse action on a petition for reconsideration as set forth in section 48.

“G. Judicial Matters

“48. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division, the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, Southern Division, and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia shall have exclusive and original jurisdiction of all actions brought by or against the Commission and to enforce subpoenas under this MSC Compact.

“49. The commencement of a judicial proceeding shall not operate as a stay of a Commission order unless specifically ordered by the court.

“H. Liability and Indemnification

“50. The Commission and its Members, Alternate Members, officers, agents, employees, or representatives shall not be liable for suit or action or for any judgment or decree for damages, loss, or injury resulting from action taken within the scope of their employment or duties under this MSC Compact, nor required in any case arising or any appeal taken under this MSC Compact to give a supersedeas bond or security for damages. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to protect such person from suit or liability for damage, loss, injury, or liability caused by the intentional or willful and wanton misconduct of such person.

“51. The Commission shall be liable for its contracts and for its torts and those of its Members, Alternate Members, officers, agents, employees, and representatives committed in the conduct of any proprietary function, in accordance with the law of the applicable Signatory (including, without limitation, rules on conflict of laws) but shall not be liable for any torts occurring in the performance of a governmental function. The exclusive remedy for such breach of contract or tort for which the Commission shall be liable, as herein provided, shall be by suit against the Commission. Nothing contained in this MSC Compact shall be construed as a waiver by the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or the State of Maryland of any immunity from suit.

“I. Commitment of Parties

“52. Each of the Signatories pledges to each other faithful cooperation in providing safety oversight for the WMATA Rail System, and, to affect such purposes, agrees to consider in good faith and request any necessary legislation to achieve the objectives of this MSC Compact.

“J. Amendments and Supplements

“53. Amendments and supplements to this MSC Compact shall be adopted by legislative action of each of the Signatories and the consent of Congress. When one Signatory adopts an amendment or supplement to an existing section

of this MSC Compact, that amendment or supplement shall not be immediately effective, and the previously enacted provision or provisions shall remain in effect in each jurisdiction until the amendment or supplement is approved by the other Signatories and is consented to by Congress.

“K. Withdrawal and Termination

“54. Any Signatory may withdraw from this MSC Compact, which action shall constitute a termination of this MSC Compact.

“55. Withdrawal from this MSC Compact shall be by a Signatory’s repeal of this MSC Compact from its laws, but such repeal shall not take effect until 2 years after the effective date of the repealed statute and written notice of the withdrawal being given by the withdrawing Signatory to the governors or mayor, as appropriate, of the other Signatories.

“56. Prior to termination of this MSC Compact, the Commission shall provide each Signatory:

“(a) A mechanism for concluding the operations of the Commission;

“(b) A proposal to maintain state safety oversight of the WMATA Rail System in compliance with applicable federal law;

“(c) A plan to hold surplus funds in a trust for a successor regulatory entity for 4 years after the termination of this MSC Compact; and

“(d) A plan to return any surplus funds that remain 4 years after the creation of the trust.

“L. Construction and Severability

“57. This MSC Compact shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purposes for which it is created.

“58. If any part or provision of this MSC Compact or the application thereof to any person or circumstances be adjudged invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to the part, provision, or application directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered and shall not affect or impair the validity of the remainder of this MSC Compact or the application thereof to other persons or circumstances, and the Signatories hereby declare that they would have entered into this MSC Compact or the remainder thereof had the invalidity of such provision or application thereof been apparent.

“M. Adoption; Effective Date

“59. This MSC Compact shall be adopted by the Signatories in the manner provided by law therefor and shall be signed and sealed in 4 duplicate original copies. One such copy shall be filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Maryland, the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Secretary of the District of Columbia in accordance with the laws of each jurisdiction. One copy shall be filed and retained in the archives of the Commission upon its organization. This MSC Compact shall become effective upon the enactment of concurring legislation by the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland, and consent thereto by Congress and when all other acts or actions have been taken, including, without limitation, the signing and execution of this MSC Compact by the Governors of Maryland and Virginia and the Mayor of the District of Columbia.

“N. Conflict of Laws

“60. Any conflict between any authority granted herein, or the exercise of such authority, and the provisions of the WMATA Compact shall be resolved in favor of the exercise of such authority by the Commission.

“61. All other general or special laws inconsistent with this MSC Compact are hereby declared to be inapplicable to the Commission or its activities.”

RIGHT TO ALTER, AMEND, OR REPEAL

SEC. 2. The right to alter, amend, or repeal this joint resolution is expressly reserved. The consent granted by this joint resolution shall not be construed as impairing or in any manner

affecting any right or jurisdiction of the United States in and over the region that forms the subject of the Compact.

CONSTRUCTION AND SEVERABILITY

SEC. 3. It is intended that the provisions of this Compact shall be reasonably and liberally construed to effectuate the purposes thereof. If any part or application of this Compact, or legislation enabling the Compact, is held invalid, the remainder of the Compact or its application to other situations or persons shall not be affected.

INCONSISTENCY OF LANGUAGE

SEC. 4. The validity of this Compact shall not be affected by any insubstantial differences in its form or language as adopted by the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SEC. 5. This joint resolution shall take effect on the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

□ 1715

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.J. Res. 76, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.J. Res. 76 grants Congress' approval to the Metrorail Safety Commission Interstate Compact, an interstate compact entered into recently by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia.

The safety record of the D.C.-area Metrorail system and other public transit systems in our country has been a matter of increasing concern for some time. To better address public transit safety needs, including metro-rails, Congress included in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century, or MAP Act or MAP-21, and the Fixing America's Surface Transportation, or FAST Act, provisions strengthening the Federal Transit Administration's safety oversight authority and related safety requirements for public transit systems.

Pursuant to these acts and through the Metrorail Safety Commission Interstate Compact, Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia have committed to establish a new Washington Metrorail Safety Commission to act as the State safety oversight authority for the Metrorail system. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has informed the Judiciary Committee that the new compact's provisions satisfy the requirements of the relevant Federal statutes.

The jurisdictions completed, in March of this year, their adoption by legislation of their respective compact instruments. In the meanwhile, however, due to delays in the adoption of the instruments, the FTA invoked on February 9, 2017, authority to suspend the distribution of transit funds to the jurisdictions until the new safety commission is established.

By passage of H.J. Res. 76, we can hasten the day by which Metrorail safety will be improved and funds obligated for other impacted transit systems in the compact jurisdictions can be made available for release.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 76. This very important legislation grants congressional consent and approval to Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact under Article I, section 10 of the Constitution, establishing the Metrorail Safety Commission. Importantly, Federal transit funds have been suspended by the Federal Transit Authority until Congress grants its assent to these amendments to the WMATA compact, as H.J. Res. 76 would do.

I want to thank my friend, the distinguished minority whip, STENY HOYER, for taking the lead on this measure, and all of our colleagues in the Virginia and Maryland delegations and District of Columbia delegation for supporting it in such a strong, bipartisan, and cross-Potomac River fashion. I am proud to join them.

Mr. Speaker, I did want to take a moment to say a word about the Metro system.

WMATA is not just the Metro that serves the Washington area. It is truly America's Metro system. It is the second largest system in the Nation, behind only New York City. It is 117 miles long. It has 91 stations, and it includes more than 12,000 employees.

It is critical to the functioning of the Federal Government because it moves more than 40 percent of the Federal workforce every day to and from work and also during the day for various missions that people go on during the normal workday. It is essential to national security. If we didn't have the Metro system, what is already one of the most traffic-plagued and congested regions in the country would be absolutely paralyzed.

It is also the mechanism that moves millions of Americans who come from all over the United States, all of our constituents here in Congress, to visit us. That is how people get to the White House and the Capitol and go to the Pentagon and go to see NIH and visit the museums and the battlefields and so on.

So the Metro is critical not just to the people who live and work here every day and make the Federal Gov-

ernment go, but also to all American citizens who rely on the efficiency of the Federal Government and come to Washington to petition for redress of grievances and to partake in the processes of government.

I am thrilled that this legislation, responding to the safety needs of the system, is moving forward with speed now. It is essential that we continue to invest in the Metro, to upgrade its safety, to upgrade its efficiency and its reliability.

The Federal Government was instrumental in the creation of Metro at the beginning, along with Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. We all send representatives to the board of Metro. The Federal Government has representatives on the board of Metro. We are equal partners in it, and I want to make sure that everyone here in Congress feels deeply invested in the success of Metro, which, after all, gets a lot of our staffers to work every day.

With passage of H.J. Res. 76, Congress reaffirms its fundamental commitment to America's Metro system. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support the swift passage of this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK).

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Chairman GOODLATTE, for his work on this matter and for yielding the time. I appreciate his leadership in bringing this forward.

I rise in support, Mr. Speaker, of this resolution, H.J. Res. 76, offered by the gentleman from Maryland, the minority whip, Mr. HOYER. We have very much a regional partnership that is essential for Metro, and this resolution today reflects that. It lends congressional approval to the new interstate compact between Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia to establish an independent State safety oversight program, in this case known as the Metro Safety Commission.

The previous iteration of the Metro safety oversight body was known as the Tri-State Oversight Commission, and in response to various accidents, inadequacies, and outright failures, the previous Secretary of Transportation, Anthony Foxx, used the authority that we in Congress, together, working with our regional delegation together, gave him to temporarily take over the safety oversight role of Metro through the Federal Transit Administration. But it was only meant to be temporary control. We still need a permanent body to provide this invaluable safety oversight for WMATA, and the passage of this legislation in the House today brings us one important step closer to that goal.

I also would like to mention that, because we had not done this in the time-frame initially allowed, the FTA did give notice to the Metro Safety Commission it had to be in place on or before February 9, and when it wasn't,

they suspended some of our Federal funds.

Now, with this today, we hope this initial withholding, which equated to \$8.9 million and is expected could total \$15 million, that now that can move forward.

I have a letter that I include in the RECORD, which is signed by our regional delegation in support of now releasing those funds.

Washington, DC, June 30, 2017.

Hon. ELAINE CHAO,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY CHAO, As representatives of public transit customers in the Commonwealth of Virginia, we write to express our concerns regarding the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) February 10, 2017 decision to withhold federal transit grant money in response to incomplete efforts to establish a new State Safety Oversight Program (SSOP) for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

On February 8, 2016, the FTA gave notice that the Metropolitan Safety Commission (MSC), a new SSOP to succeed WMATA's Tri-State Oversight Commission, must be in place and certified by the FTA on or before February 9, 2017. On February 10, 2017, with no new SSOP certified, the FTA announced it would exercise its authority to withhold five percent of federal funds authorized in fiscal year 2017 under the Urbanized Area Apportionments Program (49 U.S.C. 5307). The initial withholding equated to \$8.9 million, and is expected to total \$15 million if he withholding continues to the end of the current fiscal year. This withholding will not just impact funding for WMATA, but for broader infrastructure maintenance throughout Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

The decision to withhold these federal funds has created significant uncertainty amongst state and local governments in terms of budget planning and stability. Should the withholding of funds continue throughout the remainder of the fiscal year, the governments and their transit systems will be faced with a number of difficult decisions about the manner in which they allocate their limited resources. Under a worst-case scenario, they would be forced to make cuts to state of good repair efforts or reduce service to their respective communities, either of which would be harmful to our constituents. We agree safety must be a top priority, but eliminating funding for infrastructure repair would directly contradict a SSOP's stated goal.

Given the FTA must engage in this process with 29 other transit agencies nationwide by 2019, we appreciate the complexity of the issues that were considered in making the decision to withhold these funds. However, we must emphasize—as many of us have expressed previously either directly to you, your predecessor, or the FTA—that the timing of both the notice and the deadline set by FTA were arbitrary in that there seemed to be little or no consideration of the legislative calendars of the Virginia General Assembly or the General Assembly of Maryland.

The FTA timetable effectively gave Virginia and Maryland less than one full legislative session to negotiate amongst each other and the District, draft the proposal, navigate it through the respective lawmaking bodies, and sign it into law. The unreasonable requirements FTA put forth were not simply for the SSOP to have a legal foundation by the February 2017 deadline, but to have the program fully certified by FTA, which neces-

sitates months of work after passing legislation, including, but not limited to, appointing commissioners, hiring staff, and leasing office space. We are therefore led to believe that FTA either set their requirements without providing fair consideration to the unique institutional challenges that exist within the jurisdictions, or the FTA set them with a deadline so unrealistic that failure was unavoidable.

Given the concerns we have raised in this letter regarding FTA's shortsighted approach to this matter, and in light of the demonstrated progress which has been made, we respectfully request that your office work with the FTA to explore a compromise in which part of these withheld funds can be released as a show of good faith, as the jurisdictions continue their work to construct a stable SSOP.

Lending further justification for this request is the real progress that has been made with respect to organizing the MSC. At the time this is written:

Virginia, Maryland, and the District (the jurisdictions) have each enacted legislation to enter into an interstate compact to form the MSC;

The jurisdictions have submitted a detailed draft certification plan to FTA for review (though FTA has not yet provided formal feedback on the plan);

Joint resolutions have been introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to grant Congressional approval to the MSC compact;

The Senate has passed its version of the joint resolution;

The House Judiciary Committee, which has sole jurisdiction over the joint resolution, has ordered the House's parallel version of the resolution to be reported favorably to the full House; and

We are requesting that the measure be taken up for consideration as soon as possible.

We appreciate the FTA's important safety work, especially its temporary safety oversight role with respect to WMATA. Without FTA's diligence, more harm may have come to WMATA's customers. But we must find an equitable solution to this matter.

We look forward to partnering with you, Madam Secretary, as well as the FTA to ensure safety remains the top priority in all transit systems and that reforms are made to accomplish a transit agency that provides safe, reliable service to our constituents. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

BARBARA COMSTOCK,
Member of Congress.

BOB GOODLATTE,
Member of Congress.

ROBERT J. WITTMAN,
Member of Congress.

TIM KAINE,
United States Senator.

MARK R. WARNER,
United States Senator.

SCOTT TAYLOR,
United States Senator.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, we in the region have worked together on these issues and, with this congressional approval and with the help of my colleague, Chairman GOODLATTE, took this to the Judiciary Committee, who will now be able to begin the process of improving Metro in connection with our State and regional partners.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), our distinguished minority whip, who

has been a longtime champion of the Metro system.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I was tempted to stop at that podium. One of my Republican predecessors used to come over here a long time ago and speak to Democrats from this podium and then walk back and speak to his Republican colleagues.

This is truly something that both podiums support. It is a bipartisan effort. I was privileged to work with Congresswoman COMSTOCK's predecessor, Frank Wolf, and we worked arm in arm, hip to hip, shoulder to shoulder for a decade with Republican administrations, both the Reagan administration and with the first Bush administration, and this truly is a bipartisan effort to enhance America's subway.

I say "America's subway" because not only do our people use it that live in the region, but millions of Americans who come to Washington, D.C., to see their Capital use their Metro system. I am proud to be the sponsor of this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

People throughout the National Capital region depend upon Metro to get to work, reach family and friends, and access shopping and entertainment, as so many of my colleagues have already said. It is the lifeblood of the area's economy. Nobody probably knows that better than GERRY CONNOLLY, who was the head of one of the largest subdivisions in our region and knows how critically important Metro is to our region.

Metro—I have referred to it as the "ties that bind the Washington metropolitan area together"—is used by millions of visitors to our Nation's Capital who come from across the country. It is critical to the functioning of our Federal Government, with Federal employees making up nearly 40 percent of its ridership. They and many military personnel rely on Metro to get to their offices and duty stations on time so they can serve the American people.

As anyone who spends time in this city knows, Metro has had its share of challenges in recent years, including, of course, safety issues that have prompted an ambitious overhaul of safety procedure and infrastructure, which was absolutely necessary and too long in coming.

Safety must continue to be Metro's number one priority both for its passengers and for its employees. Our resolution, Mr. Speaker—when I refer to "our," the entire metropolitan delegation—would provide congressional consent for the establishment of a Metro-rail Safety Commission—Mrs. COMSTOCK spoke of that; Mr. RASKIN has spoken of that; I am sure others will as well—which will provide real enforcement teeth to our region's commitment to enhancing Metro safety. The safety commission is being launched jointly by Congress, Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

I want to thank Ms. NORTON, who, herself, has worked so long and so effectively on behalf of Washington's Metro system. Thank you very much, Congresswoman NORTON.

The Federal Transit Administration is currently withholding approximately \$8.9 million, which Mrs. COMSTOCK referred to. This step will be a significant step in making sure that that \$8.9 million is released. Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. have all given their approval already, the Virginia Legislature, the Maryland Legislature, and the D.C. legislature. Now it is up to Congress.

But today's resolution is not an end. It is an important step, but not an end. It must signal an ongoing commitment across the region to Metro and, yes, by the Congress itself.

I believe that if Metro is to become safer and more reliable, it must have a dedicated funding source. That is not the issue in this resolution, but it is the issue before Metro and before our region and before our country. That is why I will continue to push for more Federal investment in Metro and for WMATA to have every resource it needs to keep its riders and employees safe, which is to say all of the American people who use it on their visits here as well as those of us who live here.

I want to thank each of the Members of our delegation, our regional delegation, who work together on behalf of the region; and I want to thank, in particular, Senator TIM KAINE from Virginia, who sponsored this legislation on the Senate side. We have all been working hard to ensure this resolution comes to the floor and to make sure all stakeholders have been at the table.

I thank my delegation, the regional delegation, and I thank Mr. GOODLATTE for bringing this resolution to the floor in a timely fashion; and I thank certainly one of our newest Members but one of our most able Members, Mr. RASKIN.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), a distinguished Delegate.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that my friend, Mr. RASKIN from the State of Maryland, has yielded this time to me.

First, I want to thank the senior member of our delegation. I thank the acknowledged leader of this entire bipartisan delegation, Mr. HOYER, for being the chief sponsor of this resolution that is bipartisan because it concerns the seamless Metro system, seamless because you can't get from one part of this region to the other part of this region without Metro and because this subway is the only subway which encompasses more than one State. It encompasses three jurisdictions. Therefore, we are bipartisan because there is no other way for us to exist. The transportation network re-

quires it, and this resolution does, in fact, shows our bipartisanship.

□ 1730

This resolution is quintessentially important, because it creates a safety commission for Metro.

Now, along with other Members, we see Metro in at least two different ways. We see it, of course, in light of our own constituents. Metro makes it possible for entire neighborhoods to be created, entire parts of the region to be connected. Metro has promoted economic growth, but far more important than any of our individual jurisdictions is the importance of Metro to the Federal Government. You may have heard the figure 40 percent today; almost half of the Federal employees get to work through Metro.

When Metro has a snow day, the whole region shuts down. We are in this Congress by ourselves. If Metro has a snow day, nobody can get to the Congress of the United States or to the Federal Government.

Metro is absolutely critical, and therefore, a safe Metro is essential to all that happens in the Congress of the United States, quite apart from the tourist economy that the District, Maryland, and Virginia are a part of, quite apart from our own local economies.

More important to us all is the safety commission embodied in this joint resolution. Metro is useless if it is not safe. And we know what happens when it is not safe. In 2009, there was a tragic accident in this region. Nine residents lost their lives, seven of them from the District of Columbia. Anybody could have been on that train. In 2015, there was a smoke accident. One woman was killed, another D.C. resident. So an interstate safety commission is necessary if there is to be a Metro at all.

I applaud the local lawmakers from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia for doing their part to support this jurisdiction safely kneading together the three parts of the region, and I urge my own colleagues to give them permission to move forward.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), my good friend, for yielding time.

I rise today in support of this legislation, which I was happy to cosponsor with Mr. HOYER and our colleagues in the metropolitan region.

The joint resolution would establish an independent safety oversight commission for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority that will be empowered to create new safety rules, impose fines, issue subpoenas, and direct additional funding toward safety priorities.

Consideration of the joint resolution in the United States House follows the

passage of companion legislation in the Virginia and Maryland General Assemblies, the Council of the District of Columbia, and the United States Senate.

The joint resolution before us represents the culmination of more than a year of multijurisdictional, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and is an example of the kind of bipartisan cooperation we need moving forward for Metro.

For several years now, Metro has been a system in crisis, all lights blinking red. The lack of a strict safety culture has resulted in derailments, falsified track inspection reports, fires, track defects, and, as Ms. NORTON just indicated, has tragically claimed lives.

The previous safety oversight body, the Tri-State Oversight Committee, was admittedly ineffective and failed to safeguard Metro personnel and customers. It was clear the safety crisis at Metro needed further Federal intervention.

While I am glad that the U.S. Department of Transportation took action, I would have preferred that the Department act in accordance with the NTSB recommendation that it be the FRA, not the FTA, that provided that day-to-day safety oversight. Very simply, the FRA is and was better equipped to pick up this vital mission and run with it from day one, rather than to learn on the job with a modern, contemporary transit system, as the FTA has had to do.

It is my hope that enactment of this joint resolution will finally convince the FTA to reverse its misguided decision to withhold \$8.9 million of Federal transit grants from Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. The FTA announced the withholding of that money on February 10, because the jurisdictions had not yet established a fully certified Metrorail Safety Commission before the FTA's own arbitrary deadline.

The decision to withhold the funds, penalizing other transit systems not related to Metro, which is authorized under the Urbanized Area Apportionments Program, was crude and punitive, and the process that led to the decision was anything but neat.

The 1-year timeline imposed on the jurisdictions to establish and certify the Metro Safety Commission ignored both the unique legislative calendars of the citizen legislatures in Maryland and Virginia as well as the time-consuming, FTA-managed certification process itself for State safety oversight programs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The 1-year timeline imposed on the jurisdiction ignored those unique legislative schedules, but the decision to withhold money as a punishment for missing an arbitrary deadline was announced at a time, ironically, when all three jurisdictions were, in fact, moving simultaneously to enact just such legislation, as was requested.

This is no good deed going unpunished, Mr. Speaker, and the FTA did not publish its own toolkit, application, or program standard for the oversight program certification process until February 14 of this year, 4 days after they withheld the money punitively from those three jurisdictions. They couldn't meet their own deadline.

As the House and Senate move to enact this joint resolution, I hope to renew my request of the Secretary of Transportation to reverse entirely the FTA's bad decision to block safety and maintenance investments that are so desperately and obviously needed here in the Metro system in Washington.

I ask my colleagues to support the joint resolution before us today and to recognize that it is a big step forward in the region and in terms of bipartisan cooperation.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, may I just inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a kid in high school, they built the Metro system here. It was a great feat of bipartisan leadership when they built the Metro, and it changed my life. It was the jewel of our region, and it opened up, to at least one kid, the Capitol, the White House, the museums, the National Gallery, the Hirshhorn, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, and it was really a spectacular and resplendent addition and feature to the Virginia, D.C., Maryland region.

In the intervening years, there has been inadequate investment in safety, efficiency, and reliability in the Metro system, and we need to bring the Metro back to its original glory and we must make sure that, above all, it is safe for the people who ride it. The safety and security of the passengers is essential.

So passage of this resolution will ensure the establishment of the safety commission to assume effective oversight of this system and to allow for the disbursement of Federal transit funds to Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. for essential transit services.

I urge all of our colleagues to support this bipartisan measure. Again, I want to salute all of the Members who have been involved in this legislation, and I thank House Judiciary Chairman GOODLATTE for facilitating consideration of the resolution by both the Judiciary Committee and by the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to say that this has been a good bipartisan collaborative effort. I thank Minority Whip HOYER, Congresswoman COMSTOCK, and the other Members from the region for their work to assure that safety measures do move forward with regard to the Metro here in the Washington, D.C., area. And this legislation

is critical to accomplish that, so I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 76.

This resolution would grant the consent and approval of Congress for Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact establishing the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission.

I support this bipartisan measure for several reasons.

Most importantly, this Commission will help improve the safety of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority—also known as WMATA, which provides transportation services for millions of people each year.

Last year alone, nearly 180 million riders traveled on WMATA's commuter rail system. In fact, more than 760,000 riders used that system on just a single day in March of last year.

Unfortunately, there have been a series of serious safety violations at WMATA in recent years, some of which have tragically led to deaths and injuries.

Even though such dangerous conditions are obviously inexcusable, they nevertheless have persisted for many years. There are numerous causes, which range from aging infrastructure, years of neglected maintenance, uncertain funding, and poor oversight and management.

In response to these critical concerns, the District of Columbia—together with the states of Virginia and Maryland—have each passed legislation agreeing to enter into an interstate compact establishing an oversight commission dedicated to improving the safety of WMATA.

Clearly, this undertaking will help ensure WMATA's passengers and workers—as well as the many communities that WMATA serves—have a safe, efficient, and reliable mass transit system.

In addition, H.J. Res. 76 warrants our support because it implements Congress' 2015 directive to the states to establish legal and financially independent state oversight authorities responsible for the safety of fixed rail transit facilities within their respective jurisdictions.

By granting our consent and approval of the interstate compact to be established pursuant to this Resolution, we are fulfilling our responsibility to help ensure the safety of our Nation's rail system.

Finally, prompt consideration of H.J. Res. 76 is imperative not only because of ongoing safety concerns, but also because of financial concerns that serve to exacerbate the safety concerns.

When Congress issued its 2015 directive, it did so with strings attached. A state's failure to comply with this directive would result in a suspension of federal rail transit funding.

Accordingly, the Transportation Department's Federal Transportation Authority suspended its distribution of federal transit funds to the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia earlier this year and it continues to do so until the new safety commission is established.

Thus, every day that goes by without action on this Resolution, is another day that these jurisdictions are deprived of critical federal funding.

So, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the immediate passage of H.J. Res. 76.

The safety and reliability of our Nation's commuter rail transit system should be the standard for other metropolitan areas to aspire to. Unfortunately, much improvement is necessary to reach this critical goal.

H.J. Res. 76, however, will hopefully provide an important opportunity to address the system's safety shortcomings.

In closing, I want to thank Representative STENY HOYER, the esteemed author of this critical legislation. His commitment and leadership are to be commended.

Accordingly, I strongly support this bipartisan measure and urge colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it as well.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. J. Res. 76, which grants consent and approval from Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission.

As Houston is a major transportation hub, I understand and appreciate the importance of this legislation.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), an interstate compact agency, provides transportation services to millions of people each year.

It is imperative that the WMATA be safe and effective as it is essential to the commerce and prosperity of the National Capitol Region.

The District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland intend to create the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission to act as the state safety oversight authority for the WMATA system under 49 U.S.C. 5329.

In title III of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (section 3026, Public Law 114-94), the Congress provided sole authority to the Secretary of Transportation to appoint Federal Directors to the Board of Directors of the WMATA and required the signatory parties to the Compact to amend the Compact as necessary.

This compact is created for the benefit of the people of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the State of Maryland so that there may be an increase in their safety, commerce, and prosperity.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. J. Res. 76.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 76, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 2210, by the yeas and nays;

H.J. Res. 92, by the yeas and nays; and

H.J. Res. 76, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

SERGEANT JOSEPH GEORGE KUSICK VA COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2210) to designate the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center", on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DUNN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 401, nays 0, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 379]

YEAS—401

Abraham	Beyer	Brooks (IN)
Adams	Biggs	Brown (MD)
Aderholt	Bilirakis	Brownley (CA)
Aguilar	Bishop (GA)	Buchanan
Allen	Bishop (MI)	Buck
Amash	Bishop (UT)	Bucshon
Amodei	Black	Budd
Arrington	Blackburn	Burgess
Babin	Blum	Bustos
Bacon	Blumenauer	Butterfield
Banks (IN)	Blunt Rochester	Byrne
Barletta	Bonamici	Calvert
Barr	Bost	Capuano
Barragán	Boyle, Brendan	Carbajal
Barton	F.	Cárdenas
Bass	Brady (PA)	Carson (IN)
Beatty	Brady (TX)	Carter (GA)
Bera	Brat	Carter (TX)
Bergman	Bridenstine	Cartwright

Castor (FL)	Guthrie	McMorris	Smith (WA)	Torres	Watson Coleman
Castro (TX)	Hanabusa	Rodgers	Smucker	Trott	Weber (TX)
Chabot	Handel	McSally	Soto	Tsongas	Welch
Cheney	Harper	Meadows	Speier	Turner	Wenstrup
Chu, Judy	Harris	Meehan	Stefanik	Upton	Westerman
Cicilline	Hartzler	Meng	Stewart	Valadao	Williams
Clark (MA)	Hastings	Messer	Stivers	Veasey	Wilson (FL)
Clay	Heck	Mitchell	Suozzi	Vela	Wilson (SC)
Cleaver	Hensarling	Moolenaar	Swalwell (CA)	Velázquez	Wittman
Cluburn	Herrera Beutler	Mooney (WV)	Takano	Wagner	Womack
Coffman	Hice, Jody B.	Moore	Taylor	Walberg	Woodall
Cohen	Higgins (NY)	Moulton	Tenney	Walden	Yarmuth
Cole	Hill	Mullin	Thompson (CA)	Walker	Yoder
Collins (GA)	Himes	Murphy (FL)	Thompson (MS)	Walorski	Yoho
Collins (NY)	Holdring	Murphy (PA)	Thompson (PA)	Walters, Mimi	Young (AK)
Comer	Hollingsworth	Nadler	Thornberry	Walz	Young (IA)
Comstock	Hoyer	Neal	Tiberi	Wasserman	Zeldin
Conaway	Hudson	Newhouse	Titus	Schultz	
Connolly	Huffman	Noem	Tonko	Waters, Maxine	
Cook	Huizenga	Nolan			
Cooper	Hunter	Norcross			
Correa	Hurd	Norman			
Costa	Issa	Nunes			
Costello (PA)	Jackson Lee	O'Halleran			
Courtney	Jayapal	O'Rourke			
Cramer	Jeffries	Olson			
Crawford	Jenkins (KS)	Palazzo			
Crist	Jenkins (WV)	Pallone			
Crowley	Johnson (GA)	Palmer			
Cuellar	Johnson (OH)	Panetta			
Culberson	Johnson, E. B.	Pascarell			
Curbelo (FL)	Jones	Paulsen			
Davidson	Jordan	Payne			
Davis (CA)	Joyce (OH)	Pearce			
Davis, Danny	Kaptur	Pelosi			
Davis, Rodney	Katko	Perlmutter			
DeFazio	Keating	Perry			
DeGette	Kelly (IL)	Peters			
Delaney	Kelly (MS)	Peterson			
DeLauro	Kelly (PA)	Pingree			
DeBene	Kennedy	Pittenger			
Demings	Khanna	Pocan			
Denham	Kihuen	Poe (TX)			
Dent	Kildee	Poliquin			
DeSaulnier	Kilmer	Polis			
DesJarlais	Kind	Posey			
Deutch	King (IA)	Price (NC)			
Diaz-Balart	King (NY)	Quigley			
Dingell	Kinzinger	Raskin			
Doggett	Krishnamoorthi	Ratcliffe			
Donovan	Kuster (NH)	Reed			
Doyle, Michael	Kustoff (TN)	Reichert			
F.	Labrador	Renacci			
Duffy	LaHood	Rice (SC)			
Duncan (SC)	LaMalfa	Richmond			
Duncan (TN)	Lamborn	Rohy			
Dunn	Lance	Roe (TN)			
Ellison	Langevin	Rogers (AL)			
Emmer	Larsen (WA)	Rogers (KY)			
Engel	Larson (CT)	Rokita			
Eshoo	Latta	Rooney, Thomas			
Estes (KS)	Lawrence	J.			
Esty (CT)	Lawson (FL)	Ros-Lehtinen			
Evans	Lee	Rosen			
Farenthold	Levin	Roskam			
Faso	Lewis (GA)	Ross			
Ferguson	Lewis (MN)	Rothfus			
Fitzpatrick	Lieu, Ted	Rouzer			
Fleischmann	Lipinski	Roybal-Allard			
Flores	LoBiondo	Royce (CA)			
Fortenberry	Loeb sack	Ruiz			
Foster	Lofgren	Ruppersberger			
Fox	Long	Russell			
Frankel (FL)	Loudermillk	Rutherford			
Franks (AZ)	Love	Sánchez			
Frelinghuysen	Lowenthal	Sanford			
Fudge	Lowe y	Sarbanes			
Gabbard	Lucas	Schakowsky			
Gaetz	Luetkemeyer	Schiff			
Gallagher	Lujan Grisham,	Schneider			
Gallego	M.	Schrader			
Garamendi	Luján, Ben Ray	Schweikert			
Gianforte	Lynch	Scott (VA)			
Gibbs	MacArthur	Scott, Austin			
Gohmert	Maloney,	Scott, David			
Gomez	Carolyn B.	Sensenbrenner			
Gonzalez (TX)	Marchant	Serrano			
Goodlatte	Marshall	Sessions			
Gosar	Massie	Sewell (AL)			
Gottheimer	McCarthy	Shea-Porter			
Gowdy	Matsui	Sherman			
Granger	McCarthy	Shimkus			
Graves (GA)	McCaul	Shuster			
Graves (LA)	McClintock	Simpson			
Graves (MO)	McCollum	Sinema			
Green, Al	McEachin	Smith (MO)			
Green, Gene	McGovern	Smith (NE)			
Griffith	McHenry	Smith (NJ)			
Grothman	McKinley	Smith (TX)			

Brooks (AL)	Johnson (LA)	Rooney, Francis
Clarke (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Rush
Conyers	Knigh t	Ryan (OH)
Cummings	Maloney, Sean	Scalise
DeSantis	Marino	Sires
Espallat	Mast	Slaughter
Garrett	McNerney	Tipton
Grijalva	Meeks	Vargas
Gutiérrez	Napolitano	Visclosky
Higgins (LA)	Rice (NY)	Webster (FL)
Hultgren	Rohrabacher	

NOT VOTING—32

Brooks (AL)	Johnson (LA)	Rooney, Francis
Clarke (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Rush
Conyers	Knigh t	Ryan (OH)
Cummings	Maloney, Sean	Scalise
DeSantis	Marino	Sires
Espallat	Mast	Slaughter
Garrett	McNerney	Tipton
Grijalva	Meeks	Vargas
Gutiérrez	Napolitano	Visclosky
Higgins (LA)	Rice (NY)	Webster (FL)
Hultgren	Rohrabacher	

□ 1854

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GRANTING CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF CONGRESS TO AMEND WASHINGTON AREA TRANSIT REGULATION COMPACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 92) granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 402, nays 0, not voting 31, as follows:

[Roll No. 380]

YEAS—402

Abraham	Bera	Brady (PA)
Adams	Bergman	Brady (TX)
Aderholt	Beyer	Brat
Aguilar	Biggs	Bridenstine
Allen	Bilirakis	Brooks (IN)
Amash	Bishop (GA)	Brown (MD)
Amodei	Bishop (MI)	Brownley (CA)
Arrington	Bishop (UT)	Buchanan
Babin	Black	Buck
Bacon	Blackburn	Bucshon
Banks (IN)	Blum	Budd
Barletta	Blumenauer	Burgess
Barr	Blunt Rochester	Bustos
Barragán	Bonamici	Butterfield
Barton	Bost	Byrne
Bass	Boyle, Brendan	Calvert
Beatty	F.	Capuano

Carbajal	Graves (LA)	McCollum	Sinema	Tiberi	Wasserman	Bridenstine	Gallagher	Luetkemeyer
Cárdenas	Graves (MO)	McEachin	Smith (MO)	Titus	Schultz	Brooks (IN)	Gallego	Lujan Grisham,
Carson (IN)	Green, Al	McGovern	Smith (NE)	Tonko	Waters, Maxine	Brown (MD)	Garamendi	M.
Carter (GA)	Green, Gene	McHenry	Smith (NJ)	Torres	Watson Coleman	Brownley (CA)	Garrett	Luján, Ben Ray
Carter (TX)	Griffith	McKinley	Smith (TX)	Trott	Weber (TX)	Buchanan	Gianforte	Lynch
Cartwright	Grothman	McMorris	Smith (WA)	Tsongas	Welch	Buck	Gibbs	MacArthur
Castor (FL)	Guthrie	Rodgers	Smucker	Turner	Wenstrup	Bucshon	Gohmert	Maloney
Castro (TX)	Hanabusa	McSally	Soto	Upton	Westerman	Budd	Gomez	Carolyn B.
Chabot	Handel	Meadows	Speier	Valadao	Williams	Burgess	Gonzalez (TX)	Marchant
Cheney	Harper	Meehan	Stefanik	Veasey	Wilson (FL)	Bustos	Goodlatte	Marshall
Chu, Judy	Harris	Meng	Stewart	Vela	Wilson (SC)	Butterfield	Gosar	Matsui
Cicilline	Hartzler	Messer	Stivers	Velázquez	Wittman	Byrne	McCarthey	McCaul
Clark (MA)	Hastings	Mitchell	Suozi	Visclosky	Womack	Calvert	Goody	McCaul
Clay	Heck	Moolenaar	Swalwell (CA)	Wagner	Woodall	Capuano	Granger	McClintock
Cleaver	Hensarling	Mooney (WV)	Takano	Walberg	Yarmuth	Carbajal	Graves (GA)	McCollum
Clyburn	Herrera Beutler	Moore	Taylor	Walsh	Yoder	Cárdenas	Graves (LA)	McEachin
Coffman	Hice, Jody B.	Moulton	Tenney	Walker	Yoho	Carson (IN)	Graves (MO)	McGovern
Cohen	Higgins (NY)	Mullin	Thompson (CA)	Walorski	Young (AK)	Carter (GA)	Green, Al	McHenry
Cole	Hill	Murphy (FL)	Thompson (MS)	Walters, Mimi	Young (IA)	Carter (TX)	Green, Gene	McKinley
Collins (GA)	Himes	Murphy (PA)	Thompson (PA)	Walz	Zeldin	Cartwright	Griffith	McMorris
Collins (NY)	Holding	Nadler	Thornberry			Castor (FL)	Rodgers	
Comer	Hollingsworth	Neal				Castro (TX)	McSally	
Comstock	Hoyer	Newhouse				Chabot	Hanabusa	Meadows
Conaway	Hudson	Noem	Brooks (AL)	Johnson, Sam	Rooney, Francis	Cheney	Handel	Meehan
Connolly	Huffman	Nolan	Clarke (NY)	Joyce (OH)	Rush	Chu, Judy	Harper	Meng
Cook	Huizenga	Norcross	Conyers	Knight	Ryan (OH)	Cicilline	Harris	Messer
Cooper	Hultgren	Norman	Cummings	Maloney, Sean	Scalise	Clark (MA)	Hartzler	Mitchell
Correa	Hunter	Nunes	DeSantis	Marino	Sires	Clay	Hastings	Moolenaar
Costa	Hurd	O'Halleran	Españat	Mast	Slaughter	Cleaver	Heck	Moore
Costello (PA)	Issa	O'Rourke	Estes (KS)	McNerney	Tipton	Clyburn	Hensarling	Moulton
Courtney	Jackson Lee	Olson	Grijalva	Meeks	Vargas	Coffman	Herrera Beutler	Mullin
Cramer	Jayapal	Palazzo	Gutiérrez	Napolitano	Webster (FL)	Cohen	Hice, Jody B.	Murphy (FL)
Crawford	Jeffries	Pallone	Higgins (LA)	Rice (NY)		Cole	Higgins (NY)	Murphy (PA)
Crist	Jenkins (KS)	Palmer	Johnson (LA)	Rohrabacher		Collins (GA)	Hill	Nadler
Crowley	Jenkins (WV)	Panetta				Collins (NY)	Himes	Neal
Cuellar	Johnson (GA)	Pascarell				Comer	Holding	Newhouse
Culberson	Johnson (OH)	Paulsen				Comstock	Hollingsworth	Noem
Curbelo (FL)	Johnson, E. B.	Payne				Conaway	Hoyer	Nolan
Davidson	Jones	Pearce				Connolly	Hudson	Norcross
Davis (CA)	Jordan	Pelosi				Cook	Huffman	Norman
Davis, Danny	Kaptur	Perlmutter				Cooper	Huizenga	Nunes
Davis, Rodney	Katko	Perry				Correa	Hultgren	O'Halleran
DeFazio	Keating	Peters				Costa	Hunter	O'Rourke
DeGette	Kelly (IL)	Peterson				Costello (PA)	Hurd	Olson
Delaney	Kelly (MS)	Pingree				Courtney	Issa	Palazzo
DeLauro	Kelly (PA)	Pittenger				Cramer	Jackson Lee	Pallone
DelBene	Kennedy	Pocan				Crawford	Jayapal	Palmer
Demings	Khanna	Poe (TX)				Crist	Jeffries	Panetta
Denham	Kihuen	Poliquin				Crowley	Jenkins (KS)	Pascarell
Dent	Kildee	Polis				Cuellar	Jenkins (WV)	Paulsen
DeSaulnier	Kilmer	Posey				Culberson	Johnson (GA)	Payne
DesJarlais	Kind	Price (NC)				Curbelo (FL)	Johnson (OH)	Pearce
Deutch	King (IA)	Quigley				Davidson	Johnson, E. B.	Pelosi
Diaz-Balart	King (NY)	Raskin				Davis (CA)	Jordan	Perlmutter
Dingell	Kinzinger	Ratcliffe				Davis, Danny	Joyce (OH)	Perry
Doggett	Krishnamoorthi	Reed				Davis, Rodney	Kaptur	Peters
Donovan	Kuster (NH)	Reichert				DeFazio	Katko	Peterson
Doyle, Michael	Kustoff (TN)	Renacci				DeGette	Keating	Pingree
F.	Labrador	Rice (SC)				Delaney	Kelly (IL)	Pittenger
Duffy	LaHood	Richmond				DeLauro	Kelly (MS)	Pocan
Duncan (SC)	LaMalfa	Roby				DelBene	Kelly (PA)	Poe (TX)
Duncan (TN)	Lamborn	Roe (TN)				Demings	Kennedy	Poliquin
Dunn	Lance	Rogers (AL)				Denham	Khanna	Polis
Ellison	Langevin	Rogers (KY)				Dent	Kihuen	Posey
Emmer	Larsen (WA)	Rokita				DeSaulnier	Kildee	Price (NC)
Engel	Larson (CT)	Rooney, Thomas				DesJarlais	Kilmer	Quigley
Eshoo	Latta	J.				Deutch	Kind	Raskin
Esty (CT)	Lawrence	Ros-Lehtinen				Diaz-Balart	King (IA)	Ratcliffe
Evans	Lawson (FL)	Rosen				Dingell	King (NY)	Reed
Farenthold	Lee	Roskam				Doggett	Kinzinger	Reichert
Faso	Levin	Ross				Donovan	Krishnamoorthi	Renacci
Ferguson	Lewis (GA)	Rothfus				Doyle, Michael	Kuster (NH)	Rice (SC)
Fitzpatrick	Lewis (MN)	Rouzer				F.	Kustoff (TN)	Richmond
Fleischmann	Lieu, Ted	Roybal-Allard				Duffy	Labrador	Roby
Flores	Lipinski	Royce (CA)				Duncan (SC)	LaHood	Roe (TN)
Fortenberry	LoBiondo	Ruiz				Duncan (TN)	LaMalfa	Rogers (AL)
Foster	Loeback	Ruppersberger				Dunn	Lamborn	Rogers (KY)
Fox	Lofgren	Russell				Ellison	Lance	Rokita
Frankel (FL)	Long	Rutherford				Emmer	Langevin	Rooney, Thomas
Frank (AZ)	Loudermilk	Sánchez				Engel	Larsen (WA)	J.
Frelinghuysen	Love	Sanford				Eshoo	Larson (CT)	Ros-Lehtinen
Fudge	Lowenthal	Sarbanes				Estes (KS)	Latta	Rosen
Gabbard	Lowey	Schakowsky				Esty (CT)	Lawrence	Roskam
Gaetz	Lucas	Schiff				Evans	Lawson (FL)	Ross
Gallagher	Luetkemeyer	Schneider				Farenthold	Lee	Rothfus
Gallego	Lujan Grisham,	Schrader				Faso	Levin	Rouzer
Garamendi	M.	Schweikert				Ferguson	Lewis (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Garrett	Luján, Ben Ray	Scott (VA)	Abraham	Barragán	Black	Fitzpatrick	Lewis (MN)	Royce (GA)
Gianforte	Lynch	Scott, Austin	Adams	Barton	Blackburn	Fleischmann	Lieu, Ted	Ruiz
Gibbs	MacArthur	Scott, David	Aderholt	Bass	Blum	Flores	Lipinski	Ruppersberger
Gohmert	Maloney	Sensenbrenner	Aguilar	Beatty	Blumenauer	Fortenberry	LoBiondo	Russell
Gomez	Carolyn B.	Serrano	Allen	Bera	Blunt Rochester	Foster	Loeback	Rutherford
Gonzalez (TX)	Marchant	Sessions	Amodei	Bergman	Bonamici	Fox	Lofgren	Sánchez
Goodlatte	Marshall	Sewell (AL)	Arrington	Beyer	Bost	Fox	Long	Sarbanes
Gosar	Marshall	Shea-Porter	Babin	Biggs	Boyle, Brendan	Frankel (FL)	Loudermilk	Schakowsky
Gottheimer	Matsui	Sherman	Bacon	Bilirakis	F.	Frelinghuysen	Love	Schiff
Goody	McCarthy	Shimkus	Banks (IN)	Bishop (GA)	Brady (PA)	Fudge	Lowenthal	Schneider
Granger	McCaul	Shuster	Barletta	Bishop (MI)	Brady (TX)	Gabbard	Lowey	Schrader
Graves (GA)	McClintock	Simpson	Barr	Bishop (UT)	Brat	Gaetz	Lucas	Schweikert

NOT VOTING—31

Johnson, Sam
Joyce (OH)
Knight
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Mast
McNerney
Meeks
Napolitano
Rice (NY)
Rohrabacher

□ 1902

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the joint resolution was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GRANTING CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF CONGRESS TO ESTABLISH WASHINGTON METRO-RAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 76) granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 399, nays 5, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 381]

YEAS—399

Abraham	Barragán	Black
Adams	Barton	Blackburn
Aderholt	Bass	Blum
Aguilar	Beatty	Blumenauer
Allen	Bera	Blunt Rochester
Amodei	Bergman	Bonamici
Arrington	Beyer	Bost
Babin	Biggs	Boyle, Brendan
Bacon	Bilirakis	F.
Banks (IN)	Bishop (GA)	Brady (PA)
Barletta	Bishop (MI)	Brady (TX)
Barr	Bishop (UT)	Brat

Scott (VA)	Swalwell (CA)	Walorski
Scott, Austin	Takano	Walters, Mimi
Scott, David	Taylor	Walz
Sensenbrenner	Tenney	Wasserman
Serrano	Thompson (CA)	Schultz
Sessions	Thompson (MS)	Waters, Maxine
Sewell (AL)	Thompson (PA)	Watson Coleman
Shea-Porter	Thornberry	Weber (TX)
Sherman	Tiberi	Welch
Shimkus	Titus	Wenstrup
Shuster	Tonko	Westerman
Simpson	Torres	Williams
Sinema	Trott	Wilson (FL)
Smith (MO)	Tsongas	Wilson (SC)
Smith (NE)	Turner	Wittman
Smith (NJ)	Upton	Womack
Smith (TX)	Valadao	Woodall
Smith (WA)	Veasey	Yarmuth
Smucker	Vela	Yoder
Soto	Velázquez	Yoho
Speier	Visclosky	Young (AK)
Stefanik	Wagner	Young (IA)
Stewart	Walberg	Zeldin
Stivers	Walden	
Suozi	Walker	

NAYS—5

Amash	Massie	Sanford
Jones	Mooney (WV)	

NOT VOTING—29

Brooks (AL)	Johnson, Sam	Rooney, Francis
Clarke (NY)	Knight	Rush
Conyers	Maloney, Sean	Ryan (OH)
Cummings	Marino	Scalise
DeSantis	Mast	Sires
Espallat	McNerney	Slaughter
Grijalva	Meeke	Tipton
Gutiérrez	Napolitano	Vargas
Higgins (LA)	Rice (NY)	Webster (FL)
Johnson (LA)	Rohrabacher	

□ 1909

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the joint resolution, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, July 17, I missed three votes to attend to constituent business in my district. Had I been present for the day's vote series, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 379, the passage of H.R. 2210, to designate the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center, "yea" on rollcall No. 380, the passage of H.J. Res. 92, granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact; and "yea" on rollcall No. 381, the passage of H.J. Res. 76, granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL). Without objection, the title is amended by striking "a enter" and inserting "enter".

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 806, OZONE STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report

(Rept. No. 115-229) on the resolution (H. Res. 451) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 806) to facilitate efficient State implementation of ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON H.R. 3266, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

Mr. SIMPSON, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-230) on the bill (H.R. 3266) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

REPORT ON H.R. 3267, COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

Mr. CULBERSON, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-231) on the bill (H.R. 3267) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

REPORT ON H.R. 3268, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

Mr. ADERHOLT, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-232) on the bill (H.R. 3268) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

□ 1915

CONGRATULATING JAMES HAUTMAN

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate James Hautman

of Chaska, Minnesota, who recently won the Federal Duck Stamp Contest for the fifth time. This year, James' design depicts three geese flying at sunset.

Since 1934, sales of the Federal Duck Stamp have raised more than \$950 million for the conservation of wetlands and national wildlife refuges all over our country. The money raised helps to preserve the habitat of hundreds of species, as well as provide clean water for many communities throughout the Nation.

Last fall, a panel of five judges selected James' submission out of 152 total entries, marking the fifth time that he has won the competition. Only two other artists, Mr. Speaker, have ever won the Federal Duck Stamp Contest five times, including James' own brother Joseph.

Mr. Speaker, I once again extend my sincere congratulations to James Hautman. Minnesotans are proud to see such a gifted artist from our home State get recognized and use his talents for such a great cause. We wish him the best in his future.

PUTTING AMERICA'S HARDWORKING FAMILIES FIRST

(Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, over the Fourth of July district work period, I met with my constituents across Chicago's west and northwest suburbs. Despite the range of our groups and communities I spoke with, there was one theme that was on everybody's mind: the urgent need for Congress to take action that puts hardworking families first.

Across the country, working families are counting on us to invest in infrastructure, modernize our Tax Code, and help their children get the skills necessary for rewarding careers.

Earlier this summer, the House unanimously passed the Thompson-Krishnamoorthi Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. This bipartisan legislation will modernize and expand career and technical education programs across the country by increasing funding and local control while expanding the cooperation that exists between educators and employers.

The House has done its part to advance this legislation and support working families. Now the Senate must act and send it to the President for his signature.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO J. ROBERT MILLER

(Mr. COMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COMER. I rise today to pay tribute to my friend, neighbor, mentor, and former Kentucky Commissioner of

Agriculture, J. Robert Miller. Robert passed away last night at the age of 97.

J. Robert Miller was a legend in agriculture, agriculture education, and Kentucky politics. He served as Kentucky's Commissioner of Agriculture from 1957 to 1971 during the Louie Nunn administration. Before that, J. Robert was an agriculture teacher at Tompkinsville High School and always an active, lifelong farmer.

Growing up in 4-H and FFA, my earliest memories include Robert Miller. He was a mainstay at Monroe County area livestock shows and FFA banquets, always helping out and offering advice to present and future farmers.

J. Robert Miller was a great man who had a positive influence on countless Kentuckians.

STOP THE BLOCKADE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I always applaud when the United States steps in and takes a leadership role to prevent war. I have traveled to the Mideast for many years as a Member of the United States Congress representing my constituents.

I want to express my appreciation to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson for the energy that he is putting into engaging Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Jordan, Egypt, and Qatar to be able to stop the blockade and the conflict that may continue to grow against Qatar.

This is a region that many of these countries have been allies of the United States, the Southern Command is in Qatar, and, frankly, I think they need to be united against those terrorists that plague them all.

I would also say that the UAE, as has been reported in the Nation's newspapers, hacked into the emails of Qatar and put words in the mouths of their government officials that were untrue. This is not the way to proceed with peace and diplomacy.

So I believe we should energetically and aggressively engage these countries to stop this blockade and begin to repair the collaborative efforts to ensure that we fight the war on terror together and not against.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Tillerson. I look forward to working with him as a Member of the United States Congress to bring peace to that region.

RECOGNIZING PENN STATE CREAMERY IN HONOR OF NATIONAL ICE CREAM DAY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Americans observed National Ice Cream Day, which is celebrated annually on the third Sunday in July.

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan made the designation and also named July National Ice Cream Month.

Our very own Penn State University is a world leader in dairy production and food science. Over the last 150 years, its Berkey Creamery has been an important Penn State landmark.

Penn State has a herd of more than 200 Holsteins that are milked twice daily, which is the start of the university's delicious ice cream. The methods developed by Penn State's food and dairy scientists have made the creamery a world authority on ice cream and dairy manufacturing.

Penn State's legendary short course, which takes participants from "Cow to Cone," has attracted some of the biggest names in ice cream, from Baskin-Robbins to Ben & Jerry's, from Hershey's to Haagen-Dazs.

For 6 days a year, industry professionals head to Happy Valley for the best-known program dealing with science and the technology of ice cream.

Congratulations to Penn State for being the industry leader, and happy National Ice Cream Month.

ENHANCING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I have the honor and the privilege of being a United States Congressman, and with that comes tremendous responsibility. We have a country of over 320 million people—men, women, and children. And right now, we may be days away or even a couple of weeks away from watching the United States Senate possibly change healthcare for America like we have never seen before.

I hope and pray that my colleagues in both Houses and the President of the United States try their best to make sure that we enhance healthcare access rather than divert more than 20 million people away from being able to see a doctor.

Just last week I was visited by some young folks and I was given this red band called "Will Power" for a little boy named Will, who has gone through many operations. If these bills see the light of day and the President's desk and gets into law, people like Will just might not be around very much longer.

Mr. Speaker, let's hope and pray that we do the right thing.

CONDOLENCES TO FAMILIES OF THE 2ND MARINE RAIDER BATTALION

(Ms. TENNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my condolences to the families of the 15 marines and one

Navy corpsman who tragically lost their lives last week.

These servicemembers were among the most elite in our armed services, with six marines and the sailor from the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion located at Camp Lejeune. The other nine were based out of Stewart Air National Guard Base located in Newburgh, New York.

Many of them had been deployed and served in conflicts in the Middle East. These American heroes valiantly served and placed the needs of our Nation first.

As the parent of a marine now deployed in the Middle East, it is with a heavy heart that I offer my condolences to the friends and families of these exceptional Americans. The greatest worry of family and friends is the tragic loss of a loved one who is serving; thus, it is important to honor and remember these brave men and the sacrifices they made to preserve our way of life.

We thank them and remember them for their service and sacrifice. Semper fi.

CELEBRATING VERA POWELL'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 90th birthday of Ms. Vera Powell, who lives in Pooler, Georgia.

Ms. Powell was born on July 16, 1927, in Tattnall County, Georgia, about 60 miles due west of Savannah. After graduating from Tattnall County High School, Ms. Powell dedicated her life to her family and raising her three children: Bruce, Linda, and Crystal.

In 1994, Ms. Powell moved from Tattnall County to Pooler, Georgia, and became a member of the First Baptist Church of Pooler. Her love of God and fellowship with others turned into a meaningful role with the church's weekly Sunday school class.

Now she has been an active weekly participant, greatly contributing to the fellowship and scholarship with the class for the past 23 years, and is a staple of the church.

The members of the congregation look forward to seeing Ms. Powell as she greets them at the church doors every Sunday morning.

Ms. Powell's family and friends celebrated her 90th birthday with a reception on July 16, 2017. Please join me in wishing this remarkable woman a very happy birthday.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, it is great to be here with you this evening and to talk about a very important topic.

Before I get into the topic of this hour, it is with great honor that I rise today to coanchor this CBC Special Order hour with my dear friend, Delegate STACEY PLASKETT from the Virgin Islands, and also acknowledge our CBC chair, the Honorable CEDRIC RICHMOND from the great State of Louisiana.

For the next 60 minutes, we have a chance to speak directly to the American people on issues of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congress, the constituents that we represent, and all Americans on this very important issue of voter suppression.

Before I go into my remarks, Mr. Speaker, we do have some colleagues here that would like to also speak about this very timely and important topic.

There have been many developments that have occurred over the last week dealing with commissions that are being formed out of the White House to help aid in voter suppression and other things that have been very troubling.

So I am going to ask for the first speaker to rise, and that would be my colleague, also from the great State of Texas, from Harris County and the city of Houston, the Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE, who has been very thoughtful and been a great voice on expanding the rights to vote of all Americans. I thank Representative JACKSON LEE for taking the time during this hour to come out and talk about this very important topic.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY), the coleader of this hour, along with Delegate PLASKETT, for not only their astute leadership of the hour, but certainly of their astute leadership of the issue. I am delighted to join my colleagues. I thank the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Mr. CEDRIC RICHMOND, for continuing to make sure that the conscience of the Congress, the Congressional Black Caucus, is heard on these crucial issues.

Mr. VEASEY, I am going to focus my issues—because this is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It is an American issue. I do want to personally thank you for your leadership as the named plaintiff of the Texas voter ID litigation, which has been—how should I say? I wanted to say Earth-

shattering—but it has been groundbreaking in its recognition of the diminishing of the rights of people to vote by a draconian voter ID law. We know that it has been somewhat modified, but your astuteness recognizes that, even in its modification, in the coming elections, we should be very wary of the effort that the State will utilize the voter ID law for voter suppression.

So today I want to rise in the backdrop of the Shelby case, which many of us are well aware of. The Shelby case, which occurred in Alabama, was the unfortunate case that turned back the clock on the 1965 Voting Rights Act that had been working for decades with absolutely no problem; but, unfortunately, this conservative-leaning Supreme Court made decisions not on what is good for America, not even on what is good in terms of the law, but decided to eliminate section 5.

□ 1930

I am reminded of the very astute words of Justice Ginsburg, very astute words, when she was appalled that the Supreme Court yielded to what I would consider misinterpretation, that there is no problem with discrimination and there is no problem with racism, and Justice Ginsburg very astutely said: Well, we have been very fortunate that the polio vaccination has all but extinguished polio in the United States.

That is great news. But because we have extinguished polio, does that mean we need to get rid of the polio vaccination? And any commonsense thinker, any American, any hard-working American, would absolutely, because they love their children and their families, would have a resounding “no.”

So why would you get rid of section 5 when there is documentation, unfortunately and sadly, of discrimination and of racism? Racism is a question of being discriminated against because of race. It does not say Black, it does not say any particular type of race, but it does mention race. That means that section 5 was a protector for all Americans and giving them the added protection of one vote, one person.

So, unfortunately, on June 28, 2017—and, by the way, Mr. Speaker, the pending meeting of this established Commission, the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity, PACEI, is going to be meeting July 19, this week. This is a dangerous phenomenon.

The chair and Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach wrote to the Nation’s secretaries of state requesting extensive personal information on American voters—personal information, when we have stood in this well fighting against the PATRIOT Act when it was not written well after 9/11 because its premise was to spy on the American people and to ignore the Fourth Amendment, which is to protect Americans against unreasonable search and seizure.

This is unreasonable search and seizure. Let me list for you what this Commission is asking for. Some of this is public knowledge, but listen to this list: the full first and last names of all registrants; middle names or initials, if available; addresses, dates of birth, political party, if recorded in your State; last four digits of Social Security, if available; voter history—voter history—what elections you voted in from 2006 onward; active and inactive status.

I would venture to say that if I asked my Republican colleagues if they want their constituents sending this information in I would hear a little bit of grumbling.

Canceled status; information regarding any felony convictions.

All these are State issues.

Information regarding voter registration in another State; information regarding military status; and overseas citizen information.

First of all, there is no documentation of massive voter fraud.

“The right to vote, and the sanctity and privacy of the vote, is protected by the U.S. Constitution, including the Fifth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments. Due process. All of these allow you to have a degree of privacy. It is an obligation of your administration,” which is a letter to President Trump that I am reading from, “to preserve the sanctity and privacy of the vote, not to undermine it as would be the case if Texas were to comply with the PACEI’s unconscionable request. The only approved government use of voter registration data, outside of voting, is jury selection, not a Presidential Advisory Commission of dubious purpose formed to search for non-consistent evidence to vindicate your false claim that you lost the popular vote by 2.9 million votes, the largest loss in American history, because ‘millions of people who voted illegally.’”

As you well know, that was a statement that no one can document by this present administration. So this Presidential Advisory Commission is a doubling down of an executive order to find a problem that does not exist. It is a solution, a false solution, seeking to find a problem. It is a dangerous proposition. It is an invasion of the privacy of the American people. And any good person who believes in the right to privacy, any conservative, liberal, moderate, anyone with any political philosophy who believes in the Constitution of the United States should stand arm in arm together against PACEI.

It is the beginning of Big Brother, the arm of Big Brother, the frightening Big Brother, to intrude into the homes of the American people and to secure information that is, in fact, challenging whether you can move from one State to the next, challenging whether or not you can have a voter card canceled or expired, challenging individuals who have been given pardons but had a felony, and challenging military persons who move from place to place. This is an insult, and this is

clearly voter suppression, not in any way a way to speak to the issue of fraud.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to take this very seriously. I have asked my State to stand down. I have asked the President to pull this request, and I, frankly, believe this executive order should be eliminated.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD two documents related to this.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 6, 2017.

President DONALD J. TRUMP,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am writing to urge you to rescind your May 11, 2017 Executive Order establishing the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity (PACEI) and to direct that the PACEI be dissolved immediately. The PACEI is charged with studying “the registration and voting processes used in Federal elections” and identifying “vulnerabilities in voting systems” that could lead to voter fraud. Many people, however, suspect that the real purpose of the Commission is not investigate widespread voter fraud, which every reputable study has already debunked as a myth, but to gather data to aid in future voter suppression efforts.

On June 28, 2017, PACEI Chair and Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach wrote to the nation’s secretaries of state requesting extensive personal information on American voters threatens to violate individual privacy. Specifically, the PACEI seeks to obtain, inter alia: “the full first and last names of registrants, middle names or initials if available, addresses, dates of birth, political party (if recorded in your state), last four digits of social security number if available, voter history (elections voted in) from 2006 onward, active/inactive status, cancelled status, information regarding any felony convictions, information regarding voter registration in another state, information regarding military status, and overseas citizen information.”

Releasing the confidential voter information sought by the PACEI which will be stored in an unsecured database on unsecured servers and accessible to the public is illegal, irresponsible, jeopardizes civil liberties and privacy rights, and puts our national security at risk.

It is important that all voters, including those in the 18th Congressional District of Texas whom I am privileged to represent, be fully protected. While supplying only public voter information may seem secure, the sad fact is that it is not. There is no publicly available record for voter registration information for any state in America. Such data set is protected under the principle of collective privacy, recognized by the Supreme Court in the landmark decision of *NAACP v. Alabama*, 377 U.S. 288, 84 S. Ct. 1302, 12 L. Ed. 2d 325 (1964), which held that compelled disclosure of affiliation with

groups engaged in advocacy may constitute an impermissible chilling effect on the freedom of association guaranteed by the First Amendment. The Court has affirmed this principle and it is now settled law. Accordingly, Texas cannot, consistent with the U.S. Constitution, supply the private voter information requested by the PACEI. Indeed, if the information sought was public as PACEI contends, there would be no need for it to request the information from state governments.

The right to vote, and the sanctity and privacy of the vote, is protected by the U.S. Constitution, including the Fifth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments. It is an obligation of your administration to preserve the sanctity and privacy of the vote, not to undermine it as would be the case if Texas were to comply with the PACEI’s unconscionable request. The only approved government use of voter registration data, outside of voting, is jury selection, not a presidential advisory commission of dubious purpose formed to search for nonexistent evidence to vindicate your false claim that you lost the popular vote by 2.9 million votes, the largest loss in American history, because “millions of people who voted illegally.”

Voter suppression is real but the oft-repeated claim that American elections are rife with voter fraud is a myth. A comprehensive 2014 study published in *The Washington Post* found out of more than a billion votes cast only 31 credible instances of impersonation fraud from 2000 to 2014, and that event this tiny number was likely inflated because the study’s author counted not just voter fraud prosecutions or convictions but all credible claims. Numerous other reports have reached the same conclusion.

Finally, it should be noted that compliance with the PACEI’s voter data request would put the security of the nation’s electoral processes at risk. We know from recent and painful experience, including the cyberattacks on the Veterans Administration, the Office of Personnel Management, not to mention SONY and Yahoo, that large centralized databases are targets of opportunities for criminals, terrorists, and foreign adversaries. It would be the height of recklessness for Texas to provide the PACEI with personal information of millions of person via unsecured email address to be stored in undersecured databases on undersecured servers.

This is why the large majority of states, 44 states and the District of Columbia, have refused to comply with the PACEI’s data requests. To date, only five states have indicated they will cooperate with the PACEI and with a data set this small, any findings drawn by the PACEI will lack external validity and yield no generalizable conclusions. In view of all the circumstances extant, the most reasonable and accurate conclusion that can be reached about the PACEI is that it

is not intended to ferret out and prevent voter fraud, but to obtain information that can be used to refine voter suppression efforts.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to rescind your May 11, 2017 Executive Order and direct that the President’s Advisory Commission on Election Integrity be disbanded immediately. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,
SHEILA JACKSON LEE,
Member of Congress.

[From Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas]

TRUMP’S VOTER FRAUD COMMISSION IS A
FRAUD AND SHOULD BE DISBANDED NOW

Unable to cope with the brutal fact that he lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton by 2.9 million votes, the largest vote deficit of any president in American history, Donald Trump tweeted that he would have won the popular vote but for “millions of people who voted illegally.” Instead of producing any credible evidence to support this claim, a hoax that has been repeatedly and decisively debunked by experts, the President doubled down and issued an Executive Order establishing the “Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity” (PACEI), appointing Kris Kobach, anti-immigration warrior and poster-child for voter fraud conspiratorialists everywhere, to lead the Commission.

It would be more accurate to characterize the PACEI as the “Presidential Advisory Commission on Vote Suppression.” Voter suppression is real but the oft-repeated claim that American elections are rife with voter fraud is a myth. According to a comprehensive 2014 study published in *The Washington Post*, out of more than a billion votes cast between 2000 and 2014, only 31 credible instances of impersonation fraud were found, and even this tiny number was likely inflated because the study’s author counted not just voter fraud prosecutions or convictions but all credible claims. Numerous other reports have reached the same conclusion.

Any lingering doubt regarding the true purpose of the PACEI should be laid to rest by the request made by Commissioner Kobach on June 28, 2017 when he wrote each of the nation’s state secretaries of state requesting that they provide the Commission with “the full first and last names of all registrants, middle names or initials if available, addresses, dates of birth, political party (if recorded in your state), last four digits of social security number if available, voter history (elections voted in) from 2006 onward, active/inactive status, cancelled status, information regarding any felony convictions, information regarding voter registration in another state, information regarding military status, and overseas citizen information.”

The information requested by the Commission will not prevent voter fraud. It will violate rather than protect voter privacy. And it will make it easier to craft legislation and devise campaign strategies intended to suppress the vote in urban clusters and among targeted demographic groups, particularly minority voters.

It is important that all voters, and the people of the 18th Congressional District of Texas whom I am privileged to represent, be fully protected. While supplying only public voter information may seem secure, the sad

fact is that it is not. There is no publicly accessible database of voter registration information in any of the 50 states or the District of Columbia. That is because information of this kind is protected from public disclosure under the settled principle of 'collective privacy' recognized by the Supreme Court in the landmark decision of *NAACP v. Alabama*, 377 U.S. 288, 84 S. Ct. 1302, 12 L. Ed. 2d 325 (1964), which held that compelled disclosure of affiliation with groups engaged in advocacy may constitute an impermissible chilling effect on the freedom of association guaranteed by the First Amendment, a holding that has been affirmed repeatedly.

Accordingly, neither Texas nor any state can, consistent with the U.S. Constitution, supply the voter information requested by the PACEI. Indeed, if the information sought was as public in nature as PACEI contends, there simply would be no need for it to request the information from state governments.

Trump's voter suppression commission is a solution in search of a problem. Contrary to what Trump and Kobach would have the public believe, American elections are not rife with widespread voter fraud. Studies have shown that it is more likely an American "will be struck by lightning than that he will impersonate another voter at the polls." No, the major ill affecting our election system is not that too many people vote due to voter fraud, but that too many people are prevented from voting due to vote suppression schemes such as discriminatory photo identification requirements, curtailment of early voting, too few polling stations leading to long lines and excessive wait times, purging of election rolls.

Even in the wholly unimaginable event that the commission created by Donald Trump and led by Kris Kobach could be trusted enough for states to cooperate by sharing their voter data, there is no reasonable basis for assuming that information would be kept secure and the privacy of voters protected. Recent cyberattacks have made clear the vulnerability of large central databases to cyberattack. An information security breach at the Department of Veterans Affairs compromised sensitive personal data of 26.5 million persons and cost the VA between \$100 million to \$500 million to remediate; another occurring at the Office of Personnel Management impacted 22 million current and former federal employees, many of whom held sensitive security clearances; and the attack on Yahoo, the mother of all security breaches, resulted in 1.5 billion user accounts being compromised.

Because large centralized databases are targets of opportunities for criminals, terrorists, and foreign adversaries, it would be the height of recklessness for Texas or any state to provide the PACEI with personal information of millions of persons via unsecured email address to be stored in undersecured databases on undersecured servers. One of the biggest strengths of the American election system is its decentralized nature.

Aggregating all voter data into one centralized database with questionable security protections makes that data highly vulnerable to a cyberattack that could lead to the personal information of hundreds of millions of Americans being stolen and misused. Voter privacy and the integrity of the secret ballot are integral to American democracy. Voter privacy rights should and must be protected. This is especially true since we now know for certain that adversaries like Russia are actively involved in cyberwarfare campaigns to undermine our democracy.

There is no denying that our election system is under assault, but not in the way Trump imagines. Instead of wasting taxpayer money to fund an investigation into

voter fraud, which is as mythical as a unicorn, American democracy would be better served by focusing on and correcting the real problem with our elections—voter suppression and external, illegal, and international interference in our national elections.

I am not opposed to employing reasonable, legitimate, and workable means to safeguard the integrity of our electoral system and to protect the precious right to vote. But Trump's Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity is incapable of doing either and thus should be disbanded and dissolved immediately.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by holding up this map, which indicates the colors of the individual States that are only slightly adhering to this Commission. The orange and the blue are individual States, some that are not adhering and some that are giving basic public information, but not all the personal information.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I hope we can collectively fight against the suppression of voters, and I thank him for alerting the American people to this severe attempt to perpetrate a wrongness, which is that there is voter fraud, and that we should not violate the privacy of Americans.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my fellow Texan and colleague for her timely remarks. I think the American public really would be interested in what she talked about with the criminal background history that this Commission wants.

I know that there are a lot of people—both Democrats and Republicans, quite frankly, people of all political stripes—that made mistakes when they were younger and now maybe they go and vote. They are good Americans. They assimilate themselves into society. They have learned from their mistakes, and they would be very disturbed to know that this sort of information about something that they did when they were 21 years old and now they are 40-something years old, they would be very disturbed to know that this type of information was being collected. I thank her for raising that issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), my friend, to also speak on this issue. I thank him for taking the time to come out here today and share some of the concerns that he has.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the gentleman from Texas for sponsoring this CBC Special Order hour. It is a great responsibility and a responsibility that he has done remarkably well in governing the time and the topics on which we speak. This is a timely topic, Mr. Speaker.

In a single decision, the U.S. Supreme Court set ablaze decades of progress by overturning critical portions of the Voting Rights Act. Four years after *Shelby County v. Holder*, voter protections that many Americans rely on are again under assault.

Following that decision, we saw an eruption of unjust voting laws. It is an unfortunate historical fact that, in the

absence of Federal safeguards, some States will erect prejudicial barriers to voting. States previously under Federal overview were emboldened and, shortly after the ruling issued, blatantly added discriminatory rules that directly affected minority communities.

Sadly, one of the most significant and imminent threats to accessing the polls comes directly from the administration. Since the inauguration, the Trump administration has withdrawn from longstanding legal challenges to discriminatory voter laws and created the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity that will investigate the President's wildly unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud. These sorts of actions and rhetoric only reassure States that discriminatory voting laws will be tolerated and upheld in this administration.

I urge Congress to take responsibility and restore vital voter protections that have secured the integrity of our democracy for more than 50 years. Although the *Shelby* decision was one of the most disruptive judicial decisions in recent American history, passing good voting rights legislation will redeem America's promise of a fair vote for everyone of eligible age.

It appears that protecting America's basic right to vote will be a task reborn with every generation. Obstacles to voting are no longer as blatantly obvious as literary tests and poll taxes. Unjust voter ID laws, voter intimidation, and unfair gerrymandering create barriers to the polls for individuals from all skin colors and age groups.

Although these actions appear insurmountable, they are not. Voter suppression is an affront to the Constitution and will not be tolerated. If we continue to resist all attempts to turn back voter protections, we will be successful and once again stand proudly on the right side of history.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that this Nation appears to be going in reverse. Gains that have been made by people who weren't necessarily considered citizens when they first arrived here, but property, have had to look to these rulings and laws being created in order for them to have the rights every other American has.

The hands that built this great building could not vote, were property. But it is a beautiful symbol of this Nation's history. The ancestors of the people that helped build these beautiful buildings here will be rolling over in their graves to learn that equality and rights for all are still under attack.

So, Mr. Speaker, the CBC and, I hope, the whole Congress will be vigilant in this area, making sure that all Americans, regardless of where they come from, where they started, and when they were allowed and even seen as citizens, have the right to vote in this great country.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey, particularly for pointing out about the

hands that built this building. That is something that is not widely known, that the hands that built this building were not hands of free men but hands of slaves that built this building that we stand under today, that people come and admire from all around the world, and we admire this building as a symbol of freedom. But the hands that built it were not free hands.

And of course what followed emancipation in this country—Jim Crow, voter suppression, and all of those things—once we finally got past the late sixties and seventies, to see some of that coming back again is very, very disturbing, and I want to thank him for his timely comments on that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY). I thank her spending so much time here on the House floor working the Special Order hour, and particularly when it comes to the thing that we are so worried about right now, which is the voter suppression commission.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman VEASEY for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to stand on this floor, but when I think that tonight I have to stand here and talk about the topic that the Congressional Black Caucus comes to the House floor to speak out against is a sad day.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my classmate and colleague and friend, Congressman MARC VEASEY, for taking a leadership role and for making that clarion call to ask us to come.

□ 1945

Many of us will come tonight and speak out. Several of us will file our message so it can be recorded. Others will be back in their districts fighting for voting rights.

This is something we have to do because, unfortunately, it has been over 50 years since President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which has been the most powerful tool in defending the voting rights of minorities.

The Voting Rights Act, as you have heard tonight and you will continue to hear, outlawed the harassment, the intimidation, and the violence that many African Americans experienced when trying to exercise their right to vote.

It ended some of the most overtly discriminatory practices in our country's history by banning literacy tests, appointing Federal examiners in certain problematic areas to register voters and monitor elections, and criminalizing voter intimidation threats and coercion.

Also key to the Voting Rights Act, you have heard many of our attorneys explain it and talk about the creation of the preclearance process that required certain places with some of the worst histories of discrimination to gain approval from a Federal court or the Department of Justice before making election changes.

However, Mr. Speaker, during my first term in Congress, I became a part

of this history. It was in 2013 that the United States Supreme Court struck down this crucial provision of the Voting Rights Act in the Shelby County v. Holder decision, opening the door for States to reduce—I am going to say that again, Mr. Speaker—opening the door to reduce the electoral power of minority communities.

And with that door open, many States are taking this opportunity to pass a slew or a wave of laws, including strict voter ID requirements, early voting cutbacks, and registration restrictions, making it harder for many hard-working Americans to vote. That is just not right. Every citizen should have the right to vote.

Following the 2016 election, President Trump falsely claimed that millions voted illegally, perpetuating the myth of voter fraud long used to justify restrictive legislation that suppresses voters in low-income areas. I stand here today to tell you that it is not true.

And when the Congressional Black Caucus hears the President of these United States using terms like “voter fraud” or “illegally voted,” we can read between the lines, Mr. Speaker. He is signaling his intent, in my opinion, to suppress the vote. He is signaling the support for efforts that will make it even harder for poor people, people of color, women, elderly people, to vote, one of the fundamental rights that we have to vote.

While the legislative maneuvers to restrict our citizens' fundamental right to vote should shock the conscience, it has not, and that is why we are standing on this floor today. That is why we are asking Democrats and Republicans to work together to correct this wrong.

We have witnessed the history of some 50-plus years of what happened to many people in some of our Southern States. Mr. Speaker, it is just not right, and that is why we are here today.

As former President Barack Obama said: “This is something that has constantly been disproved.” As a matter of fact, “This is fake news.”

Now, one of my colleagues came to the floor tonight and said this is not a Democrat or a Republican issue. Well, let me say it a little differently. This should not be a Democrat or Republican issue; but if it were a bipartisan issue, we wouldn't be standing here in this Special Order hour demanding and asking that we come together, as Democrats and Republicans, and restore the voting rights.

So let me be very clear. The Congressional Black Caucus, through the leadership of our chairman, Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND, through the leadership of our power-of-the-hour chair, Congressman MARC VEASEY, and the other members of the Congressional Black Caucus, one of the largest minority caucuses in this House, we stand ready to advocate, we stand ready to protect those who we come here to protect.

So as elected officials, we have a responsibility to ensure the right of “one person, one vote,” and part of this responsibility includes making it easier, Mr. Speaker, not harder for citizens to vote. And we will not stop our quest in ensuring justice for all Americans.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative BEATTY. I really appreciate her participating again and her comments, and we are going to take her call and continue to push on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite my friend and colleague up from the great State of Pennsylvania, Representative DWIGHT EVANS, to also speak about this subject. Of course, throughout the history of African Americans, Philadelphia and Pennsylvania have played a very critical role. I am glad that my colleague from Pennsylvania is stepping up and speaking about this very timely issue of voter suppression in the wake of Shelby County.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS).

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the great State of Texas, Congressman VEASEY, for his leadership under Congressman RICHMOND, and for what he and Delegate STACEY PLASKETT have been providing over the last couple of weeks.

Right now, as Members of Congress, we are in what I call an Article I, section 1 moment. Article I, section 1 in the Constitution grants us this power. We need to harness the power of the process to ensure that accountability and transparency for Philadelphians, Pennsylvanians, and all the American people.

We know that voting is a fundamental right, and we know that the Federal Government should not be in the business of dealing with personal information of voters nationwide. Philadelphians, Pennsylvanians, and Americans have a right to privacy. Myself and my colleagues before you today intend to do everything we can to ensure privacy is guaranteed and protected.

The Trump administration has yet to instill confidence and garner respect from the American people. Voting is a right that cannot and will not be taken away. The right to vote is a core American value and guiding principle that must be protected and not tampered with in any way.

Believe me when I tell you, President Trump, we know what you are trying to do here. We see the actions of your administration for what they are. Our neighborhoods are at risk of voter suppression, and we cannot and will not stand for it.

Last week, I was proud to join my colleagues, the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Chairman RICHMOND, and the United States Senator from New Jersey, when they stood up last week and introduced a piece of legislation to revoke President Trump's executive order.

I am proud to stand with the Governor of my State and my friend, Governor Tom Wolf, who has been very outspoken in speaking out for Pennsylvanians all across the Commonwealth and clearly told the President he will not disclose personal PA voter information.

I want to leave you with a quote from Dr. King: “We may have all come on different ships, but we are in the same boat now.”

I have lived my entire life in the City of Philadelphia and know that it is a sanctuary city. We are so much stronger when we celebrate our differences and use them as strengths to uplift us.

We will not accept this voter suppression. Together, we will ensure the choir of our voices are heard loud and clear. We have an obligation to build a stronger tomorrow for all of our neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus to send a message, a message and a voice that we will not just sit here idly by. We will not allow this process to just run roughshod.

As I said from the beginning, this is an Article I, section 1 moment where we all recognize that we, in Congress, Democrat and Republican alike, recognize that we have an obligation and responsibility to the American public. And this is not about partisanship. This is about a fundamental right, and we don't take it lightly.

So I applaud the leadership, again, of my colleague from the great State of Texas, for what he is providing here, and all the members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and appreciate him taking time out to talk about this very critical announcement.

As soon as everyone in the Black community, Black communities around the country, and elected officials around the country who are concerned about voter suppression and other tools and tactics that have been used to suppress the African-American vote, we went to action, and I appreciate that the gentleman was one of the first people to step up and appreciate his participation tonight.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, who was not able to make it here this evening, will be including a statement in the RECORD. She represents the 30th Congressional District of Texas and is my next-door neighbor. She represents Dallas and the southern suburbs of Dallas. I appreciate her weighing in on this topic as well.

Mr. Speaker, the foundation of American democracy is that, no matter who you are, we are all equal once we step into that voting booth. And the courage that has been displayed by brave foot soldiers who risked and, in some cases, gave their lives to guarantee that constitutional promise was fulfilled must never be forgotten, and this is really important to point out.

I mean, we have Representative JOHN LEWIS, who is a hero of the civil rights movement. But I always encourage people to watch the documentary, “Eyes on the Prize” so they can see how people were treated, how people were treated by law enforcement, how people were treated by people who were in positions of power, people who were active in the community, people who belonged to the Lions Club, belonged to the Elks Club, the way they treated people who were simply trying to register to vote.

There is one scene that I will never forget; it was about a woman who was trying to go and vote, and she was being kicked and shoved and hit and knocked to the ground by law enforcement in Alabama for simply trying to exercise her right to vote that was given to her in the early 1900s when women in this country were finally given the right of suffrage.

It is really in their memory that Congress originally passed the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965. And for years, both Republicans and Democrats reauthorized the Voting Rights Act, agreeing that equal access to the polls must be preserved for generations to come.

But sadly, Mr. Speaker, in 2013, that tradition dramatically changed. The Supreme Court ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder* struck down section 4 of the Voting Rights Act and made Congress responsible for updating the VRA. The Court has left it to Congress to create a new formula for determining which States and other jurisdictions should be discovered under section 5 of the Voting Rights Act to ensure protection against discrimination.

But 4 years later, we can confidently say that the Supreme Court ruling set into motion what most of us feared—that minorities and low-income Americans would have to face unfair and punitive barriers from exercising their most basic right as American citizens, and that is the right to vote.

□ 2000

In the years since the *Shelby County* decision, Republican legislatures nationwide have been in power to unleash an avalanche of purposely restrictive laws that have been aimed to keep, again, mostly Black and Latino voters away from the poll. Even when you do discovery and when you look into why these laws were passed by State legislatures, it is clear what the intent was.

It is a tactic that the Republican Party has indirectly endorsed, since they believe that trying to earn the vote of the growing minority population, that they would rather keep them away from the polls altogether.

Prior to *Shelby*, States with a history of voter suppression and discriminatory practices were required to preclear any changes in their election laws with the Department of Justice prior to enactment. But now, in the absence of an updated VRA, States no longer require the DOJ's approval.

I want to talk about my own State, the State of Texas, which has really served as an incubator for the suppressive tactics that Republicans nationwide have been eager to enact for years. I saw this up close and personal in the 8 years that I spent in the Texas Legislature, where I saw Texas Republicans enact SB 14, which severely restricted the types of IDs that voters could bring to the polls in order to cast the ballot. Texas Republicans claimed that limiting acceptable IDs would prevent widespread in-person voter fraud. As vice chair of the Voter Identification and Voter Fraud Select Committee in the Texas state house, I witnessed how Texas Republicans failed to produce any piece of evidence to prove that massive voter impersonation was occurring statewide.

Hearing after hearing—you can go back and look at the record, going back to 2005—I and my other colleagues who served on the committee and who were concerned about some of the voter suppression tactics asked the question: Show us evidence that voter suppression is taking place. We have time here during this legislative session.

That was what we would ask over and over again, and not one person could bring any evidence that this had happened.

Their flawed argument justified limiting voter IDs and instead favored an approach that would exclude student IDs but actually say that it was okay to use a concealed handgun license as a form of ID.

What is interesting about that is that these student IDs, campus law enforcement, which, in the State of Texas, where I am from, again, if a kid has alcohol or if someone is roaming around campus and the police need to be able to verify who they are and identify them, that student ID that is issued by a State university in the State of Texas serves as ID for law enforcement personnel on those campuses to be able to verify whether that student is, in fact, who they are and belongs on that campus. That same ID, again, that is issued by the State of Texas could not be used to go and vote. It just doesn't make any sense.

When the law was enacted, of course, the DOJ blocked the measure. However, hours after the *Shelby* decision, Governor Perry enacted Texas' restrictive voter ID law. I became a named plaintiff in the case because I knew that, despite Republicans' claims that the law would disproportionately disenfranchise Latino and African-American voters—the State's own estimates showed that it would potentially disenfranchise over 600,000 Texans who are registered but do not have one of the required forms of ID. And there are lots of different reasons why people may or may not have an ID.

If they were born in a foreign country and they are now American citizens, they may have a hard time getting access to some of those documents. They may not have the money

or the transportation to go to the county that they were born in to be able to get the documents that they need in order to get one of these IDs. Again, there are costs and there are transportation and geographic barriers that may take place.

You may have people who were born in the country by midwives, and they are particularly African-American baby boomers and older that migrated from places like Longview, Texas; Marshall, Texas; Tyler, Texas, and they weren't really even raised in those cities. They were raised in smaller towns outside of those cities and they may not have those proper forms of ID.

Remember, segregation was very rampant back then in Texas, and many people were born by midwives, were born in their houses and what have you. There are variations of spellings of last names. I have that in my own family. There are just so many other examples of that.

I am proud to report that two Federal courts, including the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which is easily considered by most to be the most conservative appeals court in the country, have found the law to be discriminatory in its intent and its effect. Despite this victory, we knew that Texas was only the beginning. We have heard about so many other laws around the country that exclude people from being able to register to vote unless they have a passport, or unless they have their birth certificate, which makes it almost impossible for nonprofits to set up a table at a busy grocery store, for instance, on a Saturday and do any sort of voter registration. There are just all sorts of issues out there. There are organizations like King Street Patriots, for instance, that pride themselves on their ability to try to suppress the minority vote. Again, Texas was only the beginning. And, sadly, Mr. Speaker, unless we can find a new way to come together to do what is right when it comes to suffrage in this country, it seems like this is going to be something that we have to fight for a long time.

Now, sadly, I am ashamed to say that our President has also taken a page out of the Republican playbook and has begun to perpetuate the same myths about widespread voter fraud that, sadly, we have been fighting since the Reconstruction era, Mr. Speaker. Very, very sad.

Nearly 3 months after winning the Presidency, President Trump could not handle the fact that, despite winning the Presidency, he lost the popular vote. And unsatisfied with the results, President Trump does what he does best: he went to Twitter to blame his unpopularity on widespread voter fraud.

And, worse, now he has created this Presidential commission on election integrity. It is a sham commission that will, no doubt, work to justify claims that elections are being compromised by our own citizens and serve as a cata-

lyst to continue the wave of voter suppression and intimidation that we have witnessed across this country.

I am proud that the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the Asian Pacific American Caucus have all gotten together to introduce legislation to ensure that not a single dollar from the taxpayers is spent towards this phony commission.

Again, I think that everybody should be concerned about this commission. Any commission that wants to gather private information on citizens, put it in a database, information that—quite frankly, mistakes that people made back when they were in college. There are a lot of people out there that I know, that I went to high school and college with, people that I have known around the Fort Worth and Dallas community for a long time, all around the State of Texas, they made mistakes when they were younger. Maybe it was a DWI. Maybe it was some other sort of issue, but they have assimilated themselves back into society. They are working. They are paying taxes. And the fact that this database would want to take the mistakes that they made in their youth and put them in this database and to look at whether or not they are committing some sort of fraud is just something that—again, doesn't matter if you are Democrat or Republican, there are a lot of people out there who made mistakes when they were younger. It is just awful that this could come back to haunt them.

The fact is that the voter fraud myth has been debunked by various reputable research organizations, including the ACLU, the Brennan Center for Justice, the Campaign Legal Center, and the Pew Research Center, to name a few. But that has not changed the fact that Republicans and now our President want to turn back the clock on voting rights. It is really sad, Mr. Speaker.

The commission recently requested sensitive voter information as part of their fake investigation, and we are already seeing the effects. Out of fear of having their Social Security, voting history, party affiliation, again, their criminal background history that I talked about in a concentrated voter base, news sources have already reported voters deregistering to vote. That is sad because that is exactly the type of voter intimidation that Republicans want to nationalize.

House Republicans have purposely dragged their feet on updating the VRA and ignored their duty to uphold the Constitution and ensure the sacred right of all Americans to be able to cast their vote.

Even as these courts begin to rule against the purposely prejudiced tactics of these GOP State legislatures, it is up to us to bring our voices together and lift the veil on their true intentions. It is our duty now to stand up against these discriminatory practices that are being implemented nation-

wide, because the President's sham commission will have its first meeting this Wednesday, and we have to send one message loud and clear: We will not allow voter suppression to become normal. We have to make that clear.

I thank my colleagues for working alongside me in this fight, because every member of the Congressional Black Caucus is talking about this in their district when they are going back, townhalls, various other events that are out and about in their respective areas that they represent around our country to let them know what is in store.

I have got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I am confident that we will once again be able to ensure that the sacred right to vote is not denied to a single American. It has been overcome a lot. We are going to continue to overcome this, just like we have after the Reconstruction era, like we did in the 1960s, and we are going to fight this all the way until we get the fairness that we want.

I want to remind everybody that there is going to be a voter suppression forum tomorrow that members of the Congressional Black Caucus, along with the House Judiciary Democrats, will host on this very topic, voter suppression in the wake of Shelby County, which is the name of the Special Order that we are working on right now. And Members will hear from Kentucky Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes and others about the President's voter fraud commission and the bipartisan backlash that it is facing. The forum will be live-streamed on the House Judiciary Democrats' Facebook page. I invite all Americans to join in this very important and crucial conversation that is going to be taking place on Wednesday.

I thank everybody again that came out to participate for this Special Order hour on voter suppression in the wake of what happened in Shelby County.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to speak out against voter suppression. Voter suppression is a serious issue that threatens the integrity of our elections. While the Congressional Black Caucus members have highlighted their numerous concerns, we should all be deeply involved in combating voter suppression and expanding access to the polls for all Americans—particularly in the wake of the destructive ruling in Shelby County v. Holder.

When fellow Texan and former President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law, our country was in the midst of wrestling with literacy tests, the purging of voter rolls, and intimidation by those who wished to keep minorities and other vulnerable segments of the population from casting their ballots at the polls. It was a difficult time in our nation's history, but one that we seemingly overcame together in a broad recognition that all Americans should have equal access to the polls. The positive effects of the Voting Rights Act grew quickly apparent.

Following passage of the VRA, nearly 1 million black voters registered to vote within just four years, including over fifty percent of the black voting age population in every southern state. We witnessed the number of black elected officials in the South more than double, from 72 to 159, following the 1966 elections. By the mid-1980s, there were more African Americans in public office across the South than throughout the rest of the nation combined.

More than fifty years later, we are once again faced with the same fight under a different, more sinister guise. The United States Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby v. Holder* has brought our nation back to our darkest times in history. Discrimination on the basis of race is a persistent reality throughout many localities in states once protected by Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act—including my home state of Texas. Absent these protections, many voters are at risk of losing their fundamental right to vote.

On May 11, 2017, President Trump issued an executive order that would create an "election integrity" commission. The stated purpose of this commission was to combat voter fraud, but we know the true meaning behind an executive order of this nature. It is to repeat the egregious mistakes of our past and once again prevent legitimate voters from exercising their constitutional rights to vote.

Mr. Speaker, the concerns of the Congressional Black Caucus and the concerns of countless Americans are worthy of our time in Congress. We must speak out against thinly veiled commissions meant to suppress the vote. We must bolster the Voting Rights Act to its former power and encourage others to combat voter suppression and protect unfettered access to the ballot.

COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise and ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, tonight, as we come before the body, we have come back on a topic we have been here before on. It is really the hidden enemy, I guess if you would, of people and trying to get a drug pricing system, something where their community pharmacist, the independent pharmacist, it is that middle man called the PBM, the pharmacy benefit manager, who simply snuck in many years ago.

□ 2015

It originally started as a good idea so that you could collaborate, you could get better drug pricing, you could get it to the consumer through rebates and

through concessions. And as in all things, I guess, good ideas and greed just get in the way sometimes.

We are at a point where this is an issue that I want to continue to highlight. We are going to do so in several ways. We are going to talk about some issues. I spoke with colleagues on the floor before about the really terrible actions of many in the PBM community, especially the largest ones that control over 80 percent of the market. There are only three of those that really control almost the entire marketplace of this and control plans that folks would understand very quickly. They control where you go, how much you pay, the formularies. It is down to that kind of a problem.

Last year, when the world began to wake up to these issues of pricing and all of this came to light, they began to question why these drugs were costing so much, such as the EpiPen. Well, what they began to find out was that these were problematic issues. But if you wanted to really look at the baseline, you had to look at the pharmacy benefit managers, and you had to understand what they were doing that was causing a great deal of problems.

We also have to go back to the basics. Community and independent pharmacists fill a critical niche in the healthcare system, serving the primary healthcare providers for over 62 million Americans. Community pharmacists are some of the most easily accessible health professionals, particularly in our rural areas.

Mr. Speaker, this is an area that I really have talked about before. We talk about the healthcare chain being a complete chain, and it is not just the doctors and the hospitals; it is the pharmacist who is typically the face of healthcare for those after they have gone to their doctors or come out from the hospital to get the medicine that will continue to keep them healthy.

You see, community pharmacists dispense roughly 40 percent of prescriptions nationwide, and a higher percentage in rural areas, such as mine. These community pharmacists regularly interact with their patients outside the pharmacy. They go to church with them. They go to shop with them at the local grocery store. The pharmacies are the sponsors of kids' Little League teams. They are the ones who have the closest personal relationships to the healthcare chain, and they are a trusted source of medical care and advice.

Pharmacists are also able to better treat patients' illnesses with their regular interactions, identifying potential risk factors early on. For example, independent community pharmacists play a key role in ensuring a patient properly uses their medication. In fact, 83 percent of community pharmacists perform the critical patient-care role of providing medication adherent services. Patients' failure to properly take their medication costs the healthcare system almost \$3 billion and contributes to 125,000 deaths annually.

Face-to-face counseling by a trusted pharmacist has proven to be the most effective method for ensuring patients take their medications, saving thousands of lives and billions of dollars annually.

Mr. Speaker, independent and community pharmacists provide multiple and valuable services, and we can talk about these services and the importance of a community pharmacist. I would be remiss if I did not mention the recent and tragic passing of someone known well in the pharmacists' community for his contributions there.

While I did not know John Carson personally, his death had reverberations throughout the pharmacists' community. Mr. Carson was from San Antonio, Texas, and owned and ran his business there, Oakdell Pharmacy, for almost 50 years. He and his wife were tragically killed in a car accident on July 7, but the legacy Mr. Carson left behind as a father, a pharmacist, and former president of both the Texas Pharmacy Association and the National Community Pharmacists Association will live on. Tonight we mourn his passing but celebrate his achievements.

I could mention individual pharmacists and their work on behalf of their patients for the rest of the evening, and I could have probably every Member of this body do the same. Instead, I will provide some information that shows the great impact on services the individuals have had.

Sixty-five percent of community pharmacists offer home or work delivery; 68 percent of community pharmacists offer immunizations; 83 percent provide medication therapy and management services; and 67 percent of community pharmacists provide monetary support to five or more community organizations. These are the guys you see sponsoring the Little League teams, the chili cook-offs, and that are true participants in our neighborhoods and towns.

Unfortunately, the community pharmacists are in jeopardy across the country, in part, due to anticompetitive behavior and the lack of transparency surrounding practices of the pharmacy benefit managers. They have taken our community pharmacist, and they have abused their trust. Pharmacy benefit managers, especially in the system that we have today, are trying, I believe personally, to get rid of our community independent pharmacists because they have their own chain, their own distribution, and they own the supply chain. When they do, they want to take everything else out, and we have talked about that on many occasions here.

So as we continue tonight, we are going to talk about these issues, as we go from pharmacists and what they have done well, some new issues that have come to light, some lawsuits, also some audits that have come out that show the real problem that we are seeing with this community, and also that

they are having, but also just being run out of business.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, if you were just trying to get up every day and run your own business, and you had a giant conglomerate tell you and tell your customers that they can't come see you anymore, not give you a reason. And if they are mistaken, they make you correct their mistake. I don't know how it operates in the rest of the world, but that isn't the way a business is supposed to operate.

At this point in the evening, I have several of my friends from Georgia who are here to talk about these issues. First off is my friend from south Georgia; another one, who has been with me on many of these occasions, a Member who has seen this up close and personal, to talk about the issues that we have tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT), someone we have been working with on the Armed Services Committee on a lot of things that are going on.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our Nation's community pharmacies which play a critical role in our healthcare system.

Many of these independent businesses operate in underserved or rural areas—like many of the counties in Georgia's Eighth Congressional District, which I represent—where access to carriers is already an issue and would be worse if community pharmacies did not exist.

In areas where a doctor can be many miles away, local pharmacists deliver flu shots, give advice on over-the-counter drugs, and help with those late-night drugstore runs for a sick child. Many people in our rural communities see their pharmacists much more often than their doctors. There is a very personal relationship between the pharmacist, the patient, and the physician.

As pillars in their community, they are also the businesses that contribute greatly to local economies. It is crucial that these pharmacies have an equitable playing field against large-scale competitors and middleman pharmacy benefit managers when trying to run a successful business in a challenging and complex environment.

I want to reiterate, Mr. Speaker, all they ask for is an equitable playing field. No advantages, just equality. Where I am from, local pharmacists are often a fixture in their communities. These pharmacists have known most of their customers all of their lives. They instill a level of trust that is unparalleled.

I frequently stop in at local community pharmacies when I am back home in the district and never fail to appreciate the unique value they add to their customers' lives. Unfortunately, on some of these visits, I am also troubled to learn how community pharmacies are finding it extremely difficult to serve the people who have depended on them for years and to com-

pete with some of the larger entities in the healthcare marketplace.

Take, for example, the increased prevalence of preferred networks in Medicare part D plans. Currently, many Medicaid beneficiaries are told by pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, which pharmacy to use based on exclusionary arrangements between those PBMs and, for the most part, big-box pharmacies. What most people don't know is that, in fact, in several instances, these big-box pharmacies actually own the PBMs that are creating these preferred networks.

Patients must pay higher copays just because the pharmacy they want to use is excluded by the PBM, who again, as I said, in many cases, actually own the larger pharmacy that they force you to do business with. The majority of the time, the hometown pharmacy is never given the opportunity to participate in the network in the first place.

Another issue I often hear about from community pharmacies is the burdensome DIR fees. Most Americans probably assume that it is a pretty simple transaction when they purchase medication from their local pharmacy. They go in, they pay a copay, and that is the end of it.

But for the pharmacy, the transaction is anything but clear and simple. Pharmacy benefit managers use so-called DIR fees to claw back money from pharmacies on the individual claims long after the claim is thought to have been resolved. That means that a pharmacy often doesn't know the final reimbursement amount they will receive for a claim for weeks, or even months.

Anyone who runs a pharmacy, or any other small business for that matter, knows you can't operate when you don't know what your reimbursements are. When competition is stifled and these small businesses suffer, so do hardworking Americans when they have had their choice to use a community pharmacy instead of a big-box business taken away from them.

Another issue I frequently hear about is the lack of transparency in generic drug reimbursements to pharmacies. Generic prescription drugs account for approximately 80 percent of drugs dispensed. The reimbursement system for these medications is largely unregulated and a complete mystery to all of us. Now, if it is unregulated with transparency, that is fine. But it is unregulated without any transparency.

Pharmacists are often reimbursed for generics by what is referred to as the maximum allowable cost list created by the pharmacy benefit managers. But the methodologies used to create these lists are not disclosed, nor are the lists updated on a regular basis, which frequently results in pharmacists being reimbursed below the actual acquisition cost for various medications.

In recent years, these extra costs that affect prescription drug prices in community pharmacies have fallen on consumers. Take doxycycline, for ex-

ample. Doxycycline is a drug that is used to treat a number of bacterial infections. As a generic antibiotic, it has been around for decades. I want to repeat: it is a generic that has been around for decades. In 2012, 30 capsules of doxycycline cost approximately \$15. In 2017, the same dosage cost \$115. That is a price increase of 667 percent.

I want to give you a real-world example of the impact this has on low-income patients in the world. I have a wonderful OB-GYN in my area, and he told me that prior to the price increase, he would simply keep doxycycline in his office, and when he had a patient that needed it, he could simply give the patient—if it was a low-income patient—the drugs instead of having them go to the pharmacy to pick them up. But with a 667 percent price increase, they could no longer afford to simply give the patients the medication that they need.

Nitroglycerin tablets are another example. Nitroglycerin has been used to treat chest pain and stop a heart attack and has seen similar price hikes in the past few years. Again, it is a generic drug that has been around for decades—no excuse in the price increases other than flat out greed.

A drug that is even more common that has been affected by the lack of transparency in the drug market is insulin. As you may know, millions of Americans with diabetes rely on insulin. They have to have it, or they will simply die. According to the American Diabetes Association, the price of insulin in America has nearly tripled over the past 15 years, making the drug nearly unaffordable for many diabetic patients.

The dramatic price hikes of insulin is ironic since, in the early 1920s, Frederick Banting, one of the scientists who helped to first develop insulin, sold the patent for the drug for \$3 because their goal was to make the drug affordable and easy to access for everybody in the world.

Now, nearly 100 years later, one vial of Humalog can cost nearly \$400 in the United States, where it costs a fraction of that in other countries around the world. In Canada and Mexico, the same dosage of Humalog costs less than half, or sometimes even a quarter of what it costs in the United States.

I understand that there is a tremendous cost in developing lifesaving treatments, new drugs, and the next development that is going to save a cancer patient, but these are generic drugs that have been around for decades. These dramatic price increases, the international price disparities, they are occurring, again, on drugs that have been around for decades because of this pricing scam put in place by the pharmacy benefit managers.

In the coming months, I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to address the lack of transparency in the pharmaceutical industry, giving community pharmacies an equitable playing field to compete,

which gives hardworking Americans the choice of affordable prescription drugs and which pharmacy they choose to purchase those drugs from.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman, Mr. COLLINS, for hosting this Special Order today.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend. We have been talking about this, and I think what is amazing is, the more we have these, and the more we talk about community pharmacists and the issues that we find, people are starting to understand the real problem that exists here.

Mr. Speaker, more than 250,000 individuals employed either on a full-time or part-time basis by community pharmacies, these people's livelihoods are facing consequential threats due to the often anticompetitive behavior of pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs.

Many people may have never heard of a PBM. Well, let's give them a definition tonight. PBMs are middlemen who administer prescription drug plans. In fact, three primary middlemen control 78—almost 80 percent—of the market and control the pharmacy benefits of over 253 million Americans.

□ 2030

PBMs process prescriptions for groups that pay for drugs and control drug formulation to determine what drugs are covered by specific plans.

The three major PBMs—Express Scripts, CVS Caremark Health, and OptumRx—produce no tangible product. Let me repeat that. These three produce no tangible product. Yet they have a major impact on the way you and I access medication, on small business pharmacies, and even other small business PBMs.

If you don't believe me, just the other day, I was watching a business show, and there was a PBM—there was a transparent PBM who talked through this whole issue of fees, rebates, and everything else. They said: We show everything.

Well, I challenge the three big ones to do it. They don't want to because—if you started looking at actually what they did, they are what I have said many times—they are monopolistic terrorists. That is all they are in this market.

Mr. Speaker, as an example of the major market power that PBMs have, I would like to point you to Express Scripts' annual average revenue. That one company has average revenue of \$101 billion. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am a conservative, free-market business person. I love to see a business actually make money. But you don't do it the way they are doing it. I am not decrying their profit. However, I am calling into question the business model of raking in massive profits on the backs of patients and small business pharmacists. You don't do it that way.

I brought this up on many occasions and only get excuses and obfuscations and everything from the PBMs going online and telling about how great

they are but never addressing the real issue. The problem is relegated to the wayside far too long and is coming into sharp focus. In fact, Anthem, an insurer, is currently suing to end its contract with Express Scripts. It claims Express Scripts failed to renegotiate lower drug prices and withheld billions in savings. This lawsuit and stories surrounding it have called into sharper focus PBM tactics that community pharmacists have been grappling with for years. In just a few moments, we are going to hear firsthand about how that has actually been going on.

Through a variety of practices, PBMs make life difficult and undermine competition for our neighborhood pharmacists and the patients that they serve. For example, PBMs have maximum allowable costs—MAC lists—that determine the maximum amount a pharmacist will be reimbursed for certain generic drugs. However, PBMs' reimbursement price determinations are hidden, and there is no transparency in the process.

PBMs commonly manipulate drug prices using what is called spread pricing. I would encourage, Mr. Speaker, those who listen to this and would want to be a part to look this up. Everything we are talking about is actual fact. PBMs charge employers a higher price for a drug than necessary and reimburse pharmacies at the MAC level, which is typically lower. Spread pricing allows PBMs to skim money from the difference between the high rate they charge for a prescription and the low rate they reimburse pharmacies. Spread pricing is artificially raising the acquisition cost of pharmacy drugs by overcharging at the expense of retail pharmacists, consumers, and health plans.

You see, when we understand this, people say: Why is this a problem? Why are we talking about it?

This lack of transparency is also a problem when PBMs administer taxpayer-funded programs like Medicare part D, TRICARE, or the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Currently, we can't ensure that the savings generated by cost-saving rebates received by the PBMs are being passed along to government programs. PBMs can receive rebates to acquire prescription drugs at lower-than-advertised costs, and PBMs can then charge the government the full cost for the drug even if a PBM has a significant discount. This deceptive practice increases the cost of prescription drugs for beneficiaries of Federal Government prescription drug programs.

Let's break that down, Mr. Speaker. When we talk about Federal drug programs, these taxpayer-funded programs, we are talking about my taxes, your taxes, and everybody else's taxes. That is why this is important and needs to be addressed. This is what is the problem.

This lack of transparency is unacceptable and jeopardizes the quality of care for millions of patients across the

United States. Northeast Georgia has a vibrant pharmacy community, but its pharmacies are being threatened by the unfair practices of the PBM. The fact is—and I have made mention of this before—several pharmacists tell me that if something doesn't change, we are going to see more and more of those pharmacies disappear within the next few years.

I introduced the Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act to help address this situation. My legislation preserves pharmacy access for patients by allowing pharmacists to know the sources PBMs are using to set reimbursement rates for community pharmacists.

PBMs' prices are often based on incentives for manufacturers not disclosed for long periods of time. Oversight of PBMs ensure taxpayers are not footing the bill for generic prescriptions by providing transparency into how drug acquisition costs are determined. The Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act also prevents PBMs from forcing their customers to fill or purchase prescriptions from pharmacies owned and controlled by the same PBM.

Let me go back over that real quickly. The PBMs, the pharmacy benefit managers, are allowed to force customers to fill or purchase prescriptions from pharmacies they own and control. There is no transparency here. They are simply controlling a system and running the market out. This means patients can keep the pharmacists they like rather than being improperly incentivized or coerced to use a PBM-owned pharmacy.

Finally, it would require PBMs to update their MAC pricing list every 7 days, codifying current CMS rules for Medicare part D and expanding it to TRICARE and FEHP. This legislation is vitally important to improving fairness and transparency in drug pricing and reimbursements to independent and community pharmacists.

I will tell you this: I've heard story after story, and we will continue these tonight. The community pharmacists may be muzzled by PBMs, those that are still. There may be fear of retaliations. But I won't let those concerns go unnoticed. We are going to continue to take this fight to the floor so there will be a voice for transparency and fairness for community pharmacists, for patients, and for taxpayers. Because if they think they can pull a fast one on the Federal Government at the cost of taxpayers, then they have got another thing coming. They may go in and intimidate and strong-arm our community and independent pharmacists. They may threaten them to keep quiet. They may tell them not to go to their elected officials or have a voice to say that we think that there is a better way, or just to be able to compete on a fairness level without anything else except just let us compete. The PBMs may try to strong-arm them and to silence them into submission, but they are not going to be able to silence me.

They can't audit me, and they can't do that to the American pharmacist who is simply trying to be a part of this system.

There is nobody that can understand that better than my friend from south Georgia. He is a pharmacist by training. He has left the pharmacies behind so that he can come up here and help us continue this fight for patient care and patient health all across this country. He is a champion in every sense of the word of this industry because, as the old saying is, he is one. He comes tonight to talk further and provide insight into this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER). It is good to have him back in the fight tonight.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for hosting this tonight and for his advocacy on the part of the community pharmacy, but, more importantly, on the part of the patients, because that is what this is about. This is about patients, about patient care, about escalating prescription costs. That is what we are talking about here, about unfair trade practices.

This is America. Like my colleague mentioned earlier, I am not opposed to anybody making money. That is great. More power to them. But where there is a problem with transparency, there is a problem with PBMs. There is a problem with escalating drug prices.

I want to mention that I have been a practicing pharmacist, as Representative COLLINS mentioned, for over 30 years. I have worked with my neighbors and my friends to really provide a helpful voice for their needs. Beneficiaries are facing increased costs in prescription drugs without much of a basis notification as to why these costs are skyrocketing.

My friend, Representative COLLINS; my friend, Representative SCOTT; others—even on the other side of the aisle—Representative PETER WELCH, Representative ELIJAH CUMMINGS, and Representative DAVE LOEBACK, this is a nonpartisan issue. Everybody has to have prescription medications. Whether you are a Democrat, whether you are a Republican, whether you are an Independent, it doesn't matter. Everyone is the victim of escalating prescription drug costs. The problem is we have got to understand where that is coming from.

I thank Representative COLLINS for his legislation, the Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act, to bring about greater transparency in the role that pharmacy benefit managers, the PBMs, have in the drug pricing structure.

Many people don't understand the structure or where the additional fees are originating from, which is often a direct result of the lack of transparency between the manufacturer and the dispenser. Let me repeat that. Many people don't understand the structure. I will be quite honest with you. I have been working with this for over 30 years, and I still don't under-

stand it. In fact, I have got numerous examples of where CEOs have said they don't understand it. It is intentionally—intentionally—complicated so that no one understands it.

I had the opportunity last year as a member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. We had the CEO of Mylan pharmaceuticals. Mylan, of course, is the manufacturer of EpiPen. It went up in price. The EpiPen costs \$600 for a dual pack.

I said: Okay. When it leaves you, the manufacturer, you are the beginning. You are the manufacturer. How much have you got in costs?

She responded: I have got \$100, maybe \$150 in costs.

I said: Okay. You are the beginning. I am the end. I am the dispensing pharmacist. When it gets to me, it is \$600—\$150 at the beginning, \$600 at the end. What happened in between? What happened in between?

Now, a lot of times it is lost on some of my colleagues here and on the average American because all they are concerned about what the copay is, if the copay is \$15 or if the copay is zero. Okay.

But keep in mind that somebody somewhere is still paying that \$600. In a lot of cases, it is the Federal Government through Medicare part D or State Medicaid plans. Somebody somewhere is paying it.

But when you have the CEO of a manufacturer, when I asked her a direct question, "What happens in between that \$150 and that \$600?" and she says, "I don't know," and I am the pharmacist and I say, "I don't know either," somebody somewhere has to know. I can tell you it is the middle man.

The most effective, the most immediate impact that we can have on prescription drug pricing is to pass this bill that Representative COLLINS has and to have transparency in drug pricing. Sunshine is the greatest disinfectant of all. If we have sunshine, we will have lower drug prices if we have transparency.

I want to give a couple of other examples. My colleague, Representative COLLINS, mentioned about three PBMs controlling 80 percent of the market. That is not competition when you have got three companies that control 80 percent of a market.

Did you know that Express Scripts, the number one PBM in the country, had gross revenues almost equal to McDonald's, Ford Motor Company, and Pfizer pharmaceuticals added together? Added together, this one PBM.

Now, again, I am not opposed to anyone making money. More power to them. But how are they making it? Nobody knows.

Why don't we have transparency?

Everybody wants lower drug prices, and we have all got to do a better job. Pharmaceutical manufacturers have got to do a better job. Pharmacists have got to do a better job. GPOs have got to do a better job. But until we

have transparency, we are never going to be able to get it under control.

I want to give a couple of other examples. The manufacturer of the hepatitis C drug has had so much criticism about the price, and it is too expensive. Gilead pharmaceuticals makes SOVALDI. SOVALDI accused Express Scripts of not warning them to go down on the price of SOVALDI. Gilead said: You never wanted us to go down on that price because you are getting a percentage rebate. The higher the cost of that medication, the higher rebate you are getting.

My colleague mentioned about the lawsuit that Anthem has against Express Scripts. Anthem is not going to renew their contract with Express Scripts because they are suing them for billions—that is billions with a "B"—of dollars, saying: You owe us billions of dollars.

These are real-life examples of what I am talking about. That is why we need to pass the Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act that Representative COLLINS is pushing so hard, and has been, and we thank him for that.

I want to also talk about some other bills here continuing in the theme of transparency. We have an opportunity to address the issue of retroactive DIR fees and the impact they have on drug pricing. My colleague, Representative SCOTT, mentioned DIR fees and clawbacks. DIR fees are having a negative impact on the ability to provide accurate and comprehensive services to the beneficiary.

Those fees are a large unknown for pharmacists and don't provide clarity on drug costs to the patient or whether they will be able to accurately meet the needs of their patients. Ultimately, the patient ends up being penalized, and that is an issue that must be addressed. Ultimately, what this boils down to is the patient—the patient, Mr. Speaker, the patient. Let's stay focused on what we are supposed to be focused on, and that is the patient.

We talk about drug costs and we talk about healthcare. We want accessibility, we want affordability, and we want patient-centered healthcare.

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That is what we want in prescription drugs, accessibility and affordability. Yes, they need to come down in prices. And again, the most effective, the immediate impact that we can have is to have transparency, transparency in the middleman in what they are doing.

That is the reason why Congressman MORGAN GRIFFITH's legislation is helpful in bringing about stability. Pharmacies would no longer be penalized for providing the same quality service they always have simply because PBMs have shifted cost under a lack of transparency. With this legislation, we can keep costs down for beneficiaries.

Now, I want to talk about another piece of legislation that another good friend, Representative BRETT GUTHRIE from Kentucky has introduced, H.R.

592, the Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act, to address the role of pharmacists in rural communities. With this bill, many of the individuals who seek consultation, especially seniors, can contribute to receive quality input and expertise.

There are many underserved and rural areas of the country where patients don't have access to a primary care provider but have access to a pharmacist. Pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare professionals that we have. That is why provider status is so important. That is what we call this, the Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act.

Under this legislation, pharmacists can continue to service those rural and underserved areas and fill a role that is vital to the healthcare of these residents in these areas.

I also want to compliment and commend Representative GRIFFITH again on his efforts to keep patients' access to compounded medications intact. In June, he introduced a Preserving Patient Access to Compounded Medications Act of 2017. This bill will provide further guidance for the FDA, medical providers, patients, and compounding pharmacies about what constitutes pharmacy compounding and what is regarded as drug manufacturing. This legislation will provide a crucial balance between public safety and patients' access to the medications they need.

Lastly, the leadership of the Energy and Commerce Committee has been critical in advancing legislation both in the 114th and 115th Congress that will lead to research and development of new drugs and treatments. I commend my colleagues on their hard work and thank my good friends for the opportunity to speak tonight on this issue that is very important to me.

Mr. Speaker, the President has identified escalating prescription drug cost as being one of his biggest priorities. He has said himself: If you are on the other side of research and development, you need to beware because we are coming after you. PBMs, you are on the other side of research and development, and we are coming after you.

This is too important. It is too important to the patients who are trying to get these medications, who need these medications. All we are asking for here is transparency. All we are asking for is to shine the light on what is going on.

I know they make it difficult to understand. It is a shell game. It is nothing more than a shell game. Again, I want to commend my colleague, my friend, Representative COLLINS, for his untiring advocacy on the part of community pharmacists and on the part of citizens who need and depend on their community pharmacists.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend. He has brought out so many things. And you know, Representative CARTER, one of the things that is off the top, when we

talk about Mack Transparency, when we talk about this list we talk about, one of things they come back at us, and they say: Well, it is going to increase cost. You know, if you do this, it increases cost.

And it is sort of interesting because in Texas, this actually happened in 2013, they did their top 200 drugs, and they were somewhere in the neighborhood of a little over \$200. And then in just a matter of 3 years, those average prices of those 200 drugs dropped to below \$100.

We are both from Georgia when we were talking about it. That is going down. It is not going up. It is because they are actually having to show what they are doing. That is why this—don't you agree that that is why we are having to do what we are doing here?

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. There is no question about it. Let me, if I may.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Continue.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, if I might just give two examples. First of all, there is an example of Caterpillar. Caterpillar has done away with PBMs. They have done away with the third parties. They are doing it themselves. And you know what it has resulted in? Stable drug prices for the past few years.

As opposed to the increases that most companies have seen, Caterpillar, when they cut out the middleman, they have had stable drug prices. They said: We can do this better. And they have done it better.

Keep in mind—the second thing that I want to point out is, keep in mind, why were PBMs created? First of all, they were created to process claims, insurance claims. But what is their purpose? They will tell you our purpose is to keep drug prices down. Our purpose is to keep drug prices down.

Mr. Speaker, how is that working out for you? They are not keeping drug prices down. They are keeping drug prices up. They are one of the reasons why drug prices are going up, one of the primary reasons.

I can remember when I started practicing pharmacy in 1980. And I am proud to say that I am that old. I started practicing pharmacy in 1980. We used to buy directly from the drug companies. I would buy directly from Upjohn, from Merck Sharp & Dohme, from Squibb, from whoever. There was no middleman there. Now I can't even do that. I have to go through the PBM. I have to go through all these different layers and layers in order to get the medication.

PBMs, if their purpose is to control drug prices, then what is going on? Because drug prices are escalating. What a tangled web we weave.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is that, and I think the interesting thing is the middleman who produces nothing on their own. That is the thing. They don't produce anything in this. They are simply—you know, I think I will just sort of describe it like I see it in northeast Georgia. It is like

a tick on the back of a dog. They just simply suck profit off and do not do what you exactly just said. They don't do what they just said.

I mean, Caterpillar. You brought up Caterpillar. I will bring you some numbers with Caterpillar. Caterpillar started moving away from PBMs. They suspected that they could save as much as, in a quarter, \$150 million in drug prices being spent inefficiently.

They went back and did their own formularies. They worked this out so that they are on this straight, and just—the company saved 5- to \$10 million per year in just cholesterol-lowering statins alone, one of the most widely prescribed medications, just in that right there.

When you see how PBMs claim to save money, you look at the Caterpillar model. There are other models out there that are finally looking at this and saying: We can do this in a better way.

And I appreciate your input tonight. I think that has been—you are just highlighting this that there are ways to do this. This is not the only way. And to go into State legislators, and to go into county offices, and to go into county governments, and the Federal Government, and to pull the wool saying "we are saving money," while all along we are seeing this tangled web of DIR fees and clawback and no transparency.

You know, it isn't amazing to me that they are spending so much money on advertising right now. It is not amazing to me that they are trying to spend so much money claiming what we are saying is not true. But they never address the point. They never say this is not true. They simply say we are saving all this.

I encourage the Energy and Commerce Committee to take these bills up, hold hearings on these things. They are not going to deny it, and they are going to find out that, unfortunately what is supposed to be a help has been really falling backwards, and actually, you know—and really, even from the Federal Government, those community and independent pharmacists are not wanting.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, if I could just mention one thing, and I would be remiss if I did not mention this, because the gentleman has just brought up an outstanding point, and that is: What value are they bringing to the system? What value are PBMs, are middlemen, bringing to the system? That is what I would ask.

Now, look, pharmaceutical manufacturers need to do a better job. They need to bring their prices down. But I will cut them some slack. At least they are using their profits to go back into research and development. At least they are doing that. PBMs don't put one red cent into research and development, not one red cent.

I repeat what I said earlier. I am not against anybody making money, but, Mr. Speaker, this is causing escalating

drug prices. The lack of transparency is causing the problems that we are experiencing right now.

The most immediate, the most effective impact that we can have on prescription drug prices is transparency. Sunshine is the greatest disinfectant out there, and we need sunshine.

Thank you for what you are doing for the patients. Thank you for what you are doing for the people who are struggling to pay for their prescriptions. That is what this is about.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it has always been about that. I have come to this well and come to this floor on many occasions to talk about it. And when you look at the impacts they are having on DIR fees and these clawback fees that are coming back after the fact and not at the time of when there is no really need or cause for it, according to the Community Oncology Alliance, pharmacists lose \$58,000 per practice, on average, to DIR fees each year. You know, this makes it completely—I mean, think about that.

Mr. Speaker, if you had a business in which you had \$58,000 just sucked away for no apparent reason, I mean, this is—we wonder why this is happening, and we wonder why people can't get their drugs. We wonder why people wonder why can't I get this drug? Why do I have to wait to get approval here? It is this area right here—DIR fees.

And I do applaud my friend, Mr. GRIFFITH from Virginia, who has introduced this bill, and I am a proud cosponsor with him on this.

You know, it is amazing today to see when patients—when this happens in Medicare part D, the beneficiaries are going through this process, and really what happens, it increases the problem called the doughnut hole, and they are hitting that doughnut hole sooner, forcing them to pay out of pocket for their drugs. And when patients pass through the doughnut hole into catastrophic coverage, CMS takes on most of the cost of burden-sharing.

Now, here is where it gets important, Mr. Speaker. When CMS picks it up, the cost increased from 10 billion in 2010 to 33 billion in 2015. You cannot tell me DIR fees are not part of that problem right there. You cannot tell me that what they are doing is now taking—they are simply reaching into your pocket, Mr. Speaker. Maybe you can feel it right now. You can feel that hand going into your wallet. You can feel that tax money being taken out and being taken away, sucked away by PBM through these fees and DIR fees, and they are getting into it through Medicare part D. And 10 billion to 33 billion increase is simply from 2010 to 2015.

Pharmacists are at distinct disadvantage when DIR is taken and collected from pharmacies after point of sale. There is a lack of transparency in the detail provided to pharmacists, and the retroactive nature of these fees creates operational and cash flow challenges for pharmacists.

Think about having something that you think you have one price on, and they come back and say: No, you messed it up.

We talked about so many different things. We talked about how PBMs can come in and audit basically their competitors. We talked about how they can send out letters to a pharmacy's clients and say: This pharmacy is no longer taking this prescription plan. And then when the pharmacist points it out, they say: Yeah, you are right; you still have the plan.

And the pharmacists have the audacity to ask: Would you please send a letter to these people who you just sent a letter to and tell them you were mistaken? And the PBM said: No, we can't do that; you will have to do that on your own.

Is this America, Mr. Speaker? Where do we operate like that? And we wonder why our healthcare system and these community pharmacists are bearing the brunt of it.

At the end of the day, it is about people. It is about moms and dads. It is about kids. It is about those folks who simply want a healthcare system that works. And one of the most visible parts of the healthcare system is the community pharmacist, the one who dispenses the drug and asks them: How are you doing? How are the kids? Are you taking your medicine?

And they will ask those questions that maybe some of us just don't want to ask our doctor. You know, you might just ask that pharmacist that question and say: Really, what does this do to me?

That is what we need. And as long as they are being frontally assaulted, retroactively assaulted with DIR fees, and generally pummeled out of business, the PBM will continue to just drown our community and independent pharmacists.

And as long as that happens, there will be myself and others in the well speaking the truth and pushing our committees to do something about this, because at the end of the day, businesses ought to operate properly. But when you are affecting the taxpayer dollars, when you are going after taxpayers, and you are doing so in a way that takes pharmacists out of the loop, you have threatened them, you have done everything else you can to them, well, the day is over, this Congress will continue to fight. And there are many Members who are learning what is going on, and it is now time I challenge this body and the committees of relevant jurisdiction to take this issue up because we are not going to stop.

And we will be back soon, Mr. Speaker, with some more details on this issue and how much it can be effective. And with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak, and thank you, Congressman COLLINS, for your leadership and persistence on this critical issue.

Community pharmacies are so important to our Districts. There is nothing like walking into your local pharmacy, and the pharmacist knows you by name. He knows your medical history. He knows what you need. He knows you.

As one community pharmacist described, "People call me all hours of the day and night. They know where I live, and they come to my house if they need me."

These local pharmacies are in danger of disappearing across the Nation. Why? Because PBMs are running them out of business.

Pharmacy Benefits Managers, or PBMs, claim to act as middlemen and help pharmacies and manufacturers find the best deals for their patients. It's a great idea.

Despite these PBMs' promises, I have heard from more and more pharmacy owners in my District who say that many PBMs are in reality ripping them off with various unethical tricks of their trade.

PBMs are often dictating the prices charged by manufacturers and pharmacists or insurance plans. PBMs are a key problem behind drug price inflation.

One critical aspect of their strategy is gag orders that they impose on pharmacists and manufacturers in contracts, thereby silencing dissenters under threat of being excluded from networks or formularies . . . in other words, under threat of being blocked from buying and selling in the drug market altogether.

Often, PBMs use what they call clawbacks. The outright cost of a drug might only be \$40, but the patient might have to pay double or more than that price through their insurance.

Too many times, pharmacists have to decide between two choices: either violate their consciences by watching often low-income patients pay exorbitant prices—or tell the patients to buy the drug outright, saving them money.

But the second choice comes with a threat . . . because if a pharmacist informs her patients about how to save money, she is violating her contractual gag order imposed by PBMs.

A pharmacy consultant recently interviewed by the LA Times accurately described PBMs like this—"The PBMs are sitting at the center of a big black box. They're the only ones who have knowledge of all the moving pieces."

But awareness of PBMs' deceitful practices is increasing. More and more pharmacists and manufacturers are speaking up and exposing PBMs.

One endocrinologist and professor of medicine at the University of Washington recently said, "It's becoming very, very common to see patients intentionally withholding their insulin." Doing so can be deadly, but patients are often facing \$300 per vial and need two vials a week.

There are three PBMs that control the market: ExpressScripts, OptumRx, and CVS Caremark. These three PBMs rake in over \$200 billion a year and are responsible for 290 million Americans through their contracts with both private insurers and government programs like Medicare.

CMS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, is "wising up" to PBMs. In June, CMS proposed a new guideline for Medicare Part D PBMs. If finalized, this guidance will address PBMs' common practice of imposing retroactive fees.

One of the pharmacists in my District told me these retroactive fees, known as DIR fees, can cost him tens of thousands of dollars months after the claims have been processed with no clarification, no explanation, no reasoning from the PBM.

No business or even individual can plan a budget, if months later they may be forced to pay thousands of dollars more for something they thought they had already paid for.

According to one expert and pharmacy owner in my District, he has seen three causes for recent increases in prescription drugs:

(1) FDA involvement, including requiring "modern clinical trials" of old drugs that have worked for decades;

(2) drug manufacturers' needlessly hiking the price of generic drugs;

(3) PBMs charging ridiculous prices for drugs and pocketing the profits.

According to my constituent, PBMs are the main culprit of the three.

A number of lawsuits are being filed against PBMs, including one class action lawsuit. More and more people are realizing what one lawyer said recently: "We describe this as basically a massive fraud."

We need to address artificially high drug prices right away. A good place to start is PBMs and their "massive fraud."

As one small town pharmacist said, ". . . The pharmacy benefit managers . . . set rates I cannot control. I can complain, but it does no good whatsoever. And in a town of 3,000, I cannot make it up on volume."

PBMs must be more transparent in their operations, so they can be held to their promises and to the laws.

PBMs must not be able to get away any longer with conducting business with their unethical, at best, methods.

In short, PBMs must be held accountable for their roles in the Nation's drug price crisis.

□ 2100

KEEPING AMERICA'S SKIES SAFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BACON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk for a few minutes about the FAA reauthorization act, better known as the AIRR Act.

Now, this particular bill has two components: modernization and privatization. President Trump, being a great businessman, the very astute businessman that he is, has told us that we need to modernize our airspace, our air traffic control facilities, everything that allows us to continue to have the safest and busiest airspace, literally, in the world, and I agree wholeheartedly with our great President that we do need to modernize. The issue that I have is with the privatization part.

As mentioned, our airspace is the busiest it has ever been. On a daily basis, somewhere between 87,000 and 88,000 flights take place in the airspace of the United States of America.

We have been asked to compare our air traffic control system with that of

our great neighbor to the north, Canada, but the issue with that, Mr. Speaker, is that Canada only has a small, small fraction of the air traffic that we have here in the great United States.

The U.S. airspace is unique because it is a public resource that is accessible to all users, and it is protected by the fact that the air traffic organization, under the FAA, is directly accountable to Congress, but more importantly, to the American people.

Handing over that control of air traffic services to a private corporation, as this AIRR Act wants to do, will put the interests that right now are under the tutelage of air traffic control to a board of directors that may not have the interests of the American taxpayer and the consumer as its foremost priority.

Under the plan that is in the AIRR Act, this corporation will not be answerable to Congress. The only thing they will have to do is to provide reports on its operations every now and then. Under this plan, Congress has ceded its oversight over a major component of interstate commerce and, might I add—very important—national defense.

There is also very little oversight from our executive branch, the President. Decisions by the corporation to change safety standards or to reduce air traffic services will be subject to minimal scrutiny from the Department of Transportation. Also, as stated, the President will have limited authority to take command of the airspace unless there is a declaration of war.

On the cost and the funding uncertainties, I have an issue with this AIRR Act. The CBO predicts that this plan will cost the Federal Government—which, by the way, is us, taxpayers—\$21 billion over the 10-year budget window, but this doesn't take into account any other factors that will probably exceed that cost by many, many billions, and that is with a B. The administration's fiscal 2018 budget paints a fuller picture of the costs, and it estimates a \$46 billion cost over the same 10-year period.

Mr. Speaker, we have got enough budget problems without adding more gasoline to the fire.

The problem is that this revenue is critical for filling the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, which pays for popular programs like the Airport Improvement Program that communities all across the country rely on for their airport improvements, to pay for infrastructure upgrades, runway overlays, lighting, taxiways, those types of things that are essential for an airport to work.

The FAA bill before us authorizes more funding for the Airport Improvement Fund program, which is great, but it is still uncertain where these funds will come from. What makes up for the shortfall? I don't see it in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a great swath of the great State of Louisiana,

good, good people, a lot of them in a rural community that are far away from any major metropolitan areas. My concern with this AIRR Act is that a private corporation concerned with raising money from user fees will be heavily incentivized to go to where the users are: the East Coast and the West Coast.

My question and my very much concern is: What happens to all of us in between that East Coast and West Coast? I worry that we will be left out of the mix and be left out of the equation because we will not be as able to contribute to user fees because of the population.

Decisions to change air traffic services can too easily be justified by this corporation, this private corporation that is talked about in this AIRR Act, and will face minimal scrutiny from the Department of Transportation.

A reduction in air traffic control services means a reduction in enplanements and a reduction in revenue at small, regional airports, just as I alluded to, and this makes it even harder to access the funding from the Airport Improvement Program.

All of these factors taken together will exacerbate the problem with access to air travel for 95-plus percent of the people in America, and this is hard for rural areas. They have a hard enough time making ends meet. They don't need the extra costs and the extra burden of traveling to a large city, maybe spending the night at a hotel to catch an early flight, the cost of transportation just so they can catch a flight to some other part of the United States.

The taxpayer seems to be on the hook here, too, under this AIRR Act. Under the plan, the Federal Government would simply hand over all the air traffic control assets to the private corporation free of charge, and this will negate decades and hundreds of billions—again, that is with a B—of dollars in taxpayer investments that the corporation will be able to dispose of and sell as it sees fit.

The plan will also create a potential multibillion-dollar unfunded liability for the Department of Defense to upgrade its systems to be interoperable with the new ATC corporation. What if the private corporation has one set of systems, our Department of Defense doesn't have that, but they have got to be talking to each other? This is a national security issue.

And again, who pays for that? Well, again, the taxpayers would certainly be on the hook to bring the Department of Defense up to speed. Again, this is something that we need to look very, very closely at in this bill.

The board of the corporation is not restricted in how much debt it can take on, and this sets up a very dangerous potential for a taxpayer bailout that, although this bill says it won't happen, I again question because these are the same types of promises that we got with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac,

and we know what happened then and how much the taxpayer had to dole out to bail them out.

I have alluded to the safety and national security issue, and I want to hit that a little bit harder.

Under the plan, the oversight from the air traffic safety organization—it is called AT SOS, Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service—sunsets after 2 years. My question with this AIRR Act is: What happens after the 2-year window? Who watches the gate?

And I do worry about that.

What happens if there are major safety breaches? And certainly we don't want any accidents, but what happens if there is a major accident after 2 years?

When it comes to the operation of our skies—safety, safety, safety. It trumps everything because we have lives at risk every day.

I go back to my opening remarks. We have the safest system, airspace in the world, and I am concerned that this safety could be jeopardized if our airspace is controlled by a private entity that is primarily motivated by raising revenue.

Control of our airspace is a critical function of national security. As Federal agencies, the FAA and the Department of Defense currently share airspace, training systems, assets, equipment, and information. Divorcing ATC, air traffic control, functions from the Federal Government and inserting an unaccountable third-party private contractor into the coordination of our airspace will make us more vulnerable to attack.

The private ATC corporation that the AIRR Act is touting will have access to highly sensitive information regarding strategic operations in our airspace without the same standards of protection that are required of Federal agencies, so I worry about leaks, those types of issues.

There is also a labor issue that, really, nobody is looking at, I am afraid, in this AIRR Act. I know many air traffic controllers personally. I fly in the United States airspace personally a lot. These are good, dedicated people, and I admire the work that they do every day to safely operate our skies; however, the major labor unions successfully negotiated to get every carve-out they wanted under this plan.

Mr. Speaker, I am a small government guy. I am the guy that stands up on the curb and says we need less government. There are limited areas where I personally believe government, our Federal Government, should be involved, but those are national defense, national security, major infrastructure projects like interstates, maintenance of large river systems, and aerospace and airspace. Everything else, let's let the States and the local governments handle it. I think they can do a better job.

But in this case, in our national airspace where we have both civilian and military operating, again, tens of thou-

sands of times a day, then we need to take a step back and look at our safety record. It has been impeccable for the last several years, and these air traffic controllers are doing a phenomenal job.

My concern, again, is that this private corporation that is in this AIRR Act that we will be asked to vote on will be required to hire all Federal air traffic organization employees, but they will continue to contribute to their Federal benefits and healthcare and continue to collectively bargain with their union representatives.

So, for me, trying to argue that this model of "privatization"—and I will use that in quotation marks—will increase efficiency and keep operational costs down, these labor provisions that we are giving them in this bill are not a very good ringing endorsement. So if we are going to talk privatization, let's not have a hybrid here. We need to keep it the way it is.

The airspace in America, no one can compare the size, the traffic, the complexity. It is just a phenomenal work of art that happens every day and, again, in a very safe manner. Try to compare us in America with any other system, whether it be the United Kingdom, whether it be Canada. It is like comparing apples to oranges. Again, our volume is so massive compared to any other country that you really can't compare them at all.

I want to give you an example. I wrote this down so I would get it right.

It says, in 2016, the FAA handled over 16 million flights in the U.S.—16 million, think about that—while NAV CANADA, which is the private corporation that handles Canada's airspace, only handled 5 million, 5.5 million, in the same year.

□ 2115

It is impossible to say whether a system similar to Canada's could be adopted in the United States. Mr. Speaker, I have flown in Canadian airspace. I have lost radar contact; I have lost communications; and that is, again, not any shun on Canada. They are a vast, large country with large swaths that are uncovered with radar, I am sure. But again, when I am up there talking to them, the times I have been up there, there may be only one other aircraft in the system or in that area with me.

Back in the United States, I have been in many situations in large areas like Dallas, Houston, or Chicago where it is so busy that you have to wait to get a word in edgewise. But when you do, you get very succinct instruction. You get vectored properly the right way, and you get separation of the small guys like myself from the large guys like the big airline carriers. Again, this routine happens thousands and thousands of times a day, and it happens without incident or accident.

So again, we have got a system that is working. Again, I am all for modernization. We need new equipment. We need better equipment for our airports

and for our air traffic controllers. Again, if it makes the system work more efficiently, I am all for that. But again, why take the air traffic controllers that have done such a great job for so many years out of the loop.

Modernization should be a goal of any system, and it doesn't just mean our airspace. Anything we can do in government to make it better and more efficient, I am all for it. Again, I am your less government guy. But in this instance, privatization of air traffic controllers is not the answer, especially when it means handing over the control of our airspace, the taxpayers' airspace, to a private board unaccountable to the Federal Government.

And I don't know, Mr. Speaker, but history tells me that they may come running back to Congress for a bailout when times get tough. I hope that doesn't happen if this bill should pass. Again, I am opposed to the bill. But we know it has happened so many times in the past when we have allowed situations like this to develop.

Can the Federal Government do a better job in implementing NextGen technology? NextGen technology is the next generation. Again, we live in a phenomenal world of technology. I am living proof of a pilot that used to fly with what we called steam gauges, where we had to look at things much differently. Now I fly in a cockpit that is completely digital. I am in awe of what I am flying in my little airplane as compared to what I was flying in just a few years ago. But we want that technology to be handled in the proper way. The FAA management issue can be fixed by this Congress.

Again, I go back. We have invested billions of dollars in this next generation technology. I simply don't want to take that pile of money and that technology and hand it to this private corporation and say: "Here, guys, it is yours now."

This is not what we are paid to do up here in Congress. We are paid to watch the taxpayers' money. Hopefully, part of our job is to watch where this money goes and to make sure it is spent wisely.

The uncertainty and the lost time of transferring this air traffic control to a private board will only cause delays. Again, I go back to what we have done in the past with other entities where we have tried to move from a Federal or a government agency to a private agency or vice versa. The transition time is usually lengthy. It is usually inefficient, and mistakes are made.

Here, Mr. Speaker, we are not talking just about civilian travel. We are talking about our Department of Defense, so it becomes a safety issue and a national security issue.

Modernization and privatization are not synonymous. They are actually two diverse courses that really have no business in the same bill. We should continue to take steps to provide adequate funding for the FAA and remove

barriers for modernization while maintaining U.S. airspace as the safest and most accessible in the world.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend everyone who has worked on this bill. There have been, I am sure, countless hours. There are some good things in this bill that we need to do. I have addressed the modernization issue. But again, it is the privatization of our air traffic control that gives me pause and that gives me great concern on some of the issues that I have mentioned here in this short period of time.

So I want to take a step back from this AIRR Act. I want to work with my colleagues, see what we can do to get it right and keep our skies safe. Once again I will say: I am the guy that wants less government. This is one of the few areas where government has done a good job, will continue to do a good job, and of those 87,000 flights a day, keep them safe.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MARINO (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of travel delays.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of attending to husband's health situation.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, July 18, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1997. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting a review of the Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG) program, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2433a(b); Public Law 111-23, Sec. 206(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 111-383, Sec. 1075(b)(35)); (124 Stat. 4371); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1998. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-123, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1999. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-129, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2000. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmit-

ting a report entitled, "Metropolitan Police Monitor Nearly 2,500 Demonstrations in 2014-2016 and Report No First Amendment Inquires"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2001. A letter from the Acting Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's Semi-annual Report for the period ending March 31, 2017, pursuant to Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2002. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Pennsylvania Regulatory Program [SATS No.: PA-164-FOR; Docket No.: OSM-2016-0013; S1D1S SS08011000 SX064A000 178S180110; S2D2S SS08011000 SX064A000 17XS501520] received July 12, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2003. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Recovery and State Grants, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Population of Grizzly Bears From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife [Docket No.: FWS-R6-ES-2016-0042; FXES1113090000C6-178-FF09E42000] (RIN: 1018-BA41) received July 13, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

2004. A letter from the Director, National Legislative Division, American Legion, transmitting statements describing the financial condition of The American Legion as of December 31, 2016 and 2015 along with supplemental data; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2005. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the first session of the 115th Congress; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs.

2006. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of Strategic Operations and Regulatory Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Reform of Requirements for Long-Term Care Facilities [CMS-3260-F2] (RIN: 0938-AR61) received July 11, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2910. A bill to provide for Federal and State agency coordination in the approval of certain authorizations under the Natural Gas Act, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-223). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3050. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide Federal financial assistance to States to implement, review, and revise State energy security plans, and for other purposes; with an

amendment (Rept. 115-224). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2883. A bill to establish a more uniform, transparent, and modern process to authorize the construction, connection, operation, and maintenance of international border-crossing facilities for the import and export of oil and natural gas and the transmission of electricity; with an amendment (Rept. 115-225, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 1351. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to make certain improvements in managing TSA's employee misconduct, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115-226). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. House Joint Resolution 76. A resolution granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metropolitan Safety Commission; with an amendment (Rept. 115-227). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. House Joint Resolution 92. A resolution granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact (Rept. 115-228). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 451. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 806) to facilitate efficient State implementation of ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-229). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SIMPSON: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 3266. A bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-230). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CULBERSON: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 3267. A bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-231). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ADERHOLT: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 3268. A bill making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-232). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Natural Resources discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2883 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire (for herself and Mr. BERGMAN):

H.R. 3262. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide educational assistance to certain former members of the Armed Forces for education and training as physician assistants of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish pay grades and require competitive pay for physician assistants of the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 3263. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the Medicare independence at home medical practice demonstration program; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. KIND, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. COSTA):

H.R. 3264. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify certain tax incentives for biodiesel, renewable diesel, and alternative fuels; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RUTHERFORD (for himself and Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire):

H.R. 3265. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit certain E-2 nonimmigrant investors to adjust status to lawful permanent resident status; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BROWN of Maryland (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. LEE, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. VEASEY, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 3269. A bill to repeal the revised annuity employee and further revised annuity employee categories within the Federal Employees Retirement System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COOK (for himself and Mr. O'HALLERAN):

H.R. 3270. A bill to establish a procedure for resolving claims to certain rights-of-way, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DEGETTE (for herself, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mr. REED):

H.R. 3271. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act in order to strengthen rules in case of competition for diabetic testing strips, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. RUTHERFORD):

H.R. 3272. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a grant program to provide Veteran Student Centers at institutions of higher education to assist veterans in the pursuit of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. HECK, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. AGULLAR, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. LEE, Mr. GALLEGU, Mr. KEATING, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. COHEN, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. DELAURO, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. EVANS, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. MENG, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NADLER, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BEYER, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. CHRIST, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut):

H.R. 3273. 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 Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MCCARTHY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

H.R. 3274. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of President John F. Kennedy; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 3275. A bill to provide drought relief through innovation, increased water supply, and regional adaptation and self-sufficiency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure, Agriculture, Science, Space, and Technology, Ways and Means, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DESAULNIER (for himself and Ms. LEE):

H. Res. 452. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the necessity to publically exonerate the African-American sailors of the United States Navy who were tried and convicted of mutiny in connection with their service at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine in Concord, California, during World War II in order to further aid in healing the racial divide that continues to exist in the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

tives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire:
H.R. 3262.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, Congress has the power "to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 3263.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 3264.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

a) Article I, section 1, to exercise all legislative powers vested in Congress as granted in the Constitution;

b) Article I, section 8, clause 1, which states that, "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States";

c) Article I, section 8, clause 18, which gives Congress the authority "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof"; and

d) Amendment XVI, providing that "The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration."

By Mr. RUTHERFORD:

H.R. 3269.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 3266.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law. . . ." In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States. . . ." Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 3267.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representa-

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law. . . ." In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States. . . ." Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Mr. ADERHOLT:

H.R. 3268.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law. . . ." In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States. . . ." Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Mr. BROWN of Maryland:

H.R. 3269.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1, Sec. 8, Cl. 18)

By Mr. COOK:

H.R. 3270.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. DEEGETTE:

H.R. 3271.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida:

H.R. 3272.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 (Clauses 1, 12, 13, and 14) of the United States Constitution, which grants Congress the power to lay and collect taxes for the purpose of spending; to raise and support armies; to provide and maintain a navy; and to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 3273.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. MCCARTHY:

H.R. 3274.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 5 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution: "The Congress shall have the power . . . to coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures."

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 3275.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 36: Mr. MCHENRY.
 H.R. 48: Mr. CICILLINE.
 H.R. 76: Mr. SANFORD.
 H.R. 308: Mr. SANFORD.
 H.R. 350: Mr. NEWHOUSE and Mr. CALVERT.
 H.R. 367: Mr. GUTHRIE.
 H.R. 490: Mr. MCHENRY and Mr. YODER.
 H.R. 525: Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 545: Mr. SMUCKER.
 H.R. 632: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
 H.R. 669: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
 H.R. 676: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
 H.R. 681: Mr. SANFORD and Mr. BERGMAN.
 H.R. 712: Mr. CORREA.
 H.R. 721: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.
 H.R. 747: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
 H.R. 750: Mr. NADLER.
 H.R. 828: Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 830: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H.R. 849: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. BLUM, and Mr. KNIGHT.
 H.R. 873: Mr. GIANFORTE and Mrs. NOEM.
 H.R. 911: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
 H.R. 997: Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida.
 H.R. 1046: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 1057: Mr. PETERS, Mr. CALVERT, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
 H.R. 1090: Mr. MACARTHUR.
 H.R. 1141: Mr. DEUTCH.
 H.R. 1148: Mr. GOTTHEIMER and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
 H.R. 1152: Mr. SANFORD.
 H.R. 1164: Mr. DENHAM and Mr. YODER.
 H.R. 1203: Mr. BANKS of Indiana.
 H.R. 1212: Mr. BACON and Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico.
 H.R. 1261: Mr. ROUZER and Mr. PEARCE.
 H.R. 1288: Ms. ROSEN.
 H.R. 1317: Mr. TURNER and Mr. STIVERS.
 H.R. 1322: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
 H.R. 1334: Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 1337: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
 H.R. 1341: Mr. SANFORD.
 H.R. 1416: Mr. MEEHAN.
 H.R. 1421: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania and Mr. BERA.
 H.R. 1478: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
 H.R. 1516: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H.R. 1539: Mr. PASCRELL.
 H.R. 1566: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
 H.R. 1606: Ms. MENG and Mr. SIRES.
 H.R. 1618: Ms. LOFGREN.
 H.R. 1661: Mr. TAYLOR.
 H.R. 1673: Mr. SUOZZI.
 H.R. 1676: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire and Mr. NEWHOUSE.
 H.R. 1772: Mrs. DAVIS of California and Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 1796: Ms. ROSEN.
 H.R. 1847: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
 H.R. 1874: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
 H.R. 1928: Mr. VEASEY, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
 H.R. 1937: Mr. ROKITA.
 H.R. 1953: Ms. ROSEN.
 H.R. 2049: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 2069: Mr. FASO.
 H.R. 2101: Mr. PERRY.
 H.R. 2150: Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. STIVERS.
 H.R. 2152: Mr. LABRADOR.
 H.R. 2259: Mr. RASKIN.
 H.R. 2298: Mr. OLSON.
 H.R. 2315: Mr. DENHAM, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. NORMAN, Ms.

TSONGAS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. JONES, and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 2340: Mr. WELCH, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 2368: Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 2383: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 2478: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 2482: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 2505: Ms. MENG.

H.R. 2601: Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana.

H.R. 2651: Mr. CALVERT, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. CARBAJAL, and Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 2666: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2687: Mr. PETERSON, Ms. ESHOO, and Ms. HANABUSA.

H.R. 2690: Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 2712: Mr. CHABOT and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 2723: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 2725: Ms. MOORE and Mr. LAWSON of Florida.

H.R. 2740: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. FASO, and Mr. PARENTHOLD.

H.R. 2775: Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 2796: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 2800: Mr. LAWSON of Florida.

H.R. 2821: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 2823: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. FOX, and Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 2853: Mr. GALLAGHER.

H.R. 2856: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 2859: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 2908: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2938: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 2961: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 2976: Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. TONKO, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 3029: Mr. POCAN, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. RASKIN.

H.R. 3040: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3053: Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. CLAY, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 3057: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 3182: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 3218: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 3220: Mr. HIGGINS of New York and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 3239: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3259: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.J. Res. 51: Ms. HANABUSA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. FASO, and Mr. BLUM.

H. Con. Res. 60: Mr. SHUSTER and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H. Res. 15: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia and Mr. ZELDIN.

H. Res. 319: Mr. GOWDY.

H. Res. 349: Ms. LOFGREN.

H. Res. 399: Mr. ALLEN.

H. Res. 445: Mr. GARRETT, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, and Ms. NORTON.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative CASTOR (FL) or a designee to H.R. 806, the Ozone Standards Implementation Act of 2017, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or

limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9
of rule XXI.



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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 reports 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 it 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 Staplcotn 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 "Pyrooxulam; 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-AA00) (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.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING COMMUNITY BRIDGES OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 40th anniversary of Community Bridges of Santa Cruz County, which has acted as a catalyst for a brighter future by opening doors, offering hope, and providing a hand up to the people of Santa Cruz County, California, since 1977.

Community Bridges' family of ten vital programs meets the needs of more than 22,000 children, families and seniors each year. Its programs empower seniors to live with independence and dignity, increase access to medical care and good nutrition, and provide education and family support.

Throughout the years, Community Bridges has helped launch more than ten nonprofit programs, saved five from closing their doors, and provided leadership to countless community initiatives. Every day, they work collaboratively to build on the safety net in our community and discover solutions to emerging issues across a broad spectrum of stakeholders. Community Bridges effectively engages a broad base of support to carry on their important mission that touches every part of our community for the benefit of all who live and work here.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Community Bridges for 40 years of strengthening our diverse community by providing innovative human services.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JUSTICE KATHRYN WERDEGAR

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of California Supreme Court Justice Kathryn Werdegard on her retirement after 23 years of exceptional stewardship on the court and 55 years of public service.

A resident of Marin County, Justice Werdegard received her Bachelor's degree with honors from the University of California, Berkeley, whereupon she began her subsequent legal studies and became the first woman to be elected editor-in-chief of the California Law Review. She completed her law degree at the George Washington University School of Law, where she graduated as the valedictorian of her class.

Upon graduating from law school, Justice Werdegard went to work as an attorney for the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in 1962. She showed clear determination and initiative, working directly with Attorney General Robert Kennedy and writing the

amicus brief that pressed for the release from jail of Martin Luther King, Jr.

After moving back to California in 1963, Justice Werdegard took on a number of academic and legal challenges before going to work as a research attorney for the State Court of Appeal in 1981. Showing a voracious work ethic and attention to detail, she went on to become a senior staff attorney for the California Supreme Court only four years later.

Justice Werdegard's career as a judge began in 1991, when Governor Wilson appointed her to the State Court of Appeal, only ten years after becoming a staff member for that body. Shortly thereafter, in 1994, Justice Werdegard was appointed by the Governor to the California Supreme Court where she has been ever since.

During her tenure on the California Supreme Court, Justice Werdegard strove to understand the real world impacts of each case brought before her. In doing so, she went beyond politics and ideology to prioritize the rights of people in both her majority and dissenting opinions. Some notable examples of this include her majority opinion that greatly softened California's three strikes law, her 2008 ruling that bans on same-sex marriages are unconstitutional, and her single dissenting opinion that gun manufacturers have a responsibility for the weapons they sell to the public. Because of her clear dedication to the law and rigorous approach to each case, Justice Werdegard is well regarded by her colleagues on and off of the bench.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing deep appreciation for Justice Werdegard's extraordinary service to the legal profession and the public at large by extending to her best wishes on her retirement.

TRIBUTE TO MARTHA RIVERA CHAVIS

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues here in the House of Representatives to join me as I rise to pay tribute to Martha Rivera Chavis, and the many contributions she made as a dedicated resident of Montclair, New Jersey, and to countries abroad.

Born and raised in the Dominican Republic, Mrs. Chavis was an astounding woman who loved caring and providing service to people. She completed her studies at San Pedro Apostol Catholic School in the Dominican Republic and received her degree in French Civilization from Sorbonne University in Paris, France in 1987. Following her graduation she served as a French to Portuguese translator for the Republic of Angola's Ambassador to the United Nations. It was during this time she met the love of her life, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Franklin Chavis. The couple married in September, 1988.

Mrs. Chavis was a beloved mother and fierce advocate for freedom, justice, and equality in the United States, Africa, and the Dominican Republic. She was an astounding First Lady of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, and First Lady of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Her service, however, far expanded from her First Lady roles. After her husband, Rev. Dr. Chavis, visited Angola, the couple cared for nine Angolans including six children with missing limbs as a result of the civil war in Angola, in their home in Montclair, New Jersey. Due to the Chavises' unwavering care, when the nine Angolans returned to Africa, they were able to go back with prosthetics.

Mr. Speaker, I know my fellow members of the U.S. House of Representatives agree that Mrs. Chavis deserves to be recognized for a job well done, and for many years of service to her local and international communities.

ONGOING EFFORTS TO SUPPRESS THE VOTE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to bring awareness to the Trump Administration's nefarious voter suppression campaign. On June 28, a letter from the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity asked states to hand over personal information of voters ranging from Social Security numbers to party affiliation.

As I have stated before, these so called "election integrity" efforts are a sham, and a "solution" that is in search of a problem. The Administration's ridiculously inaccurate claim that the President lost the popular vote due to millions of undocumented immigrants illegally voting is just another false and misleading statement. There are no facts that back up the Trump Administration's claims. Unfortunately, these false claims are now being used as a justification to illegally collect voter information and suppress Americans' sacred right to vote.

Fortunately, these voter suppression efforts by the Trump Administration have received bipartisan opposition. When asked if he would release his constituents' private information, the Secretary of State from Mississippi, Mr. Delbert Hosemann, said that "they can go jump in the Gulf of Mexico, and Mississippi is a great state to launch from". The Secretary of State from my home state of Alabama, Mr. John Merrill, has also refused to turn over private information. The opposition to this commission is so strong that 44 states have refused to turn over this private information.

If the Trump Administration were truly concerned about the integrity of our elections, he would join Congress in condemning Russia for interfering in our election and work with our intelligence community to prevent future election-related cyber threats.

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

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

This year, I introduced an amendment to the 2017 Intelligence Authorization Act that provides our lawmakers, election officials, campaigns, and the public with additional information and resources to defend our democracy against emerging cyber threats. Our intelligence community warns that if we do not act on this issue, our democracy will again fall victim to Russian cyber-threats. The cybersecurity of our elections shouldn't be a partisan issue, and I was proud to see the House Intelligence Committee take a step forward together by passing my amendment.

We have come too far to allow for voting barriers to be resurrected, or to allow our electoral process to be hijacked by a foreign entity. We have no choice but to move forward and unite to ensure that every citizen of the United States has the opportunity to vote. I call on all of my colleagues to condemn the malicious Election Integrity Commission created by this administration, and support my bill, H.R. 2978—The Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2017 to restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

WHAT WE ALL OWE TO LIU
XIAOBO

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, Liu Xiaobo's premature death was a jarring shock to everyone who admired this champion of freedom and democracy. We mourn his loss because it is a tragic loss for his wife, family and friends and a catastrophic loss for China and the entire world.

We owe Liu Xiaobo a debt of gratitude because he demonstrated that the noble ideas of democracy and due process, liberty and the rule of law are not foreign ideas in China.

These are universal principles that beat strongly in the hearts of people everywhere from New Jersey to the Ninevah plains of Iraq, from Poland to Peru, and from Burma to Beijing.

We owe Liu Xiaobo a debt of gratitude because he reminded us that the desire for democracy and human rights is shared by everyone because each person is endowed by the Creator with inalienable rights.

The Chinese Communist Party has tried to curtail his ideas, they call them dangerous and subversive, and they seek to silence, censor, and repress them. Yet, they live on in the hearts of untold millions of Chinese people.

With Liu Xiaobo's death, we are also reminded of the words of Dr. Martin Luther King who said "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." We should all agree that what was done to Liu Xiaobo and his wife Liu Xia was a grave injustice.

Liu Xiaobo's imprisonment in 2009 became a death sentence. The blame for this should lie squarely on the Chinese government and for his death they alone should be held accountable.

Liu Xiaobo was the first Nobel Peace Prize winner to die in state custody since Carl von Ossietzky died after being held in a Nazi concentration camp.

The Chinese government complained that it was "stabbed in the back" by those expecting

it to deal quickly with its client state in North Korea. How shameful it is to play the victim card while a victim of their own repression lay dying.

No nation should be judged entirely by crimes of the past, but this crime—the death and silencing of Liu Xiaobo—should follow the Chinese Communist Party like an unwashable, permanent stain.

We must never forget Liu Xiaobo's enduring contributions—whether during the Tiananmen Massacre where he helped save the lives of many students or with Charter 08—the treatise urging political and legal reforms in China based on constitutional principles.

We must not forget Liu Xiaobo; we must advance and preserve his legacy, and repeatedly confront the Chinese Communist Party with his ideas and memory.

In this time of need we must signal the Congress's unanimous support for Liu Xiaobo's family, his wife Liu Xia, and all those bravely standing up for human rights and liberty in China.

I was invited by Liu Xiaobo's family to attend the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. It was a moving ceremony; the now famous empty chair spoke volumes about the Chinese Communist Party's abiding fear that human rights and democracy will undermine its power.

I will always remember the words of Liu Xiaobo's speech that day about the importance of pressing for human rights: "Freedom of expression is the foundation of human rights, the source of humanity, and the mother of truth. To strangle freedom of speech is to trample on human rights, stifle humanity, and suppress truth."

And he also expressed his hopes for China's future: ". . . I firmly believe that China's political progress will not stop, and I, filled with optimism, look forward to the advent of a future free China. For there is no force that can put an end to the human quest for freedom, and China will in the end become a nation ruled by law, where human rights reign supreme."

Liu Xiaobo will, sadly, never see a free China. Chinese authorities have gone to great lengths to stifle his ideas and those who followed him. In recent years, the government of President Xi Jinping has engaged in an extraordinary assault on the rule of law, human rights, ethnic minority groups, and civil society.

As China's economic and military might grows, more and more countries will be afraid to raise subjects that the Chinese Communist Party wants to make taboo.

The U.S. stands alone—inadequate as its efforts are at times—in its willingness to keep on raising human rights issues that need to be raised. The U.S. cannot lightly shrug off the mantle of being democracy's defender, no matter how heavy that mantle may become.

It is tempting to be pessimistic about China's future and the future of U.S.-China relations. But I am not pessimistic. Constant repression has not dimmed the desires of the Chinese people for freedom and reform. I attribute this fact, in part, to Liu Xiaobo's ideas and example.

Nevertheless, the U.S. cannot be morally neutral or silent in the face of the Chinese government's repression of fundamental freedoms. Human rights are not a secondary interest, but one critically linked to U.S. economic and security interests.

The U.S. must not shy away from meeting with China's other Nobel Laureate, the Dalai Lama, or other dissidents. We must use Congressionally authorized sanctions to hold Chinese officials accountable for torture and gross abuses. We must connect Internet and press freedoms as both economic and human rights priorities. And we must demand, repeatedly and clearly, that the unconditional release of political prisoners is in the interest of better U.S.-China relations.

I believe that someday China will be free. Someday, the people of China will be able to enjoy all of their God-given rights. And a nation of free Chinese men and women will honor and celebrate Liu Xiaobo as a hero. He will be honored along with all others like him who have sacrificed so much, and so long, for freedom.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
COMMANDER HAROLD CHAPMAN

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Harold Chapman, a resident of New York's First Congressional District and the 73rd AMVETS National Commander. Commander Chapman's unyielding work for both his country and fellow veterans exemplifies public service, and should be appropriately revered and respected. In light of his years of distinguished service to the United States and her people, I am proud to offer this statement in honor of Commander Harold Chapman.

Commander Chapman is an honorably discharged veteran of the United States Air Force, with his Vietnam War-era service including 18 months in the Pacific Theater, as well as postings at air bases in California and Texas. Following his honorable discharge, Commander Chapman began his service at the AMVETS Department of New York, taking command of AMVETS New York Post 18 in 1995. Remarkably, Commander Chapman went on to hold each chair in sequence at the AMVETS Department of New York before taking command of the entire department and its more than 70 posts in 2002.

Following his two terms as New York's representative to AMVETS' National Executive Committee, in 2008, Commander Chapman became the head of AMVETS District I. This impressive next step saw Commander Chapman oversee all AMVET members and Posts in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. While in command of District I, Commander Chapman's admirable efforts to grow AMVETS membership throughout his district merited him an award from AMVETS National Headquarters, in addition to previously being recognized as the Department of New York's AMVET of the Year.

Today, Commander Chapman travels the nation to hear directly from AMVETS members on a variety of issues and deliver their important concerns directly to the White House, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Congressional leaders in both the Senate and House of Representatives. As an essential voice in Washington for veterans

across the United States, Commander Chapman insists that aiding and protecting our veterans should always be one of our top priorities.

Mr. Speaker, Commander Harold Chapman's dedication to public service and commitment to helping our nation's veterans must be commemorated. Commander Chapman has always put his country before himself, and it is both an honor and privilege to serve as his Representative in Congress.

IN HONOR OF MAJOR GENERAL
ROBERT D. CARLSON

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Major General Robert D. Carlson, who departed from his role as Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Transatlantic Division, on July 14, 2017. Major General Carlson has dedicated his life to keeping this nation safe, and I am grateful for not only his outstanding service to our great nation, but also to the citizens of Virginia's 10th Congressional District in his capacity as commander of the Transatlantic Division, located in Winchester, Virginia.

At a young age, Major General Carlson chose to pursue a career of service in defense of the freedoms that we cherish. This led him to attend the United States Military Academy where he earned a Bachelor of Science in general engineering. Upon graduation, Major General Carlson was commissioned into the Engineer Regiment and later received a Master of Science in engineering management from the University of Missouri and a Master of Arts in strategic studies from the United States Army War College (USAWC) at Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Throughout his distinguished career, Major General Carlson has served in numerous command and staff positions from company-to division-level units. Before assuming his current position, some of Major General Carlson's assignments include commanding the 372nd Engineer Brigade and the Contingency Response Unit, 416th Theater Engineer Command, and serving as the Chief of Staff, U.S. Agency for International Development. The colossal amount of prestigious awards and decorations that he has attained are illustrative manifestations of his heroic service and devotion to this nation. These honors, among others, include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Department of State Meritorious Honor Award, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal with Bronze Service Star, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, Global War on Terror Service Medal, NATO-SFOR (Balkans) Medal, NATO-ISAF (Afghanistan) Medal, Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, and the Engineer Regiment Bronze DeFleury Medal.

Under his esteemed leadership as commander of the Transatlantic Division, he oversaw both the USACE Contingency Construction Program and the Associated Foreign

Military Sales Construction Programs, which provided vital facilities for U.S. Forces and our allies throughout the Middle East. Additionally, Major General Carlson has also been a proponent of increasing awareness of and expanding opportunities for today's youth in the Science, Engineering and Technical career fields and has been involved in STEM-related events, such as National Engineer Week and TAM-sponsored STEM events in the Winchester area.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire 10th District, I would like to express my gratitude to Major General Carlson for his dedicated career of service, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing such a truly commendable figure. I wish him and his wife, Valerie, and their three children, Cody, Chad, and Camie, all the best as he moves on to his next assignment.

IN HONOR OF CONSUL GENERAL
DR. ANDY DAVID

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the efforts of Dr. Andy David, Israel's Consul General to the Pacific Northwest, who has worked tirelessly to deepen the ties between our two nations, as he completes his tour of duty at the Consulate General of Israel in San Francisco.

Dr. Andy David began his appointment as Consul General in August 2012. He has focused his work on relationship building with essential organizations such as the American Jewish Committee and promoting the special relationship between Israel and the U.S.

Throughout his career in public service, Dr. David has focused his work to advance U.S.-Israeli relations in the areas of economic development, business ties and trade opportunities.

Dr. David helped launch a cultural exchange with Israeli artists and the City of San Francisco, developing a strong exchange program with San Francisco-based artists and their Israeli counterparts.

Under Andy's guidance, the University of California system signed a new cooperation agreement with Israel designed to foster technological innovation, research, and development. This collaboration is aimed at helping American and Israeli companies increase competitiveness and improve the commercial success of both countries in global markets.

In 2014, after a series of anti-Israel rallies cropped up throughout San Francisco, Dr. David and fellow pro-Israel supporters organized a rally to show solidarity for continued U.S. support of Israel and increase morale for Israeli soldiers fighting against terrorist groups in Gaza.

Today, a strong U.S.-Israeli relationship is more important than ever. Without the selfless dedication of public servants like Dr. David, the peace and security of both nations would suffer.

The United States knows no greater friend than Israel, and Dr. David has done an extraordinary job of fostering an understanding among Americans of the importance of Israel to the security of the United States. I hope the

accomplishments made by Dr. David will inspire a future generation of public servants to deepen the ties between our countries.

Mr. Speaker, the partnership between the United States and Israel will continue to reap Dr. Andy David's contributions for years to come, and I rise to express my profound gratitude for his tremendous service.

RECOGNIZING MASTER SERGEANT
STANLEY W. TALBOT AND THE
RENAMING OF CENTENNIAL
BRIDGE

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the renaming of the Centennial Bridge in Rock Island to the Stanley Talbot Memorial Bridge in honor of Master Sergeant Stanley W. Talbot. After serving our community for decades—and after being taken from us far too soon—it is fitting that we honor Master Sgt. Talbot and his family for his dedication, selflessness and public service.

Every day we rely on men and women in uniform to protect our families, as they bravely risk their lives for our safety. We must never forget that these men and women are mothers, fathers, sons, daughters and friends. As the wife of a Sheriff, I sympathize with the family, friends and colleagues of Master Sgt. Talbot. He was a beloved member of the community and his 26 year service to the Illinois State Police deserves to be honored in a public and lasting way.

Memorials and dedications like these help us to remember his sacrifice and the brave sacrifices of those that come after him. Once again, I want to honor Master Sgt. Talbot, and support law enforcement within our community.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF MRS. ANITA JOHNSON TO
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Financial Services Committee, its Chairman, Mr. HENSARLING, and the U.S. House of Representatives, as I pay tribute to one of the hardest working and dedicated employees this House has ever known.

Mr. Speaker, for over 30 years Anita L. Johnson has served this chamber with distinction, undeniable integrity, humility, kindness, grace, and skill. For the past several years, she has worked ably and diligently as the Chief Administrative Officer for the Democratic Staff of the Financial Services Committee.

Mrs. Johnson began her career on Capitol Hill in 1982 as the Office Manager and Personal Assistant to then-Congressman Harold Ford, Sr. In 1986 she became Office Manager and Personal Assistant to Congressman SANDY LEVIN.

Although her husband's transfer relocated Mrs. Johnson away from Capitol Hill and back to her home town of Memphis, Tennessee, for three years, she returned to the Hill in 1989. For the next decade, she served as Executive Assistant and Clerk for the Education and Labor Committee Democrats. In 1999, she became the Chief Administrative Officer and Clerk for Democrats on the Judiciary Committee—a position she held for twelve years.

In 2013, Mrs. Johnson joined the Financial Services Committee and has remained the Chief Administrative Officer and Clerk until her retirement today.

From my time on the Judiciary Committee and as Ranking Member of the Financial Services Committee I have personally come to know Anita Johnson. She is a tireless and relentless worker, an excellent multi-tasker, doing whatever it takes to accomplish tasks both large and small. When everyone else is stressed because of the pressure, she remains calm.

She is a true professional, whose expertise, integrity, dedication and commitment have served as an example to her peers and colleagues. Her willingness to go the extra mile, her insights and opinions have been extremely valuable to the successful undertakings of each office she has served—especially my own.

She has flawlessly maintained budgets totaling millions of dollars, ensured the smooth running of each office in which she worked; skillfully clerked dozens of markups, and provided valuable assistance to myself, other Members, and staff.

Prior to her time on the Hill, Mrs. Johnson was an educator teaching at Wooddale Senior High School (Memphis, TN); Hazelwood Senior High School (St. Louis, MO); Ivanna Eudora Kean High School (St. Thomas, USVI); and, Savannah Area Vocational Technical School (Savannah, GA). Additionally, Anita has been a member of the Washington Performing Arts Society Men and Women of the Gospel for years; and, has performed at the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall; TNT's "Christmas in Washington"; and, the Kennedy Center Honors. With the Trinity Choir at Alfred Street Baptist Church, Alexandria, Virginia, Anita has also performed in Austria, Italy, Germany, Paris, Brussels, and Amsterdam.

On behalf of the Financial Services Committee, its staff, and this distinguished body, we would like to thank Anita for her commitment to the U.S. House of Representatives and her exemplary service to this nation. Her humility, integrity, generosity, loyalty, sense of humor and professionalism will be sorely missed. She has served as a cherished colleague, mentor and friend to many present and former Hill staff members. We wish her the best of luck and extend to her our deepest gratitude as she leaves Capitol Hill.

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT
JUSTICE RITA B. GARMAN

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Illinois Supreme Court Justice Rita B. Garman for her exemplary work on the court for the past 16 years.

In acknowledgement of Justice Garman's service, the Vermilion County Board voted to rename the county courthouse "The Rita B. Garman Vermilion County Courthouse." A ceremony dedicating the renamed courthouse will be held on August 4th.

Justice Garman is a 1965 University of Illinois graduate and a 1968 graduate of the University of Iowa College of Law. She began her judicial career at the Vermilion County Courthouse as an associate judge.

She served dutifully and responsibly as a judge in the Fifth Judicial Circuit Court from 1986 to 1995. After that, her dedication and perseverance led her to become an Illinois State Appellate Court Justice. In February 2001 she was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court, and she went on to serve as Chief Justice from 2013 to 2016. She continues to serve the people of Illinois as a member of the Supreme Court.

I have come to know Justice Garman over the last few years and applaud her for many years of dedication to upholding the law and pursuing justice. I want to personally congratulate her for this recognition by Vermilion County as they rename the courthouse The Rita B. Garman Vermilion County Courthouse.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I will vote against H.R. 2810, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2018 (Roll no. 378). I commend the House Armed Services Committee for tackling some difficult issues, but I remain concerned about several components of the bill, including its lack of fiscal discipline and use of budget gimmicks.

There are provisions of this legislation that I support. I am pleased this bill includes a provision expressing the sense of Congress that climate change is a direct threat to the national security of the United States. The bill would also support a 2.4 percent military pay raise and would require the Pentagon to report to Congress any attempts by Russian actors to hack the Defense Department's system.

However, by authorizing a total of \$621.5 billion in base budget authority, exceeding the \$549 billion cap set in the 2011 Budget Control Act, and using \$10 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding for base defense requirements, Congress and the administration are misusing budget mechanisms to pad their accounts in an era of fiscal uncertainty. The bill puts off making tough decisions about our defense spending.

The legislation also keeps intact funding for several unnecessary weapons programs and undermines key international nuclear non-proliferation efforts. The bill authorizes full

funding for the Air Force's next generation air-launched cruise missile, known as the Long-Range Standoff weapon (LRSO), even though Secretary of Defense Mattis has stated numerous times that he is skeptical we actually need it. I offered an amendment to keep funding for the LRSO at FY17 levels until the administration submits a Nuclear Posture Review to Congress, but it was unfortunately not accepted.

The bill also requires the Department of Defense to develop a missile system that, if tested or deployed, would violate U.S. obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. I offered an amendment to prohibit this system's development until military experts, diplomats and our NATO allies certify that they agree with this approach, but this amendment too was rejected.

Additionally, the legislation caps funding for nuclear weapon dismantlement at \$56 million for FY19 through FY21, making us less safe.

Beyond nuclear weapons and treaties, the legislation maintains a prohibition on transferring detainees in Guantanamo Bay detention facility to the United States and bars the construction or modification of facilities within the U.S. to house detainees for another year. It's past time that we closed this military prison. We can safely and securely imprison anyone we need to without the extraordinary expense of this recruiting tool for ISIS.

The bill also prohibits a new round of base realignment and closure (BRAC), rejecting the Department of Defense's request for flexibility to implement BRAC for the sixth year in a row.

The best way to support our troops is to fight for common-sense budgeting and spending these sums out properly.

IN RECOGNITION OF NANCY HUBBARD FOR HER LIFETIME OF SERVICE TO THE DEARBORN COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Nancy Hubbard for her service and dedication to the City of Dearborn. As one of the city's longest serving City Council members, Ms. Hubbard was a tireless public servant who left a legacy of achievement and will be missed.

Ms. Hubbard began her career as a secretary with Ford Motor Company and later worked for the Dearborn Department of Public Works and Dearborn Department of Building and Safety. She was elected to the Dearborn City Council in 1990 and compiled a distinguished record of success during her 24 years on the council. Ms. Hubbard has spent 16 years serving as the Council President Pro Tem, where she used the leadership position to advocate on behalf of the city's residents. She played a key role in the establishment of the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center and in expanding the greenway trail system in the city. She was also involved in economic development initiatives, including the establishment of the Dearborn Town Center and the redevelopment of the Warren Avenue and Dix-Vernor business corridors. As a result of her work, Dearborn has been transformed

into a thriving community that effectively serves the needs of the city's residents.

Ms. Hubbard's commitment to public service and the City of Dearborn helped improve the quality of life for the community while driving economic development in the area. As a lifelong resident of Dearborn, Ms. Hubbard's deep ties to the area allowed her to effectively engage with her constituents and address pressing issues facing the city at large. She was a tireless advocate during her career with the City Council who remained personally engaged with city's residents throughout her life, and her passion for public service will be missed. It is my hope that the city will continue to build on Ms. Hubbard's outstanding legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Nancy Hubbard for her public service with the Dearborn City Council. Ms. Hubbard lived a life dedicated to public service and well-being of others.

IN HONOR OF SERGEANT MAJOR
RONALD E. JOHNSON

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Sergeant Major Ronald E. Johnson, who departed from his role as Command Sergeant of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Transatlantic Division, on July 14, 2017 and will be retiring from the United States Army after over thirty years of honorable service. Sergeant Major Johnson has dedicated his career to keeping this nation safe, and I am grateful for not only his exemplary service to our nation, but also his service to the residents of Virginia's 10th Congressional District in his position as Command Sergeant of the Transatlantic Division, located in Winchester, Virginia.

Sergeant Major Johnson entered the Army in November of 1986 from Terre Haute, Indiana. Over the course of his illustrious career, he has served in a plethora of different capacities, including as a team leader, squad leader, platoon sergeant, drill sergeant, Equal Opportunity adviser, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of Directorate of Public Works, first sergeant and command sergeant major. Additionally, Sergeant Major Johnson has completed a multitude of tours of duty abroad, including in Germany, Honduras, Thailand, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom I and Operation Enduring Freedom IX and XI. His steadfast commitment to defending this nation and courageous service are evident by the immense amount of awards and decorations that have been bestowed upon him. These honors, among others, include two Legions of Merit, three Bronze Stars, three Meritorious Service Medals, a Joint Service Commendation Medal, six Army Commendation Medals, five Army Achievement Medals, nine Good Conduct Medals, two National Defense Service Medals, three Southwest Asia Service Medals, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, three Afghanistan Campaign Medals, United Nations Medal, NATO Medal, Kuwaiti Liberation Medal, four NCO Professional Development Ribbons,

Overseas Service Ribbon, two Meritorious Unit Citations; Combat Action, Drill Sergeant, and Parachutist Badges; Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal, and the German Physical Fitness Proficiency (Sportsman) Badge.

Mostly recently, under his guidance as Commander Sergeant of the Transatlantic Division for the past three years, Transatlantic Division organizations have completed more than \$1.7 billion in construction projects in the combat regions of Afghanistan. These efforts have included large scale military installations and utility projects, which have been vital to training Afghan security forces and providing the area with a reliable source of power. In addition to his work crucial to enhancing our national security, Sergeant Major Johnson has always been solicitous about the welfare and professional development of his soldiers and established a formal military professional development program and a very active mentoring program.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire 10th District, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Sergeant Major Johnson for his dedicated career of service, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a highly venerated figure. I wish him all the best as he moves on to the next phase in his life.

RECOGNIZING DEPUTY SILVIO
DEANGELO IV AND OFFICER
MATTHEW CAVANAGH

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Deputy Silvio DeAngelo IV of the Delaware County Sheriff's Office and Officer Matthew Cavanagh of the Glenolden Borough Police Department. These men saved the life of my staffer and friend Joseph Campisi when he suffered a heart attack on April 19th, 2015.

Joe had just finished a game of basketball at the L.A. Fitness in Springfield, PA when he suddenly collapsed. Fortunately, Deputy DeAngelo and Officer Cavanagh happened to be finishing a workout at that very moment. Despite being off-duty and having never used a defibrillator on a live person before, they immediately sprang into action. Their training came through in the clutch and they were able to resuscitate him before the EMTs arrived. Thanks to their heroism and decisive action, Joe's heart was beating again in less than two and a half minutes.

After 8 days in a coma, open heart surgery, five weeks in the hospital, and another six months of recovery, Joe was once again able to rejoin my staff. Now, more than two years since his heart attack, I am happy to say that Joe has made a full recovery. Looking at him today, you would never know he came within an inch of death.

Without the bravery and quick-thinking of Officer Cavanagh and Deputy DeAngelo, my friend Joe would not be here today. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in thanking these two law enforcement officers. They represent the very best the First District of Pennsylvania has to offer.

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM W.
"HOOTIE" JOHNSON

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 17, 2017

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on July 14, 2017, South Carolina lost an esteemed businessman and dedicated public servant with the death of William W. "Hootie" Johnson. He made a positive difference with his philanthropic efforts and I am grateful for his longtime service as Chairman of the Executive Committee at Bank of America and Chairman of Augusta National Golf Club. On Monday, July 17, 2017, a funeral service will be conducted at Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina.

The following thoughtful obituary was appropriately published in The State on July 15, 2017:

Mr. Johnson died Friday, July 14, 2017, at the age of 86. Hootie Johnson was a former chairman of the Executive Committee of Bank of America's Board of Directors. He had also served on the Boards of Directors of Alltel Corporation, Duke Energy Corporation, Liberty Corporation and Stephens, Inc. He was the husband of Pierrine Baker Johnson and was a son of the late Dewey H. and Mabel Woodward Johnson. He was born in Augusta, Georgia. Mr. Johnson held a B.S. degree in business administration from the University of South Carolina as well as an Honorary Doctor of Law degree. Honorary Doctor of Humanities degrees were also conferred upon him by the Medical University of South Carolina and Lander University. He served as chairman of both the South Carolina Ports Authority and the South Carolina Research Authority, as well as a member of The South Carolina State Development Board. Mr. Johnson also served as chairman of the Committee to Develop a Plan of Desegregation of the National Urban League. He was a Laureate of the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame. The State newspaper named Mr. Johnson as one of South Carolina's 15 most influential business leaders of the 20th Century. Mr. Johnson, an independent, was active in politics serving as finance chairman for Governor Robert McNair, Governor Carroll Campbell, Governor David Beasley, Senator Strom Thurmond, Senator Bob Dole and President George H.W. Bush. Mr. Johnson was chairman of Augusta National Golf Club and chairman of the Masters Tournament from 1998-2006 and chairman emeritus from 2006-present. He held memberships in Biltmore Forest Country Club, Forest Lake Club, the Palmetto Club, the Flamenco Club and the Centurion Club. Memorials may be made to the USC Moore School of Business. Dunbar Funeral Home, Devine Street Chapel, is assisting the family. In addition to his wife, Pierrine, Mr. Johnson is survived by daughters and sons-in-law, Jennifer and Chuck Todd, and Marie and John Fairey, all of Columbia, Sally and Ronnie Wrenn of Charlotte, and Jane and Dan Breeden of Spartanburg; grandchildren, Charlie Todd, Pierrine Todd Thomas, John Fairey, Jr., Harriett Fairey Gilmer, William Fairey, Holt Wrenn, Sarah Wrenn, Mary Breeden, Sally Breeden and Anne Breeden Pitt; great-granddaughters, Louise Thomas, Mabel Marie Gilmer, Florence Elizabeth Wrenn and Elsie Fairey; great-grandsons, Robert Gilmer, John Gilmer, John Fairey III, Willard Fairey, Gage Fairey, William Thomas, Charles Todd IV and Dewey Wrenn. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death

by his sister, Dorothy Ellington, and his brother, D. Wellsman Johnson.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, July 18, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JULY 19

9 a.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Susan M. Gordon, of Virginia, to be Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence, Robert P. Storch, of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General of the National Security Agency, Department of Defense, and Isabel Marie Keenan Patelunas, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, Department of the Treasury.

SH-216

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine illicit cigarette smuggling in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe region.

SD-106

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ajit Varadaraj Pai, of Kansas, Jessica Rosenworcel, of Connecticut, and Brendan Carr, of Virginia, each to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission.

SD-G50

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on National Parks

To hold hearings to examine S. 257, to clarify the boundary of Acadia National Park, S. 312, to redesignate the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site as the "Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park", S. 355, to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability, S. 391, to establish the African Burial Ground International Memorial Museum and Educational Center in New York, New York, S. 841, to designate the Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus,

Ohio, as the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, S. 926, to authorize the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to establish the National Global War on Terrorism Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia, S. 1073, to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, S. 1202, to modify the boundary of the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, S. 1403, to amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in national service positions to conserve, restore, and enhance the great outdoors of the United States, S. 1438, to redesignate the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in the State of Missouri as the "Gateway Arch National Park", S. 1459, to establish Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Park in the State of South Carolina, and S. 1522, to establish an Every Kid Outdoors program.

SD-366

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine S. 1514, to amend certain Acts to reauthorize those Acts and to increase protections for wildlife.

SD-406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Marvin Kaplan, of Kansas, and William J. Emanuel, of California, both to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider the nomination of David P. Pekoske, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Postal Service's actions during the 2016 campaign season, focusing on implications for the Hatch Act.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Justice's enforcement of the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

SD-226

1:30 p.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Thomas G. Bowman, of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary, Brooks D. Tucker, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary (Congressional and Legislative Affairs), and James Byrne, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Michael P. Allen, of Florida, Amanda L. Meredith, of Virginia, and Joseph L. Toth, of Wisconsin, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

SR-418

2 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Luis E. Arreaga, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala, and Sharon Day, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of

Costa Rica, both of the Department of State.

SD-419

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

4:15 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues

To hold hearings to examine the collapse of the rule of law in Venezuela, focusing on what the United States and the international community can do to restore democracy.

SD-419

JULY 20

Time to be announced

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Thomas G. Bowman, of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary, Brooks D. Tucker, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary (Congressional and Legislative Affairs), and James Byrne, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Michael P. Allen, of Florida, Amanda L. Meredith, of Virginia, and Joseph L. Toth, of Wisconsin, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

TBA

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Kay Bailey Hutchison, of Texas, to be United States Permanent Representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of Ambassador, Kelly Knight Craft, of Kentucky, to be Ambassador to Canada, and Robert Wood Johnson IV, of New York, to be Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, all of the Department of State.

SD-419

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Christopher A. Wray, of Georgia, to be Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Jeffrey Bossert Clark, of Virginia, and Beth Ann Williams, of New Jersey, both to be an Assistant Attorney General, and John W. Huber, to be United States Attorney for the District of Utah, all of the Department of Justice, and Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

SD-226

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine housing finance reform, focusing on maintaining access for small lenders.

SD-538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet

To hold hearings to examine an update on FirstNet.

SR-253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Brenda Burman, of Arizona, to be Commissioner of Reclamation, and Susan Combs, of Texas, and Douglas W.

Domenech, of Virginia, both to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of the Interior, and Paul Dabbar, of New York, to be Under Secretary for Science, David S. Jonas, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, and Mark Wesley Menezes, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary, all of the Department of Energy.

SD-366

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife

To hold hearings to examine innovative financing and funding, focusing on addressing America's crumbling water infrastructure.

SD-406

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Business meeting to markup an original bill entitled, "Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2018", an original bill entitled "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018", and subcommittee funding guidance.

SD-106

2 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

JULY 25

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on SeaPower

To hold hearings to receive testimony on options and considerations for achieving a 355-ship Navy from naval analysts.

SR-222

JULY 26

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining

To hold hearings to examine S. 32, to provide for conservation, enhanced recreation opportunities, and development of renewable energy in the California Desert Conservation Area, S. 90, to survey the gradient boundary along the Red River in the States of Oklahoma and Texas, S. 357, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain public lands in San Bernardino County, California, to the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, and to accept in return certain exchanged non-public lands, S. 436, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to retire coal preference right lease applications for which the Secretary has made an affirmative commercial quantities determination, to substitute certain land selections of the Navajo Nation, to designate certain wilderness areas, S. 467, to provide for the disposal of certain Bureau of Land Management land in Mohave County, Arizona, S. 468, to establish a procedure for resolving claims to certain rights-of-way, S. 614, to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a pilot program for commercial recreation concessions on certain land managed by the Bureau of Land Management, S. 785, to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to provide for equitable allotment of land to Alaska Native veterans, S. 837, to provide for the conveyance of certain land to Washington County, Utah, to authorize the exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Utah, S. 884, to amend the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 to require the Bureau of Land Management to provide a claimant of a small miner waiver from claim maintenance fees with a period

of 60 days after written receipt of 1 or more defects is provided to the claimant by registered mail to cure the 1 or more defects or pay the claim maintenance fee, S. 941, to withdraw certain National Forest System land in the Emigrant Crevice area located in the Custer Gallatin National Forest, Park County, Montana, from the mining and mineral leasing laws of the United States, S. 1149, to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to repeal a provision limiting the export of timber harvested from land conveyed to the Kake Tribal Corporation under that Act, S. 1230, to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, S. 1271, to designate certain mountain peaks in the State of Colorado as "Fowler Peak" and "Boskoff Peak", and S. 1548, to designate certain land administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service in the State of Oregon as wilderness and national recreation areas and to make additional wild and scenic river designations in the State of Oregon.

SD-366

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Federal infrastructure permitting and the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council.

SD-342

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office reports on human trafficking of American Indian and Alaska Natives in the United States.

SD-628

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S4009–S4027

Measures Introduced: Four bills were introduced, as follows: S. 1568–1571. **Page S4026**

Appointments:

Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission: The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 115–31, appointed the following individuals to serve as members of the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission: The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski of Maryland, Karen V. Hill of New York. **Page S4027**

Shanahan Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense. **Pages S4010–15, S4016–20**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 88 yeas to 6 nays (Vote No. 161), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S4016–17**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at 12 noon, on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, there be 15 minutes of post-cloture debate, equally divided in the usual form, on the nomination, and that following the use or yielding back of that time, Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination, and that if the nomination is confirmed, Senate immediately resume consideration of the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit. **Page S4020**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, at approximately 10 a.m., on Tuesday, July 18, 2017. **Page S4027**

Bush Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit. **Page S4015**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the

Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense. **Page S4015**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S4015**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S4015**

Bernhardt Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior. **Page S4015**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit. **Pages S4015–16**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S4015**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S4015**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S4024**

Executive Communications: **Pages S4024–26**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S4026–27**

Additional Statements: **Pages S4022–24**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S4027**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—161) **Pages S4016–17**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m. and adjourned at 7:06 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, July 18, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S4027.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE BUDGET

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budg-

et request for fiscal year 2018 for the Department of State and State Department reorganization plans, after receiving testimony from John Sullivan, Deputy Secretary of State.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 11 public bills, H.R. 3262–3265, 3269–3275; and 1 resolution, H. Res. 452, were introduced. **Pages H5919–20**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H5921**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2910, to provide for Federal and State agency coordination in the approval of certain authorizations under the Natural Gas Act, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–223);

H.R. 3050, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide Federal financial assistance to States to implement, review, and revise State energy security plans, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–224);

H.R. 2883, to establish a more uniform, transparent, and modern process to authorize the construction, connection, operation, and maintenance of international border-crossing facilities for the import and export of oil and natural gas and the transmission of electricity, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–225, Part 1);

H.R. 1351, to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to make certain improvements in managing TSA's employee misconduct, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–226);

H.J. Res. 76, granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–227);

H.J. Res. 92, granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact (H. Rept. 115–228);

H. Res. 451, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 806) to facilitate efficient State implementation of ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–229);

H.R. 3266, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–230);

H.R. 3267, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–231); and

H.R. 3268, making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–232). **Page H5919**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Taylor to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H5887**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:18 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H5889**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:07 p.m. and reconvened at 4:45 p.m. **Page H5890**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Designating the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center": H.R. 2210, to designate the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center", by a $\frac{2}{3}$ yeas-and-nay vote of 401 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 379; **Pages H5890–92, H5901**

Granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of

Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact: H.J. Res. 92, granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Area Transit Regulation Compact, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 402 yeas with none voting “nay”, Roll No. 380; and

Pages H5892–94, H5901–02

Granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission: H.J. Res. 76, amended, granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 399 yeas to 5 nays, Roll No. 381;

Pages H5894–H5900, H5902–03

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: “Granting the consent and approval of Congress for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and the District of Columbia to enter into a compact relating to the establishment of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission.”

Page H5903

Recess: The House recessed at 5:40 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

Page H5901

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yeas-and-nays votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5901, H5901–02, and H5902–03. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Appropriations: Full Committee held a markup on the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2018. The Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2018 was ordered reported, as amended.

OZONE STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION ACT OF 2017

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 806, the “Ozone Standards Implementation Act of 2017”. The Committee granted, by record vote of 6–3, a structured rule for H.R. 806. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority

member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–26 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Representatives Shimkus, Tonko, Olson, Cooper and Polis.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3218, the “Harry W. Colmery Veteran Educational Assistance Act of 2017”. Testimony was heard from Leader McCarthy, Representatives Takano, Bilirakis, Peters, Coffman, Wenstrup, Rutherford, Banks of Indiana, Messer, and Cook; Curtis L. Coy, Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, business meeting to mark up an original bill entitled, “Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018”, 10:30 a.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, business meeting to mark up an original bill entitled, “Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018”, 2:30 p.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of General Paul J. Selva, USAF, for reappointment to the grade of general and reappointment

to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of John H. Gibson II, of Texas, to be Deputy Chief Management Officer, Ellen M. Lord, of Rhode Island, to be Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Lucian Niemyer, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Matthew P. Donovan, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of the Air Force, all of the Department of Defense, 2:30 p.m., SD–G50.

Subcommittee on Seapower, to hold hearings to receive testimony on options and considerations for achieving a 355-ship Navy from former Reagan administration officials, 4 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of J. Paul Compton, Jr., of Alabama, to be General Counsel, and Anna Maria Farias, of Texas, and Neal J. Rackleff, of Texas, both to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Richard Ashooh, of New Hampshire, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Elizabeth Erin Walsh, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service, both of the Department of Commerce, and Christopher Campbell, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine the status and outlook for United States and North American energy and resource security, 10:30 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine comprehensive tax reform, focusing on prospects and challenges, 9 a.m., SD–215.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of David J. Kautter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, 11 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Callista L. Gingrich, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Holy See, Nathan Alexander Sales, of Ohio, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large, George Edward Glass, of Oregon, to be Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic, and Carl C. Risch, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary (Consular Affairs), all of the Department of State, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy, and Environmental Policy, to hold hearings to examine “The Four Famines”, focusing on root causes and a multilateral action plan, 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 3:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Nutrition, hearing entitled “The Next Farm Bill: Pathways to Success for SNAP Households”, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Full Committee, markup on the Subcommittee on Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, FY 2018; and the Subcommittee on Interior, Envi-

ronment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2018, 10:30 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, hearing entitled “ESSA Implementation: Exploring State and Local Reform Efforts”, 10 a.m. 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy, hearing entitled “Powering America: Examining the State of the Electric Industry through Market Participant Perspectives”, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled “Examining HRSA’s Oversight of the 340B Drug Pricing Program”, 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Securities, and Investment, hearing entitled “The Cost of Being a Public Company in Light of Sarbanes-Oxley and the Federalization of Corporate Governance”, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance, hearing entitled “Managing Terrorism Financing Risk in Remittances and Money Transfers”, 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled “Implementing the Global Food Security Act”, 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Transforming GPO for the 21st Century and Beyond: Part 2”, 10:30 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled “Examining Impacts of Federal Natural Resources Laws Gone Astray, Part II”, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled “Promoting Onshore Oil and Gas Development in Alaska”, 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 218, the “King Cove Road Land Exchange Act”; H.R. 2910, the “Promoting Interagency Coordination for Review of Natural Gas Pipelines Act”; and H.R. 2883, the “Promoting Cross-Border Energy Infrastructure Act”, 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Space, hearing entitled “Planetary Flagship Missions: Mars Rover 2020 and Europa Clipper”, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, hearing entitled “FAST Act Implementation: Improving the Safety of the Nation’s Roads”, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Trade, hearing entitled “Modernization of the North American Free Trade Agreement”, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of July 18 through July 21, 2017

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense, post-cloture, with a vote on confirmation of the nomination at approximately 12:15 p.m.

Upon disposition of the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense, Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit, with a vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon.

Upon disposition of the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit, Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior, with a vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Appropriations: July 18, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, business meeting to markup an original bill entitled, "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018", 10:30 a.m., SD-124.

July 18, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, business meeting to mark up an original bill entitled, "Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018", 2:30 p.m., SD-138.

July 20, Full Committee, business meeting to mark up an original bill entitled, "Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2018", an original bill entitled "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018", and subcommittee funding guidance, 10:30 a.m., SD-106.

Committee on Armed Services: July 18, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of General Paul J. Selva, USAF, for reappointment to the grade of general and reappointment to be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 9:30 a.m., SD-G50.

July 18, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of John H. Gibson II, of Texas, to be Deputy Chief Management Officer, Ellen M. Lord, of Rhode Island, to be Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Lucian Niemeyer, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Matthew P. Donovan, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of the Air Force, all of the Department of Defense, 2:30 p.m., SD-G50.

July 18, Subcommittee on SeaPower, to hold hearings to receive testimony on options and considerations for achieving a 355-ship Navy from former Reagan administration officials, 4 p.m., SR-222.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: July 18, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of J. Paul Compton, Jr., of Alabama, to be General Counsel, and Anna Maria Farias, of Texas, and Neal J. Rackleff, of Texas, both to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Richard Ashooh, of New Hampshire, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Elizabeth Erin Walsh, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service, both of the Department of Commerce, and Christopher Campbell, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, 10 a.m., SD-538.

July 20, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine housing finance reform, focusing on maintaining access for small lenders, 10 a.m., SD-538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: July 19, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ajit Varadaraj Pai, of Kansas, Jessica Rosenworcel, of Connecticut, and Brendan Carr, of Virginia, each to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission, 10 a.m., SD-G50.

July 20, Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet, to hold hearings to examine an update on FirstNet, 10 a.m., SR-253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: July 18, to hold hearings to examine the status and outlook for United States and North American energy and resource security, 10:30 a.m., SD-366.

July 19, Subcommittee on National Parks, to hold hearings to examine S. 257, to clarify the boundary of Acadia National Park, S. 312, to redesignate the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site as the "Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park", S. 355, to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability, S. 391, to establish the African Burial Ground International Memorial Museum and Educational Center in New York, New York, S. 841, to designate the Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus, Ohio, as the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, S. 926, to authorize the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to establish the National Global War on Terrorism Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia, S. 1073, to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, S. 1202, to modify the boundary of the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, S. 1403, to amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in national service positions to conserve, restore, and enhance the great outdoors of the United States, S. 1438, to redesignate the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in the State of Missouri as the "Gateway Arch National

Park”, S. 1459, to establish Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Park in the State of South Carolina, and S. 1522, to establish an Every Kid Outdoors program, 10 a.m., SD-366.

July 20, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Brenda Burman, of Arizona, to be Commissioner of Reclamation, and Susan Combs, of Texas, and Douglas W. Domenech, of Virginia, both to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of the Interior, and Paul Dabbar, of New York, to be Under Secretary for Science, David S. Jonas, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, and Mark Wesley Menezes, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary, all of the Department of Energy, 10 a.m., SD-366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: July 19, to hold hearings to examine S. 1514, to amend certain Acts to reauthorize those Acts and to increase protections for wildlife, 10 a.m., SD-406.

July 20, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife, to hold hearings to examine innovative financing and funding, focusing on addressing America’s crumbling water infrastructure, 10 a.m., SD-406.

Committee on Finance: July 18, to hold hearings to examine comprehensive tax reform, focusing on prospects and challenges, 9 a.m., SD-215.

July 18, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of David J. Kautter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, 11 a.m., SD-215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: July 18, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Callista L. Gingrich, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Holy See, Nathan Alexander Sales, of Ohio, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large, George Edward Glass, of Oregon, to be Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic, and Carl C. Risch, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary (Consular Affairs), all of the Department of State, 10 a.m., SD-419.

July 18, Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy, and Environmental Policy, to hold hearings to examine “The Four Famines”, focusing on root causes and a multilateral action plan, 2:30 p.m., SD-419.

July 19, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Luis E. Arreaga, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala, and Sharon Day, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Costa Rica, both of the Department of State, 2 p.m., SD-419.

July 19, Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women’s Issues, to hold hearings to examine the collapse of the rule of law in Venezuela, focusing on what the United States and the international community can do to restore democracy, 4:15 p.m., SD-419.

July 20, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Kay Bailey Hutchison, of Texas, to be United States Permanent Representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of Ambassador, Kelly Knight Craft, of Ken-

tucky, to be Ambassador to Canada, and Robert Wood Johnson IV, of New York, to be Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, all of the Department of State, 9:30 a.m., SD-419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: July 19, business meeting to consider the nominations of Marvin Kaplan, of Kansas, and William J. Emanuel, of California, both to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board, 10 a.m., SD-430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: July 19, business meeting to consider the nomination of David P. Pekoske, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Postal Service’s actions during the 2016 campaign season, focusing on implications for the Hatch Act, 10 a.m., SD-342.

Committee on the Judiciary: July 19, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Justice’s enforcement of the Foreign Agents Registration Act, 10 a.m., SD-226.

July 20, Full Committee, business meeting to consider the nominations of Christopher A. Wray, of Georgia, to be Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Jeffrey Bossert Clark, of Virginia, and Beth Ann Williams, of New Jersey, both to be an Assistant Attorney General, and John W. Huber, to be United States Attorney for the District of Utah, all of the Department of Justice, and Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, 9:30 a.m., SD-226.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs: July 19, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Thomas G. Bowman, of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary, Brooks D. Tucker, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary (Congressional and Legislative Affairs), and James Byrne, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Michael P. Allen, of Florida, Amanda L. Meredith, of Virginia, and Joseph L. Toth, of Wisconsin, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, 1:30 p.m., SR-418.

July 20, Full Committee, business meeting to consider the nominations of Thomas G. Bowman, of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary, Brooks D. Tucker, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary (Congressional and Legislative Affairs), and James Byrne, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Michael P. Allen, of Florida, Amanda L. Meredith, of Virginia, and Joseph L. Toth, of Wisconsin, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

Select Committee on Intelligence: July 18, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 3:30 p.m., SH-219.

July 19, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Susan M. Gordon, of Virginia, to be Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence, Robert P. Storch, of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General of the National Security Agency, Department of Defense, and Isabel Marie Keenan Patelunas, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, Department of the Treasury, 9 a.m., SH-216.

July 19, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH-219.

July 20, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH-219.

House Committees

Committee on Agriculture, July 19, Full Committee, hearing entitled “The State of Infrastructure in Rural America”, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, July 19, Full Committee, markup on the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill, FY 2018; and the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2018, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, July 19, Full Committee, markup on the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2018, 10 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, July 19, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 2823, the “Affordable Retirement Advice for Savers Act”, 2:30 p.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, July 20, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled “Examining Bipartisan Legislation to Improve the Medicare Program”, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, July 19, Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade, hearing entitled “Restricting North Korea’s Access to Finance”, 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

July 20, Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade, hearing entitled “Monetary Policy v. Fiscal Policy: Risks to Price Stability and the Economy”, 9:30 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, July 19, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, hearing entitled “Implementing the U.S.-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act”, 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

July 19, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, markup on H.R. 425, the “FTO Passport Revocation Act of 2017”; and H.R. 1196, the “Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2017”, 2 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

July 19, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, hearing entitled “Saudi Arabia’s Troubling Educational Curriculum”, 2:15 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, July 19, Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, hearing entitled “Agricultural Guestworkers: Meeting the Growing Needs of American Agriculture”, 2 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

July 20, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, hearing entitled “Gangs in Our Communities: Drugs, Human Trafficking, and Violence”, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, July 19, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 424, the “Gray Wolf State Management Act of 2017”; H.R. 717, the “Listing Reform Act”; H.R. 1274, the “State, Tribal, and Local Species Transparency and Recovery Act”; H.R. 2603, the “SAVES Act”; and H.R. 3131, the “Endangered Species

Litigation Reasonableness Act”, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

July 19, Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, hearing entitled “Exploring the Successes and Challenges of the Magnuson-Stevens Act”, 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

July 20, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled “Seeking Innovative Solutions for the Future of Hardrock Mining”, 9 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, July 19, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 378, the “Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act of 2017”; H.R. 1132, the “Political Appointee Burrowing Prevention Act”; H.R. 2897, to authorize the Mayor of the District of Columbia and the Director of the National Park Service to enter into cooperative management agreements for the operation, maintenance, and management of units of the National Park System in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes; H.R. 2989, the “Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission Act”; H.R. 3031, the “TSP Modernization Act of 2017”; H.R. 3210, the “Securely Expediting Clearances Through Reporting Transparency Act of 2017”; H.R. 3243, the “FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017”; and H.R. 3244, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for annual surveys of Federal employees, and for other purposes, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, July 19, Full Committee, hearing on “Energy Innovation: Letting Technology Lead”, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, July 19, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Reversing the Entrepreneurship Decline”, 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

July 20, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy, and Trade; and Subcommittee on Health and Technology, joint hearing entitled, “21st Century Medicine: How Telehealth Can Help Rural Communities”, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, July 19, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, hearing entitled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Implementation of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 and the Water Resources Development Act of 2016”, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, July 19, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 95, the “Veterans’ Access to Child Care Act”; H.R. 282, the “Military Residency Choice Act”; H.R. 918, the “Veteran Urgent Access to Mental Healthcare Act”; H.R. 1058, the “VA Provider Equity Act”; H.R. 1690, the “Department of Veterans Affairs Bonus Transparency Act”; H.R. 1848, the “Veterans Affairs Medical Scribe Pilot Act of 2017”; H.R. 2006, the “VA Procurement Efficiency and Transparency Act”; H.R. 2749, the “Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2017”; H.R. 2772, the “SEA Act”; H.R. 2781, the “Ensuring Veteran Enterprise Participation in Strategic Sourcing Act”; H.R. 3218, the “Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017”; and to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide educational assistance to

certain former members of the Armed Forces for education and training as physician assistants of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to establish pay grades and require competitive pay for physician assistants of the Department, and for other purposes, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, July 19, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing entitled “Efforts to Combat Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in the Medicare Program”, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

July 19, Subcommittee on Tax Policy, hearing entitled “How Tax Reform Will Simplify Our Broken Tax Code and Help Individuals and Families”, 2 p.m., 1100 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: July 19, to hold hearings to examine illicit cigarette smuggling in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe region, 9:30 a.m., SD-106.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, July 18

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, of Washington, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense, post-cloture, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at approximately 12:15 p.m.

Following disposition of the nomination of Patrick M. Shanahan, Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of John Kenneth Bush, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

(Senate will recess following the continued consideration of the nomination of John Kenneth Bush until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Tuesday, July 18

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of H.R. 806—Ozone Standards Implementation Act of 2017 (Subject to a Rule). Consideration of the following bills under suspension of the Rules: (1) H.R. 2786—To amend the Federal Power Act with respect to the criteria and process to qualify as a qualifying conduit hydropower facility; (2) H.R. 2828—To extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; and (3) H.R. 3050—Enhancing State Energy Security Planning and Emergency Preparedness Act of 2017.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

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