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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 6, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF FORTENBERRY 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 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

CONCEALED CARRY RECIPROCITY BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK) for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, next week is the fifth-year anniversary of the horrific shootings at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. For a brief moment, it looked like we would actually honor those victims by voting on a bill that would improve background checks to keep guns out of the hands of dan-

gerous criminals, but we should never have gotten our hopes up.

There is one winner in the House, and it is the gun lobby. The majority has combined the background check bill with a bill that helps move forward the gun lobby's ultimate agenda: gutting States' gun laws. This bill forces every State to accept the concealed carry laws of every other State, including the 12 States that don't even require a permit to carry a concealed weapon in public, even into a school.

Let's take one example of the dangerousness of this bill. A woman in an abusive relationship is five times more likely to be killed by her abuser if there is a gun involved.

Let that sink in: bringing a gun into an abusive situation means the chances of a woman dying increases by 500 percent.

So it makes all the sense in the world that, if this Congress were interested in public safety, saving lives, curbing gun deaths, that we would be talking about keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous people. But that is not what is happening here. We are talking about a bill that invites domestic abusers to buy a gun in a State with lax laws and legally carry that gun into any other State.

This bill creates not only added danger for the public, but for law enforcement. And there is an extra kicker: this bill includes civil liability for police officers as they try to identify who can legally carry a weapon.

The National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence wrote: "The complete lack of consistent training standards, the different standards for identifying individuals that are too dangerous to carry, the uncertainty of a document's validity, and the exposure of agencies and police officers to civil liability create unacceptable risks to our Nation's 900,000 police officers and the public at large."

Read the letters from prosecutors, from attorneys general, from law en-

forcement, all warning of the dangers of this bill. Anyone with common sense can tell you, this is not only an abdication of our duty to keep Americans safe; it is an overt favor to the rich and powerful gun lobby. But it is no surprise because the gun lobby is the only one who gets a vote on these issues in Congress.

If you are a survivor of domestic abuse fleeing across State lines to protect your family, you do not get a vote.

If you are a mom whose 6-year-old was murdered in Sandy Hook, you do not get a vote.

If your mother or sister was gunned down during a prayer service at Emanuel Church, you do not get a vote.

If you are one of the 93 people who die from gunshots every day in this country, you do not get a vote.

But if you are the gun lobby, you get a vote every single time.

Mr. Speaker, I don't need to tell you, this isn't the kind of action that Americans at home are demanding. We have heard their calls. We have taken the meetings. We have heard their pleas for help. But Republicans in Congress are trying to convince us we can't even try to prevent another death.

Here in this Chamber, the moments of silence have turned into decades of inaction. And if that inaction wasn't scandalous enough, now this Congress is paving the way to actually increase gun violence in States that have acted responsibly to decrease it and prevent it.

Who is going to pay? Not the rich and powerful gun lobby. No. It will be the next innocent victim of preventable gun violence. You remember, that is the person you couldn't even bother to give a vote.

COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

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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Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as one of the senior members on the House Education and the Workforce Committee and co-chair of the Career and Technical Education Caucus to note that this week is Computer Science Education Week.

Computer science drives job growth and innovation throughout our economy and throughout our society. Computing occupations are the number one source of all new wages in the U.S. and make up two-thirds of all projected new jobs in STEM fields, making computer science one of the most in-demand college degrees.

Computing is used all around us in virtually every field, but fewer than half of the United States' schools offer any computer science courses, and only 8 percent of STEM graduates study it; 93 percent of parents want their child's school to teach computer science, but only 40 percent of schools teach it; 67 percent of parents and 56 percent of teachers believe students should be required to learn computer science; 50 percent of Americans rank computer science as one of the two most important subjects of study after reading and writing.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there are currently 16,976 open computing jobs. The average salary for a computing occupation in Pennsylvania is \$85,654, which is significantly higher than the average salary in the State of \$47,540. Mr. Speaker, only 169 schools in Pennsylvania offered the advanced placement computer science course in 2015–2016, and there are fewer AP exams taken in computer science than in any other STEM subject area.

But technology connects the world in ways like never before. From everyday conveniences at our fingertips to improved communications, technology plays an ever-increasing role in our lives. We are becoming more dependent on applications or apps, and the students of today will become the leaders of tomorrow by developing such technology.

Proudly, the House of Representatives has encouraged America's students to focus on computer science and STEM subjects through the annual Congressional App Challenge. This competition allows K–12 students from across the country to practice their code writing skills by developing an app. Winning apps will be displayed in the Capitol Building later this year.

This year's winner from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District is Lachlan Campbell. He redesigned the Hack Club website to make it more user friendly. Hack Club is a nonprofit network of coding clubs run by high school students around the world. Lachlan started a Hack Club this past spring at his very own State College Area High School, and taught more than 40 students how to code and create a website.

His project for the Congressional App Challenge was to redesign hackclub.com, and his overhaul has been welcomed by the club.

I congratulate Lachlan on winning the Congressional App Challenge for Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. He is a two-time winner, having come in first place in 2015 as well. He has got a promising career ahead of him.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud of all of the students who participate in the App Challenge. The competition inspires students from every corner of the country to explore STEM, coding, and computer science through hands-on practice, and that is something we can all support.

Happy Computer Science Education Week.

HONORING TIM McVAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to pay honor to an extraordinary, great American.

Mr. Tim McVay, vice president and general manager of WSB Television, is retiring after 39 years as a top executive with Cox Media Group television stations across this Nation, from Dayton, Ohio, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; to San Francisco, California; and to Atlanta, Georgia, earning Tim McVay the highest awards in television, including the Edward R. Murrow Award, the Peabody Award, the Emmy Award, the Alfred I. duPont Award, and induction into the prestigious Silver Circle of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Tim McVay is a great American, deeply rooted in his love of country and his love of family: his loving wife, Cindy, and his sons, Sean and Ryan.

His son, Sean, Mr. Speaker, is head coach of the Los Angeles Rams. He is the youngest head coach in the history of the NFL.

His father, the legendary John McVay, was the head of football operations for the San Francisco 49ers and won five Super Bowls.

What a great all-American story. But there is more, Mr. Speaker, that I must tell you about Tim McVay. Tim McVay's life has been like that shining light on the hill, reaching out, helping other people, loving his neighbor as himself, that most sacred of commandments, whether it is helping the hundreds of television journalists, young people in their careers who are now leading in the television industry, or helping me and hundreds of our companies and employers, corporations in Georgia with our annual jobs fair where we have gotten over 12,000 jobs for Georgians; or our health fair that we have every year where we give breast cancer exams and prostate exams to those individuals who, for

reasons of income, don't have insurance, saving lives; and our veterans, the work that Tim McVay has helped us with our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you, it was Tim McVay, under his leadership at WSB Television in Atlanta, Georgia, and his WSB reporter Aaron Diamant who exposed to this Nation the tragically high suicide rates of our veterans and then got behind me and my Republican fellow Member of Congress, LARRY BUCSHON of Indiana, and helped us pass legislation to get more psychiatrists into the VA.

God bless Tim McVay, and God bless the United States of America, land of the free and the home of the brave.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND STEVE HOGG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise and note the celebration that we will be having not only for the birth of Christ for the month of December, but on December 10, this coming Sunday, I will celebrate the First Baptist Church in Rock Hill, South Carolina, under the leadership of Reverend Steve Hogg.

□ 1015

Let me give you a little background on the church and on Reverend Hogg. Reverend Hogg was born on January 14, 1958, in Roxana, Kentucky. I think his birthday will signify his 60th in January. He married Monieca on March 27, 1982. They have two children, Steven and Jacqueline.

The history of his service began in February of 1977 to November of 1977, where he was bus minister of the First Baptist Church in Whitesburg, Kentucky. From there he went to the Summer Missionary, First Baptist Church, from 1977 to 1980 and 1983. He was pastor of the Colson Baptist Mission from November of 1977 to March of 1984.

He then went and served as pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church from March of 1984 to December of 1987, where he began his ministry in the First Baptist Church in Rock Hill, South Carolina, in December of 1987.

Let me just give you a couple of milestones for the church. First Baptist Church relocated in April of 2004 to an 84,000 square-foot phase 1 facility on 52 acres of land near I-77. Let me tell you, as a developer, we were involved in that area, and there were no shopping centers when the church moved out there. There were no hotels when the church moved there. There were no gas stations where the church moved. They literally moved out in an area of town on faith that this area was going to be where the church wanted to grow, and grow it has.

The church budget has increased from \$490,000 to \$2,637,000. They have had over 1,500 baptisms. They sponsored the first African-American congregation for membership in the York

Baptist Association. They sponsored a second African-American congregation for membership in the York Baptist Association.

Reverend Hogg has had a long and distinguished service to our State and country. He has served as president under the South Carolina Baptist Convention in 1993 to 1994. He served as the second vice president in 1992 to 1993. He has been chairman of the United Christian Baccalaureate Planning Committee. He has served on the executive committee of the Billy Graham Carolinas Crusade. He is a charter member of the city of Rock Hill No Room for Racism Board. He is the cofounder and State codirector of Changing South Carolina which led a movement to ban video poker.

The activities of the church that he has started include many contemporary worship services, the intercessory prayer ministry, and a ministry for the deaf. He started the television broadcasts of morning services, and he has live-streaming of the worship services. He has conducted eight capital fund campaigns. I could go on and on.

It has been such a pleasure seeing this church grow. I forgot to mention that when they decided to move to this new area of town, he didn't go with just a simple majority for the board of directors of the First Baptist Church. It had to be 80 percent or greater. How democratic is that?

It has been said that to be successful, you must have three things. You must have a self worth living with, you must have a work worth living for, and you must have a faith worth living by. Reverend Hogg has demonstrated he has had a successful life, and he continues to have a successful life. Godspeed for the First Baptist Church in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

DACA RECIPIENTS LOSE THEIR PROTECTION FROM DEPORTATION

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, every day that Congress does not pass the Dream Act, 122 DACA recipients lose their protection from deportation. That is 122 every day—young people who arrived in the U.S. as children, have gone through multiple background checks, and have lived in the U.S. for at least 10 years.

Every week that passes, nearly 1,000 DACA recipients lose their protection from deportation. By Christmas, the number of DACA recipients who will have lost protection will reach 13,492.

But now we are hearing that we may have a short-term CR or a series of CRs and that the whole budget and funding debate may get kicked down the road to next year when all 800,000 young immigrants who signed up for DACA begin losing their status.

Mr. Speaker, with Republicans in control of the House, Senate, and White House, I am pretty sure you will

not need my vote to pass the next budget. So I will vote against any short-term CR because I assume you have the votes to govern as you see fit no matter how much I and other Democrats disagree with your priorities on women, on children's healthcare, the environment, or DREAMers.

Now, if Republicans decide they do need help from Democrats to approve a budget, they know where to find us, and we are more than willing to help if what we are voting on meets minimal standards of priorities for the American people. For me and a lot of my colleagues, that means a vote on the Dream Act right now this year.

The votes are here, the legislation is here, and the American people are already in support. So, Mr. Speaker, at some point, Republican leadership should just get out of the way and let America vote. That is what leadership, compromise, and bipartisanship look like.

Now, we certainly know what it doesn't look like. In the middle of the night last weekend, Republicans voted to give a tax cut to the richest Americans. They dressed it up as a tax cut for all of us—for everyone—but we all know that it is an obscene tax cut for the obscenely wealthy and rich in America.

Not a single Democrat in either House supported it. This chart explains part of the reason. It is tremendously unpopular with the American people as the small slice in red on this chart shows us. According to a Gallup poll, just 29 percent of Americans support the Republican tax cut for billionaires and the multinational corporations. That is what partisanship looks like.

So what does bipartisanship look like? It looks like the Dream Act. Overall, 86 percent of Americans support the Dream Act, a bill to legalize immigration status of immigrants who arrived in the United States as children. Yes, 86 percent. That is a big slice of red on the chart. That number comes—get this—from a FOX News poll, just in case you think I was using a partisan poll where they put their thumb on the scale to show things in my favor. Sixty-three percent of Trump voters back citizenship for the DREAMers.

So here is a proposal supported by an overwhelming number of people, an overwhelming number of Republicans, and an overwhelming percentage of Trump voters. But we can't get a vote. Yesterday, 34 Republicans in this body wrote to the Speaker asking him to please allow a vote and something to protect the DREAMers. Clearly, all 34 percent of those Republicans can read the chart in red. They want to do something that is both politically popular and the right thing to do from a moral standpoint.

The reason Republican leaders will not allow a vote on the Dream Act, or at least are acting like they won't, is because they know it will pass. So you take 34 Republicans who wrote the

Speaker and add 194 Democrats, and do you know what you got? A majority of the House.

For all of those Republicans who oppose the Dream Act, they get a Christmas present. They get to vote against it. What better way to associate yourself with the comments of your President on Mexicans, on Muslims, and on everything else than to vote against the Dream Act?

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge you to let your Members vote against the Dream Act as an act of charity in the Christmas spirit. Republicans will get what most of them want: an opportunity to send a message to their base voters by voting on something the rest of us agree on—just like the tax bill—but this time, with the passage of the Dream Act, at least a majority of the American people will get something out of it, too.

THE DEVASTATION IN PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago, I was privileged to travel to Puerto Rico to meet with residents of the hardest hit areas of the island and to stand by them and serve them on Thanksgiving Day. The extent of the damage, Mr. Speaker, is vast and heartbreaking, and the road to recovery will be long and filled with challenges.

I cannot begin to describe the devastation, but what I can describe is the enduring spirit and the shining optimism of all the people whom I met. I was inspired to see the way the community came together to help one another and the generosity with which people shared what little they had in order to make sure their neighbors were taken care of.

I was fortunate to have the advice and counsel of constituents of mine, Pastor Harry Torres, from the Arriba P.R. Project, and Karen Rosado, from the Latino Alliance of Bucks County. With their help, I reported back to our community the needs of our fellow citizens to better tailor our community's efforts to provide relief to the people of Puerto Rico.

The people of Puerto Rico are citizens of the United States of America. Let this Congress not forget that.

BATTLING DISCRIMINATION

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, I was honored to welcome a group of passionate, well spoken, and civic-minded young constituents to our Nation's Capitol. Along with the Bucks County Chapter of the NAACP and the Peace Center, these students spoke to me on the floor of the House of Representatives testifying about their experiences battling discrimination in all forms as they work to create a more inclusive society.

Our team was deeply moved by the stories of these young people. In the

coming days, I will be entering these students' written testimonies into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so my colleagues can also benefit from their experiences.

As I have said, hateful attacks against members of our community cannot and will not be tolerated, and it is incumbent upon each and every one of us to condemn hate wherever and whenever it appears. I look forward to carrying this message to my colleagues and community as we work together to rise above and appeal to the better angels of our nature.

IMPEACHMENT BEGINS TODAY

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, again, I am honored to be accorded the privilege of standing in the well of the Congress of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, the American poet, Robert Frost, penned a poem with the words: "Two roads diverged in the woods, and I took the one less traveled."

Mr. Speaker, in a metaphorical sense today, sometime after noon, shortly after 12 p.m., I will take the road less traveled.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that no one take this journey with me. I am absolutely convinced that this is a road worth traveling, but I have not asked that others travel this road and will not.

Mr. Speaker, after noon today, I will present Articles of Impeachment. There are many who want to know: What is next? What will happen after there is a vote?

Mr. Speaker, I will satiate those concerns after the vote. But I will take the road less traveled, and I believe that it will make all the difference.

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, several times over my 29 years in Congress, I have wondered whether there are any fiscal conservatives at the Pentagon. It seems that the Defense Department is just like every other gigantic bureaucracy. When it comes to money, the refrain is always more, more, more.

On November 14, the House passed what one Capitol Hill paper described as a \$700 billion compromise Defense bill. It was \$80 billion over the budget caps and many billions more than even President Trump had requested.

I opposed almost all the major initiatives of the Obama administration, but it was false to say that the Defense Department had been depleted or eviscerated during those years or that now we must rebuild the military. In fact, public relations experts in future years should conduct studies about how the

Defense Department has been able to convince the public it has been cut when it is now getting more money than ever.

□ 1030

Defense Department appropriations have more than doubled since 2000. In addition, the Department has gotten extra billions in several supplemental or emergency appropriations bills.

The military construction bill is a separate bill that has added another \$109.5 billion over the last 10 years. It would be hard to find any U.S. military base anyplace in the world that has not had several new buildings constructed over the last few years.

In fiscal year 2016, we spent over \$177 billion on new equipment, tanks, guns, et cetera. We have spent similar amounts for many years. Most of this equipment does not wear out or have to be replaced after just 1 year.

It is ironic that the only President in the last 60 or 70 years who has tried to rein in defense spending is the only President in that period who spent most of his career in the military.

In Evan Thomas' book, "Ike's Bluff," when told by his top staffer that he could not reduce defense spending, President Eisenhower said if he gave another star to every general who cut his budget, "there would be such a rush to cut costs, you'll have to get out of the way."

The book also quotes Eisenhower as saying: "Heaven help us if we ever have a President who doesn't know as much about the military as I do."

Therein lies an explanation for a big part of what has caused much excessive and/or wasteful defense spending and the willingness, even at times eagerness, to go to war and support permanent, never-ending wars.

Only 18 percent of the current Congress has ever served in any branch of the military. Members are afraid that if they do not vote for an increase in defense spending or if they question waste by the military, some demagogue will accuse them of "not supporting the troops."

It would be a huge understatement to say that I usually do not agree with New York Times editorials, but the editorial board, on October 22, published an editorial entitled "America's Forever Wars," pointing out that "the United States has been at war continuously since the attacks of 9/11" and now has "troops in at least 172 countries. . . ."

The board wrote that so far, the American people have "seemed to accept" all this militarism, but "it's a very real question whether, in addition to endorsing these commitments, which have cost trillions of dollars and many lives over 16 years, they will embrace new entanglements. . . ."

The New York Times added that "Congress has spent little time considering such issues in a comprehensive way or debating why all these deployments are needed."

Backing these words up was a cartoon in the October 25 issue of Politico, a Capitol Hill newspaper. The cartoon showed six Senators sitting at a hearing. The first Senator, reading a newspaper, says: Who knew we had troops in Niger?

The second says: Heck, we don't even know how the military budget gets spent.

Finally, the cartoon shows a Senator saying: War is hell. I say we just give the Pentagon an extra \$80 billion and call it a day.

Washington Post columnist Richard Cohen, himself a veteran, as am I, wrote on October 23: "But there is something else at work here: the slavish veneration now accorded the military. You can see it every time someone in uniform testifies before Congress."

Since now that less than 1 percent of the people serve in the military, it may be that many people who never served feel, perhaps even subconsciously, that they must bend over backwards to show their patriotism. However, it is not unpatriotic to oppose wasteful defense spending or very unnecessary permanent, forever wars.

President Reagan once said: "Our troops should be committed to combat abroad only as a last resort, when no other choice is available."

We have far too many leaders today who seem to want to be new Winston Churchills and who are far too eager to send people to war. No true fiscal conservative could ever justify spending many billions more than even President Trump requested.

Our national debt recently went over the \$20 trillion level. A few days ago, it was reported that the deficit for fiscal year 2017 was \$666 billion. This fiscal year, it may be even higher.

Conservatives used to be against huge deficit spending. They also used to be against massive foreign aid. Much of what we have been doing in both Iraq and Afghanistan, training police and farmers, repairing electrical and water systems, even making small business loans, is pure foreign aid.

Many of our foreign interventions have been done under the auspices or authority of the United Nations.

Conservatives used to be the biggest critics of the U.N. and world government. Most of our so-called "coalitions" have been funded almost entirely by American taxpayers.

Most interventionists at some point resort to a slur referring to their opponents as isolationists. This is so false.

Traditional conservatives support trade and tourism and cultural and educational exchanges with other countries and they agree with helping during humanitarian crises.

They just don't believe in dragging war out forever, primarily so defense contractors, think tanks, and military bureaucrats can get more money.

One last point: We have far too many officers. In Scott Berg's biography on Woodrow Wilson, it says during World War I, we had one officer for every 30 enlisted men.

Eisenhower once said we had too many officers when there were nine enlisted for every

officer. Now we have one officer for only four and a half to five and a half enlisted (varies by branch).

This is very expensive, both for active duty and retirement, but it also makes it much more likely that we will get involved in every little conflict around the world and/or continue basing troops in almost every country.

We simply do not have enough money to pay for defense of so many countries other than our own nor the authority under our Constitution to try to run the whole world.

NAFTA

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, the American economy stands today at a crucial moment.

With globalization and advancement in technology, the world economy continues to become more intertwined than ever, as countries trade goods and services at rates never seen before.

It is easy to look at this change and turn inward in an attempt to shore up America's position in the world economy, but that will only set us up for more struggles down the line.

Here in America, we make and produce the best goods in the world, but tariffs and regulations put American goods at a disadvantage in too many countries. That is why it is so crucial we continue to support free and fair trade, working to better our trade agreements, like the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, to help American businesses and families.

In my district, Illinois' 18th Congressional district, agriculture remains the largest portion of our economy. In fact, we are the eighth largest agriculture district in the country. Some of the most fertile farmland in the entire world is located in the 18th District.

As great as the products we grow may be, our farmers and agriculture industry must have markets to sell their goods. That is why free trade agreements like NAFTA come in, removing barriers that allow our corn and soybeans to be sold all over the world at competitive prices.

Since the implementation of NAFTA, American agriculture exports have more than quadrupled from \$8.9 million to \$38 billion annually, bringing more money back to our rural and agriculture communities. It is so important that this amount of money comes back to our district and it is the reason why our agriculture sector now supports over 21 million jobs here at home.

Other sectors of our economy are just as affected by trade, especially in manufacturing. With 95 percent of the world's consumers living outside of the United States, protectionist tariffs and policies in other countries put American goods at a disadvantage.

Since NAFTA's implementation, we have seen these barriers come down and more markets opening up to our exports. That is why our trade agreement partners receive half of all ex-

ports of American manufactured goods. The benefits of this are passed on to hardworking families, with jobs linked to trade paying 15 to 20 percent more and accounting for more than 38 million jobs across our country.

While NAFTA and free trade have allowed for this kind of prosperity and growth, we must also be mindful of the problems that can arise. For example, recent Canadian policies creating quotas for American poultry and dairy have threatened those industries here at home. That is why it is time to take a fresh look at our trade agreements, not with an eye to withdrawing from the global economy, but with the goal of making our trade fairer and better.

As President Trump and his team continue to renegotiate the terms of the NAFTA deal, it is my hope that they can keep in mind the businesses, farming operations, and families of districts like Illinois' 18th. Free trade is a win-win for our Nation, and it is vital that we work hard to make these agreements fairer to keep America at the forefront of the world economy.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 38 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Loving God, thank You for giving us another day. We thank You on this day for the example of St. Nicholas, who fed the hungry, brought hope to the imprisoned, gave comfort to the lost, and taught the truth to all.

May all who work here in the people's House strive to imitate him by putting You first in all we do.

Give us the courage, love, and strength of St. Nicholas so that, like him, we may serve You through our service to all our brothers and sisters.

May all that we do 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 Arizona (Mr. O'HALLERAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. O'HALLERAN 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TAX REFORM

(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, with the leadership of Ways and Means Committee Chairman KEVIN BRADY from Texas, the House has passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

The tax cuts bill that the House Republicans supported makes the Tax Code simpler and fairer, allows hardworking taxpayers to keep more of their own money they earn, and gives small businesses more room to grow and create jobs.

Our Senate colleagues deserve credit for listening to the people of the country and voting to pass tax cuts last week. Now we stand on the doorstep of history. As we move to conference committee, we have the chance to overhaul the antiquated and notoriously confusing Tax Code for the first time in a generation.

When the conference process is finished, the President will be able to sign a tax cut bill that serves the interests of American families and businesses rather than those of politicians and special interests.

As Speaker PAUL RYAN has said, these opportunities come around only once in a generation, and now is the time for us to seize the moment.

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

THE REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in continued opposition to the Republican tax plan.

Earlier this week, the House of Representatives agreed to go to conference with the Senate on H.R. 1, which gives breaks to the wealthy and corporations at the expense of the needs of the American family. This bill eliminates deductions used by those who need it most: students, teachers, veterans, the

sick, and families that are struggling to make ends meet.

Yet, despite this elimination of numerous vital deductions that millions of families across this country rely on, the House and the Senate bill retained a deduction for golf course owners. If you own a golf course in America, your deductions are kept; but if you are a student and you get a scholarship, you are going to have to pay taxes on that.

So if I were a student, I get it twice. We are looking at cutting the Pell grants and we are looking at taxing what students get, yet if you own a golf course where this game is played, you get a deduction.

I am sorry, but I don't think that is fair.

AMERICANS DISAPPROVE OF MEDIA COVERAGE

(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, according to a new Quinnipiac poll, 58 percent of Americans disapprove of the media's coverage of the President. Only 38 percent approve. It is no surprise why the American people disapprove of the media's coverage.

A few weeks ago, CBS Evening News ran a lengthy story mocking President Trump for taking a sip of water during the middle of a speech.

To date, the broadcast networks of ABC, CBS, and NBC have spent over 12 hours on an unproven Trump-Russia connection while only devoting 4½ minutes to the Clinton uranium scandal involving Russia.

Newsweek published a headline accusing Ivanka Trump of plagiarism because she used a sentence from a previous speech. Newsweek should check the dictionary. It is not plagiarism if you use your own words.

These are only three of many examples that account for why 58 percent of Americans disapprove of the media's coverage. Their liberal bias is on display for all to see, and Americans are tired of it.

PAYING RESPECTS TO GEORGE WILLIE, SR., OF LEUPP, ARIZONA

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

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay my respects to a hero. George Willie, Sr., of Leupp, Arizona, passed away this week at the age of 92. He was a highly decorated Navajo Code Talker who served with the Second Marine Division from 1943 to 1946. According to his family, George delivered and received coded messages using the Navajo language at the Battle of Okinawa.

His love for his family was unwavering and his commitment to his country was steadfast. Pat and I are keeping George's wife, Emma; his 10 children;

and his grandchildren in our prayers as they mourn his passing.

A celebration of his life is scheduled for Friday at the First Presbyterian Church in Leupp, and George will be laid to rest with honors at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Camp Navajo.

PRESERVING OUR SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

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

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

Our bill allows law-abiding citizens who are qualified to carry concealed firearms in one State to also carry in other States that allow residents to do so.

Constitutional rights do not end at State lines, and this must include an individual's ability to exercise their Second Amendment rights. A recent survey shows that 73 percent of Americans agree and support concealed carry reciprocity.

The current system is simply too confusing and, unfortunately, results in some concealed carry permit holders to unknowingly break the law and suffer arrest while preventing others from carrying across State lines at all.

Our bill corrects this infringement on Americans' Second Amendment rights and allows concealed carry permit holders the ability to travel freely between the States, just like a driver's license.

As a lifelong gun owner and fervent supporter of the Second Amendment, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill and empower law-abiding citizens with the ability to exercise their constitutional rights as they travel across State lines.

PRESERVING OUR SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

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

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads: "... the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

That right is a fundamental freedom guaranteed by our Bill of Rights. That is why I am proud to cosponsor the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which protects the Second Amendment rights of all Americans.

This legislation says that if you are qualified to carry a gun in your own State, then you can carry a gun in any State that has a similar law. This bill will eliminate significant obstacles to the right to keep and bear arms for millions of Americans in every State.

Hoosiers get it. Law-abiding gun owners have a right to defend themselves, and that right should not end at

the State line. I urge support for this legislation and I ask my colleagues to join me in doing more to uphold our Second Amendment rights.

PRESERVING OUR SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act as well. This commonsense legislation protects the constitutional right to bear arms by allowing qualified individuals to carry a concealed firearm across State lines.

Our First Amendment rights to free speech don't change when we cross State lines, and neither should our Second Amendment constitutional right to protect ourselves.

Unfortunately for Marylanders, our right to bear arms is still heavily restricted by gun-control liberals in our State legislature.

Restricting the right to own firearms only hurts a law-abiding citizen's right to defend herself. Cities like Baltimore and Chicago, with their out-of-control murder rates despite their highly restrictive gun laws, are proof of that.

Concealed carry reciprocity will make our country safer. Self-defense is the top reason cited for owning a firearm, and concealed carry permit holders are certainly not to blame for our Nation's violent crime problem.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 38 and protect our Second Amendment rights.

TAX REFORM

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to praise the progress the Senate and the House has made toward passing tax reform for the American people.

Our tax plan would roughly double the standard deduction, a deduction that 71 percent of Missourians use. When our tax bill passes, the simple truth is that it will allow Missouri families and families everywhere to take home more of their paychecks.

Our tax plan will also be more fair, eliminating special interest loopholes and making it easier for average Americans to file taxes. Currently, our country spends a total of \$378 billion per year filing tax returns. Our tax plan will change all that.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues on the final version of this bill so we can give Americans a great present by Christmas and watch our economy thrive.

REMEMBERING ALFRED EARNEST PELLOW, FOUNDER OF VETS HONOR GUARD IN FRANKLIN, PENNSYLVANIA

(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, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor Alfred Earnest Pellow, a resident of Franklin, Pennsylvania, who passed away last week at his home.

Ernie, as he was called by family and friends, was involved in founding the Veterans Coalition and the VETS Honor Guard in Franklin. He was also deeply instrumental in bringing the Veterans Administration clinic to Franklin to care for our military men and women.

The 79-year-old was a U.S. Army peacetime veteran who served 37 months in Germany. In 1960, he married his wife, Joyce, with whom he spent 57 years of wedded bliss. He was a family man: a loving husband, brother, father, and grandfather.

Ernie was a self-employed building contractor. He received the Pennsylvania Builders of the Year Award in 1996 and Pennsylvania Builders Distinguished Achievement Award in 2014.

A member of Masonic Blue Lodge and the York Rite, Ernie received his Masonic 50 year pin in 2015.

Mr. Speaker, Ernie Pellow lived a life of service: service to his country, service to his community, and service to his family. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

A RESOLUTION OF IMPEACHMENT

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, once again, I am accorded the pre-eminent privilege of addressing the House. I consider this one of the great honors of my life to be able to address the House of Representatives.

Today, after this 1-minute speech, Mr. Speaker, I will present a privileged resolution.

I want to thank the many persons, especially my staff, who have assisted in the drafting and crafting of this resolution. I am grateful to the many persons who have supported me in many ways.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I rise to give notice of my intent to raise a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

Impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, of high misdemeanors.

Resolved, that Donald John Trump, President of the United States is unfit to be President and is impeached for high misdemeanors, and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the Senate:

Articles of Impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States, in the name of itself and of the people of the United States, against Donald John Trump, President of the United States, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high misdemeanors committed as President constituting harm to American society to the manifest injury of the people of the United States:

Article I.

In his capacity as President of the United States, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony and courtesies necessary for stability within the society of the United States, Donald John Trump has with his statements done more than insult individuals and groups of Americans, he has harmed the society of the United States, brought shame and dishonor to the office of President of the United States, sowing discord among the people of the United States by associating the majesty and dignity of the presidency with causes rooted in White supremacy, bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, White nationalism, or neo-Nazism on one or more of the following occasions:

On August 15, 2017, Donald John Trump made a widely published statement characterizing a group of anti-Semites, bigots, racists, White nationalists, and Ku Klux Klansmen who rallied in Charlottesville, Virginia, as "very fine people."

On August 7, 2017, hate groups returned to Charlottesville, Virginia, at the statue of Robert E. Lee, the Confederate general, chanting "You will not replace us!". Since this event on October 7, the President has made many widely published statements about many things, including the National Football League, but has not made one widely published statement condemning the hate groups for returning to the place where an innocent person lost her life at the hands of hate.

On November 29, 2017, Donald John Trump shared three videos posted by a leader of a British political party considered by many to be an extremist group. The videos purported to show various violent acts committed by Muslims and were entitled: "Muslim migrant beats up Dutch boy on crutches!"; "Muslim Destroys a Statue of Virgin Mary!"; and "Islamist mob pushes teenage boy off roof and beats him to death!". The clearly inferable intent of the post was to demonstrate the alleged propensity of Muslim immigrants to engage in violent acts. Even if the videos showed what they purport

to show, in sharing these videos with his 43,800,000 followers on Twitter, Donald John Trump's dissemination of such material evinces an invidious intent to create division within American society.

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump, by his statements, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignities and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, respect, and courtesies necessary for stability within the society of the United States, has undermined the integrity of his office, has sown discord among the people of the United States, has brought disrepute, contempt, ridicule, and disgrace on the Presidency, has acted in a manner antithetical to the cause of a just society, has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the people of the United States, and committed a high misdemeanor in office.

Therefore, Donald John Trump by causing such harm to the society of the United States is unfit to be President and warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

Article II.

In his capacity as President of the United States, unmindful of the high duties of his high office, of the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony and respect necessary for stability within the society of the United States, Donald John Trump has with his statements done more than simply insult individuals and groups of Americans. He has harmed the American society by publicly casting contempt on individuals and groups, inciting hate and hostility, sowing discord among the people of the United States, on the basis of race, national origin, religion, gender and sexual orientation, on one or more of the following occasions:

On January 27, 2017, Donald John Trump issued Executive Order 13769 providing for a partial shutdown of immigration from mainly Muslim countries, to fulfill a campaign promise that read as follows: Donald J. Trump Statement on Preventing Muslim Immigration, New York, New York, December 7, 2015. Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what's going on, thereby casting contempt upon Muslims, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of religion.

On July 26, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: "After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military. Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail," and thereby casting contempt on

transgender individuals, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of gender.

On September 23, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: "Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, 'Get that son of a B-I-T-C-H off the field right now, out, he's fired? He's fired!'", thereby casting contempt on professional football players who engaged in constitutionally protected protests pertaining to allegations of police misconduct with regard to racial minorities, as well as casting contempt on the professional players' mothers by calling the mothers "B-I-T-C-H-E-S", effectively calling these mothers "dogs," thereby inciting hate and hostility and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of race and gender.

On September 30, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: "They want everything to be done for them when it should be a community effort," in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, thereby casting contempt on Puerto Rican citizens of the United States, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on national origin and race.

On October 3, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: I hate to tell you, Puerto Rico, but you've thrown our budget a little out of whack because we spent a lot of money on Puerto Rico, that's fine, we've saved a lot of lives, but Donald John Trump did not make similar comments about Texas or Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey or Hurricane Irma, treating the Puerto Rican citizens of the United States disparately, thereby casting contempt on Puerto Ricans, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on national origin and race.

On October 19, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: "The Fake News is going crazy with wacky Congresswoman Wilson (D), who was SECRETLY on a very personal call, and gave a total lie on content!", thereby casting contempt on an African-American Member of Congress, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.

On October 21, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: "I hope the Fake News Media keeps talking about Wacky Congresswoman Wilson in that she, as a representative, is killing the Democrat Party!", thereby casting contempt on an African-American female Member of Congress, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.

On October 22, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement sub-

stantially as follows: "Wacky Congresswoman Wilson is the gift that keeps on giving for the Republican Party, a disaster for Dems. You watch her in action & vote R!", thereby casting contempt on an African-American female Member of Congress, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump has, by his statements, brought the high office of President of the United States in contempt, ridicule, disgrace, and disrepute; has sown discord among the people of the United States; has demonstrated that he is unfit to be President; and has betrayed his trust as President of the United States to the manifest injury of the people of the United States; and has committed a high misdemeanor in office.

Therefore, Donald John Trump, by causing such harm to the society of the United States, is unfit to be President, warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Texas will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

□ 1230

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 38, CONCEALED CARRY RECIPROCITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 645 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 645

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 38) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a means by which nonresidents of a State whose residents may carry concealed firearms may also do so in the State. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-45 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered

on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 645, currently under consideration.

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, I am pleased to bring forward this rule on behalf of the Rules Committee. The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee. The rule also provides for a motion to recommit.

Yesterday, the Rules Committee had the opportunity to hear from my fellow Judiciary Committee members, Chairman GOODLATTE, Ranking Member NADLER, as well as Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE and others. Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE happens to be the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

Last month, the Judiciary Committee rigorously debated H.R. 38 and considered 22 amendments to this legislation. The committee also marked up and discussed H.R. 4477, the Fix NICS Act, which is incorporated into the Rules Committee print.

I thank my friend, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON), for introducing this legislation, which takes a commonsense approach and reflects our constitutional right to bear arms.

Mr. Speaker, all of us in this body took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, and, as we all understand, the Constitution enshrines our right to keep and bear arms in the Second Amendment.

Over the years, this right has been challenged in the courts and, in some cases, by public opinion. However, lest there be any question about the constitutionality of our right to keep and

bear arms, let me remind my colleagues that the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land, recognized, in a 2008 opinion, that “the Second Amendment conferred an individual right to keep and bear arms.”

As the son of a Georgia State trooper, I learned to respect firearms at an early age, and I have shared that respect with my boys and daughter. As a Member of Congress, I believe I have a duty to uphold American liberties for current and future generations. I am a cosponsor of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act because I believe constitutional rights extend past State lines.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill of Rights isn't a philosophical exercise; it is a document that protects the practical expression of liberties that our forefathers recognized as essential elements of our democracy. I, myself, have a concealed carry permit; and, as a husband and father, I have prioritized being able to defend my family and my home should the unthinkable happen.

I am also a sportsman, a hunter, and an ardent defender of the Second Amendment; but, like many others, the primary purpose of owning and keeping a concealed carry permit is self-defense. I don't think that right should be undermined simply because I travel to another State. This bill upholds and recognizes State laws, while ensuring that driving across State lines to run an errand, go to work, or visit a relative doesn't blot out an individual's rights.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you a very recent story about how firearms can play a critical role in self-defense and promote public safety. Just yesterday, in Dawson County, in a part of my district in northeast Georgia, a woman witnessed an individual attacking a sheriff's deputy at a local gas station. The woman was in possession of a firearm and fired at the suspect. While details are still unfolding at this point, it highlights the benefits of a citizenry that is reasonably and responsibly armed.

Contrary to the claims of Second Amendment detractors, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act is not about expanding access to firearms or putting guns in the hands of criminals. On the contrary, the bill includes protections to uphold laws surrounding firearm possession and safeguards individuals' ability to protect themselves and their neighbors.

The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act supports the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans, and, importantly, it offers a solution to the current patchwork of State laws affecting concealed carry permits.

Currently, all 50 States issue concealed carry permits in some capacity, but these laws leave citizens traveling across State lines to decipher a variety of State laws or risk inadvertently breaking the law.

It is also worth noting that, of the States that have adopted right-to-carry legislation, no State has repealed

it. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, we simply have no evidence to indicate that concealed carry permit holders pose a risk to public safety.

The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act upholds States' rights to establish their own permitting requirements, but it takes the commonsense step of allowing individuals who meet the criteria for concealed carry in their home States to bear arms in other States as long as they follow the local concealed carry laws of the State they are in at any given time.

This bill doesn't allow individuals who currently would be prohibited, under Federal law, from possessing firearms to obtain those weapons, and it doesn't tell States how to regulate the use of firearms. It does, however, ensure that law-abiding citizens can protect themselves and exercise their Second Amendment rights when crossing State lines.

Thirty States, including Georgia, already have “shall issue” permits, which require States to issue permits to individuals who meet the legal requirements for a concealed carry permit; eight States have “may issue” laws, which allow for discretionary permit laws; and 12 States allow for the carrying of a concealed weapon without any permit or license at all.

Many States have some type of reciprocity whereby they mutually recognize permits from other States or may honor permits or licenses issued by other jurisdictions. However, there are some States that neither recognize out-of-State concealed carry permits nor issue permits to nonresidents, resulting in a complete ban on the concealed carry rights of nonresidents who find themselves in those States.

The legal landscape of these State laws and their terms for recognizing concealed carry permits is complex. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we must recognize and remember that, at a practical level, our Union functions by acknowledging the necessary reciprocity of certain State functions, this being one of them and should be. But the current patchwork of State laws means that these law-abiding individuals have to stop and think about their rights, where they are located at the time and whether they recognize their Second Amendment rights, or they risk breaking the law.

Also, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 38 includes the text of the Fix NICS Act. The Fix NICS Act ensures individuals who are prohibited from receiving firearms are properly documented in the NICS system, and it would require Federal agencies to report relevant records in accordance with the law.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us upholds a constitutional right to keep and bear arms and recognizes the fact that the Bill of Rights isn't limited to certain jurisdictions. Our Founding Fathers carved certain foundational rights into our democracy, and today's bill simply upholds the spirit and letter of the Second Amendment.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, this is the 54th closed rule brought by the Republican majority to the floor. Yesterday, in the Rules Committee, I pointed that out, as well as the fact that there were 25 Members of this body who offered amendments that were not made in order. Significant numbers of them were germane, and they were bipartisan. We cannot continue to ignore the importance of allowing full membership to participate on behalf of their constituents.

Today's bill combines two bills: one, a bipartisan supported approach to strengthening background checks; the other, a disgraceful handout to the powerful gun lobby and gun manufacturers.

I also pointed out last night that the NRA, in many respects, is two bodies: those at the top and the rank-and-file members. Many of the rank-and-file members, for example, support universal background checks that we could be talking about in this measure if an amendment seeking to have that made in order had been made in order.

A month ago yesterday, this country grieved with our brothers and sisters in Sutherland Springs, Texas, as they reeled from one of the worst mass shootings this country has ever suffered. A man walked into a house of worship as churchgoers prayed and sprayed bullets throughout the building. He killed an 18-month-old baby; he killed eight members of one family; he killed the pastor's 14-year-old daughter—a total of 26 people—and he was able to do so in a matter of minutes.

We learned later that this man had served in the Air Force and, while there, had been court-martialed for committing acts of domestic violence against his wife and infant child. As part of his sentence, he was prohibited from purchasing or possessing firearms. Tragically, this information was never put into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and we call that NICS. He was able to pass a background check and come into possession of several guns he would use to murder 26 innocent people in Sutherland Springs, Texas, on November 5, 2017.

This tragic event is instructive to the bill brought by us today. Clearly, our background check system must be strengthened.

The problems with our background check system are more grave than we previously could even imagine, as recent reports indicate that the FBI has sought to retrieve guns from thousands of people that the background check system should have blocked from buying a weapon but who ultimately were allowed to do so.

I think we can all agree that, if we have a system through which people

like the murderer in Sutherland Springs can buy a gun or one in which thousands of people who should have never been allowed to buy a gun in the first place are able to do so, then we really have no system at all.

Today's bill, in part, would have been a good first step in addressing those weaknesses. But, Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues, in a fashion so common for their majority of this Congress, have decided to sabotage a commonsense, bipartisan bill by combining it with a reckless piece of legislation that will allow guns to be carried all over this country.

Let us remember that the gunman in Texas was a known domestic abuser. He abused his wife and he abused his child. Under today's concealed carry bill, all we would have to do is change "wife" to "girlfriend," and in some States he would be able to obtain a concealed carry permit for a handgun. Should today's bill become law, he would then be allowed to bring that concealed handgun into your State, even if your State does not allow convicted domestic abusers to have concealed weapons.

For example, Mr. Speaker, the State that I am privileged and proud to represent, Florida, stops abusive dating partners from carrying loaded, hidden handguns in public. However, my friend from Georgia's State, right over the border, does not have that same restriction. Under this legislation, Florida would be mandated to allow abusive dating partners with concealed permits from Georgia to carry their weapons in Florida.

□ 1245

Under H.R. 38, violent offenders and people with no firearms safety training would be able to carry hidden loaded guns even if they could not otherwise legally purchase a gun in the State.

Footnote right there: like my friend from Georgia, I, too, have a concealed carry permit in the State of Florida, and I am a firm believer in the Second Amendment and a person's right to own a weapon, but I also think we should be discussing today matters such as the bump stock, and there were amendments that dealt with that that were not made in order. I think we should be discussing assault weapons in the hands of the public. I, for the life of me, do not understand how anybody, other than people in law enforcement and the military, need an AK-47 or a multiple-firing gun.

Mr. Speaker, this idea that we are presented with here is so terrible, so anathema to common sense and decency, that one has to wonder aloud, where did such an idea come from.

Well, we have an answer, and it is probably not too surprising. Today's concealed carry bill is brought to you by the Republican Party via their very influential friends in the powerful gun lobby.

Footnote right there: the gun lobby does the bidding of gun manufacturers,

who benefit immensely. Why don't we just pass a mandate that every woman, man, and child in America must buy a gun, and maybe that would satisfy or satiate gun manufacturers with reference to how they continuously cause us to do things that are not commonsense matters as it pertains to guns.

In fact, this bill, which will allow domestic abusers to carry concealed weapons across State lines, is the top priority for the gun lobby. Well, happy holidays, fellows, but we here on this side of the aisle are going to do everything that we can to make sure you don't get it.

When this matter gets to the other body, I can assure my friend from Georgia, and all of the speakers on either side today, that it is going nowhere.

So what are we doing by bringing this measure in the first place? Is it a distraction? Is it an absolute necessity that we do this?

Mr. Speaker, just so we are crystal clear, what is happening right now in the people's House, let me reiterate, just over 2 months after a gunman killed 58 people and wounded nearly 550 people in Las Vegas, and just over a month after another gunman killed 26 people in their church as they prayed, this Republican majority, in response to those atrocities, saw fit to bring to the floor a bill that would allow violent offenders to carry concealed weapons all across the country. Let that sink in.

This isn't the only time that we have done something along these lines. After Sandy Hook, after children were killed and their teachers were killed, we did nothing. After Virginia Tech; where people were killed in significant numbers at a military base; in Colorado in a theater; in Orlando, Florida, in a nightclub, repeatedly we have seen these multiple shootings, or mass shootings as they are referred to, where three or more people are killed, 330 times this year alone we have had mass shootings, yet we come here with a bill talking about carrying concealed weapons.

Every day in America, 93 people on average are killed with a gun, seven of them children, but in the midst of this gun violence epidemic, and that is what it is, what do my Republican colleagues do? Did they bring to the floor legislation to close the gun show loophole, or did they close loopholes to prevent domestic abusers from purchasing guns, or are they considering a ban on so-called bump stocks that do turn semiautomatic weapons into illegal automatic guns, most recently used to rain carnage down on innocent concertgoers in Las Vegas?

One country music singer pointed out that his band had legal guns, but they were afraid to bring them out in Las Vegas because the authorities couldn't ferret out who was doing the shooting. We had that in a Wal-Mart that all of us saw posted, the shooting where people with guns caused confusion among the police.

A footnote there: this bill proposes to study the issue of bump stocks. Mr. Speaker, we don't need a study. As my colleague, Congresswoman DINA TITUS, who represents the city of Las Vegas, said last night at the Rules Committee, the only study we need is to go look at the 58 crosses in her district. That is what bump stocks do. That is your study.

Did my Republican colleagues bring to the floor a bill that would have addressed any of these commonsense proposals? Of course not, because even though those proposals have the support of an overwhelming majority of American people when it comes to guns, that is not what motivates my Republican friends. What they care about is the gun lobby and gun manufacturers and their wish list. That is why we are here today.

Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle like to compare a concealed carry permit to a driver's license, but let me set the record straight, because that comparison is nothing but a gross exercise in false equivalency. A driver's license must meet stringent, uniform Federal criteria established under the REAL ID Act. This includes a photo of the license holder and data including their date of birth and their State of residence.

There are absolutely no such uniform standards when it comes to concealed carry permits. In some States, they could look like a paper library card. In others, they may have photo identification.

There is no national database, no hotline that contains permit information from all 50 States, so law enforcement would be in a position of having to find each individual issuing agency to verify that a concealed carry permit is valid, and that is impossible.

My Republican colleagues often tout their support for our first responders. Well, I urge them to heed the warnings of those brave men and women. Major law enforcement groups understand how dangerous this bill would be, and that is why so many of them oppose what the majority is trying to do here today. Organizations like the Major Cities Chiefs Association, Police Foundation, and Police Executive Research Forum all stand in strong opposition to today's bill.

To make matters worse, this piece of legislation even exposes members of the law enforcement community to personal litigation if they mistakenly question someone's ability to carry a concealed weapon.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just some small issue limiting a law enforcement officer's ability to carry out their job; this limit on challenging concealed carry permits will cost lives. In fact, a recent study conducted by Stanford University found that when States weaken law enforcement's authority to deny a permit to those who pose a danger to the community, violent crime goes up by 13 to 15 percent. This research is clear, convincing, and not at

all difficult to fathom. When you lift limits on who can carry a concealed weapon, gun-related crime goes up. It is that simple.

Mr. Speaker, among the many important issues this body must address, the following stand out: as of this moment, we are roughly 72 hours away from a government shutdown; we have 800,000 persons whom we refer to as DREAMers who continue to wait for us to do the right thing and bring them fully into the only country that they know as home; and we have 9 million children and their parents facing an unconscionable lapse in lifesaving funding for the incredibly important Children's Health Insurance Program.

Given all that, what does the Republican-controlled Congress do? They bring a bill to the floor that will make it easier for domestic abusers to cross State lines with concealed weapons. This is shameful and no way to run a government.

Last night, I thought actively too long trying to go to sleep about the acronym GOP, Grand Old Party, the conservatives, the States' rights conservatives, the fiscal conservatives who are about to dump serious debt on our children should be called now by their acronym, rather than GOP, in light of the choice that they make with reference to guns, perhaps GOP should stand for "Guns Over People."

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER). She has some language in this bill. I also would like to thank her for her support for this legislation.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

This bill, which reaffirms the Second Amendment rights of all law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms in every State, includes a provision I introduced earlier this year as the Police Officers Protecting Children Act.

My provision would help protect our children from school shootings and empower local law enforcement to respond rapidly in the case of an emergency. As many of you who represent rural areas know, in these sparsely populated regions, our local law enforcement is stretched thin.

My bill would amend the Gun-Free School Zones Act to allow school boards to permit off-duty and retired police officers to carry their firearms on school campuses so they can respond quickly in the event of a crisis. The legislation would expand the reach of local police officers, decrease emergency response time, and put more choice back in the hands of our local school districts. It is a win-win-win.

As we have learned over and over, localities are much better equipped to know what works for their district rather than the Federal Government. In fact, the idea of my bill came from a constituent who is a retired police of-

ficer and served his community for 30 years. This gentleman came to me because he wasn't allowed to use his weapon to protect his grandchildren at school even though he had decades of experience and continued to pass an annual recertification test.

Additionally, the sheriff of Laclede County in my district said: Not allowing current law enforcement officers, or qualified retired law enforcement officers, to carry weapons at schools simply puts children's lives at risk.

I agree.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Judiciary Committee for including my legislation in this important bill, and I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), a very good friend of mine.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

This dangerous bill is an attack on commonsense gun laws across the country. It will force States like mine in New York, with carefully crafted gun laws, to recognize the concealed carry permits from all other States.

This bill doesn't create a national standard. Instead, it lets the States with the weakest laws dictate the safety of everyone else. Thirty-one States require safety training, 35 States prohibit domestic abusers from carrying concealed weapons, 27 States prohibit people convicted of violent misdemeanors from carrying concealed weapons. All of these States' laws will be overridden if H.R. 38 passes.

It is unconscionable, in the wake of two of the worse mass shootings in modern American history, Republicans are still trying to dismantle gun laws. It is like "Alice in Wonderland." We must fight on behalf of the safety of all Americans and pass comprehensive gun safety laws, not this dangerous bill.

□ 1300

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), a fellow member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the underlying bill, H.R. 38; or maybe that is the lead bill and there is an underlying bill that has been attached to it. I want to speak a little bit here about this process.

First of all, though, we have a concealed carry bill before us that is a good and an excellent bill, that has been hard-worked and well-vetted, and I want to thank Mr. HUDSON for his diligent work on this for a number of years.

A year and a half or more ago we had this bill about ready to go before the Judiciary Committee. I raised an issue. My concern was that it didn't allow for the proper respect for the States—7 then, 12 now—who have legitimate constitutional carry, which is: Since you

have a Second Amendment right, you have a right to carry a weapon.

Under this bill now, having incorporated an amendment that I had prepared a year and a half or so ago that allows then for the residents of the States who have constitutional carry to then travel into other States; if they are legal in their home State, they are legal in another State, under this bill, without having to require the States that respect full constitutional carry to produce permits for their citizens and their residents to travel into neighboring States or anywhere in the country. I think that is a significant improvement, and I thank Mr. HUDSON for his cooperation and work on that. Like I say, this is a good and solid bill.

I am, however, concerned about this process. When I hear the gentleman, Mr. HASTINGS, speak about this is the 54th closed rule that we have seen, I am for a lot of open rules. I am for open debate. I want to fight it out in committee and I want to fight it out here on the floor.

Our Founding Fathers understood that. They set this system up this way. They said to all of us: Go to your district, pull the best ideas you have there, generate your own good ideas, bring them here, and let them compete in this marketplace of ideas.

But if we don't have the window to compete with ideas, if we don't have that opportunity to have the debates, if we don't have the opportunity to force votes on amendments, then the best that America has to offer eventually doesn't show up in the law or to the President's desk.

This is one of those circumstances where we learned a bill that didn't have a number the morning that we marked this up in committee is now the Fix NICS bill. It got a number sometime that same day. There was not a full opportunity to vet the Fix NICS bill. I am very apprehensive about what it might do to this country.

I would like to have had hearings and learn what kind of American citizens, law-abiding citizens, will be disadvantaged by the Fix NICS bill. Whose names get on that and why? How do you get those names off when you need to be cleaning up the list?

I want to have everybody on the list who belongs on the list, but I don't want anybody on the list who doesn't belong on the list. I want to protect American people and I want to protect constitutional rights.

We didn't get an opportunity to look into this, and anybody who brought an amendment to the Rules Committee, it came to the floor under a closed rule. So I am concerned and I am apprehensive about this.

In fact, as I look through these provisions, I strongly support section 103, VICKY HARTZLER's section in the bill. Section 104—

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I yield an additional 15 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I support also the section of the judges, but offered an amendment in committee—too many Members weren't there; at least 10 Republicans were gone—to protect congressional Members of Congress in the same way as the judges. We didn't have that opportunity to actually have a hearing on it in the committee—a legitimate one—and we didn't have an opportunity to bring that amendment to the floor, so I have this apprehension.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we get back to regular order.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, my friend from Iowa, Mr. KING, had two amendments that were rejected last night in the Rules Committee. I join him in saying that we need to get back to regular order.

Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to inform me and my friend from Georgia how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 11¾ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 18 minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL), a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

Our country is still reeling, Mr. Speaker, from two of the worst mass shootings in modern American history.

From the 58 people murdered in Las Vegas to the 25 killed in a Texas church, how can we face the families of these people and say that this bill is the best we could do?

Studies show that States with laws permitting concealed carry experience an estimated 13 to 15 percent increase in violent crime than there would have been without the right to carry laws.

But we don't need academic studies, Mr. Speaker, to know that this bill is wrong. We just need to look at real people.

One of my constituent's sisters was shot in Las Vegas and survived. She is one of the lucky ones. They won't have any empty spots at the holiday table this year because they lost someone to gun violence. Over 14,000 Americans, including parents of nearly 700 children, are not as fortunate, and my heart goes out to them, especially as we enter the holiday season.

Today, we have a critical opportunity to say enough is enough, and I strongly urge my colleagues to stop this heinous bill from moving forward.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL), a fine member whose strong support of this bill is appreciated.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, and the underlying rule. The Second Amendment right to bear arms must stand resolute, as should all our constitu-

tional rights. This legislation simply affirms the right of law-abiding citizens to effectively exercise their right in other States as they do at home.

Forty-two States broadly recognize the right of law-abiding citizens to carry concealed handguns, and most States allow some form of concealed carry. State recognition of concealed carry licenses from other States is not uniform or consistent. Those who wish to carry a concealed weapon across State lines are subject to a confusing patchwork of State laws that make it difficult for law-abiding citizens to travel with a firearm without fear of prosecution.

Mr. Speaker, contrary to what critics would have you believe, this legislation does not upend State laws or expand access to firearms. States will still have the right and the ability to set specific conditions for residents to conceal carry, and individuals from other States must abide by those laws and rules when they carry in other States.

This legislation does not lessen limitations on gun purchases. If you are prohibited from purchasing a firearm now, they will continue to be prohibited from purchasing a firearm if this bill is passed.

If you can't legally own or carry a firearm today, this legislation will not allow you to do so after it is passed.

This legislation is about respecting our Constitution. Our other constitutional rights, like free speech, do not expire when you cross State lines. They are not restricted by State lines. So why should we also allow the Second Amendment to be limited by State lines?

Indeed, the core of the Second Amendment is self-defense, and the ability to carry a firearm outside your home is a critical component of that constitutional right. That is why 24 State attorney generals, including Michigan's attorney general, Bill Schuette, submitted letters supporting this legislation. They know, like I do, that this legislation is common sense. It prioritizes the rights of law-abiding citizens to conceal carry and the ability to travel freely from State to State without worrying about conflicting State laws and prosecution.

Mr. Speaker, each of us are required to take an oath of office here. In that oath, we swear to uphold and defend our Constitution—the Constitution of the United States. That is what this legislation exactly does. It makes sure our exercise of constitutional rights applies throughout the United States.

My colleague on the other side of the aisle questions proceeding with this legislation while funding for the Federal Government hangs in the balance in the next 72 hours. I agree. We must keep the lights on. We are all responsible for keeping the lights on. It isn't as if it is one side of the aisle or the other, and in the past, it has been a bipartisan agreement to do so.

Suddenly, the other side of the aisle says: If we don't get exactly what we

want on terms we have, including on DACA, we will take it to the precipice.

A solution on DACA is there if my colleagues wish to take it. At this point, so far, they haven't.

But there are some things that aren't malleable. There is right and there is wrong in this. I suggest we solve it in the next 72 hours and we keep the lights on because we are all equally responsible for that.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), my good friend, who is a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, why should the United States of America be the only rich country in the world that cannot protect our families from gun violence?

It doesn't have to be this way. In fact, there are a number of States that have enacted gun safety protections. And in those States that have done so, there are fewer gun deaths and there are fewer gun injuries.

My State of Oregon is one of those that has enacted them, in part, because of votes of the people, not politicians. This proposal would strip away protections of Oregonians because there are 12 States that, basically, if you are 21 and have a pulse, you can carry a firearm. Others have much less-restrictive proposals.

This eliminates the ability of States to protect its own citizens. It is shameful. It is wrong.

Someday, Congress will come to its senses and enact reasonable gun safety legislation for the country. But until we do, for heaven's sake, don't punish States that have accepted their responsibility to protect their families.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON).

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

As a lifelong gun owner and staunch advocate for protecting our Second Amendment rights, I am proud to co-sponsor this legislation.

H.R. 38 would protect law-abiding gun owners with concealed carry permits, like the single mother, Shaneen Allen, from Pennsylvania. Many of you have heard this story. I know the author of this bill, Mr. HUDSON, has told this story many times, where Miss Allen was arrested in New Jersey during a routine traffic stop because her valid Pennsylvania concealed carry license had no legal standing in New Jersey.

Our constitutionally protected Second Amendment rights should not stop at a State line. This commonsense bill would ensure that concealed carry permit holders' rights to carry firearms across all State lines will exist.

The legislation would allow Georgia's 600,000-plus concealed carry permit holders to remain protected while traveling. The bill would also incentivize

States to report individuals prohibited from owning guns to the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System, better known as NICS, and it gives States the resources they need to follow this law.

This would not put an additional burden on law-abiding gun owners or make it more difficult for them to purchase or carry a firearm. It simply ensures that agencies and bureaucrats are following the existing laws.

I appreciate Mr. HUDSON's hard work to advance this commonsense legislation to protect Americans' constitutional rights, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this rule and the bill.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), my good friend.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the bill before us creates a dangerous race to the bottom, forcing States to accept concealed carry permits from all other States, regardless of their training standards, their background check system, or their safety requirements.

Make no mistake, this bill would make it easier to cross State lines with hidden, loaded weapons, threatening local communities by making it harder for law enforcement to determine who is lawfully carrying a firearm. No wonder sheriffs, police chiefs, and other law enforcement agencies oppose this bill.

What a shame it is that, after the terrible mass shootings in Las Vegas and Texas, the first gun-related bill this House considers would actually make it easier for dangerous people to carry concealed weapons in more places.

Mr. Speaker, these tragedies aren't inevitable. They are the result of policy choices. We could be working together to enact commonsense measures to respond to the gun violence epidemic facing our country. But as long as Republicans are beholden to NRA extremism, these proposals, I am afraid, will fall on deaf ears.

I urge my colleagues to reject this shameful proposal and to work, instead, to address the root causes of gun violence in this country.

□ 1315

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

Since I was elected to Congress in 2014, I have been devoted to preserving the constitutional rights of Americans, including the inalienable right to bear arms.

Despite our Second Amendment protections, many States have laws restricting the ability of citizens to carry concealed weapons, principally out-of-State residents. This is particularly

confusing and burdensome for law-abiding citizens who choose to conceal carry and live near a State line.

For example, the district I represent borders South Carolina along the Savannah River. For many of my constituents, the closest grocery store, bank, and even their work may be in South Carolina. Thankfully for my constituents, Georgia and South Carolina already have firearm permit reciprocity.

But this is not the case everywhere. As the law currently stands, Americans in other States are losing their right to bear arms on a daily basis simply because they live near a State line. Just as your First Amendment right to free speech does not change from one State to another, neither should your right to protect yourself and your family.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will see this and will join me in voting for this commonsense legislation to solve this problem.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise as the co-chair of the Law Enforcement Caucus in the Congress of the United States. This bill is terrible. The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act should not be voted on.

As a may-issue State, New Jersey allows local law enforcement the discretion on issuing concealed carry permits. In order to receive a permit, applicants must demonstrate an urgent need to carry a concealed weapon and pass a safety course on par with firearms training required of police officers.

H.R. 38 would undermine the good regulations New Jersey has in place by forcing New Jersey and other States to recognize the concealed carry standards from every other State, even if their regulations are weak or non-existent.

Allowing States with the weakest concealed carry requirements to set the national standard creates a race to the bottom. Aside from the outrageous fact that House Republicans are pushing a bill to weaken States' rights, this bill makes it harder for local law enforcement to do their jobs.

This bill does not establish a process for officers to easily verify that someone is carrying lawfully, because officers would be essentially required to know the permitting standards of every State, a heavy and unnecessary burden, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY).

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule for consideration of H.R. 38 and the underlying bill, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, Mr. Speaker, protects the individual rights of American citizens to keep and bear arms. This is a fundamental right to our great Republic.

In Wyoming, Mr. Speaker, we know that this is a God-given right enshrined in our Constitution, which is why Wyoming is a constitutional carry State. Wyoming is not alone in this Constitution-based conviction.

Across the country, Mr. Speaker, 42 States broadly recognize the right of law-abiding citizens to carry concealed handguns. Further, all 50 States allow some form of concealed carry. Many States, but not all, Mr. Speaker, already recognize the gun laws of other States.

However, Mr. Speaker, those traveling through or living on the border of a State that does not recognize their home State's laws could have their gun rights stripped when they cross State lines. That is wrong, Mr. Speaker.

This puts otherwise law-abiding citizens in a situation where they may be criminally liable for simply carrying out their constitutional right to keep and bear arms.

The constitutional rights of United States citizens should not change or end at State lines, Mr. Speaker. The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act ensures the rights of law-abiding citizens to travel across State lines without worrying about the conflicting patchwork of State concealed carry laws or regulations.

This bill is crucial to protecting our constitutional rights. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOULTON).

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, 26: that is how many people were gunned down in a Texas church. Fifty-nine: that is how many were murdered at a concert in Las Vegas. And 489: that is how many law-abiding Americans were injured in that same attack.

Mr. Speaker, it has been weeks after those shootings, and we haven't taken a single action in the United States Congress to stop the gun violence epidemic plaguing America.

Instead, Republican leadership is pushing a bill with blood money from the NRA that will create a race to the bottom where States with the weakest concealed carry requirements will rewrite the laws for everyone else.

Meanwhile, we all know there are bipartisan bills that will reduce gun deaths, including my bill to ban bump stocks. Those bills have been denied a vote.

Mr. Speaker, we have lived through too many massacres. At this rate, I guarantee we will live through more. Let's stop this nonsense and work together on commonsense solutions the majority of Americans want.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my good friend.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 38, which unconscionably combines a needed reform to improve background checks

with a wholesale abandonment of sanity with respect to gun permitting.

The Fix NICS Act would improve notifications about criminal activity for background checks, which I strongly support. A system, by the way, that tragically failed prior to the Sutherland Springs shooting.

Unfortunately, this reform is tied to the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which would endanger millions of Americans and undermine well-established State laws with respect to concealed carry.

My home State of Rhode Island has strong, sensible procedures for getting a concealed carry permit. In Rhode Island, you must be at least 21 years old, trained in gun safety, and must have just cause to carry a concealed weapon. Domestic abusers are not eligible.

H.R. 38 would override these commonsense laws, putting our residents at risk. It would allow anyone denied a permit in Rhode Island to permit shop in States with weaker laws, and it would allow residents of States with weaker requirements to carry freely in our neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, gun violence is an epidemic in this country. We should not be taking steps to put more guns on our streets. I urge my colleagues to heed the warnings of law enforcement officers and reject this dangerous bill.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER).

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I can't think of a more breathtaking display of nerve or brass than what the Republican majority is doing with this bill.

After the tragedies we have suffered in Las Vegas and in Orlando, in Aurora, Colorado, that I represent, to race to the bottom to have the easiest laws—and no offense to Georgia, but Georgia has no business and no right to tell Colorado what its laws concerning the health, safety, and welfare of Coloradans should be under the 10th Amendment.

Instead of taking up real legislation on assault weapons or bump stocks that make those assault weapons machine guns that mowed down all those people in Las Vegas, we are saying: No. Whatever State has the weakest, most lax gun laws, then that State is going to control all the other States. That is wrong, that is unconstitutional, and this bill should be rejected right here and right now.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3440, the Dream Act.

Mr. Speaker, a group of 34 of my Republican colleagues sent a letter this week to Speaker RYAN urging a vote before the year's end on legislation that would protect DACA recipients. I include in the RECORD that letter.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: We write in support of passing of a permanent legislative solution for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients before the end of the year. DACA recipients—young people brought to America through no fault of their own—are contributing members of our communities and our economy. For many, this is the only country they have ever known. They are American in every way except their immigration status.

Since DACA's inception, the federal government has approved approximately 795,000 initial DACA applications and 924,000 renewals. Since being approved for DACA status, an overwhelming majority of these individuals have enrolled in school, found employment, or have served in the military. Studies have shown that passing legislation to permanently protect these individuals would add hundreds of billions to our country's gross domestic product (GDP). That is why the business community, universities, and civic leaders alike support a permanent legislative solution.

We agree with President Trump that executive action was not the appropriate process for solving this issue, as was done under the previous administration, and we believe Congress should act. We are compelled to act immediately because many DACA recipients are about to lose or have already lost their permits in the wake of the program's rescission. Not acting is creating understandable uncertainty and anxiety amongst immigrant communities.

While we firmly believe Congress must work to address other issues within our broken immigration system, it is imperative that Republicans and Democrats come together to solve this problem now and not wait until next year. We all agree that our border must be enforced, our national security defended, and our broken immigration system reformed, but in this moment, we must address the urgent matter before us in a balanced approach that does not harm valuable sectors of our economy nor the lives of these hard-working young people. We must pass legislation that protects DACA recipients from deportation and gives them the opportunity to apply for a more secured status in our country as soon as possible. Reaching across the aisle to protect DACA recipients before the holidays is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Scott Taylor; Dan Newhouse; Mia Love; Mark Amodei; David G. Valadao; Dave Reichert; Brian Fitzpatrick; Mike Coffman; Charlie Dent; Frank A. LoBiondo; Peter T. King; Carlos Curbelo; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; Ryan A. Costello; Fred Upton; Jeff Denham; Rodney Davis; John J. Faso; John Katko; Chris Stewart; Susan W. Brooks; Adam Kinzinger; GT Thompson; Mike Simpson; Mimi Walters; Leonard Lance; Pat Meehan; Elise Stefanik; Tom MacArthur; Chris Smith; Jenniffer González-Colón; Joe Barton; Will Hurd; Bruce Poliquin.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ari-

zona (Mr. GRIJALVA) to discuss our proposal.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, each day that Congress delays action on the Dream Act, 122 people lose their temporary protected status granted by DACA.

Since the Trump September 5 announcement, 11,182 young people have lost their DACA status and face the daily threat of being detained and deported.

Time and time again, House Democrats have pleaded to Republicans and their leadership the urgency of finding a legislative solution that would permanently protect DREAMers. We have pleaded and explained the economic benefit, \$23 billion yearly contributed by DREAMers to the GDP of this Nation.

We have pleaded with the Republican leadership to bring a Dream Act to the House floor that is just and fair without the trappings of xenophobia, division, or hate.

We have pleaded that the DREAMers have not committed a crime. It was not an act of volition on their part as children.

We must move beyond the political calculations about race, us-versus-them divisions in this country, and scapegoating.

The House has an opportunity and the authority to vote on a clean Dream Act and embrace the shared values and humanity of this Nation, while rejecting the politically manufactured hysteria.

Mr. Speaker, I ask a "no" vote on the previous question so that H.R. 3440, the Dream Act, can come to the House floor.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I have watched this year as members of the Republican majority have worked diligently to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would have been a failure for the American people but great for special interests.

I have watched members of the Republican majority work relentlessly to push a tax scam bill through this body that will certainly be a failure for the American people but great for corporate America and the ultrawealthy.

I have watched members of the Republican majority here today and yesterday in the Rules Committee champion a bill that will be a failure for the American people, especially survivors of domestic violence, but great for the powerful corporate gun lobby and gun manufacturers. I sense a theme for my friends across the aisle, and it is a shameful one.

Mr. Speaker, our country faces a gun violence epidemic, and we here in Congress should be doing all that we can to put it to an end.

The opportunity to pass a bipartisan measure to strengthen our background

check system has presented itself, but apparently the majority, without hearings, would rather drown bipartisanship in the dirty waters of the corporate gun lobby and gun manufacturers.

I have said it before, and I will say it again here today: Those who stand in the way of legislation that will address our country's gun violence epidemic are increasingly culpable for its need-less continuation. That is why I dubbed and gave the acronym GOP, "Guns Over People," but I guess I should have used the acronym "Good Old Puppets" of the gun lobby and gun manufacturers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on the rule and underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1330

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I do appreciate my friend from Florida. We have many lively debates on the floor and many lively debates in the Rules Committee. But if you really want to see things going in really a tone and tenor misspeak on this floor, let's at least get back to saying there are ideas that we agree with and disagree with.

There are ideas of actually just taking a constitutional right and being able to apply that in the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which is what we are talking about here, regardless of who might find that appealing, what groups or nongroups. That is a constitutional right that we are fighting for.

But in this regard of saying that puppets—the moment that the group who enjoys killing babies says, "You need to make sure that right is available," then my friends across the aisle are quick to jump to their strings to say, "Yes, I want to do that."

When they wanted to have more government-controlled healthcare, they also said: Oh, but our insurance companies, we need to have a position for them in which they are taken care of.

I guess that was another puppet string, Mr. Speaker.

I think the bottom line is, let's quit, knowing that many of us on both sides have our positions, and we have people who like our positions on both sides, whether they be Democrat or Republican.

But one of the reasons that the American people are very frustrated with this body is because the tone and tenor is not on policy, which we can disagree on. It is who controls the other.

If we wanted to lay out a laundry list of supporters of the Democratic Party and maybe supporters of the Republican Party and say, that is all that matters, then fine, Mr. Speaker. If we have degenerated to that, then so be it. But shame on us.

Whether you want reciprocity or not, good. Argue it. Whether you want to have another thing in our tax reform

and you believe tax reform can be done in a different way, argue it. But when we separate out who is a puppet and who is not, then we are also racing to the bottom. We are racing to the bottom of the civil discourse that the American people are tired of. Look at the last election.

So when I look at this today, Mr. Speaker, I look at a bill—and we have also heard interesting things that have been said, like: Officers will be in trouble and possibly can be sued. Look at the language that is put into the bill, a Terry stop, that they could ask, and that they are protected from suit.

What they are not protected from is unlawful arrest. Then they will be held liable. Or maybe, it has also been said that we are going to turn all of these concealed carry permit owners, like myself and my friend from Florida, loose on the country and terrible things are going to happen.

May I remind us here on the floor that Florida, which has issued nearly 2 million permits, has only revoked 168 due to gun crimes committed by permit holders. That is 0.008 percent. The fight that concealed carry permit holders are generally more law-abiding citizens than the general public, we can disagree, Mr. Speaker, and that is part of this body.

We can come to different conclusions. That is the reason we have a debate floor. But when we start to try and bring in other things, and who is controlled by whom, then I just simply, Mr. Speaker, ask that the other side cut their strings first.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 645 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3440) to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain individuals who are long-term United States residents and who entered the United States as children and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of

the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3440.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS. 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 question will be postponed.

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of privilege of the House and offer the resolution that was previously noticed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

RESOLUTION

Impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, of high misdemeanors.

Resolved, That Donald John Trump, President of the United States is unfit to be President and is impeached for high misdemeanors, and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the Senate:

Articles of Impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States, in the name of itself and of the people of the United States, against Donald John Trump, President of the United States, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high misdemeanors committed as President constituting harm to American society to the manifest injury of the people of the United States:

ARTICLE I

In his capacity as President of the United States, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony and courtesies necessary for stability within the society of the United States, Donald John Trump has with his statements done more than insult individuals and groups of Americans, he has harmed the society of the United States, brought shame and dishonor to the office of President of the United States, sowing discord among the people of the United States by associating the majesty and dignity of the presidency with causes rooted in white supremacy, bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, white nationalism, or neo-Nazism on one or more of the following occasions:

On August 15, 2017, Donald John Trump made a widely published statement characterizing a group of anti-Semites, bigots, racists, white nationalists, and Ku Klux Klansmen who rallied in Charlottesville, Virginia, as “very fine people”.

On August 7, 2017, hate groups returned to Charlottesville, Virginia, at the statue of Robert E. Lee, the Confederate general, chanting “You will not replace us!” Since this event on October 7, the President has made many widely published statements about many things including, the National Football League, but has not made one widely published statement condemning the hate groups for returning to the place where an innocent person lost her life at the hands of hate.

On November 29, 2017, Donald John Trump shared 3 videos posted by a leader of a Brit-

ish political party considered by many to be an extremist group. The videos purported to show various violent acts committed by Muslims, and were entitled: “Muslim migrant beats up Dutch boy on crutches!”; “Muslim Destroys a Statue of Virgin Mary!”; and “Islamist mob pushes teenage boy off roof and beats him to death!”. The clearly inferable intent of the post was to demonstrate the alleged propensity of Muslim immigrants to engage in violent acts. Even if the videos showed what they purport to show, in sharing these videos with his 43,800,000 followers on Twitter, Donald John Trump’s dissemination of such material evinces an invidious intent to create division within American society.

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump, by his statements, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignities and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, respect, and courtesies necessary for stability within the society of the United States, has undermined the integrity of his office, has sown discord among the people of the United States, has brought disrepute, contempt, ridicule and disgrace on the Presidency, has acted in a manner antithetical to the cause of a just society, has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the people of the United States, and committed a high misdemeanor in office.

Therefore, Donald John Trump by causing such harm to the society of the United States is unfit to be President and warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

ARTICLE II

In his capacity as President of the United States, unmindful of the high duties of his high office, of the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, and respect necessary for stability within the society of the United States, Donald John Trump has with his statements done more than simply insult individuals and groups of Americans, he has harmed the American society by publicly casting contempt on individuals and groups, inciting hate and hostility, sowing discord among the people of the United States, on the basis of race, national origin, religion, gender and sexual orientation, on one or more of the following occasions:

On January 27, 2017, Donald John Trump issued Executive Order 13769 providing for a partial shutdown of immigration from mainly Muslim countries, to fulfill a campaign promise that read as follows: “DONALD J. TRUMP STATEMENT ON PREVENTING MUSLIM IMMIGRATION (New York, NY) December 7th, 2015—Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what’s going on”, thereby casting contempt upon Muslims, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of religion.

On July 26, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military. Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail”, and thereby casting contempt on transgender individuals, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of gender.

On September 23, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “Wouldn’t you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody dis-

respects our flag, to say, ‘Get that son of a B-I-T-C-H off the field right now, out, he’s fired? He’s fired!’” thereby casting contempt on professional football players who engaged in constitutionally protected protests pertaining to allegations of police misconduct with regard to racial minorities, as well as casting contempt on the professional players’ mothers by calling the mothers “B-I-T-C-H-E-S”, effectively calling these mothers dogs, thereby inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of race and gender.

On September 30, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “They want everything to be done for them when it should be a community effort”, in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria thereby casting contempt on Puerto Rican citizens of the United States, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on national origin and race.

On October 3, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “I hate to tell you, Puerto Rico, but you’ve thrown our budget a little out of whack because we spent a lot of money on Puerto Rico, that’s fine, we’ve saved a lot of lives”, but Donald John Trump did not make similar comments about Texas or Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey or Hurricane Irma, treating the Puerto Rican citizens of the United States disparately, thereby casting contempt on Puerto Ricans, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on national origin and race.

On October 19, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “The Fake News is going crazy with wacky Congresswoman Wilson (D), who was SECRETLY on a very personal call, and gave a total lie on content!”, thereby casting contempt on an African-American Member of Congress, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.

On October 21, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “I hope the Fake News Media keeps talking about Wacky Congresswoman Wilson in that she, as a representative, is killing the Democrat Party!” thereby casting contempt on an African-American female Member of Congress, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.

On October 22, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “Wacky Congresswoman Wilson is the gift that keeps on giving for the Republican Party, a disaster for Dems. You watch her in action & vote R!” thereby casting contempt on an African-American female Member of Congress inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump has, by his statements, brought the high office of President of the United States in contempt, ridicule, disgrace and disrepute, has sown discord among the people of the United States, has demonstrated that he is unfit to be President and has betrayed his trust as President of the United States to the manifest injury of the people of the United States, and has committed a high misdemeanor in office.

Therefore, Donald John Trump, by causing such harm to the society of the United States, is unfit to be President, warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution qualifies.

MOTION TO TABLE

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the resolution on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. 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, this 15-minute vote on laying the resolution on the table will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 645;

Adopting House Resolution 645, if ordered; and

Suspending the rules and passing S. 1266.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 364, nays 58, answered “present” 4, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 658]

YEAS—364

Abraham	Cooper	Gowdy
Aderholt	Correa	Granger
Aguiar	Costa	Graves (GA)
Allen	Costello (PA)	Graves (LA)
Amash	Courtney	Graves (MO)
Amodel	Cramer	Green, Gene
Arrington	Crawford	Griffith
Babin	Crist	Grothman
Bacon	Crowley	Guthrie
Banks (IN)	Cuellar	Hanabusa
Barletta	Culberson	Handel
Barr	Cummings	Harper
Barton	Curbelo (FL)	Harris
Bera	Curtis	Hartzler
Bergman	Davidson	Heck
Beyer	Davis (CA)	Hensarling
Biggs	Davis, Rodney	Herrera Beutler
Bilirakis	DeFazio	Hice, Jody B.
Bishop (GA)	DeGette	Higgins (LA)
Bishop (MI)	Delaney	Hill
Bishop (UT)	DeLauro	Himes
Black	DelBene	Holding
Blackburn	Demings	Hollingsworth
Blum	Denham	Hoyer
Blumenauer	Dent	Hudson
Blunt Rochester	DeSantis	Huizenga
Bonamici	DesJarlais	Hultgren
Bost	Deutch	Hunter
Boyle, Brendan	Diaz-Balart	Hurd
F.	Dingell	Issa
Brady (TX)	Donovan	Jeffries
Brat	Doyle, Michael	Jenkins (KS)
Brooks (AL)	F.	Jenkins (WV)
Brooks (IN)	Duffy	Johnson (GA)
Brown (MD)	Duncan (SC)	Johnson (LA)
Buchanan	Duncan (TN)	Johnson (OH)
Buck	Dunn	Johnson, E. B.
Bucshon	Emmer	Johnson, Sam
Budd	Eshoo	Jones
Burgess	Estes (KS)	Jordan
Bustos	Esty (CT)	Joyce (OH)
Butterfield	Farenthold	Kaptur
Byrne	Faso	Katko
Calvert	Ferguson	Keating
Carbajal	Fitzpatrick	Kelly (MS)
Cárdenas	Fleischmann	Kelly (PA)
Carson (IN)	Flores	Khanna
Carter (GA)	Fortenberry	Kihuen
Carter (TX)	Foster	Kildee
Cartwright	Fox	Kilmer
Castor (FL)	Franks (AZ)	King (IA)
Chabot	Frelinghuysen	King (NY)
Cheney	Gabbard	Kinzie
Chu, Judy	Gaetz	Kinzie
Cicilline	Gallagher	Knight
Cleaver	Galleo	Krishnamoorthi
Coffman	Garamendi	Kuster (NH)
Cole	Garrett	Kustoff (TN)
Collins (GA)	Gianforte	Labrador
Collins (NY)	Gibbs	LaHood
Comer	Gohmert	LaMalfa
Comstock	Goodale (TX)	Lamborn
Conaway	Goodlatte	Lance
Connolly	Gosar	Langevin
Cook	Gottheimer	Larsen (WA)

Larson (CT)	Palazzo	Shuster
Latta	Palmer	Simpson
Lawson (FL)	Panetta	Sinema
Levin	Paulsen	Sires
Lewis (MN)	Pearce	Smith (MO)
Lipinski	Pelosi	Smith (NE)
LoBiondo	Perlmutter	Smith (NJ)
Loeb	Perry	Smith (TX)
Lofgren	Peters	Smith (WA)
Long	Peterson	Smucker
Loudermilk	Pittenger	Soto
Love	Poe (TX)	Speier
Lowenthal	Poliquin	Stefanik
Lowe	Posey	Stewart
Lucas	Price (NC)	Stivers
Luetkemeyer	Quigley	Suozzi
Lujan Grisham,	Ratcliffe	Swalwell (CA)
M.	Reed	Takano
Luján, Ben Ray	Reichert	Taylor
Lynch	Renacci	Tenney
MacArthur	Rice (NY)	Thompson (CA)
Maloney,	Rice (SC)	Thompson (PA)
Carolyn B.	Roby	Thornberry
Maloney, Sean	Roe (TN)	Tiberi
Marchant	Rogers (AL)	Tipton
Marino	Rogers (KY)	Tonko
Marshall	Rohrabacher	Torres
Massie	Rokita	Trott
Mast	Rooney, Francis	Tsongas
Matsui	Rooney, Thomas	Turner
McCarthy	J.	Upton
McCaul	Ros-Lehtinen	Valadao
McClintock	Rosen	Velázquez
McEachin	Roskam	Visclosky
McHenry	Ross	Wagner
McKinley	Rothfus	Walberg
McMorris	Rouzer	Walden
Rodgers	Roybal-Allard	Walker
McSally	Royce (CA)	Walorski
Meadows	Ruiz	Walters, Mimi
Meehan	Ruppersberger	Wasserman
Meeks	Russell	Schultz
Meng	Rutherford	Weber (TX)
Messer	Ryan (OH)	Webster (FL)
Mitchell	Sánchez	Welch
Moolenaar	Sanford	Wenstrup
Mooney (WV)	Sarbanes	Westerman
Mullin	Scalise	Williams
Murphy (FL)	Schiff	Wilson (SC)
Nadler	Schneider	Wittman
Neal	Schrader	Womack
Newhouse	Schweikert	Woodall
Noem	Scott (VA)	Yarmuth
Nolan	Scott, Austin	Yoder
Norman	Scott, David	Yoho
Nunes	Sensenbrenner	Young (AK)
O'Halleran	Serrano	Young (IA)
O'Rourke	Sessions	Zeldin
Olson	Shimkus	

NAYS—58

Adams	Gomez
Barragán	Green, Al
Bass	Grijalva
Beatty	Hastings
Brady (PA)	Higgins (NY)
Capuano	Huffman
Clark (MA)	Jackson Lee
Clarke (NY)	Jayapal
Kelly (IL)	Clay
Lawrence	Sherman
Lee	Slaughter
Lewis (GA)	Thompson (MS)
Lieu, Ted	Titus
McCollum	Vargas
McGovern	Vela
McNerny	Walz
Moore	Waters, Maxine
Moulton	Watson Coleman
Napolitano	Wilson (FL)
Norcross	

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—4

Castro (TX)	Shea-Porter
Sewell (AL)	Veasey

NOT VOTING—6

Bridenstine	Gutiérrez	Payne
Brownley (CA)	Kennedy	Pocan

□ 1409

Mses. MCCOLLUM and SCHAKOWSKY changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. SCALISE changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama changed her vote from “yea” to “present.”

Ms. SHEA-PORTER changed her voted from “nay” to “present.”

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 38, CONCEALED CARRY RECIPROCALITY ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 645) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 38) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a means by which nonresidents of a State whose residents may carry concealed firearms may also do so in the State, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 236, nays 189, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 659]

YEAS—236

Abraham	Denham	Issa
Aderholt	Dent	Jenkins (KS)
Allen	DeSantis	Jenkins (WV)
Amash	DesJarlais	Johnson (LA)
Amodel	Diaz-Balart	Johnson (OH)
Arrington	Donovan	Johnson, Sam
Babin	Duffy	Jones
Bacon	Duncan (SC)	Jordan
Banks (IN)	Duncan (TN)	Joyce (OH)
Barletta	Dunn	Katko
Barr	Emmer	Kelly (MS)
Barton	Estes (KS)	Kelly (PA)
Bergman	Farenthold	King (IA)
Bilirakis	Faso	King (NY)
Bishop (MI)	Ferguson	Kinzie
Bishop (UT)	Fitzpatrick	Knight
Black	Fleischmann	Kustoff (TN)
Blackburn	Flores	Labrador
Blum	Fortenberry	LaHood
Bost	Fox	LaMalfa
Brady (TX)	Franks (AZ)	Lamborn
Brat	Frelinghuysen	Lance
Brooks (AL)	Gaetz	Latta
Brooks (IN)	Gallagher	Lewis (MN)
Buchanan	Garrett	LoBiondo
Buck	Gianforte	Long
Bucshon	Gibbs	Loudermilk
Budd	Goodlatte	Love
Burgess	Gowdy	Lucas
Bustos	Granger	Luetkemeyer
Butterfield	Graves (GA)	MacArthur
Byrne	Graves (LA)	Marchant
Calvert	Graves (MO)	Marino
Carbajal	Griffith	Marshall
Cárdenas	Grothman	Mast
Carson (IN)	Guthrie	McCarthy
Carter (GA)	Handel	McCaul
Carter (TX)	Harper	McClintock
Cartwright	Harris	McHenry
Castor (FL)	Hartzler	McKinley
Chabot	Hensarling	McMorris
Cheney	Herrera Beutler	Rodgers
Cheney	Hice, Jody B.	McSally
Coffman	Higgins (LA)	Meadows
Cole	Hill	Meehan
Collins (GA)	Holding	Messer
Collins (NY)	Hollingsworth	Mitchell
Comer	Hudson	Moolenaar
Comstock	Huizenga	Mooney (WV)
Conaway	Hultgren	Mullin
Connolly	Hunter	Newhouse
Cook	Hurd	Noem

Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas
J.
Ros-Lehtinen

Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (SC)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry

NAYS—189

Adams
Aguilar
Barragan
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Biggs
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espallat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego

Garamendi
Gohmert
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larson (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe y
Lujan Grisham,
M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano

Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Hoyer
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suo zzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Bridenstine
Brownley (CA)
Chu, Judy

Gutiérrez
Kennedy
Payne

NOT VOTING—7
Pocan

□ 1416

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 232, noes 194, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 660]

AYES—232

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Handel
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick

Fleischmann
Flores
Portenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Guthman
Guthrie
Orlan
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino

Marshall
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas
J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker

Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner

Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup

NOES—194

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Barragan
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Biggs
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan (TN)
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espallat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi

Gohmert
Gomez
Gosar
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe y
Lujan Grisham,
M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal

Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suo zzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—6

Bridenstine
Brownley (CA)

Chu, Judy
Gutiérrez

□ 1424

So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENHANCING VETERAN CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished is the vote on the motion to

suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1266) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with nonprofit organizations to investigate medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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 Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 423, nays 0, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 661]
YEAS—423

Abraham	Cook	Gottheimer
Adams	Cooper	Gowdy
Aderholt	Correa	Granger
Aguilar	Costa	Graves (GA)
Allen	Costello (PA)	Graves (LA)
Amash	Courtney	Graves (MO)
Amodi	Cramer	Green, Al
Arrington	Crawford	Green, Gene
Babin	Crist	Griffith
Bacon	Crowley	Grijalva
Banks (IN)	Cuellar	Grothman
Barletta	Culberson	Guthrie
Barr	Cummings	Hanabusa
Barragán	Curbelo (FL)	Handel
Barton	Curtis	Harper
Bass	Davidson	Harris
Beatty	Davis (CA)	Hartzler
Bera	Davis, Danny	Hastings
Bergman	Davis, Rodney	Heck
Beyer	DeFazio	Hensarling
Biggs	Delaney	Herrera Beutler
Bilirakis	DeLauro	Hice, Jody B.
Bishop (GA)	DelBene	Higgins (LA)
Bishop (MI)	Demings	Higgins (NY)
Bishop (UT)	Denham	Hill
Black	Dent	Himes
Blackburn	DeSantis	Holding
Blumenauer	DeSaulnier	Hollingsworth
Blunt	DesJarlais	Hoyer
Bonamici	Deutch	Hudson
Bost	Diaz-Balart	Huffman
Boyle, Brendan	Dingell	Huizenga
F.	Doggett	Hultgren
Brady (PA)	Donovan	Hunter
Brady (TX)	Doyle, Michael	Hurd
Brat	F.	Issa
Brooks (AL)	Duffy	Jackson Lee
Brooks (IN)	Duncan (SC)	Jeffries
Brown (MD)	Duncan (TN)	Jenkins (KS)
Buchanan	Dunn	Jenkins (WV)
Buck	Ellison	Johnson (GA)
Bucshon	Emmer	Johnson (LA)
Budd	Engel	Johnson (OH)
Burgess	Eshoo	Johnson, E. B.
Bustos	Español	Johnson, Sam
Butterfield	Estes (KS)	Jones
Byrne	Esty (CT)	Jordan
Calvert	Evans	Joyce (OH)
Capuano	Farenthold	Kaptur
Carbajal	Faso	Katko
Cárdenas	Ferguson	Keating
Carson (IN)	Fitzpatrick	Kelly (IL)
Carter (GA)	Fleischmann	Kelly (MS)
Carter (TX)	Flores	Kelly (PA)
Cartwright	Fortenberry	Khanna
Castor (FL)	Foster	Kihuen
Castro (TX)	Foxo	Kildee
Chabot	Frankel (FL)	Kilmer
Cheney	Franks (AZ)	Kind
Cicilline	Frelinghuysen	King (IA)
Clark (MA)	Fudge	King (NY)
Clarke (NY)	Gabbard	Kinzinger
Clay	Gaetz	Knight
Cleaver	Gallagher	Krishnamoorthi
Clyburn	Galleo	Kuster (NH)
Coffman	Garamendi	Kustoff (TN)
Cohen	Garrett	Labrador
Cole	Gianforte	LaHood
Collins (GA)	Gibbs	LaMalfa
Collins (NY)	Gohmert	Lamborn
Comer	Gomez	Lance
Comstock	Gonzalez (TX)	Langevin
Conaway	Goodlatte	Larsen (WA)
Connolly	Gosar	Larson (CT)

Latta	Pallone	Shuster
Lawrence	Palmer	Simpson
Lawson (FL)	Panetta	Sinema
Lee	Pascrell	Sires
Levin	Paulsen	Slaughter
Lewis (GA)	Payne	Smith (MO)
Lewis (MN)	Pearce	Smith (NE)
Lieu, Ted	Pelosi	Smith (NJ)
Lipinski	Perlmutter	Smith (TX)
LoBiondo	Perry	Smith (WA)
Loeb sack	Peters	Smucker
Lofgren	Peterson	Soto
Long	Pingree	Speier
Loudermilk	Pittenger	Stefanik
Love	Poe (TX)	Stewart
Lowenthal	Poliquin	Stivers
Lowe	Polis	Suozzi
Lucas	Posey	Swalwell (CA)
Luetkemeyer	Price (NC)	Takano
Lujan Grisham,	Quigley	Taylor
M.	Raskin	Tenney
Luján, Ben Ray	Ratcliffe	Thompson (CA)
Lynch	Reed	Thompson (MS)
MacArthur	Reichert	Thompson (PA)
Maloney,	Renacci	Thornberry
Carolyn B.	Rice (NY)	Tiberi
Maloney, Sean	Rice (SC)	Tipton
Marchant	Richmond	Titus
Marshall	Roby	Tonko
Massie	Roe (TN)	Torres
Mast	Rogers (AL)	Trott
Matsui	Rogers (KY)	Tsongas
McCarthy	Rohrabacher	Turner
McCaul	Rokita	Upton
McClintock	Rooney, Francis	Valadao
McCollum	Rooney, Thomas	Vargas
McEachin	J.	Veasey
McGovern	Ros-Lehtinen	Vela
McHenry	Rosen	Velázquez
McKinley	Roskam	Visclosky
McMorris	Ross	Wagner
Rodgers	Rothfus	Walberg
McNerney	Rouzer	Walden
McSally	Roybal-Allard	Walker
Meadows	Royce (CA)	Walorski
Meehan	Ruiz	Walters, Mimi
Meeks	Ruppersberger	Walz
Meng	Rush	Wasserman
Messer	Russell	Schultz
Mitchell	Rutherford	Waters, Maxine
Moolenaar	Ryan (OH)	Watson Coleman
Mooney (WV)	Sanchez	Weber (TX)
Moore	Sanford	Webster (FL)
Moulton	Sarbanes	Welch
Mullin	Scalise	Wenstrup
Murphy (FL)	Schakowsky	Westerman
Nadler	Schiff	Williams
Napolitano	Schneider	Wilson (FL)
Neal	Schrader	Wilson (SC)
Newhouse	Schweikert	Wittman
Noem	Scott (VA)	Womack
Nolan	Scott, Austin	Woodall
Norcross	Scott, David	Yarmuth
Norman	Sensenbrenner	Yoder
Nunes	Serrano	Yoho
O'Halleran	Sessions	Young (AK)
O'Rourke	Sewell (AL)	Young (IA)
Olson	Shea-Porter	Zeldin
Palazzo	Sherman	
	Shimkus	

There was no objection.
CONCEALED CARRY RECIPROCITY ACT OF 2017
Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 645, I call up the bill (H.R. 38) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a means by which nonresidents of a State whose residents may carry concealed firearms may also do so in the State, and ask for its immediate consideration.
The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 645, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-45 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.
The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:
H.R. 38
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the "Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017".
TITLE I—CONCEALED CARRY RECIPROCITY ACT OF 2017
SEC. 101. RECIPROCITY FOR THE CARRYING OF CERTAIN CONCEALED FIREARMS.
(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 926C the following:
"§926D. Reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms
"(a) Notwithstanding any provision of the law of any State or political subdivision thereof (except as provided in subsection (b)) and subject only to the requirements of this section, a person who is not prohibited by Federal law from possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving a firearm, who is carrying a valid identification document containing a photograph of the person, and who is carrying a valid license or permit which is issued pursuant to the law of a State and which permits the person to carry a concealed firearm or is entitled to carry a concealed firearm in the State in which the person resides, may possess or carry a concealed handgun (other than a machinegun or destructive device) that has been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce, in any State that—
"(1) has a statute under which residents of the State may apply for a license or permit to carry a concealed firearm; or
"(2) does not prohibit the carrying of concealed firearms by residents of the State for lawful purposes.
"(b) This section shall not be construed to supersede or limit the laws of any State that—
"(1) permit private persons or entities to prohibit or restrict the possession of concealed firearms on their property; or
"(2) prohibit or restrict the possession of firearms on any State or local government property, installation, building, base, or park.
"(c)(1) A person who carries or possesses a concealed handgun in accordance with subsections (a) and (b) may not be arrested or otherwise detained for violation of any law or any rule or regulation of a State or any political subdivision thereof related to the possession, transportation, or carrying of firearms unless there is probable cause to believe that the person

NOT VOTING—9

□ 1435

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.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3524

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3524.

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

is doing so in a manner not provided for by this section. Presentation of facially valid documents as specified in subsection (a) is prima facie evidence that the individual has a license or permit as required by this section.

“(2) When a person asserts this section as a defense in a criminal proceeding, the prosecution shall bear the burden of proving, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the conduct of the person did not satisfy the conditions set forth in subsections (a) and (b).

“(3) When a person successfully asserts this section as a defense in a criminal proceeding, the court shall award the prevailing defendant a reasonable attorney’s fee.

“(d)(1) A person who is deprived of any right, privilege, or immunity secured by this section, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage of any State or any political subdivision thereof, may bring an action in any appropriate court against any other person, including a State or political subdivision thereof, who causes the person to be subject to the deprivation, for damages or other appropriate relief.

“(2) The court shall award a plaintiff prevailing in an action brought under paragraph (1) damages and such other relief as the court deems appropriate, including a reasonable attorney’s fee.

“(e) In subsection (a):

“(1) The term ‘identification document’ means a document made or issued by or under the authority of the United States Government, a State, or a political subdivision of a State which, when completed with information concerning a particular individual, is of a type intended or commonly accepted for the purpose of identification of individuals.

“(2) The term ‘handgun’ includes any magazine for use in a handgun and any ammunition loaded into the handgun or its magazine.

“(f)(1) A person who possesses or carries a concealed handgun under subsection (a) shall not be subject to the prohibitions of section 922(g) with respect to that handgun.

“(2) A person possessing or carrying a concealed handgun in a State under subsection (a) may do so in any of the following areas in the State that are open to the public:

“(A) A unit of the National Park System.

“(B) A unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

“(C) Public land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management.

“(D) Land administered and managed by the Army Corps of Engineers.

“(E) Land administered and managed by the Bureau of Reclamation.

“(F) Land administered and managed by the Forest Service.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 926C the following:

“926D. Reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.”.

(c) SEVERABILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, if any provision of this section, or any amendment made by this section, or the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional, this section and amendments made by this section and the application of such provision or amendment to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 102. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this title prohibits a law enforcement officer with reasonable suspicion of a violation of any law from conducting a brief investigative stop in accordance with the Constitution of the United States.

SEC. 103. CERTAIN OFF-DUTY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ALLOWED TO CARRY A CONCEALED FIREARM, AND DISCHARGE A FIREARM, IN A SCHOOL ZONE.

Section 922(q) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(B)—

(A) by striking “or” at the end of clause (vi); and

(B) by redesignating clause (vii) as clause (ix) and inserting after clause (vi) the following:

“(vii) by an off-duty law enforcement officer who is a qualified law enforcement officer (as defined in section 926B) and is authorized under such section to carry a concealed firearm, if the firearm is concealed;

“(viii) by a qualified retired law enforcement officer (as defined in section 926C) who is authorized under such section to carry a concealed firearm, if the firearm is concealed; or”;

(2) in paragraph (3)(B)—

(A) by striking “or” at the end of clause (iii);

(B) by striking the period at the end of clause (iv) and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(v) by an off-duty law enforcement officer who is a qualified law enforcement officer (as defined in section 926B) and is authorized under such section to carry a concealed firearm; or

“(vi) by a qualified retired law enforcement officer (as defined in section 926C) who is authorized under such section to carry a concealed firearm.”.

SEC. 104. INTERSTATE CARRYING OF FIREARMS BY FEDERAL JUDGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, as amended by section 101(a) of this Act, is amended by inserting after section 926D the following:

“§926E. Interstate carrying of firearms by Federal judges

“Notwithstanding any provision of the law of any State or political subdivision thereof, a Federal judge may carry a concealed firearm in any State if such judge is not prohibited by Federal law from receiving a firearm.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for such chapter, as amended by section 101(b) of this Act, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 926D the following:

“926E. Interstate carrying of firearms by Federal judges.”.

TITLE II—FIX NICS ACT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Fix NICS Act of 2017”.

SEC. 202. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.

Section 103 of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (34 U.S.C. 40901) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)(1), by adding at the end the following:

“(F) SEMI-ANNUAL CERTIFICATION AND REPORTING.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The head of each Federal department or agency shall submit a semiannual written certification to the Attorney General indicating whether the department or agency is in compliance with the record submission requirements under subparagraph (C).

“(ii) SUBMISSION DATES.—The head of a Federal department or agency shall submit a certification to the Attorney General under clause (i)—

“(I) not later than July 31 of each year, which shall address all relevant records, including those that have not been transmitted to the Attorney General, in possession of the department or agency during the period beginning on January 1 of the year and ending on June 30 of the year; and

“(II) not later than January 31 of each year, which shall address all relevant records, including those that have not been transmitted to the Attorney General, in possession of the depart-

ment or agency during the period beginning on July 1 of the previous year and ending on December 31 of the previous year.

“(iii) CONTENTS.—A certification required under clause (i) shall state, for the applicable period—

“(I) the total number of records of the Federal department or agency demonstrating that a person falls within one of the categories described in subsection (g) or (n) of section 922 of title 18, United States Code;

“(II) for each category of records described in subclause (I), the total number of records of the Federal department or agency that have been provided to the Attorney General; and

“(III) the efforts of the Federal department or agency to ensure complete and accurate reporting of relevant records, including efforts to monitor compliance and correct any reporting failures or inaccuracies.

“(G) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subparagraph, the head of each Federal department or agency, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall establish a plan to ensure maximum coordination and automated reporting or making available of records to the Attorney General as required under subparagraph (C), and the verification of the accuracy of those records, including the pre-validation of those records, where appropriate, during a 4-year period specified in the plan. The head of each Federal department or agency shall update the plan biennially, to the extent necessary, based on the most recent biennial assessment under subparagraph (K). The records shall be limited to those of an individual described in subsection (g) or (n) of section 922 of title 18, United States Code.

“(ii) BENCHMARK REQUIREMENTS.—Each plan established under clause (i) shall include annual benchmarks to enable the Attorney General to assess implementation of the plan, including—

“(I) qualitative goals and quantitative measures;

“(II) measures to monitor internal compliance, including any reporting failures and inaccuracies;

“(III) a needs assessment, including estimated compliance costs; and

“(IV) an estimated date by which the Federal department or agency will fully comply with record submission requirements under subparagraph (C).

“(iii) COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION.—Not later than the end of each fiscal year beginning after the date of the establishment of a plan under clause (i), the Attorney General shall determine whether the applicable Federal department or agency has achieved substantial compliance with the benchmarks included in the plan.

“(H) ACCOUNTABILITY.—The Attorney General shall publish, including on the website of the Department of Justice, and submit to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a semiannual report that discloses—

“(i) the name of each Federal department or agency that has failed to submit a required certification under subparagraph (F);

“(ii) the name of each Federal department or agency that has submitted a required certification under subparagraph (F), but failed to certify compliance with the record submission requirements under subparagraph (C);

“(iii) the name of each Federal department or agency that has failed to submit an implementation plan under subparagraph (G);

“(iv) the name of each Federal department or agency that is not in substantial compliance with an implementation plan under subparagraph (G);

“(v) a detailed summary of the data, broken down by department or agency, contained in the certifications submitted under subparagraph (F);

“(vi) a detailed summary of the contents and status, broken down by department or agency, of the implementation plans established under subparagraph (G); and

“(vii) the reasons for which the Attorney General has determined that a Federal department or agency is not in substantial compliance with an implementation plan established under subparagraph (G).

“(I) NONCOMPLIANCE PENALTIES.—For each of fiscal years 2019 through 2022, each political appointee of a Federal department or agency that has failed to certify compliance with the record submission requirements under subparagraph (C), and is not in substantial compliance with an implementation plan established under subparagraph (G), shall not be eligible for the receipt of bonus pay, excluding overtime pay, until the department or agency—

“(i) certifies compliance with the record submission requirements under subparagraph (C); or

“(ii) achieves substantial compliance with an implementation plan established under subparagraph (G).

“(J) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Attorney General may use funds made available for the national instant criminal background check system established under subsection (b) to provide technical assistance to a Federal department or agency, at the request of the department or agency, in order to help the department or agency comply with the record submission requirements under subparagraph (C).

“(K) BIENNIAL ASSESSMENT.—Every 2 years, the Attorney General shall assess the extent to which the actions taken under the title II of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 have resulted in improvements in the system established under this section.

“(L) APPLICATION TO FEDERAL COURTS.—For purposes of this paragraph—

“(i) the terms ‘department or agency of the United States’ and ‘Federal department or agency’ include a Federal court; and

“(ii) the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall perform, for a Federal court, the functions assigned to the head of a department or agency.”; and

(2) in subsection (g), by adding at the end the following: “For purposes of the preceding sentence, not later than 60 days after the date on which the Attorney General receives such information, the Attorney General shall determine whether or not the prospective transferee is the subject of an erroneous record and remove any records that are determined to be erroneous. In addition to any funds made available under subsection (k), the Attorney General may use such sums as are necessary and otherwise available for the salaries and expenses of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to comply with this subsection.”.

SEC. 203. NICS ACT RECORD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) REQUIREMENTS TO OBTAIN WAIVER.—Section 102 of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (34 U.S.C. 40912) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), in the first sentence—
(A) by striking “the Crime Identification Technology Act of 1988 (42 U.S.C. 14601)” and inserting “section 102 of the Crime Identification Technology Act of 1998 (34 U.S.C. 40301)”; and

(B) by inserting “is in compliance with an implementation plan established under subsection (b) or” before “provides at least 90 percent of the information described in subsection (c)”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1)(B), by inserting “or has established an implementation plan under section 107” after “the Attorney General”.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION ASSISTANCE TO STATES.—Section 103 of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (34 U.S.C. 40913) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(3), by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: “, including through increased efforts to pre-validate the

contents of those records to expedite eligibility determinations”;

(2) in subsection (e), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—For each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022, the Attorney General shall create a priority area under the NICS Act Record Improvement Program (commonly known as ‘NARIP’) for a Domestic Abuse and Violence Prevention Initiative that emphasizes the need for grantees to identify and upload all felony conviction records and domestic violence records.

“(B) FUNDING.—The Attorney General—

“(i) may use not more than 50 percent of the amounts made available under section 207 of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022 to carry out the initiative described in subparagraph (A); and

“(ii) shall give a funding preference under NARIP to States that—

“(I) have established an implementation plan under section 107; and

“(II) will use amounts made available under this subparagraph to improve efforts to identify and upload all felony conviction records and domestic violence records described in clauses (i), (v), and (vi) of section 102(b)(1)(C) by not later than September 30, 2022.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(g) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Attorney General shall direct the Office of Justice Programs, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to—

“(1) assist States that are not currently eligible for grants under this section to achieve compliance with all eligibility requirements; and

“(2) provide technical assistance and training services to grantees under this section.”.

SEC. 204. NATIONAL CRIMINAL HISTORY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) STATE GRANT PROGRAM FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE IDENTIFICATION, INFORMATION, AND COMMUNICATION.—Section 102 of the Crime Identification Technology Act of 1998 (34 U.S.C. 40301) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (C), (D), and (E) as subparagraphs (D), (E), and (F), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

“(C) identification of all individuals who have been convicted of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding 1 year”;

(2) in subsection (b)(6)—

(A) by striking “(18 U.S.C. 922 note)” and inserting “(34 U.S.C. 40901(b))”; and

(B) by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: “, including through increased efforts to pre-validate the contents of felony conviction records and domestic violence records to expedite eligibility determinations, and measures and resources necessary to establish and achieve compliance with an implementation plan under section 107 of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007”; and

(3) in subsection (d), by inserting after “unless” the following: “the State has achieved compliance with an implementation plan under section 107 of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 or”.

(b) GRANTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF CRIMINAL RECORDS.—Section 106(b)(1) of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (34 U.S.C. 40302(1)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking “as of the date of enactment of this Act” and inserting “, as of the date of enactment of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017.”; and

(B) by striking “files,” and inserting the following: “files and that will utilize funding

under this subsection to prioritize the identification and transmittal of felony conviction records and domestic violence records.”;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) by striking “upon establishment of the national system.”; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following—

“(D) to establish and achieve compliance with an implementation plan under section 107 of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007.”.

SEC. 205. IMPROVING INFORMATION SHARING WITH THE STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (34 U.S.C. 40911 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 107. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017, the Attorney General, in coordination with the States and Indian tribal governments, shall establish, for each State or Indian tribal government, a plan to ensure maximum coordination and automation of the reporting or making available of appropriate records to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System established under section 103 of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (34 U.S.C. 40901) and the verification of the accuracy of those records during a 4-year period specified in the plan, and shall update the plan biennially, to the extent necessary, based on the most recent biennial assessment under subsection (f). The records shall be limited to those of an individual described in subsection (g) or (n) of section 922 of title 18, United States Code

“(b) BENCHMARK REQUIREMENTS.—Each plan established under this section shall include annual benchmarks to enable the Attorney General to assess the implementation of the plan, including—

“(1) qualitative goals and quantitative measures; and

“(2) a needs assessment, including estimated compliance costs.

“(c) COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION.—Not later than the end of each fiscal year beginning after the date of the establishment of an implementation plan under this section, the Attorney General shall determine whether each State or Indian tribal government has achieved substantial compliance with the benchmarks included in the plan.

“(d) ACCOUNTABILITY.—The Attorney General—

“(1) shall disclose and publish, including on the website of the Department of Justice—

“(A) the name of each State or Indian tribal government that received a determination of failure to achieve substantial compliance with an implementation plan under subsection (c) for the preceding fiscal year; and

“(B) a description of the reasons for which the Attorney General has determined that the State or Indian tribal government is not in substantial compliance with the implementation plan, including, to the greatest extent possible, a description of the types and amounts of records that have not been submitted; and

“(2) if a State or Indian tribal government described in paragraph (1) subsequently receives a determination of substantial compliance, shall—
“(A) immediately correct the applicable record; and

“(B) not later than 3 days after the determination, remove the record from the website of the Department of Justice and any other location where the record was published.

“(e) INCENTIVES.—For each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022, the Attorney General shall give affirmative preference to all Bureau of Justice Assistance discretionary grant applications of a State or Indian tribal government that received

a determination of substantial compliance under subsection (c) for the fiscal year in which the grant was solicited.

“(f) BIENNIAL ASSESSMENT.—Every 2 years, the Attorney General shall assess the extent to which the actions taken under title II of the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 have resulted in improvements in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System established under section 103 of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (34 U.S.C. 40903).

“SEC. 108. NOTIFICATION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES OF PROHIBITED PURCHASE OF A FIREARM.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a background check conducted by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System pursuant to the request of a licensed importer, licensed manufacturer, or licensed dealer of firearms (as such terms are defined in section 921 of title 18, United States Code), which background check determines that the receipt of a firearm by a person would violate subsection (g) or (n) of section 922 of title 18, United States Code, and such determination is made after 3 business days have elapsed since the licensee contacted the System and a firearm has been transferred to that person, the System shall notify the law enforcement agencies described in subsection (b).

“(b) LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES DESCRIBED.—The law enforcement agencies described in this subsection are the law enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction over the location from which the licensee contacted the system and the law enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction over the location of the residence of the person for which the background check was conducted, as follows:

“(1) The field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

“(2) The local law enforcement agency.

“(3) The State law enforcement agency.”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-180; 121 Stat. 2559) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 106 the following:

“Sec. 107. Implementation plan.

“Sec. 108. Notification to law enforcement agencies of prohibited purchase of a firearm.”.

SEC. 206. ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT ON USE OF BUMP STOCKS IN CRIME.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Using amounts made available for research, evaluation, or statistical purposes, within 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall prepare and submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate a written report that—

(1) specifies the number of instances in which a bump stock has been used in the commission of a crime in the United States;

(2) specifies the types of firearms with which a bump stock has been so used; and

(3) contains the opinion of the Attorney General as to whether subparagraphs (B)(i) and (C)(i) of section 924(c)(1) of title 18, United States Code, apply to all instances in which a bump stock has been used in the commission of a crime of violence in the United States.

(b) DEFINITION OF BUMP STOCK.—In this section, the term “bump stock” means a device that—

(1) attaches to a semiautomatic rifle (as defined in section 921(a)(28) of title 18, United States Code);

(2) is designed and intended to repeatedly activate the trigger without the deliberate and volitional act of the user pulling the trigger each time the firearm is fired; and

(3) functions by continuous forward pressure applied to the rifle's fore end in conjunction with a linear forward and backward sliding motion of the mechanism utilizing the recoil energy when the rifle is discharged.

SEC. 207. AUTHORIZATIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated \$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022 to carry out, in accordance with the NICS Act Record Improvement Program and the National Criminal History Improvement Program, the activities under—

(1) section 102 of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007;

(2) section 103 of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007;

(3) section 102 of the Crime Identification Technology Act of 1998; and

(4) section 106(b) of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act.

(b) ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATIONS.—Section 1001(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10261(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “\$33,000,000” and inserting “\$31,000,000”;

(B) by striking “1994 and 1995” and inserting “2018 through 2022”;

(C) by inserting “, in addition to any amounts otherwise made available for research, evaluation or statistical purposes in a fiscal year” before the period; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking “\$33,000,000” and inserting “\$27,000,000”;

(B) by striking “1994 and 1995” and inserting “2018 through 2022”;

(C) by inserting “, in addition to any amounts otherwise made available for research, evaluation or statistical purposes in a fiscal year” before the period.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 30 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 within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 38.

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, I rise in strong support of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, throughout my career in elected office, I have believed in and adhered to two fundamental principles regarding firearms policy: first, the right guaranteed to law-abiding Americans by the Second Amendment must be aggressively protected and preserved; second, the laws we have on the books need to be enforced to the fullest extent possible. The bipartisan bill before us today does both.

H.R. 38 ensures that law-abiding citizens' Second Amendment right does not end when they cross State lines. The bill allows law-abiding gun owners with valid State-issued concealed carry firearm permits or those who live in so-

called constitutional carry States to carry a concealed firearm in any other State that also allows concealed carry.

We know that citizens who carry a concealed firearm are not only better prepared to act in their own self-defense, but also in the defense of others. Take, for instance, an incident that occurred just last November on a highway in Florida. Lee County Sheriff's Deputy Dean Bardes had just concluded a high-speed chase just off Interstate 75. As Deputy Bardes approached to apprehend the suspect, the suspect, Edward Strother, violently attacked Deputy Bardes.

A witness on the scene told reporters that the attacker “just started punching him and hitting and hitting and hitting. I was afraid for the police officer. I thought he was going to kill him.”

Fortunately for Deputy Bardes, Ashad Russell, a Florida concealed carry permit holder, was also watching the attack unfold. Mr. Russell pulled his gun and approached the altercation. He told Strother he would shoot him if he didn't stop beating the deputy. The State Attorney's Office said Strother ignored Russell's commands to stop beating the deputy, so Russell fired his gun three times, hitting and fatally wounding the assailant. Lee County Sheriff Mike Scott has hailed Russell as a hero.

Importantly, this bill also contains the Fix NICS Act of 2017. This is a bipartisan and bicameral measure. The Fix NICS Act takes steps to ensure that State and Federal agencies enter all relevant records into the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System. This bill will help ensure people who are legally prohibited from having guns, like those with violent felony convictions, do not obtain them.

The shooting at Virginia Tech and the church shootings in Charleston, South Carolina, and Sutherland Springs, Texas, are tragic reminders of what can happen when all relevant records are not entered into the system.

Our NICS system is only as good as the information within it. This important piece of legislation will ensure that more of the information already required to be uploaded to NICS under current law is actually placed in the NICS system.

Taken together, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act and the Fix NICS Act preserve and protect the right guaranteed to us by the Second Amendment and ensure that those prohibited by existing law from receiving a firearm are prevented from doing so.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

I want to thank the lead sponsor, Mr. HUDSON of North Carolina, for his hard work on this bill. I would also like to thank the authors of the Fix NICS provisions, Mr. CULBERSON and Mr. CUELLAR, for their important contributions to the legislation before us today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act. This bill would not protect us from gun violence, but it would make us far less safe.

Under current law, each State makes its own determination about who may carry a concealed firearm in public, including deciding which other States' concealed carry permits to recognize. This bill would eviscerate the core public safety determinations that each State makes concerning the concealed carrying of guns in public based on the unique circumstances of each State and the desires of its citizens. In fact, the standards and requirements adopted in the States vary dramatically:

Thirty-one States and D.C. require gun safety training to carry concealed guns in public, and 21 of those States require live-fire training; 27 States and the District of Columbia prohibit individuals convicted of misdemeanor crimes of violence from concealed carry; 28 States and D.C. prohibit convicted stalkers from carrying concealed guns; 34 States and D.C. prohibit those under 21 years of age from carrying concealed guns. Many States prohibit gun possession and concealed carry by abusive dating partners, exceeding Federal protections against abusive spouses.

All of these States would have their carefully considered laws governing concealed carry overridden by this bill.

The obvious solution to the varying State laws is to continue to do what is currently done by many States, which is to choose which other State permits they will recognize. Some States, including my State of New York, have chosen not to recognize permits issued by any other State. Most States, however, have chosen to recognize permits from at least some other States, basing the choice on the strength and standards employed by the other States.

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We should not disregard these determinations, which is what this bill would do. Instead, this bill would say that every State must honor the concealed carry permit of every other State. About 10 States don't have any requirements and issue a concealed carry permit upon request to anyone.

What this bill would do, in effect, is to say that if New York or Illinois have strict requirements for concealed carry, if someone comes in from a State that doesn't, they have to let that person have concealed carry in their State. In effect, it uses the power of the Federal Government to import the laws of one State and make them enforceable in the other State.

In addition, I am deeply disappointed that the version of this bill before us today includes the bipartisan Fix NICS Act, a measure that should be enacted as a stand-alone bill without delay, and

that was reported as a separate bill by the Judiciary Committee.

That bill would take steps to address shortcomings with the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or what we often call the NICS.

As the recent mass shooting at the church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, illustrates, we must do more to ensure all relevant prohibiting records are submitted to the databases that comprise the NICS. No one should pass a firearm background check that he or she should have failed simply because their record of a felony conviction, or domestic violence record, or some other prohibition under Federal law was not included in the system.

There is broad bipartisan support for the Fix NICS bill here in the House and in the Senate. That proposal, which would actually save lives, should not be tethered to the forced concealed carry reciprocity provisions of this bill, which would only serve to endanger our citizens.

The answer to our national problem of gun violence is not that we need more people carrying concealed firearms on our streets. More than 33,000 Americans lose their lives to gun violence every year, while, in some other countries, this figure barely exceeds 100. In 2011, the United Kingdom had 146 deaths due to gun violence; Denmark, 71; Portugal, 142; Japan, just 30; the United States, over 30,000.

A study in *The American Journal of Medicine* found that, compared to 22 other high-income countries, the gun-related murder rate in the United States is 25 times higher. The common factor in all of these other countries is the lack of such easy availability of guns. Our country, however, is awash in guns, and we have the shameful death toll to show for it. Sadly, this bill will only increase it.

We must change our approach to gun violence and adopt meaningful legislation that strengthens our gun laws instead of weakening them; and we must not undermine the efforts of States to defend their citizens against these arms.

Unfortunately, the dangers posed by the concealed carry reciprocity portion of this bill greatly outweigh the benefits of the NICS improvements; therefore, I oppose H.R. 38, and urge my colleagues to reject it today.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON), the lead sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you a story. It is a story about an African-American single mother, two kids, living in south Philly. After twice being the victim of muggings, she decides to go out and legally purchase a firearm to protect herself, gets trained with her weapon, and applies for a concealed carry permit.

Sometime thereafter, she crossed the State line into New Jersey and, at a

routine traffic stop, did exactly as she was trained; handed her driver's license and her concealed carry permit to the police officer and let him know that she had a pistol in her purse.

What she didn't know is that the State of New Jersey doesn't recognize the concealed carry permits of their neighbor in Pennsylvania. And so this poor single mother, who has never had a brush with the law, spent almost 50 days in jail and was looking at 10 years in prison.

Are you serious? We have to make sure that never happens again.

The other side today is going to argue that we are violating States' rights with this legislation; but Article IV, section 1, the full faith and credit clause of the Constitution, says very clearly that every State should give the full faith and credit to the judicial proceedings and documents of every other State, and that Congress has a responsibility to determine how those documents will be recognized.

That is why a driver's license is recognized in every State. That is why, if I get married in North Carolina but I move to Arizona, I am not a single man again. They recognize that marriage. That is why divorce decrees are recognized in every State. The concealed carry permit should be recognized the same way.

But this is not trampling States' rights, because States can still determine what can be carried, where it can be carried. They can set any kind of limits they want about how weapons are carried in their municipalities or their States.

For example, if you visit the State of New York, they have a limit on the size of a magazine on a pistol. You have got to follow that law. If they want to set restrictions about places where you can't carry, even with this legislation, that law would have to be followed. The States retain this right, just like a driver's license.

The other side is also going to stand up and claim all kinds of doomsday scenarios about how we are going to increase crime; we are going to increase the number of weapons out there; we are going to turn the cities into the Wild West.

I find it ironic that we are being lectured to by people from big cities with a lot of gun control measures but have some of the worst crime in the Nation. They are worried about people coming from other places where we don't have crime. I think that is ironic.

But the truth is, over half the States already recognize permits from every other State; 19 States, in fact, already do this. States and municipalities, as I mentioned, retain the right to restrict where guns are carried in their communities, even under this legislation.

And if you look at the empirical evidence, places where you have concealed carry, even constitutional carry, when you instituted this right, violent crime went down. Gun crime went down. You have seen less crime, not more crime.

There was actually a study done in Florida and Texas, and it showed that off-duty police officers commit crimes more than concealed carry permit holders. Think about that. Police officers don't commit crimes very often, but even they commit crimes more than concealed carry permit holders. These are not the people we are worried about. These are not the violent criminals that we are worried about in our cities.

This is a commonsense measure that upholds our constitutional right. It makes sure that a law-abiding citizen, trying to do the right thing, doesn't become a criminal simply because they cross that line.

So for every freedom-loving American who exercises their Second Amendment right, today is your day. To the 73 percent of Americans who support concealed carry, today is your day. To the 15 million concealed carry permit holders out there, today is your day. And finally, to the single mothers out there who just want to protect themselves and their families, today is your day.

I thank the chairman for his leadership on this. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the ranking member of the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me say that the problems that my good friend just mentioned on the floor can be solved by real, sensible gun safety legislation. Unfortunately, H.R. 38 is not that, and it is not that because it has ignored the pleas of law enforcement, and it has ignored the rational addition of amendments that would save lives.

H.R. 38 is dangerous, it is reckless, and it is secretly packaged as a fix to gun violence, but, instead, it is laced with lethal elements of catastrophic proportion.

Then, in the midnight hour, it matches the NICS Fix, dealing with the background checks, with the concealed carry reciprocity. That is patently unfair, Mr. Speaker.

Then it would not allow reasonable amendments, exposing victims of domestic violence, an amendment that I had, it will expose them, victims of domestic violence, to stalkers, and those who have been involved in domestic violence to gun violence or death.

It will entice those who perpetrate hate crimes. It will add to the current alarming death rate. Unfortunately, where we could have fixed the NICS, it does not do that.

556 women have been murdered this year alone by intimate partners with firearms. My amendment would have made this bill safer on the concealed carry bill. Didn't want to have it. Fourteen other sensible amendments were blocked.

4.5 million American women alive today have been threatened by abusers. Hate crimes, those worshippers in Charleston, South Carolina, were killed by a person who came there with hate. My amendment dealing with not allowing someone convicted of a hate crime—even though they say that that is the Federal law, why not have it in this underlying bill where so many people are killed?

Let me give you an example. Under the Brady Campaign, 114,994 Americans are killed by guns. They include those in Las Vegas; they include those at the Pulse nightclub; in Charleston; those who marched in Charlottesville, with all the violence that they had; and of course, Sandy Hook. Seventeen thousand children are gunned down by guns.

The laws of different States, 12 States, have an open carry law with no rules. That means that if you are in Washington, D.C., where heads of state and other dignitaries come, then recklessly someone can come on the streets.

Do we even listen to police officers? The Major Chiefs Association has indicated that they are opposed to H.R. 38 because it will require those making legitimate legal stops as law enforcement officers, seeking to come home to their families, being subjected to individuals whose documents they may not know are credible, or whether they are fraudulent or whether, in fact, these individuals legitimately should have a gun.

I can't understand why this is not understood. So let me just say that it is usually understood that we respect the constitutionality of States. This is a bad bill. It ignores sovereignty, and we should vote it down because too many people are murdered by guns without safety regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 38, the "Concealed to Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017".

I oppose the bill for the following reasons:

H.R. 38 is dangerous, reckless and secretly packaged as a fix to gun violence, but instead, is laced with lethal elements of catastrophic proportion.

It will expose victims of domestic violence or stalking to gun violence or death.

It will entice those who perpetrate hate crimes.

It will add to the current alarming death rate.

The majority has elected to combine this dangerous measure with a more sensible and bipartisan measure, the Fix NICS Act, which we all supported as a stand-alone bill at mark-up.

This trickery tactic is both disappointing and deadly, of which, neither approach is welcome, for this reckless effort will negate any protections offered by the Fix NICS Act.

My Amendments would have remedied these glaring defects in H.R. 38, which is a recipe for disaster because it authorizes anyone who is allowed by one state to carry a concealed handgun to do so in any other state, even if other states have higher standards than the state where permit was granted.

This bill would endanger many more lives when dealing with domestic partners by exposing victims to gun violence.

Approximately, 556 women have been murdered this year alone by intimate partners with firearms, as statistics show that guns are the weapon of choice for domestic violence homicides.

My domestic violence amendment is an important public safety measure. Had it been made in order, it would have provided that States not be required to allow an individual to carry where such person is convicted of an offense of domestic violence or stalking as defined under the law.

Despite this sensible measure, my amendments along with 14 other germane democratic amendments were all blocked by the majority.

A 2016 meta-analysis found that approximately 4.5 million American women alive today have been threatened by abusers with firearms; of those, one million had either been shot or shot at by their abusers.

Stalking is also a strong indicator of lethality, with one study of female murder victims in ten cities finding that 76% of women who were murdered by an intimate partner were stalked the previous year.

My second amendment would have prohibited any person convicted of a hate crime, as defined under section 249 of title 18 United States Code, or any substantially similar offense under the law of any State, from carrying under this bill.

We all remember the vicious church shooting in Charleston, South Carolina where a white supremacist opened fire in a historic black church, killing nine people, including a pastor, during a prayer meeting.

Again, recently, in Charlottesville, VA, white nationalists invoked violence during a march by plowing a car into a group of anti-protesters, killing 32 year old Heather Heyer of Charlottesville.

This event prompted Attorney General Sessions to call the fatal attack "domestic terrorism" and said you can be sure we will charge and advance the investigation toward the most serious of charges that can be brought.

Imagine if this killer from Ohio was allowed to cross state lines freely at that time under this bill with a gun; the additional loss of life on that day could have been catastrophic.

New analysis of National Crime Victimization Survey data by the Center for American Progress reveals that between 2010 and 2014, roughly 43,000 hate crimes were committed in the United States that involved the use or threat of a gun.

Under federal law and the law in most states, individuals who have been convicted of hate crimes remain free to buy and possess guns. And now, under this bill, they can take their guns with them to inflict mayhem beyond their home states.

Hate-motivated individuals such as violent extremists and hate criminals often use guns as a tool to terrorize, threaten and intimidate members of historically vulnerable or marginalized communities. My amendment therefore, was a sensible and practical measure.

Mass shootings and carnage-filled classrooms, churches, workplace, concerts and clubs should not be the new normal because Congress can and should do better.

Every day on average, 315 people are shot, of which 93 die from gun violence, daily. And of the 315 shot, 46 are children and teens between the age of 0-19 and at least 7 of our children die daily from gun violence.

Every year on average, 114,994 people are shot, of which 33,880 people die from gun violence and of those shot, 17,012 of those victims are children and teens. Therefore, we lose at least 2,647 of our children a year to senseless gun violence.

These numbers are alarming and we should be devoting our efforts to saving lives, not opening up the flood gate to more carnage by snuffing innocent lives in passing H.R. 38.

This bill will amplify tragedies such as Sandy Hook Elementary, Charleston, SC, Florida's Pulse night club, San Bernardino, Las Vegas bump stocks killings, Texas recent church massacre, and the countless lives lost on our streets across this country daily.

Although the NRA argues that the United States is a dangerous place and that owning and carrying a gun is the only way to protect oneself and one's family, there are over 30,000 dead.

Removing safeguards intended to protect the public against potential harm or deadly force by private individuals jeopardizes universally recognized human rights—including the right to life.

H.R. 38 prohibits Congress' ability to address gun violence in a constructive and realistic manner? Adding more guns to our streets and loosening existing laws is extremely dangerous and counterproductive to ensuring public safety.

Disguising the danger in this bill, by wrapping it in the cloth of H.R. 4477, a more sensible measure, does not negate the toxicity level of H.R. 38.

In response to the TX recent church shooting, my amendment strengthened H.R. 4477 by requiring DoD to conduct a more comprehensive review of the procedures used by each branch of the Armed Forces to ensure that the Department is in substantial compliance with the DoD instruction 5505.11 entitled, "Fingerprint Card and Final Disposition Report Submission Requirements", dated December 1, 1998. But again, these amendments were blocked.

Unlike H.R. 4477, the Fix NICS Act, a bipartisan measure and good first step, which aims to improve key elements in the submission of information by federal and state agencies to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and which I supported, H.R. 38 as is and combined is lethal.

For the reasons stated above, I oppose this Rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds, and I include in the RECORD an article entitled, "Good Samaritan Kills Active Shooter in Texas Sports Bar," in which a shooter with two guns and two knives entered a sports bar and was shot by an individual that the police labeled a Good Samaritan who happened to be eating at the restaurant with his wife. He was a concealed carry permit holder. He told his wife to get down on the ground, and then he shot the assailant.

[From nbcnews.com, May 4, 2017]

'GOOD SAMARITAN' KILLS ACTIVE SHOOTER IN TEXAS SPORTS BAR: POLICE

(By Phil McCausland)

A "good Samaritan" with a gun killed an active shooter who may have been gearing up for a deadly rampage at a Texas sports bar Wednesday night, police said.

When 48-year-old James Jones walked inside the Zona Caliente Sports Bar, started

yelling and then allegedly shot and killed Cesar Perez—a 37-year-old restaurant manager who'd attempted to calm him down—Arlington police said witnesses were afraid they would be next.

In addition to the gun used to kill Perez, police say Jones had another semiautomatic pistol and two knives on him. The serial number on the second gun had been scratched off, and Jones did not have a gun license, police said.

"He definitely had the capacity, if he wanted, to commit further violence and potentially kill other patrons in the business," Arlington Police Lieutenant Chris Cook told NBC News, adding that it did not appear that the shooter knew his victim.

An armed "good Samaritan"—as the Arlington Police labeled him—happened to be eating at the restaurant with his wife. A concealed carry permit holder, he told her to get down on the ground and then shot Jones in the back.

"I don't think the shooter even knew where the rounds were coming from because he started shooting at the front door," Cook said, who described the scene as "chaotic."

Police reviewed video surveillance and pieced together the incident via witness interviews, but it remains unclear how many shots were fired by either individual. Police were looking into Jones' background to see whether he suffered from any mental illnesses and were awaiting test results to find out if he was under the influence.

The man who took down Jones wished to maintain his anonymity, police said, noting that he felt overwhelmed but relieved that he prevented further violence.

"We're thankful that the good 'Samaritan' acted quickly and decisively to end the threat," Cook said. "We never recommend people get involved. That's a personal decision that a citizen has to make."

Use of force and firearms expert Emanuel Kapelsohn told NBC News that, from his understanding, the man who took down the shooter reacted appropriately.

"I think it's to be applauded," he said. "Not everybody in the world ought to own a gun. Not everybody in the world ought to carry a gun. Not everyone in the world ought to engage an armed criminal where innocent people could be potentially injured."

"But this good Samaritan obviously had the ability to do what he did," Kapelsohn added. "Who knows how many people would be dead if he had not acted?"

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), the chairman of the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that H.R. 38, as amended, includes the Fix NICS Act. I have long supported the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS.

NICS is about saving lives and protecting people from harm by preventing guns from falling into the wrong hands. It does this without interfering in the timely transfer of firearms to eligible gun buyers.

I was the original cosponsor of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act of 1993 and worked diligently for its passage. I strongly supported this bill because it makes sense to prevent convicted felons and individuals judged to be mentally ill from obtaining guns.

At the time of negotiations, I insisted on the inclusion of the NICS program. Under this system, firearms dealers use the FBI's NICS system to cross-reference with a list of known convicted felons, drug users, illegal aliens, and those convicted of domestic violence.

As I have stated many times, the NICS system is only as good as the records that are put into it. Too often, people who otherwise would not pass a background check can slip through the cracks and buy guns.

After the recent shooting in Sutherland Springs, Texas, the U.S. Air Force disclosed that it had failed to report the gunman's history of domestic assault to the database, which should have prevented him from purchasing a firearm in the first place.

This legislation will provide a much-needed push to speed implementation of the NICS system used in conducting instant background checks prior to gun purchases. At the Federal level, it would require Federal agency cooperation and provide relevant records to the Attorney General for inclusion into the NICS. It holds Federal agencies accountable if they fail to upload relevant records to the background check system through public reporting and prohibiting bonus pay for political appointees.

At the State level, it will incentivize them to make sure that their reporting is up to date by giving Federal grant preferences to States which comply.

□ 1500

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. This bill is not about expanding background checks. This is about ensuring that the existing law is working. There is strong bipartisan support for improving what has become the systemic problem of missing information in the database. Accurate reporting is essential to ensuring that the system works as intended.

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article by Mark Kelly entitled "Good Guys With Guns Can Be Dangerous, Too. Don't Gut Conceal Carry Laws. Why is Congress about to Vote to Loosen Gun Laws Again;" a letter from Major Cities Chiefs Association opposing H.R. 38; a letter from the chief of police from the City of Houston; and, finally, a report from the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence.

'GOOD GUYS WITH GUNS' CAN BE DANGEROUS,
TOO. DON'T GUT CONCEALED CARRY LAWS
WHY IS CONGRESS ABOUT TO VOTE TO LOOSEN
GUN LAWS AGAIN?

(By Mark Kelly)

That day in Tucson, amid a gun tragedy, one of the heroes almost got shot.

It was Saturday, Jan. 8, 2011, and a mentally ill young man who'd gotten his hand on a gun opened fire on my wife, then-Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.), and her constituents at an event in a Safeway parking lot. He shot my wife in the head at close range, injured 12 others and took the lives of six people. One victim was a 9-year-old girl.

After Gabby's would-be assassin dropped the full magazine as he sought to reload his gun and continue his rampage, people tackled him, kicked his gun away, subdued him as they waited for law enforcement to arrive and brought an end to the chaos. They were heroes.

The chaos nearly continued, though. Because the man who murdered those innocent people wasn't the only one there with a loaded, concealed gun.

Joe Zamudio was shopping at a drugstore nearby when he heard the shots. Allowed to carry a concealed weapon under Arizona law, Zamudio recognized the sound of gunfire and rushed to the scene with his gun in his jacket pocket, his hand on his weapon and ready to fire. But then Zamudio—a good guy trying to do the right thing—almost shot another good guy.

As he rounded the corner, he saw a man holding a gun. Zamudio confronted him: "Drop it, drop it!" he yelled.

But that man with a gun was a good guy, too. He was one of the heroes who had wrestled the shooter to the ground. And he was moments away from being shot for the wrong reason.

To his credit, Zamudio held his fire—just barely. As he recounted to reporters later, "It was a matter of seconds. . . . I was really lucky. . . . I've never been in the military or had any professional training. I just reacted."

The situation that played out in the Safeway parking lot that day shows the potential for tragedy and bloodshed when untrained people carrying loaded guns react to a crisis. Even with the best intentions, an armed person without the extensive firearms training that is required to respond under pressure in a crisis will risk making the situation worse, not better.

But this week, as we approach the seventh anniversary of the tragedy in Tucson and the fifth anniversary of the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School—and after two of the five deadliest mass shootings in modern history happened in the last two months—Congress is working hard to pass one of the big-ticket items on the National Rifle Association's wishlist, a bill that weakens our gun laws and poses serious threats to public safety.

The House of Representatives is on the verge of voting to allow people permitted to carry concealed weapons to carry them into any other state regardless of what that state's law on such guns is. That would make it harder for law enforcement to do their job and allow all permit holders, even if they don't have a single shred of training, to carry loaded, hidden guns on every street in our country.

Right now, each state has the right to determine the extent to which it will recognize the concealed carry laws of other states. Some states have strong laws, preventing dangerous people like domestic abusers and convicted stalkers from obtaining concealed carry permits and requiring training and a thorough evaluation as part of the process.

In other states, concealed carry laws have much lower standards. The 12 states with the weakest laws, permitless carry states, do not even require a permit. That means a resident of those states may carry loaded, concealed guns in public spaces without ever having passed a background check.

The bill before Congress would allow people who have a permit issued by any state—including permitless carry states—to carry loaded, concealed handguns in any other state that allows concealed carry, even though they might not meet local public safety standards. This would mean an 18-year-old high school student from West Virginia could legally carry a concealed firearm in New York City, where residents must be 21 to even own a handgun.

And what would it mean for law enforcement? Nothing good. The bill would impose a threat of personal litigation on all law enforcement officers by allowing anyone whose ability to carry a concealed gun is mistakenly questioned by law enforcement to personally sue the officer. This bill would also effectively require them to be an expert on nationwide gun laws as they work to determine if it's legal for someone from out of state to be carrying a gun in whatever state they might be visiting. Just as concerning, it will mean that more law enforcement officers will have to confront more people with guns. And think back to the tragedy in Tucson: When law enforcement officers arrive at a crime scene where multiple people are holding guns, how do they even know who the good guy is?

We need politicians to show courage and listen to the American people, who want stronger laws to make them safer, not give-aways to gun lobbyists that threaten the safety of our communities. And that's exactly what this irresponsible bill would do.

As members of Congress consider this bill, they have to ask themselves if they want to be remembered as voting to help the Washington gun lobby instead of supporting law enforcement and public safety. And they should know that their constituents are watching their decision closely.

MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION,
November 2, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: On behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs, representing the Nation's largest metropolitan law enforcement agencies in the country, we are writing to voice our strong opposition to the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017, HR 38. Because we are responsible for public safety in jurisdictions across the Nation, we recognize that this legislation would be an enormous mistake.

This measure is both impractical and contrary to the rights of States. Moreover, it raises Constitutional questions about the authority of Congress to direct State officers.

Concealed weapon permit laws have been tailored to the needs of regions and local communities over a period of many years. An attempt by Congress to preempt these State laws forces States to accept the lowest minimum standard for concealed carry across the Nation, and creates a contradiction between the standards required for State residents and State visitors.

The thousands of local permit formats would make enforcement impossible, because police officers would not be able to determine the validity of a permit issued in another State or locality. It would be impossible for law enforcement to distinguish true permit carriers from criminals and illegal guns.

We are confident that members of Congress will respect the Constitutional sovereignty

of the States and will not act with disregard for the many reasonable and prudent laws already in place across the Nation.

Sincerely,

J. THOMAS MANGER,
Chief of Police, Montgomery County Police Department,
President.

CITY OF HOUSTON,
HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT,
Houston, TX, November 29, 2017.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman,

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Ranking Member, Committee of the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY AND RANKING MEMBER FEINSTEIN: As the Chief of Police in Houston, I see first-hand the bloodshed and death toll from gun violence. Recent horrible events in Texas and Nevada serve as grim reminders that we have not done enough to prevent gun violence in America. While I am sorry I cannot attend your planned hearing, I serve as the First Vice President of Major Cities Chiefs and ask that you also enter this letter into the record.

The mass shooting in Texas is an ugly and tragic example of the need to strengthen our system of background checks. That's why I am supporting the measure introduced by Senator Cornyn and I urge the Committee to move his bill forward. The proposed legislation seeks to make current law work better by strengthening procedures. But we should not stop there as much more can be done to prevent the public from gun violence. This measure alone does not go far enough to stop what recently happened in Texas and the many, many senseless mass shootings that preceded our own tragedy.

Universal Background Check: The mass shooting in Texas represents a renewed call for the Universal Background Check that Congress has failed to adopt in the past. Much has been said about how the Texas gunman would have been precluded from the store purchase if the background system had worked correctly. But what would have stopped him from buying the same weapons at the next gun show? It's a disservice to the public to conduct background checks only in some cases, but not for all of them.

"Bump Stocks": Another common-sense measure is a ban on "bump stocks" and similar accessories that replicate fully automatic weapons fire. Such features result in a number of shots fired that causes the carnage we witnessed in Las Vegas. Like other law enforcement officials, I have studied the Las Vegas slaughter and concluded that there is no reasonable sporting or hunting purpose served by deadly devices that simulate military weapons capabilities. I was seated next to the ATF Director at a recent meeting of Major Cities Chiefs when he advised the Chiefs that new legislation will be required.

Concealed Weapons: Each State has carefully crafted its own laws relating to concealed weapons. While Congress has heretofore respected the Constitutional sovereignty of the States, there is legislation now pending that would undermine the authority of State laws relating to carrying of weapons. We strongly urge Congress to reject the misguided and impractical proposal for reciprocity. As police officers could not be expected to recognize legitimate or forged permits from thousands of jurisdictions, it would be impossible to determine which persons are authorized to carry a concealed weapon.

Silencers: Legislation to deregulate silencers is ill-advised because it would further threaten public safety. These devices were

invented for killing and stealth. Once widespread, hunters would be unable to hear nearby gunfire and thus be endangered. Gunshot detection systems in urban areas would be thwarted. Worst of all, the proposed legislation would permit criminals to purchase and possess silencers without any screening requirements. There is simply no legitimate justification for a measure that would further endanger the public.

Our Duty to Protect: Like those of us who wear a badge, members of Congress share our solemn duty to protect the public. The recent tragedies in Texas and Nevada should be recognized by Congress as cries for help from past and future innocent victims of gun violence. Chiefs of Police and Sheriffs join these victims in asking you to act now to prevent more death and bloodshed. We turn to you for courage and leadership to consider multiple steps and measures to curb the ongoing threat of gun violence in America.

Sincerely,

ART ACEVEDO,
Chief of Police.

NATIONAL TASK FORCE TO END
SEXUAL & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,

December 1, 2017.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: As we enter the winter holiday season, we grieve for the approximately 556 women who will not celebrate with their families—the 556 women who have been murdered this year by intimate partners with firearms. As a country, we can and must do more to prevent the daily mass shootings that plague our nation, most of which are related to family violence.

Accordingly, we, the member organizations of the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (NTFV), comprising national organizations working to end gender-based violence and representing hundreds of member programs and hundreds of thousands of advocates and survivors, write to you today to oppose the package containing both the Concealed Carry Reciprocity (CCR) Act of 2017, H.R. 38, and the Fix NICS Act of 2017, H.R.4434.

While the Fix NICS Act of 2017, H.R.4434, will protect victims of domestic violence by ensuring domestic violence records are properly and expeditiously submitted to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, H.R. 38, undermines the safety of victims of domestic violence, dating violence and stalking by destabilizing protections for victims of abuse and allowing domestic violence offenders to follow their victims across state lines with loaded, concealed firearms. This combined measure is incredibly dangerous and will negate any protections offered by the Fix NICS Act.

Firearms are regularly used as tools of power and control. A 2016 meta-analysis of existing literature found that approximately 4.5 million American women alive today have been threatened by abusers with firearms; of those, one million had either been shot or shot at by their abusers. Guns are also the weapon of choice for domestic violence homicides. An abuser's mere access to a firearm increases the risk of intimate partner homicide of women by five times. Stalking is also a strong indicator of lethality, with one study of female murder victims in ten cities finding that 76% of women who were murdered by an intimate partner were stalked the previous year. Lawmakers have enacted strong, commonsense protections to prevent domestic violence homicides in states and localities across the nation and such protections must not be undermined by federally mandating concealed carry reciprocity.

States and Reciprocity Agreements: Currently, each state determines who can le-

gally carry concealed, loaded firearms in public. Many states have enacted strong laws to protect victims and survivors from gun-enabled abuse beyond the vital but limited protection federal law provides. States enter into reciprocity agreements at their own discretion. The proposal before the Committee would take away this local control by requiring every state to recognize every other state's concealed weapons permits, thereby undermining states' authority to make their own decisions as to what measures will provide the best protection for their citizens.

Victim Relocation: Often, victims of domestic violence, dating violence and stalking relocate across state lines to escape their abusers and seek refuge in states with stronger firearms protections. H.R. 38 would require states with strong protections for victims of abuse to accept the permits of states with weaker protections and allow domestic violence offenders to travel across state lines with loaded, concealed firearms. Domestic violence offenders could shop around for "out of state" permits, which are granted by ten states to non-residents, even if they do not meet the requirements to obtain a permit in their home state. Even if domestic abusers are prohibited from possessing firearms from their state of residence, they could easily obtain "out of state" permits and cross state lines to threaten, harass and harm their victims with firearms.

Law Enforcement and Background Checks: The CCR Act assumes that law enforcement need only look at an individual's out-of-state concealed carry license to verify their eligibility to carry a firearm. Twelve states no longer require permits to carry loaded, concealed firearms; individuals from those states would not be able to produce a state-issued photo ID license to prove their eligibility to carry a concealed firearm, as required by the bills. The bill also assumes that federal firearms prohibitors apply to all persons asserting the right to concealed carry reciprocity. However, many states do not run background checks when issuing concealed permits, so law enforcement in the travel state is unable to ascertain whether a federal or state prohibitor impairs the traveler's concealed carry permit or firearm possession. Even when a background check is required before a permit is issued, prohibited abusers often erroneously pass background checks, because the federal background check databases are missing most records relating to federal and many states' domestic violence prohibitors.

The Fix NICS Act of 2017 (H.R.4434): This bipartisan, bicameral bill reauthorizes NCHIP, requires all federal agencies and states to design implementation plans to increase submission of records into NICS, holds states and federal agencies responsible if they do not meet the benchmarks established in their implementation plans, and creates a Domestic Abuse and Violence Prevention Initiative to focus state efforts specifically on domestic violence records. This bill is supported not only by the domestic violence community but also such disparate entities as the NRA, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, and a number of gun violence prevention organizations.

Although gaps in reporting of records span a range of firearms prohibitors, the gap in reporting of domestic violence records is particularly notable. Approximately 700,000 protective orders reside in state databases that are not in any federal database, and countless more protective orders are issued at the local level but never entered into state databases. Similarly, there are significant gaps in the number of misdemeanor domestic violence convictions and the records submitted to NICS. Poor record keeping often leads to

domestic abusers erroneously passing background checks or to "default proceed", in which a background check cannot be completed within seventy-two hours, and a sale is allowed to proceed before the FBI has made a determination about the potential buyer's ability to legally purchase or possess firearms. In 2013 and 2014, a plurality (approximately 40%) of cases referred by the FBI to the ATF for firearms retrieval after a default proceed were related to a domestic violence prohibitor. An unknown number of prohibited abusers wrongly passed background checks altogether.

Simply put, we cannot support any bill that puts the lives of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking at risk. Any bill that includes the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, H.R.38, imperils the lives of victims, survivors, their children, their families, their friends and their communities. We continue to support The Fix NICS Act of 2017, H.R.4434, as a standalone bill because it saves lives. On behalf of victims of domestic violence, dating violence and stalking, we urge you to reconsider combining these bills. These two bills cannot be supported as a package and the CCR Act threatens to erase any progress that could be made by the Fix NICS Act.

Sincerely,

THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE
TO END SEXUAL AND
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY).

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the so-called Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act. It is outrageous that today, of all days, 1 week before the 5-year anniversary of the horrific murder of 20 schoolchildren and 6 educators in my district of Newtown, 2 months after the slaughter of 50 Americans watching a concert, that we are about to act on a bill to put more guns in the hands of more dangerous people.

Rather than helping raise the standards nationally for gun safety, this bill would override and lower most States' concealed carry laws, making it easier for domestic violence abusers, stalkers, and violent criminals to carry across State lines loaded hidden guns. This bill should be called the "Act to Carry Any Gun Anywhere Anytime by Anyone."

The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act is an outrage and an insult to the families in Newtown and to the hundreds of families who have lost loved ones to gun violence who are gathered here today at the Capitol for the fifth annual Vigil to End Gun Violence.

In the 5 years since Sandy Hook, this is the very first bill we have been allowed to vote on in this Chamber, and it is a reckless giveaway to the moneyed gun interests.

Mr. Speaker, since 2012, gun violence has killed over 170,000 Americans. It is time for this House to truly honor the victims of gun violence and their families with action instead of caving in to the gun lobby yet again.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to oppose this dangerous bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, history is the great educator. We remember in American history the War of Independence started when the British tried to take away the firearms of Americans, and we had the Battles of Lexington and Concord. That revolution was successful because Americans were able to be armed.

The Texas War of Independence started when the Mexican Government tried to take away the firearms of Texans. That started in Gonzales, Texas, and it was successful and we became an independent country.

The Second Amendment is a constitutional right that Americans have. My friends on the other side don't like the Second Amendment. They wish it wasn't there. They do everything in their power to restrict the privilege and the right that we have under the Second Amendment, and we get it because of our history, to protect us from government and also for self-defense.

My friends talk about gun violence. They have got to remember that gun violence happens many times where people are disarmed, and it usually takes a gun to stop that gun, just like it did at the church in Texas.

In another situation, if I were to drive my Jeep to California and I get stopped by the California Highway Patrol, which maybe would occur, I would show them my Texas driver's license, and then they would let me drive, even though the laws in California are different on a driver's license.

Second, the registration of my Jeep in Texas would pass in California, even though if I had to get it done in California, it probably wouldn't pass. But they recognize that because we have laws that recognize that.

My marriage license would be accepted as well.

The right to bear arms, the right to have a concealed carry weapon, is based on the Second Amendment of the Constitution. All this law does is allow us to exercise that right in every State.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. NADLER for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, that is just the way it is. Since the start of 2017, more than 14,340 people have been killed by gun violence in the United States, more than any other country on Earth. That is just the way it is.

More than 29,150 have been wounded. More than 680 of those have been children.

In October, 58 people were killed and 515 wounded in Las Vegas in the worst mass shooting in our Nation's history.

But we don't have a bill on the floor to prevent the creation of machine guns, which are illegal, by bump stocks.

Just 5 weeks later, a gunman entered a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas,

and killed 26 worshipers, while wounding 20.

The majority's response?

Bring to the floor a bill that makes America less safe, more replete with people carrying and concealing weapons in our communities. This bill says: If you want to carry a concealed weapon in a State that doesn't allow it constitutionally, no problem. Get your concealed carry license in another State that does.

In other words, every State, no matter their own judgment, talk about States' rights, no matter their own judgment, must be subjected to the policies of the least protective State in the Nation.

Instead of addressing the very serious problem of rampant gun violence in a constructive way, the Republican majority is bringing to the floor a bill that makes it easier to hide dangerous weapons in public.

Newtown, Aurora, Orlando, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, and community after community after community. What will it take for this Congress to act? What will it take to face this challenge instead of ignoring it? How many more will not live to see the new year or begin it with debilitating injuries they will carry for the rest of their lives? How many times will we have a moment of silence and a year of no action?

Mr. Speaker, defeat this bill. Its rational provision of NICS, making sure people report, does not justify the danger it expands. Support the rights of States to protect their residents from hidden firearms. Do not ignore the crisis that confronts our country. Have a moment of action, a moment of legislating more safety, not less; not simply a few seconds of silence to lament the loss of life, whether it be in Las Vegas or Orlando or in our own communities. Defeat this bill. Come back and do some positive, constructive work that makes America safe again.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to include in the RECORD a letter signed by 23 of those States' attorneys general who say, in part, in this letter: "Strong evidence indicates that concealed carry permit holders actually deter and reduce crime." This is taking action by passing this legislation.

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MISSOURI,
Jefferson City, MO, December 1, 2017.
Re Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (S. 446) and Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (H.R. 38).

HON. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

HON. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

HON. CHUCK SCHUMER,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

HON. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS: As the chief legal officers of our States, we, the undersigned 23 state Attorneys General, write

in support of the Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (S. 446) and the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (H.R. 38). We share a strong interest in the protection of our citizens' Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms, and we are committed to supporting federal and state policies to preserve that constitutional right. These bills, if enacted, would eliminate significant obstacles to the exercise of the right to keep and bear arms for millions of Americans in every State.

The Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides an individual right to own and carry a firearm for self-defense. The Amendment states that "[a] well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." U.S. Const. amend. II. As the Supreme Court recognized in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S. 570, 592 (2008), the Second Amendment "guarantee[s] the individual right to possess and carry weapons in case of confrontation." Indeed, "individual self-defense is 'the central component' of the Second Amendment right." *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, 561 U.S. 742, 767 (2010) (quoting *Heller*, 554 U.S. at 599).

The core interest protected by this right is self-defense by law-abiding citizens. This right therefore extends to weapons "in common use" and "typically possessed by law-abiding citizens for lawful purposes." *Heller*, 554 U.S. at 624-25, 627 (quoting *United States v. Miller*, 307 U.S. 174, 179 (1939)).

The Second Amendment historically has guaranteed the right to carry firearms outside the home for self-defense. In *Heller*, the Supreme Court relied on the preeminent authority on English law for the founding generation, William Blackstone, who explained that the right to self-defense, codified by the framers in the Second Amendment, was an "individual right protecting against both public and private violence." *Heller*, 554 U.S. at 594 (citations omitted). As Justices Thomas and Gorsuch have written, "[s]elf-defense has to take place wherever the person happens to be, and in some circumstances a person may be more vulnerable in a public place than in his own house." *Peruta v. California*, 137 S. Ct. 1995, 1998-99 (2017) (Thomas, J., and Gorsuch, J., dissenting from the denial of certiorari) (quoting Eugene Volokh, *Implementing the Right to Keep and Bear Arms for Self-Defense: An Analytical Framework and a Research Agenda*, 56 UCLA L. Rev. 1443, 1515 (2009)).

To be sure, the right to carry firearms for self-defense is not unlimited, and the Supreme Court has stated that its decisions do not cast doubt on the "longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms." *Heller*, 554 U.S. at 626-27. But these exceptions all assume that the right to carry a weapon in self-defense applies in public places generally.

The Second Amendment, moreover, applies to both the Federal Government and the States. The Second Amendment is a right "fundamental to our scheme of ordered liberty," and so it applies not just to the Federal Government but also to the States under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. *McDonald*, 561 U.S. at 767; see also *Caetano v. Massachusetts*, 136 S. Ct. 1027, 1027 (2016) (per curiam).

Nevertheless, some activist courts have held that the Second Amendment has no application at all outside the home, and thus have upheld state laws banning any firearm ownership outside the home. See, e.g., *Peruta v. California*, 137 S. Ct. 1995, 1997, 1999 (2017) (Thomas, J. and Gorsuch, J., dissenting from

the denial of certiorari) (collecting cases); e.g., *Williams v. State*, 10 A.3d 1167, 1177 (Md. 2011); *Mack v. United States*, 6 A.3d 1224, 1236 (D.C. 2010). Further, ten states refuse to recognize any out-of-state concealed carry permits, and many more refuse to recognize out-of-state concealed carry permits unless certain conditions are met.

The citizen interest in self-defense, supported and protected by the Second Amendment, is called into serious question by such blanket refusals to permit carrying firearms in self-defense outside the home or to allow non-resident visitors to carry concealed weapons. Because some States refuse to give the Second Amendment its full import, Congress should enact concealed-carry reciprocity legislation, to help implement and enforce the constitutional right to self-defense for millions of law-abiding Americans across the country.

The exercise of Congress's power is particularly warranted in this case because the States that refuse to allow law-abiding, non-resident visitors to carry concealed weapons place their occupants in greater danger—not less—from gun violence. These States leave citizens without any real option for self-defense, and so it is not surprising that they have been unable to show that their regulations reduce crime.

Authorizing permit holders to carry across state lines will not result in an increased risk of crime. Concealed carry permit holders are among the most law-abiding members of society, and those States that allow for reciprocal concealed-carry permits have not encountered any significant safety issues. In Texas, for example, state data on permit holders shows that, compared to the general public, they are “ten times less likely to commit a crime, eleven times less likely to commit an aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, and seven times less likely to commit deadly conduct with a firearm.” Kevin Ballard, *Peruta v. County of San Diego: An Individual Right to Self-Defense Outside the Home and the Application of Strict Scrutiny to Second Amendment Challenges*, 47 *Golden Gate U. L. Rev.* 25, 59 (2017).

Further, strong evidence indicates that concealed-carry permit holders actually deter and reduce crime. Those who engage in lawful and licensed concealed carry are not only less likely to be involved in criminal activity themselves, but their presence also deters others from engaging in violent crime. See John R. Lott, Jr., *More Guns, Less Crime* (University of Chicago Press, 3d ed. 2010). County-level data for the entire United States from 1977 to 2000, the period in which many concealed-carry laws took effect, shows annual reductions in murder rates between 1.5 percent and 2.3 percent for each additional year that a right-to-carry law was in effect, and the total economic benefit from reduced crimes usually ranges between approximately \$2 billion and \$3 billion per year. Florenz Plassmann & John Whitley, *Confirming “More Guns, Less Crime,”* 55 *Stan. L. Rev.* 1313 (2003). “Violent crime falls after right-to-carry laws are adopted, with bigger drops the longer the right-to-carry laws are in effect.” John R. Lott, Jr., *What a Balancing Test Will Show for Right-to-Carry Laws*, 71 *Md. L. Rev.* 1205, 1212 (2012).

Our experience as attorneys general further reinforces this data. Law-abiding individuals who choose to exercise their constitutional right to carry a firearm for self-defense promote public safety. Our states have chosen to respect the rights of residents and non-residents alike to carry arms for their defense, and we ask Congress to protect the same rights of our law-abiding residents as they travel throughout the United States.

States should not be able to deny citizens of other States the basic constitutional right

to self-defense. We thus urge Congress to enact legislation such as the Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (S. 446) or the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 (H.R. 38). These bills aim to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens to carry a concealed handgun. They do not allow for carrying firearms by felons, those involuntarily committed to mental health facilities, and other persons prohibited by federal law from possessing or receiving firearms. And these bills would not prevent States from allowing governmental and private entities to preclude concealed carry on their own property.

As the Supreme Court held in *McDonald*, it is “unmistakably” true that “the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms” is “fundamental to our scheme of ordered liberty” and “deeply rooted in this Nation’s history and tradition.” *McDonald*, 561 U.S. at 767–68. Congress should act to safeguard and implement this deeply rooted right for those traveling across state lines.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this legislation. As the chief legal and law enforcement officers of our respective States, we urge Congress to pass this important legislation implementing one of the most basic American freedoms, the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms.

Very truly yours,

Joshua D. Hawley, Missouri Attorney General; Steve Marshall, Alabama Attorney General; Mark Brnovich, Arizona Attorney General; Leslie Rutledge, Arkansas Attorney General; Pamela Jo Bondi, Florida Attorney General; Chris Carr, Georgia Attorney General; Lawrence Wasden, Idaho Attorney General; Curtis T. Hill, Jr., Indiana Attorney General; Derek Schmidt, Kansas Attorney General; Jeff Landry, Louisiana Attorney General; Bill Schuette, Michigan Attorney General; Timothy C. Fox, Montana Attorney General.

Doug Peterson, Nebraska Attorney General; Adam Paul Laxalt, Nevada Attorney General; Wayne Stenehjem, North Dakota Attorney General; Mike DeWine, Ohio Attorney General; Alan Wilson, South Carolina Attorney General; Marty J. Jackley, South Dakota Attorney General; Ken Paxton, Texas Attorney General; Sean Reyes, Utah Attorney General; Patrick Morrissey, West Virginia Attorney General; Brad D. Schimel, Wisconsin Attorney General; Peter K. Michael, Wyoming Attorney General.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, our Founders laid out certain rights in our Constitution, not to empower the government, but to empower the people. Certainly among the most fundamental of those rights we have as Americans is to keep and bear arms.

H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017, simply ensures all law-abiding citizens who meet the requirements to obtain concealed carry permits in their home State can exercise the right to protect themselves in any State, provided that they obey the local concealed carry laws.

Mr. Speaker, some opponents of this bill claim that we are somehow making it easier for dangerous unqualified individuals to obtain and carry guns. That is absolutely not true.

If a citizen is currently prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm, this bill does nothing to change that.

On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, others will tell you that we are making it harder for law-abiding Americans to exercise their Second Amendment right. That is not true either.

H.R. 38 does nothing to infringe upon anyone’s right to keep and bear arms. The bill simply ensures that our current National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS, is enforced and working properly.

Those of us who respect the Second Amendment and dedicate our careers to defending it will always fight to protect this fundamental right from those who would erode it.

Mr. Speaker, we also have a responsibility to uphold and enforce our current laws to ensure dangerous people can’t obtain weapons. In fact, it is precisely because we want to preserve our Second Amendment right that we must ensure our criminal background check system works properly.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill in order to ensure that those who obtain a concealed carry permit in one State are able to enjoy the freedom in any State and to make sure our current background check system is working the way it was intended to work.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, firstly, the NRA put a bulletin out to urge people to vote for this. They said: “We must ensure that antigun jurisdictions do not harass travelers.”

Mr. Speaker, that is the purpose of this bill from the NRA, that nine antigun jurisdictions, State legislatures that have restrictive gun laws, cannot harass travelers, cannot see that their State has the same laws that their citizens have from people out of State.

When my friends on the other side talk about being concerned about the Second Amendment and dedicating their lives to it and seeing that irresponsible people don’t get guns, when we tried to bring a no fly, no buy law, they weren’t for it. They talked about due process.

But have they brought a due process bill to the floor for people who are on the no-fly list?

No.

People who are on Social Security who can’t manage their own affairs, they passed a law that said they should get guns when they couldn’t before. That is not in keeping with what they are saying.

This bill violates States’ rights, puts guns in the hands of people that States don’t want them to have. There are seven States that don’t allow people under 21, unless they are in the military, to have a gun permit. This Federal law would override those seven States.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bad law. It is the NRA's law. We should have had amendments considered in committee, but we didn't because the NRA didn't want them.

□ 1515

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to support the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which will allow a person who is licensed in one State to carry their firearm to carry it in other States. It works just like your driver's license. My Texas driver's license lets me drive in Virginia; it lets me drive in Florida; it lets me drive in California.

When I was a child growing up in Texas, my family taught me the importance of marksmanship, gun safety, and the Second Amendment. And I have long said that, when it comes to reducing violence, it is the individual, not the weapon, that we need to be focused on.

This bill helps ensure an American's right to carry is not infringed when crossing State lines, enhancing public safety. In fact, as the chairman stated earlier here today, a peer-reviewed study shows that States with more restrictive concealed carry laws had higher gun-related murder rates. That is why we need an armed citizenry to protect ourselves and each other.

As we saw in the terrible Texas church shooting in Sutherland Springs just recently, the death toll could have been much higher had not an armed citizen been there to confront the gunman. There are those who insist the bill will arm the criminals, but those claims are far from true, as gun laws restricting criminals from access to weapons are already there in their home States. They are going to remain undisturbed.

I am a strong supporter of the Second Amendment and the Constitution, as I suspect most of you all are, Mr. Speaker, and I believe gun control is hitting what you aim at and nothing else.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it has been almost 5 years to the day that 20 6- and 7-year-old babies were slaughtered in Newtown. It has been about a year-and-a-half since 49 people were killed in my home State of Florida, 58 more being injured. In October, 59 people were killed and 500 injured at an outdoor concert in Las Vegas. And in November, 26 people were killed and injured as they worshiped in Sutherland Springs, Texas. The response to all of this tragedy is a bill to make it easier for people to carry concealed weapons in every corner of this country.

I don't know whose idea—other than the gun corporations, I don't know

whose idea it was that this would be the way that we honor the memories of those who have been killed, that instead of commonsense gun safety legislation that the overwhelming majority of people in this country support, we get a bill to make it possible to carry concealed weapons in every State, in every corner of this country.

When my friends on the other side say this doesn't override any laws, that is absolutely untrue. In States that have State laws that govern where you can and can't carry a gun, this bill overrides that and says you can bring any gun into the State, whatever your regulations are about what you can carry.

This is a bill that doesn't make us safer. It doesn't make us stronger. But make no mistake, it makes the bottom line, the profits of the gun makers in this country, a little bit healthier.

As we enter the Christmas season and we think about the 20 6- and 7-year-old kids whose lives were taken 5 years ago today, whose parents, whose families suffer every day with that loss, whose kids aren't there to receive Christmas presents, I ask my friends on the other side: Why is it that we respond to that by giving this enormous Christmas gift to the NRA?

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to include in the RECORD two articles, one from Tennessee and one from Florida, in which concealed carry permit holders stopped dead in their tracks people who were going to commit murder.

[From www.wsmv.com, Oct. 8, 2017]

USHER BEING CALLED "HERO" FOR HELPING TO STOP ANTIOCH CHURCH SHOOTER

(By Edward Burch)

ANTIOCH, TN.—Robert Caleb Engle is being hailed as a hero after helping to stop the accused gunman during the shooting at Burnette Chapel Church of Christ in Antioch on Sunday.

According to police and witnesses at the scene, Engle, who is an usher at the church, confronted the accused shooter, Emanuel Kidega Samson. Engle was then pistol-whipped by Samson. The two got into a scuffle before Samson shot himself in the chest.

Engle, who has a carry permit, went out to his car to get a gun, despite suffering a head injury.

Engle then went back inside the church to confront Samson and held him at gunpoint until authorities arrived.

Engle, 22, declined an on-camera interview but did send a statement.

When complimented about his heroism, Engle said, "I do not want to be labeled a hero. The real heroes are the police, first responders, medical staff and doctors who have helped me and everyone affected."

"I've been going to this church my whole life," Engle said "I would have never, ever thought something like this would have happened."

"(He's) just an outstanding young man, even before today," said Tammy Adcock, one of Engle's neighbors. "Today just proved his character."

Engle also asked for prayers for not just the victims, but for the shooter and the shooter's family.

"They are hurting as well," Engle said.

Engle and 64-year-old Catherine Dickerson were taken to Skyline Medical Center with non-life-threatening injuries.

Both Engle and Dickerson have since been released from the hospital.

[From Florida Today, Nov. 27, 2017]

SCHLENKER SHOOTING: ROCKLEDGE GUNMAN RECOVERING, WORKED AT BREVARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(By J.D. Gallop)

The 28-year-old man suspected of carrying out a shooting at a Rockledge auto shop last week that left one person dead and another paralyzed, also worked as a part-time custodian at an elementary school, authorities said.

Brevard County Public School officials confirmed that Robert Lorenzo Bailey Jr. was employed with the district since 2014, working at Lewis Carroll Elementary on Merritt Island.

"He's a part-time custodian," said Jennifer Wolfinger, spokeswoman for the school district, adding that Bailey remains on the payroll. Officials are reviewing his employment records.

Bailey wandered onto the Schlenker Automotive property on Friday, and using a .40-caliber handgun, started firing on workers, killing 50-year-old Schlenker employee Roger Lee Smith, Rockledge police said. Smith had stepped into the parking lot after he heard a shot that paralyzed a 25-year-old, unidentified co-worker, according to police. Police have not released the identity.

Two other workers—both concealed weapons permit holders—confronted the gunman and engaged in a shootout that left the suspect wounded. Bailey continues to recover at Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne.

The shooting—which happened the day after Thanksgiving—left family members of the victim, a husband, father and grandfather, devastated.

"He would do anything . . . anything for anybody. It hurts that somebody would hurt him," said Bnickcole Smith, a 27-year-old niece of the victim. "That man took from us a longtime husband, a father figure and a grandfather. He loved being with his family and was such a fun, outgoing person. Personally, it's just destroyed me."

Bailey, known to friends as a bouncer and a regular in the Cocoa Village pub scene, did not have any connections to the autoshop, police said. Police have not yet confirmed any criminal or medical history that might give insight into a possible motive.

Others who knew Bailey, including a manager at the Dog and Bone British Pub, said he seemed to be acting differently lately. The manager said Bailey was fired from his job at the pub after Bailey confronted a patron. Another manager suggested Bailey see a doctor after Bailey aired thoughts that he believed the patron had a gun and was attempting to kill him.

"You could tell he had gone through some type of stress or disorder. He kept to himself," said 26-year-old Paul Lyal, who learned about the shooting late Sunday. Lyal said he met Bailey at the Dog and Bone British Pub several years ago.

"Sometimes he would be quiet, other times out laughing with everyone. He would even do karaoke or just go upstairs and dance for hours," Lyal recalled. "I'm just shocked like everyone else."

Rockledge detectives did not comment on Bailey's injuries or surgery over the weekend to treat his wounds.

Lou Schlenker, owner of the business that has operated in Rockledge for 36 years, released a statement to Florida Today on Sunday evening:

"In this difficult time of mourning the loss of Roger and the severe injuries that (our other employee) has sustained, we would like

to thank all of the community for the overwhelming support and prayers we have received. We know there will be a long healing process ahead of us but we want to reassure everyone that this is an organization full of dedicated, courageous, and heroic individuals serving this community," the statement read.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

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

Mr. Speaker, I don't know why Democrats are so afraid to allow people to exercise the full extent of their constitutional rights. In my State, we have got 1.7 million concealed carry permit holders. Concealed carry permit holders in Florida are eight times less likely to commit crimes than members of law enforcement.

I think the American people see that, if they had their way, we would take the bad acts of people who break the law and we would use that as an excuse to deprive law-abiding people of the full exercise of their rights.

So I rise in support of the Constitution and to correct a common mistake. The rights that are enumerated in the Constitution are not granted to the American people by government. These are God-given rights, and it is the government's duty to protect them for all citizens.

For too long, the government has failed to protect the Constitution and has stripped law-abiding citizens of their freedom. States recognize driver's licenses from other States, but nowhere in the Constitution are they mentioned; yet States routinely deny carry permits from other States, including neighboring States, even though the Constitution explicitly states that the right of people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Mr. HUDSON's good bill restores constitutional liberty. I am proud to join in sponsoring this legislation and to stand with the Constitution and against those who wish to dismantle it.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to remember the oath that they swore to uphold and defend the Constitution, and I would encourage them to vote "yes" on H.R. 38.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle made a number of arguments about how, if everyone has a concealed weapon, America will be safer.

Mr. Speaker, I have two studies here which directly rebut that:

A 2017 Stanford University study found that in States that adopted the most permissive concealed carry laws, violent crime is 13 to 15 percent higher than it would have been had the State retained a more restrictive law;

A 2017 study by researchers at Boston University found that States with shall-issue laws had a 10.6 percent higher handgun homicide rate, consistent with the results of the Stanford study.

Both of those empirical studies disprove the claim that we make America safer if everyone carries a hidden, loaded firearm.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), the distinguished chairman of the Democratic Caucus.

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

I must have missed something in my religious training. Were there 11 Commandments by God? I know about the first 10, but I missed that 11th one that thou shall have the ability to bear arms. I missed that one, that God-given right.

Was it a God-given right for someone to take that God-given right and execute 58 people at a concert? Was that a God-given right?

Mr. Speaker, the American people have spoken with nearly a unanimous voice. They want Congress to keep their families safe by passing common-sense gun safety legislation, legislation that will keep guns out of the hands of criminals; protections that will keep those who want to cause terror in our churches, in our schools, at concerts, and in our communities from getting those firearms.

The bill before us does the exact opposite. It would force States like New York to weaken their own gun safety laws and allow concealed carry. It puts families like yours and mine at risk. And for what? To appease the NRA? That is shameful.

In the 66 days since the Las Vegas massacre, Congress has done nothing, absolutely nothing, to address the clear loopholes in our laws that allowed one man to kill and injure so many.

It has been 66 days since numerous Republicans denounced the bump stocks and promised a fix, only to turn around and do this bill. At a time when we have seen one horrific mass shooting after another, Republicans are forcing through a bill that will put each and every American in harm's way. What is more, this egregious proposal comes days before the fifth anniversary of the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook.

This will put us in further danger of another Las Vegas, another Orlando, and another Sandy Hook. The American people are sick and tired of this. They want this Congress to protect them, not enable criminals.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time is remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YOUNG of Iowa). The gentleman from Virginia has 11¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 13 minutes remaining.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the

gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in my 41 years of law enforcement, 12 years as a sheriff of Duval County, Florida, I can tell you I have seen many, many times where good, law-abiding citizens used legal firearms to stop dangerous people from harming them, their loved ones, and even their neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, as a law enforcement professional, I want good people carrying firearms.

The Fraternal Order of Police that represents thousands of officers all across the United States of America supports good people carrying firearms. Do you know why? Because we know, as law enforcement officers we understand that, at our agencies, our priority one response time target is 7 minutes.

In a life-and-death situation, we target getting there in 7 minutes. That is in a well-policed community. I want to put Republicans, Democrats, and everyone on notice that, for that 7 minutes, you better be prepared to protect yourself.

If an active shooter in a mall, in a school, in a church like we just saw in Sutherland Springs, Texas, is killing people, let's say to the tune of five people per minute, that is an average of 35 dead, unarmed citizens before the police can even arrive at the scene.

Believe me, we want good, law-abiding citizens who are authorized to carry firearms to have the ability to intervene in a violent situation before law enforcement can even arrive at the scene. We need the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act to ensure that these good, law-abiding citizens can retain the constitutional right to bear arms legally across State lines and hopefully be able to stop a violent incident.

Mr. Speaker, none of our other constitutional rights stop at a State line. Our Second Amendment rights should not stop at that line either.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 38 and save lives.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

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

We just heard some of our other colleagues on the other side of the aisle speak about the God-given right to apparently carry a concealed, loaded firearm across State lines. What about the God-given right to live, to stay alive, and to be free from gun violence in this country?

We now have seen the two deadliest shootings in American history, 20 children slaughtered 5 years ago at Sandy Hook, and the list goes on and on.

Our Republican colleagues will do nothing about it. They won't pass universal background checks. They won't pass no fly, no buy to keep terrorists from being able to buy a gun. They won't prevent bump stocks. But they are finally rising up to do something, and what is their answer? Let everyone in America carry a concealed, loaded firearm. Even people who are violent criminals, stalkers, and domestic abusers can carry a concealed firearm.

Make no mistake about it. This legislation allows someone to go online. You don't have to be a resident of the State, a State that has no protections. You don't have to have training. You could be a criminal. You can go online and you get a permit in that State. You don't have to be a resident. You only have to go there, and you can then travel America with a loaded, concealed firearm and overrule the will of the people of that State through their legislature to impose responsible limitations on it.

□ 1530

It also endangers police officers who can be sued for having the audacity to ask someone if they actually have a permit and detain them. They have a cause of action against the police officer and attorneys' fees—unprecedented.

This is the response to a country that is pleading for responsible gun safety legislation, that is living with the carnage of gun violence and asking this Congress: Do something about it; protect us from this violence.

Our Republican colleagues muster up the courage to pay homage to the NRA and make it easier to sell guns so that people can carry concealed loaded firearms all across this country.

Shame on you. Shame on you. You have a responsibility to work with us to protect our constituents from gun violence and to enact sensible gun safety legislation that will reduce the incidents of gun violence. This will make it worse.

The claim that somehow it makes it safer is refuted by all of the empirical evidence. You know it is. Shame on the Republicans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman and other Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), who is a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017.

Our constitutional right to keep and bear arms should not be confined by State lines. Yet, currently, a person who has legally obtained a concealed carry permit in one State can be denied that right by simply crossing the State's border.

Consider my own home State of Louisiana. Our laws rightfully allow for licensed carrying of concealed firearms. I am a concealed carry permit holder myself. When a Louisianian leaves the State, however, our valid concealed carry handgun permit becomes void, absent an agreement from the State we may be in or traveling through.

The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act that we vote upon today ensures that law-abiding citizens with a concealed carry permit are not denied their Second Amendment right simply because they travel to other States. The Constitution should know no such bound. It does so while also recognizing States' rights by clearly noting that concealed carry holders must follow the law of each and every jurisdiction.

As a constitutional law attorney myself, it is critically important to me that the fundamental right of every law-abiding citizen to keep and bear arms is protected; and, yes, this legislation is about preserving our God-given freedoms. It is about public safety, and it is about common sense.

As noted, our letter by 23 States attorneys general, including my own home State of Louisiana, affirms that concealed carry laws deter crime. As my friend and colleague, Sheriff Rutherford, just said here so well, he reminded us that law enforcement wants the good guys to be armed.

The Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act protects our Second Amendment right, and I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation. I want to thank Congressman HUDSON for introducing H.R. 38 and Chairman GOODLATTE for advancing this legislation through the House Judiciary Committee. I am proud to be a part of this historic legislation.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, there have been 914 cases of non-self-defense killings by private citizens holding permits to carry concealed loaded handguns in the last 10 years, which translates into 1,119 Americans dead by homicide, mass shooting, suicide, and murder of police officers under concealed carry permit laws in the States.

In Florida, for example—I saw my friend, Mr. RUTHERFORD, up there—in August, concealed handgun permit holder, Everett Miller, shot and killed two Kissimmee, Florida, police officers.

Now, if you want to give everybody the right to a concealed carry permit in your States, fine. But don't impose that on the people of Maryland. We have got our own laws, thank you. Since January, we have had 397 gun massacres in America defined as a slaying of four people or more. Two of them—Las Vegas, which left 58 people dead, and Sutherland Springs, which left 26 people dead—are among the 10 worst massacres in American history by gun.

The American people want to end this reign of terror. But what do our

friends do on the other side? Do they bring us the universal criminal background check legislation favored by more than 90 percent of the American people of every political party to plug the gun show loophole, the internet loophole, and the 7-Eleven parking lot loophole? No.

Do they bring to the floor the bill to criminalize bump stocks which they promised to us? No. No such luck. Instead, they bring forward a bill that would wipe out the vast majority of concealed carry laws in the United States of America, trampling States' rights and wrecking all of the painstaking work of legislatures all over the land dragging this down to the most lax and permissive State laws in the country. It is not a race to the bottom, it is a plunge to the bottom they have engineered here.

This fraudulently named bill has nothing to do with reciprocity because States already have the power to negotiate reciprocity agreements, and 22 of them have it.

Your bill destroys reciprocity. Your bill brings us down to the level of the lowest, most permissive laws in the country. My State doesn't give concealed carry permits to domestic abusers, to violent offenders, and to dangerously unstable people. Don't drag us down to the lowest level. Protect States' rights.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON).

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, the difference of opinion on this bill vividly illustrates the profoundly different world view of Democrats versus Republicans. Democrats instinctively trust the government and instinctively distrust individuals. Republicans instinctively distrust the government and trust the good hearts and good sense of individual Americans to be the best stewards of protecting themselves, their family, their property, and their freedoms.

Our Founders understood this, and this is why the First Amendment protects our freedom of conscience and the Second Amendment follows it immediately so that we, as free people, have the ability to protect ourselves—our freedom of conscience—against the overpowering force of the government.

We in Texas enacted in 1995, while I was a member of the Texas house, a concealed carry law, and we have had now over 20 years of data. People can go to the Department of Texas Public Safety website and look under conviction rates and see that the concealed carry permit holders in Texas, over the last 22 years, are 21 times less likely to commit a crime than the average Texans.

The 7 minutes Sheriff Rutherford just mentioned to us are a lifetime, if you or your family or neighbors are at risk of attack. The individual law-abiding American who is carrying a concealed weapon has had a background check, they have been trained in the

use of the weapon, and they know the law. We all, as Americans, should work together to preserve the Second Amendment right of every American to keep and bear arms no matter what State they are in.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this important legislation.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE).

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Like so many Texans, I grew up in a household that honored a tradition of gun ownership for hunting, for collection, and for sportsmanship, and also honored gun safety. I was taught to shoot by my uncle, Raymond O'Rourke, jail captain and the chief marksman in the El Paso County Sheriff's Office.

I also live in a State that has a license to carry process which requires safety training, though 18 States do not. Texas requires that someone who has a license to carry be 21 years or older, though 15 States do not. Texas requires that those who abuse their partners not be allowed to have a license to carry, though 14 States do not. Texas does not grant licenses to violent offenders, though 22 States do. Texas does not grant licenses to people convicted of stalking, though 21 other States do.

What H.R. 38 does, Mr. Speaker, is it subjects every Texan and every El Pasoan whom I represent to the lowest common denominator in the United States. It will make our State less—not more—safe. That is why I oppose H.R. 38, and I ask all my colleagues to join me in doing the same.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to point out that the attorney general of the State of Texas has signed a letter, along with 22 other State attorneys general, in support of this legislation and pointing out that authorized permit holders to carry across State lines will not result in an increased risk of crime. Further, strong evidence indicates that concealed carry permit holders actually deter and reduce crime.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CUELLAR), who is the lead Democratic cosponsor of this legislation.

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the lead sponsors for the Fix NICS Act of 2017, I rise in support of this legislation which has been combined with the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act, which is, again, another section that I support, also.

On the Fix NICS Act, I certainly want to thank Senator CORNYN, Representatives CULBERSON, ESTY, COSTELLO, and AGUILAR for their leadership on this particular issue that we have been working on.

A few weeks ago, 26 members of the Sutherland Springs community, which is in my district, were killed by someone who should have never had access

to firearms. The investigation into the shooter revealed that the shooter had a criminal history. The Defense Department and the Air Force missed six times—six times—where the criminal justice process should have reported the history to the NICS database.

As of 2016, the Air Force, which should have entered the Sutherland Springs shooter's criminal information, entered a total of one active record in the NICS record. If the Air Force would have met the minimum obligations, then the gunman never would have been able to legally purchase a firearm. This is why we introduced the Fix NICS Act of 2017.

This legislation ensures that Federal and State authorities comply with existing laws to accurately report relevant criminal history—accurately report these records to the NICS. It also provides consequences for Federal agencies who fail to report the relevant records and ensure that States improve their overall reporting. The Fix NICS Act is an important step to ensure that people like the Sutherland Springs shooter never slip through the cracks of the NICS database again.

As to the reciprocity part of it, again, I know that both sides have spoken on that, but, again, as a supporter of the Second Amendment, I believe that the Second Amendment doesn't stop at political State lines. It is part of the U.S. Constitution and should apply across.

So, again, I rise in support of this legislation, and I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), who is the chairman of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this dangerous bill. I asked my local law enforcement what they thought of folks from out of State who don't meet our local requirements coming into our communities with loaded concealed firearms. These are the folks who are on the front lines of fighting gun violence, and we should listen to what they have to say.

Our Sonoma County sheriff opposes this bill and says it would negatively affect our community and put citizens and his deputies in greater danger.

The chief of police from my hometown in St. Helena said: As a lifelong proponent of the ability to own, possess, and carry firearms within the provisions of the law, I am wholeheartedly against H.R. 38.

Like many of us, he asks: How long will it take before someone who can't meet the legal requirements to concealed carry in California goes to some other State with little or no standards and gets a permit from that State?

Our chief of police in Martinez opposes this bill and says that it is a race to the bottom.

Overwhelmingly, law enforcement in my district strongly oppose this bill. Moreover, there is a reason no major law enforcement organizations have come out in support of this bill. It is dangerous, and it is unnecessary.

I think my colleagues should stand with law enforcement—the people that keep us and our families safe—and oppose this bill. Every example that was given from my friends across the aisle doesn't pertain to this bill. They talk about, in their States, concealed carry. Texas was the last one. In Texas, there is a standard you have to meet to get a concealed carry permit.

If this bill passes, you erase that standard. Somebody from out of State who is a violent criminal can come in with a loaded concealed firearm in the State of Texas. Someone who is a criminal in the State of Texas, where there are rules, can go to another State, get a concealed carry permit, and bring that loaded, concealed firearm into the State of Texas. This is bad policy, and it should be opposed.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DUNN).

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act. This common-sense legislation ensures that our Second Amendment rights don't end when we cross State lines.

We are all aware of the story of Shaneen Allen, a mother of three who was pulled over in New Jersey after committing a minor traffic violation. She told the police legally that she had a handgun on her person and a concealed carry permit. She was unaware that the permit was not transferable to New Jersey, and she had no prior criminal record. Nonetheless, she spent 40 days in a jail cell.

Americans like Shaneen are exposed to real risks of accidentally breaking the law of another State simply by exercising their constitutional right. This bill ensures that valid concealed carry permits from one State are valid in all other States.

□ 1545

It creates legal protections for law-abiding gun owners against States that violate this statute.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation and to show the American people the Second Amendment is safe with us.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 6 minutes remaining.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, we have a gun violence epidemic in this country.

It is glaringly obvious to anyone paying attention that our Federal gun safety laws are pathetically weak and in major need of improvement.

So what is this House doing about it? Working to pass a bill that completely undermines gun safety laws and puts more guns on the street and more lives at risk.

Believe me, if more guns made this country safer, we would be the safest country on Earth. We are far from it.

Under this bill, someone who couldn't get a concealed carry permit in New York would now be able to carry concealed guns into New York State or any State, as long as they have a permit from another State. This completely eviscerates State-level gun safety laws and puts us all at the mercy of the weakest gun safety laws in the country.

This bill is opposed by major law enforcement organizations across this country. I urge this body to listen to their advice and vote against this reckless assault on State and local gun safety laws.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD).

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Mr. HUDSON's Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

As things stand, each State currently determines its own concealed carry reciprocity laws. Some States don't recognize concealed carry permits from other States. This forces lawful gun owners to sometimes surrender their Second Amendment rights when they are traveling.

The current system has created accidental criminals, ruined lives, and punished gun owners simply because they fell victim to complexity and uncertainty in the law.

My colleague's bill addresses this problem by bringing much-needed clarity to the system. H.R. 38 is a simple proposal, but a necessary one. If enacted, it will allow lawful gun owners to carry their firearm into other States that allow concealed carry. This interstate recognition of concealed carry would be very similar to a driver's license.

H.R. 38 would not create national standards for concealed carry or take away a State's right to govern their own concealed carry laws, like some might claim. No. This bill simply uses Congress' 14th Amendment power to protect people's constitutional rights from State abuse.

Samuel Adams said: "The Constitution shall never be construed . . . to prevent the people of the United States who are peaceable citizens from keeping their own arms."

This powerful line from Mr. Adams sums up my feelings on this bill much better than I can.

I thank Mr. HUDSON for his steadfast leadership on this issue.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle from Florida talked about the 1.7 million concealed weapons permits

that are issued in Florida. Let me make it quite clear that those permits are issued to Floridians for Floridians, not to any person from any State at any time who wants to bring a gun into Florida.

Different from my colleague, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advocate for the safety of every American and for the safety of our first responders, who are entrusted with that awesome responsibility.

As Members of Congress, our question should be: What can we all do to make living in America safer?

Every day, law enforcement officers risk their lives to keep our communities safe. Last week, I was honored that the House passed the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act unanimously. Police officers have a tough job, and I think we can all agree on this point: the job is getting tougher.

Mr. Speaker, we must ask ourselves: Why would any Member, Republican or Democrat, support this legislation that would make a police officer's job harder, more dangerous, and open our officers up to personal liability for simply doing their jobs?

This reckless piece of legislation would allow persons from outside your State to bring their firearms anywhere, including school zones, without applying the guidelines, laws, restrictions, or oversight of your State.

Mr. Speaker, I want you to envision this situation from the perspective of a law enforcement officer. An out-of-state, armed individual is stopped by that officer. Maybe that individual's license is legitimate, maybe it is not. The officer is on the side of the road, facing an armed individual, trying to figure out whether the individual's permit is authentic, which the officer is obligated to do.

If the permit is fake, failing to stop that individual puts the community at risk. If the permit is real, stopping the individual has opened the officer up to potential personal liability.

In the last year, I have heard my colleagues on the other side talk about how we should better empower States to decide what is in their own best interest.

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, this legislation strips individual States of their power and puts our public safety officers in legal and personal jeopardy.

Supporting this legislation is reckless and irresponsible. As a former chief of police, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 38.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN).

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, for generations, Maine families have enjoyed the great outdoors. That means hunting, fishing, camping, and hiking. That is part of who we are as a people. That is part of our way of life.

Part of that way of life is responsibly and lawfully owning firearms. We are comfortable with them. We have been for generations.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. HUDSON's bill, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017, is a commonsense fix to a patchwork of State laws that will confuse, and do confuse, law-abiding Americans who have valid concealed carry permits issued by their own States when they want to travel to or through other States that have different concealed carry laws.

I want to make this very clear: H.R. 38 does not allow travel as long as the holder of a concealed carry license does not obey the laws of the States that he or she is traveling to. I read directly, Mr. Speaker, from the statute: "This bill shall not be construed to supersede or limit the laws of any State."

So the other side of the aisle just needs to make sure they get this exactly right, because they have not been correct on this fact.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. HUDSON's bill actually additionally strengthens existing regulations by requiring Federal Government agencies to promptly and accurately require a reporting to the FBI someone who is mentally ill, someone who has committed a serious crime, or someone who is in the country illegally and should not have a firearm.

This bill is a commonsense bill that will help law-abiding Americans enjoy their Second Amendment right, their outdoor sporting activities, and help keep our families safer.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 2½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, this bill is advanced I am not sure in the name of what, but what it is going to do is make us less safe and to overrule all our States.

Under this bill, someone who lives in New York could go to another State—doesn't even have to go to another State; just apply to the other State, get a concealed carry permit from that State, never set foot in that State, and then use it in New York; thus, overriding New York's laws.

We have heard it said that this bill is necessary to protect the Second Amendment constitutional rights of gun owners. But the fact is, there is no Second Amendment constitutional right for concealed carry.

In the District of Columbia v. Heller case in which the Supreme Court said that the Second Amendment established a personal right, Justice Scalia's

opinion held that the Second Amendment was not unlimited, a variety of gun regulations were entirely consistent with the Constitution, and he said:

The majority of American courts to consider the question have held that prohibitions on carrying concealed weapons were lawful under the Second Amendment for State analogues.

So the Second Amendment argument is simply wrong or disingenuous.

But let me say also that we are living in an epidemic of gun violence. 33,000 Americans are killed every year, and 30,000 more every year. No other country approaches this. No country—other than those at war—in peacetime has more than 300 or 400, or even 100 or 72, and we have 33,000. It is not because of mental illness. It is because of the presence of large numbers of gun.

A 2017 Stanford University study found a direct correlation with the most permissive concealed carry laws and violent crime. General studies have shown a direct correlation of the presence of the number of guns and murder rates by guns.

So this is a bill that is a death sentence for many Americans. That is what this bill is. It is a death sentence without trial for many Americans by increasing the danger of guns by overruling States that fear and that we don't want concealed weapons on the New York City subway or the Chicago metro or other places of great concentrations of people.

But no, we, in our wisdom, are going to say the States with the least restrictive, perhaps most rural, maybe sensible restrictions for them, will impose those restrictions on other States.

It is wrong. It is a death sentence for many Americans. It ought not pass.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) for the purpose of closing the argument.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, we all have subjects that we find fascinating.

For 25 years, I have actually kept files of abstracts on this because I actually participated in writing Arizona's 1993 concealed carry law.

I desperately wish this was an intellectually honest conversation about the data, because we all want our communities and families to be safer. I believe I can show you the statistical abstract data.

In States like Arizona, adjusted for population, the violent use of firearms is almost one-half of what it was before the adoption of our concealed carry law.

Now, was concealed carry responsible for that?

Of course, not. But it is a factor. Some of it is mental health, some of it is law enforcement, some of it is incarceration. It is complicated. But if you actually look at these data abstracts of

crime statistics in the United States on the misuse of firearms, it turns out that States that have adopted concealed carry compared to States that have gone other directions, States that adopted have gotten safer.

There is actually some brilliant articles when you compare Florida and Illinois: big, populated, demographically complex States. Florida has gotten dramatically safer. Illinois has not.

If you really love our families, love our communities, this needs to be an intellectually sound discussion of what factors make us safer as a society. I believe this bill leads us in that direction.

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I oppose H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act.

While I am opposed to restricting law abiding citizens' access to firearms, I feel that this bill does not adequately address many of the requirements that states have instituted in passing their own concealed carry laws.

I am a big supporter of concealed carry and was the lead author of a bill in 1991 in the State Senate to create local concealed carry. The way this bill is written would strip many protections that are currently afforded to Texans.

Texas has many requirements for a person to be able to get that license including live-fire training. As a state, we also bar convicted domestic abusers and those convicted of violent crimes and stalking. Under this bill, an individual who had committed those crimes could conceal carry their weapon in Texas if they got their permit from a neighboring state that lacked these requirements for concealed carry like Mississippi. It is for these reasons that I do not support this bill as it is currently written.

If we are going to create a federal reciprocity standard for concealed carry it should be a standard that takes into account many of the protections individual states have created. I would proudly vote in support of a bill that addressed these standing issues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 645, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

□ 1600

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Thompson of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 38 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendments:

Page 1, line 13, strike "(a)" and insert "(a)(1)".

Page 2, line 10, strike "(1)" and insert "(A)".

Page 2, line 13, strike "(2)" and insert "(B)".

Page 2, after line 15, insert the following:

"(2)(A) A person who has been convicted of a violent crime within the preceding three years may not possess or carry a concealed handgun under this section in a State that by law prohibits a person from doing so on the basis of a conviction for such offense.

"(B) For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'violent crime' means any offense that involves injury or the threat of injury to the person of another.

"(C) What constitutes a conviction of such a crime shall be determined in accordance with the law of the jurisdiction in which the proceedings were held. Any conviction which has been expunged, or set aside or for which a person has been pardoned or has had civil rights restored shall not be considered a conviction for purposes of this paragraph, unless such pardon, expungement, or restoration of civil rights expressly provides that the person may not ship, transport, possess, or receive firearms."

Mr. THOMPSON of California (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill nor send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, next week will be the fifth anniversary of the hideous mass murder at Sandy Hook Elementary, where 20 kids and six educators were slaughtered in their classroom.

This year, we have witnessed two of the worst mass shootings in recent American history: in Las Vegas, Nevada, and in Sutherland Springs, Texas. Every day more than 30 people are killed by someone using a gun. This should be a call to action for everyone to work together to help prevent gun violence. That is why 90 percent of Americans support strengthening our gun laws, not weakening them.

Let's be clear about what this Congress is going to do today. Instead of taking serious action on bump stocks or expanding background checks, the majority party is undermining the very laws that work to prevent gun violence.

For example, some States allow people who have been convicted of some violent crimes to carry a loaded, concealed firearm.

Thirty States and the District of Columbia currently deny permits to people convicted of those violent crimes, such as assault and battery, threatening, or crimes committed with a weapon. So if you are from any of these States—Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana,

Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, or the District of Columbia—a vote for this underlying bill is a vote to undermine your own State gun violence prevention policy, because this bill says that, even if your State prohibits its own residents who have been convicted of certain violent crimes, you can't prohibit someone from another State with the same criminal record from carrying a loaded, concealed firearm if their State allows it.

This motion to recommit would state that a person who has been convicted of a violent crime within the preceding 3 years may not possess or carry a concealed handgun in a State that prohibits a person from doing so on the basis of a conviction for that very same offense. This would be people convicted of crimes such as resisting arrest, assault, permitting sexual abuse of a minor, aggravated assault, or violation of a criminal sexual assault protection order—all violent crimes.

An “aye” vote on this motion to recommit is a pro-States' rights, pro-Second Amendment, and anticriminal vote.

I am a gun owner. I have been all of my life. I am not opposed to concealed carry, but I am opposed to violent criminals having guns, and Members should be, too.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this motion to recommit; and if they vote against it, they are voting to allow violent criminals, convicted criminals, to carry loaded, concealed firearms in their community, in their State, and in their district. That is wrong. We should prohibit that from happening.

It is a real easy fix. It could have been fixed in committee. It could have been fixed in committee. They could have taken care of the concerns that they have with the restrictions on concealed carry, and they could have stopped criminals, convicted criminals, from carrying loaded, concealed firearms. But the committee didn't do it.

We have a chance now. It is the last chance to do it before this bill comes to a vote. I urge my friends on both sides of the aisle to vote for this motion to recommit.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, with this motion to recommit, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are trying in vain to hamper the passage of this important legislation. H.R. 38 seeks to allow law-abiding citizens the ability to exercise their Second Amendment right when they cross State lines.

The Supreme Court held in *District of Columbia v. Heller* that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia and to use that firearm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense. Further, the Court concluded that the Second Amendment guarantees the individual right to possess and carry weapons in case of confrontation, and that central to this right is the “inherent right of self-defense.”

Additionally, in *McDonnell v. City of Chicago*, the Supreme Court ruled that the right of an individual to “keep and bear arms,” as protected under the Second Amendment, is incorporated by the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment against the States.

An individual's Second Amendment right is no different than the First Amendment's protections on speech and free exercise of religious expression and the Fourth Amendment's prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure or the Eighth Amendment's prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment.

Can you imagine my colleagues' outcries if any of the aforementioned rights stopped at their State's borders? Believe me, I can. They would be loud and boisterous about it, and justifiably so. Despite that fact, here they are trying to derail a bill that affords the Second Amendment the same respect.

Now, this motion to recommit attempts to extend the law, the Federal law, which already bars people from having firearms if they have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor domestic violence crimes, by saying any violent crime be covered. And they define violent crime by saying it means “any offense that involves injury or the threat of injury to the person of another.”

Well, in my State of Virginia and in most other States, it is up to the police officer in a traffic accident, if you rear-end somebody and you injure them, whether or not you are simply charged with a traffic offense or you are charged with a criminal offense. That should not be the basis of denying somebody their Second Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this motion to recommit and support the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX,

this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

Passage of the bill, if ordered; and

The motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Con. Res. 90.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 190, nays 236, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 662]

YEAS—190

Adams	Gabbard	Napolitano
Aguilar	Gallego	Neal
Barragan	Garamendi	Nolan
Bass	Gomez	Norcross
Beatty	Gonzalez (TX)	O'Halleran
Bera	Gottheimer	O'Rourke
Beyer	Green, Al	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Green, Gene	Panetta
Blum	Grijalva	Pascarell
Blumenauer	Gutiérrez	Payne
Blunt Rochester	Hanabusa	Pelosi
Bonamici	Hastings	Perlmutter
Boyle, Brendan	Heck	Peters
F.	Higgins (NY)	Pingree
Brady (PA)	Himes	Polis
Brown (MD)	Hoyer	Price (NC)
Bustos	Huffman	Quigley
Butterfield	Jackson Lee	Raskin
Capuano	Jayapal	Rice (NY)
Carbajal	Jeffries	Richmond
Cárdenas	Johnson (GA)	Rosen
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard
Cartwright	Jones	Ruiz
Castor (FL)	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Castro (TX)	Keating	Rush
Chu, Judy	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Ciциlline	Khanna	Sánchez
Clark (MA)	Kihuen	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kildee	Schakowsky
Clay	Kilmer	Schiff
Cleaver	Kind	Schneider
Clyburn	Krishnamoorthi	Schrader
Cohen	Kuster (NH)	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Langevin	Scott, David
Cooper	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Correa	Larson (CT)	Sewell (AL)
Costa	Lawrence	Shea-Porter
Courtney	Lawson (FL)	Sherman
Crist	Lee	Sinema
Crowley	Levin	Sires
Cuellar	Lewis (GA)	Slaughter
Cummings	Lieu, Ted	Smith (WA)
Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Soto
Davis, Danny	Loeb sack	Speier
DeFazio	Lofgren	Swalwell (CA)
DeGette	Lowenthal	Takano
Delaney	Lowe y	Thompson (CA)
DeLauro	Lujan Grisham,	Thompson (MS)
DelBene	M.	Titus
Demings	Luján, Ben Ray	Tonko
DeSaulnier	Lynch	Torres
Deutch	Maloney,	Tsongas
Dingell	Carolyn B.	Vargas
Doggett	Maloney, Sean	Veasey
Doyle, Michael	Matsui	Vela
F.	McCollum	Velázquez
Ellison	McEachin	Visclosky
Engel	McGovern	Walz
Eshoo	McNerney	Wasserman
Espallat	Meeks	Schultz
Esty (CT)	Meng	Waters, Maxine
Evans	Moore	Watson Coleman
Foster	Moulton	Welch
Frankel (FL)	Murphy (FL)	Wilson (FL)
Fudge	Nadler	Yarmuth

NAYS—236

Abraham	Black	Cheney
Aderholt	Blackburn	Coffman
Allen	Bost	Cole
Amash	Brady (TX)	Collins (GA)
Amodei	Brat	Collins (NY)
Arrington	Brooks (AL)	Comer
Babin	Brooks (IN)	Comstock
Bacon	Buchanan	Conaway
Banks (IN)	Buck	Cook
Barletta	Bucshon	Costello (PA)
Barr	Budd	Cramer
Barton	Burgess	Crawford
Bergman	Byrne	Culberson
Biggs	Calvert	Curbelo (FL)
Bilirakis	Carter (GA)	Curtis
Bishop (MI)	Carter (TX)	Davidson
Bishop (UT)	Chabot	Davis, Rodney

Denham Kelly (MS)
 Dent Kelly (PA)
 DeSantis King (IA)
 DesJarlais King (NY)
 Diaz-Balart Kinsinger
 Donovan Knight
 Duffy Kustoff (TN)
 Duncan (SC) Labrador
 Duncan (TN) LaHood
 Dunn LaMalfa
 Emmer Lamborn
 Estes (KS) Lance
 Farenthold Latta
 Faso Lewis (MN)
 Ferguson LoBiondo
 Fitzpatrick Long
 Fleischmann Loudermilk
 Flores Love
 Fortenberry Lucas
 Foxx Luetkemeyer
 Franks (AZ) MacArthur
 Frelinghuysen Marchant
 Gaetz Marino
 Gallagher Marshall
 Garrett Massie
 Gianforte Mast
 Gibbs McCarthy
 Gohmert McCaul
 Goodlatte McClintock
 Gosar McHenry
 Gowdy McKinley
 Granger McMorris
 Graves (GA) Rodgers
 Graves (LA) McSally
 Graves (MO) Meadows
 Griffith Meehan
 Grothman Messer
 Guthrie Mitchell
 Handel Moolenaar
 Harper Mooney (WV)
 Harris Mullin
 Hartzler Newhouse
 Hensarling Noem
 Herrera Beutler Norman
 Hice, Jody B. Nunes
 Higgins (LA) Olson
 Hill Palazzo
 Holding Palmer
 Hollingsworth Paulsen
 Hudson Pearce
 Huizenga Perry
 Hultgren Peterson
 Hunter Pittenger
 Hurd Poe (TX)
 Issa Poliquin
 Jenkins (KS) Posey
 Jenkins (WV) Ratcliffe
 Johnson (LA) Reed
 Johnson (OH) Reichert
 Johnson, Sam Renacci
 Jordan Roby
 Joyce (OH) Roe (TN)
 Katko Rogers (AL)

NOT VOTING—6

Bridenstine Kennedy Rice (SC)
 Brownley (CA) Pocan Suozzi

□ 1634

Messrs. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, BISHOP of Michigan, Ms. GRANGER, Messrs. RUTHERFORD, and HARRIS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. BLUMENAUER and BLUM changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 231, noes 198, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 663]

AYES—231

Abraham Gowdy
 Aderholt Granger
 Allen Graves (GA)
 Amodei Graves (LA)
 Arrington Graves (MO)
 Babin Griffith
 Banks (IN) Grothman
 Barletta Guthrie
 Barr Handel
 Barton Harper
 Bergman Harris
 Biggs Hartzler
 Bilirakis Hensarling
 Bishop (GA) Herrera Beutler
 Bishop (MI) Hice, Jody B.
 Bishop (UT) Higgins (LA)
 Black Hill
 Blackburn Holding
 Blum Hollingsworth
 Bost Hudson
 Brady (TX) Huizenga
 Brat Hultgren
 Brooks (AL) Hunter
 Brooks (IN) Judd
 Buchanan Issa
 Bucshon Jenkins (KS)
 Budd Jenkins (WV)
 Burgess Johnson (LA)
 Byrne Johnson (OH)
 Jones Johnson, Sam
 Jordan Jones
 Joyce (OH) Joyce (OH)
 Katko Kelly (MS)
 Kelly (PA) Kelly (PA)
 Kind King (IA)
 King (IA) Kinsinger
 Kinsinger Knight
 Kustoff (TN) Kustoff (TN)
 Labrador Labrador
 LaHood LaHood
 LaMalfa LaMalfa
 Lamborn Lamborn
 Lance Lance
 Latta Latta
 Lewis (MN) Lewis (MN)
 LoBiondo LoBiondo
 Long Long
 Loudermilk Loudermilk
 Love Love
 Lucas Lucas
 Luetkemeyer Luetkemeyer
 MacArthur MacArthur
 Marchant Marchant
 Marino Marino
 Marshall Marshall
 Massie Massie
 Mast Mast
 McCarthy McCarthy
 McCaul McCaul
 McClintock McClintock
 McHenry McHenry
 McKinley McKinley
 McMorris McMorris
 Meadows Meadows
 McSally McSally
 Messer Messer
 Mitchell Mitchell
 Moolenaar Moolenaar
 Mooney (WV) Mooney (WV)
 Mullin Mullin
 Newhouse Newhouse
 Noem Noem
 Norman Norman
 Nunes Nunes
 Olson Olson
 Palazzo Palazzo
 Palmer Palmer
 Paulsen Paulsen
 Pearce Pearce
 Perry Perry
 Peterson Peterson
 Pittenger Pittenger
 Poe (TX) Poe (TX)
 Poliquin Poliquin
 Posey Posey
 Ratcliffe Ratcliffe
 Reed Reed
 Reichert Reichert
 Renacci Renacci
 Roby Roby
 Roe (TN) Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL) Rogers (AL)

NOES—198

Adams Boyle, Brendan
 Aguilar F.
 Amash Brady (PA)
 Barragán Brown (MD)
 Bass Buck
 Beatty Bustos
 Bera Butterfield
 Beyer Capuano
 Blumenauer Carbajal
 Blunt Cárdenas
 Rochester Carson (IN)
 Bonamici Cartwright

Correa Keating
 Costa Kelly (IL)
 Costello (PA) Khanna
 Courtney Kihuen
 Crist Kildee
 Crowley Kilmer
 Cummings King (NY)
 Curbelo (FL) Krishnamoorthi
 Davis (CA) Kuster (NH)
 Davis, Danny Lance
 DeFazio Langevin
 DeGette Larsen (WA)
 Delaney Larson (CT)
 DeLauro Lawrence
 DelBene Lawson (FL)
 Demings Lee
 DeSaulnier Levin
 Deutch Lewis (GA)
 Dingell Lieu, Ted
 Doggett Lipinski
 Donovan Loebsock
 Doyle, Michael Lofgren
 F. Lowenthal
 Ellison Lowey
 Engel Lujan Grisham,
 Eshoo M.
 Espallat Luján, Ben Ray
 Esty (CT) Lynch
 Evans Maloney,
 Fitzpatrick Carolyn B.
 Foster Maloney, Sean
 Frankel (FL) Massie
 Fudge Matsui
 Gabbard McCollum
 Gallego McEachin
 Garamendi McGovern
 Gohmert McNeerney
 Gomez Meehan
 Gottheimer Meeks
 Green, Al Meng
 Green, Gene Moore
 Grijalva Moulton
 Gutiérrez Murphy (FL)
 Hanabusa Nadler
 Hastings Napolitano
 Heck Neal
 Higgins (NY) Nolan
 Himes Norcross
 Hoyer O'Halleran
 Huffman O'Rourke
 Jackson Lee Pallone
 Jayapal Panetta
 Jeffries Pascarell
 Johnson (GA) Payne
 Johnson, E. B. Pelosi
 Kaptur Perlmutter

NOT VOTING—4

Bridenstine Kennedy
 Brownley (CA) Pocan

□ 1642

So the bill was passed.
 The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.
 A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING ETHNIC CLEANSING OF ROHINGYA AND CALLING FOR AN END TO ATTACKS IN AND AN IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO RAKHINE, BURMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 90) condemning ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calling for an end to the attacks in and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr.

ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 423, nays 3, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 664]

YEAS—423

Abraham	Curbelo (FL)	Hill
Adams	Curtis	Himes
Aderholt	Davidson	Holding
Allen	Davis (CA)	Hollingsworth
Amash	Davis, Danny	Hoyer
Amodi	Davis, Rodney	Hudson
Arrington	DeFazio	Huffman
Babin	DeGette	Huizenga
Bacon	Delaney	Hultgren
Banks (IN)	DeLauro	Hunter
Barletta	DelBene	Hurd
Barr	Demings	Issa
Barragán	Denham	Jackson Lee
Barton	Dent	Jayapal
Bass	DeSantis	Jeffries
Beatty	DeSaulnier	Jenkins (KS)
Bera	DesJarlais	Jenkins (WV)
Bergman	Deutch	Johnson (GA)
Beyer	Diaz-Balart	Johnson (LA)
Bilirakis	Dingell	Johnson (OH)
Bishop (GA)	Doggett	Johnson, E. B.
Bishop (MI)	Donovan	Johnson, Sam
Bishop (UT)	Doyle, Michael	Jordan
Black	F.	Joyce (OH)
Blackburn	Duffy	Kaptur
Blum	Duncan (SC)	Katko
Blumenauer	Duncan (TN)	Keating
Blunt Rochester	Dunn	Kelly (IL)
Bonamici	Ellison	Kelly (MS)
Bost	Emmer	Kelly (PA)
Boyle, Brendan	Engel	Khanna
F.	Eshoo	Kihuen
Brady (PA)	Espallat	Kildee
Brady (TX)	Estes (KS)	Kilmer
Brat	Esty (CT)	Kind
Brooks (AL)	Evans	King (IA)
Brooks (IN)	Farenthold	King (NY)
Brown (MD)	Faso	Kinzinger
Buchanan	Ferguson	Knight
Buck	Fitzpatrick	Krishnamoorthi
Bucshon	Fleischmann	Kuster (NH)
Budd	Flores	Kustoff (TN)
Burgess	Fortenberry	Labrador
Bustos	Foster	LaHood
Butterfield	Fox	LaMalfa
Byrne	Frankel (FL)	Lamborn
Calvert	Franks (AZ)	Lance
Capuano	Frelinghuysen	Langevin
Carbajal	Fudge	Larson (CT)
Cárdenas	Gabbard	Latta
Carson (IN)	Gaetz	Lawrence
Carter (GA)	Gallagher	Lawson (FL)
Carter (TX)	Gallego	Lee
Cartwright	Garamendi	Levin
Castor (FL)	Garrett	Lewis (GA)
Castro (TX)	Gianforte	Lewis (MN)
Chabot	Gibbs	Lieu, Ted
Cheney	Gohmert	Lipinski
Chu, Judy	Gomez	LoBiondo
Cicilline	Gonzalez (TX)	Loeb
Clark (MA)	Goodlatte	Loeffler
Clarke (NY)	Gosar	Long
Clay	Gottheimer	Loudermilk
Cleaver	Gowdy	Love
Clyburn	Granger	Lowenthal
Coffman	Graves (GA)	Lowe
Cohen	Graves (LA)	Lucas
Cole	Graves (MO)	Luetkemeyer
Collins (GA)	Green, Al	Lujan Grisham,
Collins (NY)	Green, Gene	M.
Comer	Griffith	Luján, Ben Ray
Comstock	Grijalva	Lynch
Conaway	Grothman	MacArthur
Connolly	Guthrie	Maloney,
Cook	Gutiérrez	Carolyn B.
Cooper	Hanabusa	Maloney, Sean
Correa	Handel	Marchant
Costa	Harper	Marino
Costello (PA)	Harris	Marshall
Courtney	Hartzler	Mast
Cramer	Hastings	Matsui
Crawford	Heck	McCarthy
Crist	Hensarling	McCaul
Crowley	Herrera Beutler	McClintock
Cuellar	Hice, Jody B.	McCollum
Culberson	Higgins (LA)	McEachin
Cummings	Higgins (NY)	McGovern

McHenry	Rice (SC)	Stefanik
McKinley	Richmond	Stewart
McMorris	Roby	Stivers
Rodgers	Roe (TN)	Suozi
McNerney	Rogers (AL)	Swalwell (CA)
McSally	Rogers (KY)	Takano
Meadows	Rohrabacher	Taylor
Meehan	Rokita	Tenney
Meeks	Rooney, Francis	Thompson (CA)
Meng	Rooney, Thomas	Thompson (MS)
Messer	J.	Thompson (PA)
Mitchell	Ros-Lehtinen	Thornberry
Moolenaar	Rosen	Tiberi
Mooney (WV)	Roskam	Tipton
Moore	Ross	Titus
Moulton	Rothfus	Tonko
Mullin	Rouzer	Torres
Murphy (FL)	Roybal-Allard	Trott
Nadler	Royce (CA)	Tsongas
Napolitano	Ruiz	Turner
Neal	Ruppersberger	Upton
Newhouse	Rush	Valadao
Noem	Russell	Vargas
Nolan	Rutherford	Veasey
Norcross	Ryan (OH)	Vela
Norman	Sánchez	Velázquez
Nunes	Sanford	Visclosky
O'Halleran	Sarbanes	Wagner
O'Rourke	Scalise	Walberg
Olson	Schakowsky	Walden
Palazzo	Schiff	Walker
Pallone	Schneider	Walorski
Palmer	Schrader	Walters, Mimi
Panetta	Schweikert	Walz
Pascarella	Scott (VA)	Wasserman
Paulsen	Scott, Austin	Schultz
Payne	Scott, David	Waters, Maxine
Pearce	Sensenbrenner	Watson Coleman
Pelosi	Serrano	Weber (TX)
Perlmutter	Sessions	Webster (FL)
Perry	Sewell (AL)	Welch
Peters	Shea-Porter	Wenstrup
Peterson	Sherman	Westerman
Pingree	Shimkus	Williams
Pittenger	Shuster	Wilson (FL)
Poe (TX)	Simpson	Wilson (SC)
Poliquin	Sinema	Wittman
Polis	Sires	Womack
Posey	Slaughter	Woodall
Price (NC)	Smith (MO)	Yarmuth
Quigley	Smith (NE)	Yoder
Raskin	Smith (NJ)	Yoho
Ratcliffe	Smith (TX)	Young (AK)
Reed	Smith (WA)	Young (IA)
Reichert	Smucker	Zeldin
Renacci	Soto	
Rice (NY)	Speier	

NAYS—3

Biggs	Jones	Massie
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NOT VOTING—6

Aguilar	Brownley (CA)	Larsen (WA)
Bridenstine	Kennedy	Pocan

□ 1650

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Concurrent resolution condemning ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calling for an end to the violence in and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 477, SMALL BUSINESS MERGERS, ACQUISITIONS, SALES, AND BROKERAGE SIMPLIFICATION ACT OF 2017; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3971, COMMUNITY INSTITUTION MORTGAGE RELIEF ACT OF 2017; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES 123, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

MR. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-443) on the resolution (H. Res. 647) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 477) to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3971) to amend the Truth in Lending Act and the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 to modify the requirements for community financial institutions with respect to certain rules relating to mortgage loans, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 123) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CELEBRATING THE BATAVIA BULLDOGS' ILLINOIS STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Batavia High School Bulldogs football team on winning the Illinois Class 7A State Championship. Holding off the undefeated Lake Zurich Bears and winning the thrilling final in overtime, the team ended the season with an overall 13 and 1 record.

Crucial to the victory was quarterback Riley Cooper. The senior completed 28 of 42 passes for 295 yards and 3 touchdowns in the championship game.

The final score was a 10-yard touchdown pass to Tommy Stuttle in overtime, securing the 21-14 win at Huskie Stadium in DeKalb.

Leading the team throughout a great regular season and playoff run was Coach Dennis Piron, who has headed the team since 2010, and who is a 1983 Batavia graduate.

This is the school's first State championship since 2013. Students who cheered their siblings and friends on the 2013 Bulldogs team are now carrying the torch and celebrating their own victory as members of the 2017 team.

Congratulations, Batavia Bulldogs, past and present, for your achievements. Your success is well deserved.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND
LEGACY OF NAOMI LAUTER

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of my dear friend Naomi Lauter, who died on December 4, in her beloved San Francisco.

Naomi lived her life in the spirit of “world repair,” “tikkun olam,” dedicated to making the world a better place by fighting for values, ideas, and issues we all hold most dear.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Naomi attended Lowell High School, UC Berkeley, and San Francisco State University.

Her parents, Rose and Louis Ets-Hokin, were prominent leaders in the San Francisco Jewish community. Their activism, particularly that of her mother, who brought food, entertainment, and joy to America’s service-members in San Francisco during World War II, inspired Naomi’s own commitment to the causes of equality and justice.

Naomi’s political activism began in the 1950s in the civil rights and labor movements, most prominently by working with Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers.

Her grassroots organizing and mobilizing helped in the fight to end segregation and to expand access to quality education for all.

Her commitment to upholding the dignity of every person knew no bounds.

Naomi and her husband of 61 years, Bob, were fierce supporters of Israel and worked tirelessly to strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship. Naomi was a pillar of the San Francisco Jewish community, where she was dedicated to forging connections between young Jewish Americans and the State of Israel.

Her leadership in spearheading the San Francisco Holocaust Memorial and training generations of volunteers around the country will benefit the Jewish community for years to come.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I say that many political and civic leaders depended on Naomi’s wise counsel, and with her passing, they have lost a dear friend. We will all profoundly miss her warmth and wonderful leadership.

Above all, Naomi was passionate about her family; her husband, Bob; her four beautiful children, David Jonathan, Sarah, and Sam; and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Our families were close neighbors and remain good friends. The Pelosi family was welcomed to many Shabbat and Passover Seder dinners with the Lauter family, and they joined us for Christmas. We celebrated together, just as we organized and worked together.

May it bring comfort to the Lauter family that so many share their sorrow at the passing of this much beloved and inspiring woman.

POVERTY IN SUBURBAN
COMMUNITIES IS ON THE RISE

(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, when one thinks of poverty, it is likely they envision poverty in an urban or maybe a rural setting; and it may come as a surprise, but poverty in suburban communities is on the rise.

In fact, the number of people living in poverty outside of the Twin Cities’ urban core in Minnesota increased 93 percent between 2000 and 2015.

The suburbs are often thought of as places of comfort, if not wealth. However, when considering suburban areas, it is estimated there are more than 187,000 people in poverty in the Twin Cities.

Organizations within our community, like People Reaching Out to People, PROP; the Lakewinds Food Co-op; Southwest News Media; and Chanhassen DECA students, Mark Self, Brian Taylor, and Alex Walther, are shedding light on the issues of suburban poverty and making a difference.

Mr. Speaker, the holiday season that we are in now is a time to come together and think about others who may need a little extra help and generosity. It is the perfect time to start helping neighbors and friends in our communities who are struggling. Awareness is just the first step. Taking action should follow.

DENOUNCING CONCEALED CARRY
RECIPROCITY

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, New Jersey has one of the ten lowest firearm death rates in the country. That is because the people of my State have set the bar high for public safety.

The bill my Republican colleagues just passed would undermine the will of the people and make New Jersey less safe.

Mr. Speaker, in New Jersey, gun owners who want to carry a concealed weapon in public must meet stringent public safety requirements and have a really good reason to carry a concealed weapon loaded while in public.

The people of my State can feel secure because they know that the people licensed to carry these guns in public are carrying their guns safely and responsibly.

Mr. Speaker, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act is the peak of Federal overreach. It is a special interest bill from the NRA that will overturn laws and undermine the safety of the State of New Jersey. Today’s vote was bad for New Jersey and bad for our Nation.

□ 1700

WATER FOR THE WORLD

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when we turn on the tap, clean water flows out and we hardly even think about it. The same thing happens when we turn on the shower or flush the toilet. But for a lot of the world, this just isn’t true.

According to the USAID, over 700 million people lack dependable access to clean water. But it is not just water. One in three people don’t have access to a toilet. Many don’t know the basic hygiene practices. As a result, over 800 children a day die.

However, progress has been made. The Water for the World Act that Representative BLUMENAUER and I authored in the 113th Congress made great strides to guarantee safe water, sanitation, and hygiene to everyone.

But there is still work to be done. Eighty percent of the countries receiving aid report that water issues remain. The poor still lack water and sanitation. With our God-given resources, we have an obligation and a privilege to make sure people receive the basic of life: clean water.

And that is just the way it is.

CONCEALED CARRY

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, next week is the fifth anniversary of the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Just over 2 months ago, a mass shooter took the lives of 58 at a concert in Las Vegas; and 31 days ago, Sutherland Springs, Texas, was changed forever.

But just minutes ago, my Republican colleagues memorialized those deaths by passing a bill that would increase the risk of this happening in communities like yours and mine. To pass a bill written by the NRA at the expense of the safety and security of residents and law enforcement is an absolute disgrace.

To allow people, including those with dangerous histories, to carry hidden, loaded guns anywhere across the country is simply shameful.

First, by stripping healthcare and now this, it seems that the Republican agenda is fostering death over life.

SUPPORTING CONCEALED CARRY

(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 support H.R. 38, the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017, which passed the House with a bipartisan vote a few moments ago.

As the Representative of a district with a large number of law-abiding

firearm owners, I know many individuals who have concealed carry permits use their firearm for personal protection. This commonsense measure would also allow qualified law-abiding citizens who have obtained concealed carry permits to carry their firearms across State lines and in other States.

Since 1991, the number of concealed carry permits has increased dramatically, while the violent crime rates have dropped nearly 51 percent, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Additionally, the fix on the so-called NICS provision of the legislation would add an extra layer of accountability to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System for individuals

who are legally prohibited from obtaining a firearm.

As one of the leading advocates for Second Amendment rights in New York State, I was the first to introduce a full repeal of Governor Andrew Cuomo's gun-grabbing so-called SAFE Act. I firmly believe that our Second Amendment rights are God-given by the Constitution and something we need to defend each and every day.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 228. An act to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2017, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JANICE ROBINSON, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 15 AND OCT. 22, 2017

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Janice Robinson	10/16	10/18	Netherlands		1,060.00		(3)				1,060.00
	10/18	10/20	Jordan		781.00		(3)				781.00
	10/20	10/22	Germany		645.00		(3)				645.00
Committee total					2,486.00						2,486.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Military air transportation.

JANICE C. ROBINSON, Nov. 7, 2017.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JENNIFER A. HEMINGWAY, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 27 AND OCT. 31, 2017

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Jennifer A. Hemingway	10/27	10/28	Estonia		259.00		(3)				259.00
	10/28	10/31	Czech Republic		1,189.20		(3)				1,189.20
Committee total					1,448.20						1,448.20

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Military air transportation.

JENNIFER A. HEMINGWAY, Nov. 28, 2017.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3301. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing eighteen officers to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3302. A letter from the PRAO Branch Chief, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements [FNS-2017-0021] (RIN: 0584-AE53) received December 6, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3303. A letter from the Acting Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pen-

sion Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits received November 29, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3304. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Quinclorac; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2016-0384; FRL-9970-05] received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3305. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pseudomonas fluorescens 4-hydroxyphenylpyruvate dioxygenase (HPPD-4); Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2017-0115; FRL-9969-94] received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec.

251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3306. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Revision to References for Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Sector to Incorporate Latest Edition of Certain Industry, Consensus-based Standards [EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0472; FRL-9968-24-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AT53) received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3307. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Prometryn; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2016-0495; FRL-9970-01] received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3308. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — *Bacillus thuringiensis Cry14Ab-1 Protein in or on Soybean*; Temporary Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2017-0113; FRL-9970-43] received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3309. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New York; Cross-State Air Pollution Rule; NOx Annual and SO2 Group 1 Trading Programs [EPA-R02-OAR-2017-0425; FRL-9971-25-Region 2] received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3310. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's withdrawal of direct final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R03-OAR-2017-0413; FRL-9971-40-Region 3] received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3311. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; AK: Updates to Materials Incorporated by Reference [EPA-R10-OAR-2017-0554; FRL-9970-27-Region 10] received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3312. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Transmittal No. 17-55, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3313. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Transmittal No. 17-64, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3314. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Transmittal No. 17-0A, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3315. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's Office of Inspector General Semi-annual Report to Congress for the period ending September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3316. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Office of Inspector General Semi-annual Report to Congress for the period April 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3317. A letter from the Executive Analyst (Political), Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a notification of a discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3318. A letter from the Executive Analyst (Political), Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a notification of a discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3319. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting three notifications of a nomination and discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3320. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting two notifications of a designation of acting officer and discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3321. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a notification of a nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3322. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a notification of a nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3323. A letter from the Director of Presidential Appointments, Department of State, transmitting ten (10) notifications of a vacancy, designation of acting officer, nomination, action on nomination, discontinuation of service in acting role, and change in previously submitted reported information, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3324. A letter from the Acting Chairman, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's Inspector General Semiannual Report to Congress, for the period April 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3325. A letter from the Acting Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's annual Agency Financial Report for FY 2017, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3326. A letter from the Vice Chairman, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting the Board's FY 2017 Agency Financial Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3327. A letter from the Solicitor General, Department of Justice, transmitting a notification that the Department has decided not to defend the Commission in the *Raymond J. Lucia, et al. v. Securities and Exchange Commission*, No. 17-130 (S. Ct.) case that is before the Supreme Court, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 530D(a)(1); Public Law 107-273, Sec. 202(a); (116 Stat. 1771); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3328. A letter from the Federal Liaison Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — International Trade-

mark Classification Changes [Docket No.: PTO-T-2017-0040] (RIN: 0651-AD27) received December 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3329. A letter from the Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalty Adjustments for Inflation [CBP Dec. 17-20] (RIN: 1651-AB15) received December 6, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3330. A letter from the Deputy Administrator, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, transmitting Corporation's annual financial audit and management report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3331. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Request for Comments on Application of Excise Taxes With Respect to Donor Advised Funds in Certain Situations [Notice 2017-73] received December 5, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. S. 140. An act to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund (Rept. 115-441). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1800. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer certain Federal land to facilitate scientific research supporting Federal space and defense programs; with an amendment (Rept. 115-442). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WOODALL: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 647. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 477) to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3971) to amend the Truth in Lending Act and the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 to modify the requirements for community financial institutions with respect to certain rules relating to mortgage loans, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 123) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-443). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 1148. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand access to telehealth-eligible stroke services under the Medicare program; with an amendment (Rept. 115-444, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3120. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the volume of future electronic health record-related significant hardship requests (Rept. 115-445, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. 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; with an amendment (Rept. 115-446, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. 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; with an amendment (Rept. 115-447, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3245. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to increase civil money penalties and criminal fines for Federal health care program fraud and abuse, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-448, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2557. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of certain DNA Specimen Provenance Assay clinical diagnostic laboratory tests; with an amendment (Rept. 115-449, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 4300. A bill to authorize Pacific Historic Parks to establish a commemorative display to honor members of the United States Armed Forces who served in the Pacific Theater of World War II, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-450). 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 Committee on Ways and Means discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1148 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Ways and Means discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2557 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Ways and Means discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3245 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Ways and Means discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3271 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 Mr. STEWART (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mrs. LOVE, and Mr. CURTIS):

H.R. 4558. A bill to provide greater conservation, recreation, economic development

and local management of Federal lands in Garfield and Kane Counties, Utah; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. ESTES of Kansas (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. KATKO):

H.R. 4559. A bill to conduct a global aviation security review, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4560. A bill to suspend contributions by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to the Housing Trust Fund during any period that the full required dividend payments under the Senior Preferred Stock Purchase Agreements for such enterprises are not made, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. DUNN):

H.R. 4561. A bill to provide for third party testing of transportation security screening technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. HILL (for himself and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 4562. A bill to provide relief to community banks, to promote access to capital for community banks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RUSSELL (for himself, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. FLORES):

H.R. 4563. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to the Government of Georgia if the President determines that the Government of Georgia is taking actions to undermine commitments or contractual agreements with United States persons engaging in business operations in the country of Georgia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and the Judiciary, 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. HIGGINS of Louisiana (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. KATKO, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. RUTHERFORD, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 4564. A bill to require a threat assessment on current foreign terrorist fighter activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 4565. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish headstones or markers to private cemeteries for graves of certain veterans of World War I; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 4566. A bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to provide relief to nonbanks from certain stress test requirements under such Act; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. VELA, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 4567. A bill to require a Department of Homeland Security overseas personnel enhancement plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 4568. A bill to amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to promote timely exploration for geothermal resources under geothermal leases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GALLAGHER (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. KATKO, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. RUTHERFORD):

H.R. 4569. A bill to require counterterrorism information sharing coordination,

and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself, Mr. JONES, Ms. JAYAPAL, and Ms. STEFANK):

H.R. 4570. A bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California (for herself, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. MAST, and Ms. ROSEN):

H.R. 4571. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to expand eligibility for the TRICARE program to include certain veterans entitled to benefits under the Medicare program due to conditions or injuries incurred during service in the Armed Forces and to waive the Medicare part B late enrollment penalty for such veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and 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 Mrs. DINGELL (for herself and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida):

H.R. 4572. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Medicine to evaluate the preparedness of hospitals, long-term care facilities, dialysis centers, and other medical facilities for public health emergencies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois (for herself, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RUSH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. BASS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. FUDGE, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. ADAMS, and Mr. EVANS):

H.R. 4573. A bill to clarify that the Dickey Amendment does not prevent the use of funds for research on mental health, gun violence, and how they intersect, and to provide for reporting on the effects of gun violence; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (for himself, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. BOST, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. SCHKOWSKY, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. GUTIERREZ):

H.R. 4574. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 108 West Schick Road in Bloomingdale, Illinois, as the "Bloomingdale Veterans Memorial Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. LONG (for himself and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 4575. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to preserve consumer and employer access to licensed independent insurance producers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MEADOWS:

H.R. 4576. A bill to expand school choice in the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. KATKO, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. BACON):

H.R. 4577. A bill to establish a working group to determine ways to develop a domestic canine breeding network to produce high

quality explosives detection canines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. VELA (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. KATKO):

H.R. 4578. A bill to authorize certain counter terrorist networks activities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 4579. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to implement Medicare payment policies designed to improve management of chronic disease, streamline care coordination, and improve quality outcomes without adding to the deficit; 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 Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mrs. BLACK):

H.R. 4580. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the Medicare accountable care organization (ACO) program, and for other purposes; 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 Mr. AL GREEN of Texas:

H. Res. 646. A resolution impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, of high misdemeanors; which was laid on the table.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. STEWART:

H.R. 4558.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section III

By Mr. ESTES of Kansas:

H.R. 4559.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4560.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 4561.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts, and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for car-

rying into Execution the forgoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4562.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. RUSSELL:

H.R. 4563.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana:

H.R. 4564.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 4565.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 4566.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes:" as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KATKO:

H.R. 4567.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

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.

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.R. 4568.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2

"The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States . . ."

By Mr. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 4569.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—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.

By Mrs. BUSTOS:

H.R. 4570.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 4571.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. DINGELL:

H.R. 4572.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Arti-

cle I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 4573.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const., Art. I, Sec. 8, Cl. 18 (Necessary and Proper Clause) (This bill would authorize federal agencies to study, and report on, the impact gun violence has on the public health. Such a law is both "necessary and proper" in order to carry out the purpose of the Constitution: promotion of the general welfare).

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY:

H.R. 4574.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. LONG:

H.R. 4575.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1: 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.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution, which states "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. MEADOWS:

H.R. 4576.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

H.R. 4577.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I empowers the Congress to provide for the common defense.

Explosives detection canines have proven invaluable in conflicts throughout American history. Servicemembers and first responders entrust their safety to these incredible animals. However international demand for capable working dogs has driven up prices and depleted supply abroad. This bill aims to connect domestic canine breeders and vendors with the federal procurement process and streamline the procurement of quality working dogs from the United States rather than overseas.

This legislation will ensure continued access to critical defense asset.

By Mr. VELA:

H.R. 4578.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. WELCH:

H.R. 4579.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have 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 in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. WELCH:

H.R. 4580.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have 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 in any Department or Officer thereof.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 42: Mr. RUSSELL.
 H.R. 233: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 257: Mr. MESSER, Mr. MARCHANT, and Ms. MCSALLY.
 H.R. 502: Mr. MEEKS.
 H.R. 535: Mr. KING of Iowa.
 H.R. 548: Mr. AMODEI.
 H.R. 632: Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. KATKO, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.
 H.R. 644: Mr. GOSAR.
 H.R. 681: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
 H.R. 778: Mr. UPTON.
 H.R. 846: Mr. RUSSELL and Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 858: Mr. EVANS, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. WELCH.
 H.R. 909: Mr. ABRAHAM.
 H.R. 912: Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. LEE, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. CARBAJAL.
 H.R. 927: Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 1148: Mr. LAHOOD and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
 H.R. 1154: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 1155: Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 1271: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 1276: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
 H.R. 1380: Mr. RUTHERFORD.
 H.R. 1406: Ms. DEGETTE.
 H.R. 1409: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GALLAGHER, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, and Mr. KATKO.
 H.R. 1457: Mr. RUTHERFORD.
 H.R. 1480: Mr. POSEY.
 H.R. 1494: Ms. BARRAGÁN.
 H.R. 1566: Ms. HANABUSA.
 H.R. 1587: Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 1606: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
 H.R. 1676: Mr. POSEY.
 H.R. 1802: Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 1861: Mr. YARMUTH.
 H.R. 1889: Mr. NEAL.
 H.R. 1987: Mr. ESPAILLAT and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
 H.R. 2319: Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 2327: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 2436: Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 2451: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
 H.R. 2460: Mr. COLE and Mr. SIMPSON.
 H.R. 2495: Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
 H.R. 2545: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 2666: Mr. VALADAO.
 H.R. 2669: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 2687: Mr. CORREA, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. RASKIN, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
 H.R. 2723: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 2735: Mr. SCHRADER.
 H.R. 2740: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GARRETT.
 H.R. 2790: Ms. HANABUSA.
 H.R. 2856: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
 H.R. 2899: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 2913: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 3083: Mr. POLIQUIN.
 H.R. 3199: Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 3444: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.
 H.R. 3495: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. DINGELL, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
 H.R. 3519: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
 H.R. 3528: Mr. LONG.
 H.R. 3596: Mrs. BUSTOS.
 H.R. 3600: Mr. BABIN, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Mr. GIBBS.
 H.R. 3635: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
 H.R. 3671: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
 H.R. 3709: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. AGUILAR.
 H.R. 3711: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 3712: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.
 H.R. 3729: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 3730: Mr. BARLETTA.
 H.R. 3740: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
 H.R. 3759: Mr. EMMER, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. POLIQUIN, and Mr. PETERS.
 H.R. 3761: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
 H.R. 3768: Mr. KIND.
 H.R. 3775: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
 H.R. 3793: Mr. DEFAZIO.
 H.R. 3828: Ms. HANABUSA.
 H.R. 3861: Mr. ZELDIN and Mr. WILLIAMS.
 H.R. 3865: Mr. GOMEZ.
 H.R. 3871: Mr. MOULTON.
 H.R. 3956: Mrs. WALORSKI.
 H.R. 4007: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4013: Mr. RASKIN and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
 H.R. 4082: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
 H.R. 4099: Mr. HECK.
 H.R. 4143: Mr. MOULTON, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. SHUSTER, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. CALVERT, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 4166: Mr. BACON.
 H.R. 4215: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 4234: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 4253: Ms. MENG, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 4300: Mr. COLE, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 4314: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. ROKITA.
 H.R. 4319: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. KING of New York.
 H.R. 4328: Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 4391: Ms. SPEIER.
 H.R. 4392: Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. HECK, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. UPTON.
 H.R. 4396: Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. TURNER, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 4443: Mr. HECK.
 H.R. 4465: Mr. BUCK and Mr. GOSAR.
 H.R. 4473: Mr. CORREA and Ms. TITUS.
 H.R. 4474: Mr. CORREA and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
 H.R. 4481: Ms. GABBARD.
 H.R. 4503: Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 4504: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4516: Mrs. BUSTOS.
 H.R. 4521: Ms. GABBARD.
 H.R. 4526: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. NORMAN.
 H.R. 4537: Mr. ZELDIN, Mrs. LOVE, and Mr. WILLIAMS.

H.R. 4541: Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. POLIS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. GOMEZ, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 4545: Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. ZELDIN, and Mr. PITTENGER.
 H.R. 4548: Ms. GABBARD and Mr. HIGGINS of New York.
 H.J. Res. 121: Mr. NORMAN.
 H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. ESPAILLAT.
 H. Con. Res. 95: Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. ROSEN.
 H. Con. Res. 96: Ms. BASS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Ms. NORTON.
 H. Res. 201: Ms. MENG.
 H. Res. 252: Mr. ISSA and Mr. PITTENGER.
 H. Res. 276: Mr. GOMEZ.
 H. Res. 466: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
 H. Res. 495: Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RASKIN, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
 H. Res. 570: Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida, and Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H. Res. 587: Mr. SIRES, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. RASKIN.
 H. Res. 621: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
 H. Res. 632: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. VIS-CLOSKY.
 H. Res. 637: Mr. SCALISE.
 H. Res. 641: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. EVANS, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

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:

OFFERED BY MR. FRELINGHUYSEN

H.J. Res. 123, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, does not contain any congressional earmark, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative BRAD SHERMAN or a designee to H.R. 477 the Small Business Mergers, Acquisitions, Sales, and Brokerage Simplification Act of 2017, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative BRAD SHERMAN or a designee to H.R. 3971 the Community Institution Mortgage Relief Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 3524: Mr. LATTA.



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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, we trust You to direct our lives. You are holy, ruling in the Heavens.

Keep our lawmakers faithful to You as You use them to accomplish Your purposes. May they hear the groans of the poor, the cries of the helpless, and the moans of the oppressed.

Help our Senators to cause justice to roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream. Give them the wisdom to find in You a refuge in turbulent times, remembering that You will never abandon those who seek You. Grant them the greatness of being on Your side, doing Your will on Earth, even as it is done in Heaven.

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. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House of Representatives.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House disagree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1) entitled "An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018," and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, Senators answered the call of our constituents by voting to overhaul our complex and outdated Federal Tax Code.

We seized the opportunity to spur economic growth, to help create jobs right here at home, and to take more money out of Washington's pocket and put more money into the pockets of hard-working American families.

Our bill also helps to provide for the country's energy security by further developing Alaska's oil and gas potential in an environmentally responsible way, and it delivers relief to low- and middle-income Americans by repealing ObamaCare's individual mandate tax.

I would like to once again thank every one of my colleagues who supported this once-in-a-generation effort to make our Tax Code work for the middle class and to help them get ahead.

Since the beginning of this process, we said that tax reform would be done through regular order and an open process. That is exactly what has happened.

Under Chairman HATCH's leadership, the Senate Finance Committee hosted dozens of hearings over multiple years and a full committee markup. Members on both sides of the aisle had a chance to offer amendments both in committee and on the floor. We considered numerous amendments and, when it came time to vote, the Senate approved the bill. This has been a years-long process to deliver tax reform. We have come a long way, and we still have more work ahead of us.

Earlier this week, our colleagues in the House voted to work with Members of the Senate to produce a final bill to

send to the President's desk. Later today, the Senate will do the same. We will vote to join our colleagues in a conference to finish our work on tax reform. The American people deserve taxes that are lower, simpler, and fairer. By voting for a conference, we will be one step closer to getting it done.

I look forward to voting to send our legislation to conference later today.

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. President, now on another matter, with the cooperation of our colleagues, Congress will pass a short-term continuing resolution before the end of the week. Once the House passes a continuing resolution, the Senate will have a chance to consider it as well.

By sending this short-term funding provision to the President for his signature, we will ensure that the government remains open while bipartisan discussions continue with our colleagues in Congress and the White House on a long-term funding solution.

In the meantime, it is important to recognize that this bill doesn't have any contentious provisions. We should all support it. A vote for this short-term measure will help maintain our military, it will continue the important work of Federal agencies, and it will provide States with certainty to continue funding the Children's Health Insurance Program until a bipartisan CHIP reauthorization agreement is finalized.

When the House sends us the short-term continuing resolution later this week, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting for it. That way, we can continue the critical operations of the Federal Government while we work to finalize a long-term solution.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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



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The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DACA

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about Dreamers in Virginia. Congress is engaged in a discussion about many topics in December, one of which is what to do about the DACA Program. A couple of months ago, President Trump said he was going to terminate the DACA Executive order of President Obama in 6 months. That would be in early March, unless Congress found a resolution.

I am gratified that many of us are having discussions about what that resolution might be. In particular, I want to acknowledge that 35 House Republicans yesterday signed on to a letter that was led by Virginia Representative SCOTT TAYLOR, from the Hampton Roads area, saying: We need to fix this, and we need to fix this by the end of the year.

I want these discussions to continue. In Virginia, there are about 13,500 Dreamers. I want to tell a few of their stories and why Virginia is a better State because of them and why, I think, the Nation is a better country because of the hundreds of thousands of Dreamers who are contributing to the diverse richness of this country. Let me talk about a few of the Virginia Dreamers I have met in the last few months.

The first is the pretty astounding story of Gloria Oduoye. Gloria is a child of parents who are Nigerian. She was born in England, and her parents brought her to the United States when she was 1 year old. Her dad is a doctor and came to practice medicine and work on a work visa, but then her dad became ill and could no longer work. As a result, the work visa expired. Gloria then became undocumented when her father's visa expired.

Gloria was not aware that she was undocumented until she was about to start college, and her parents had to tell her the full story. Gloria is a remarkable, remarkable young woman. She went to Wesleyan College on a scholarship and graduated. Then, she enrolled at William & Mary Law School.

Gloria is scheduled to graduate this month. When she does, she will be the first DACA student to get a law degree in Virginia and only the fourth DACA recipient in the United States to get a law degree. She is bound and determined. She said: I am going to be the first undocumented student to get a law degree in Virginia, and I am going to be the first undocumented lawyer in Virginia, and I am going to be the first undocumented judge in Virginia.

She is very, very focused upon her studies. She has been very involved with the National Black Law Students Association, the Immigration Law and

Service Society, and the Virginia Intercollegiate Immigrants' Association for the last 3 years.

I have had a chance to meet Gloria. She is a tremendous, tremendous young lady. That is Gloria.

Andreas Magnusson is in Richmond. He has an unusual story. Andreas is Swedish. He is a Swedish-born music producer and mixer. His parents brought him to the United States when he was 2 years old. This is the only home that he has ever known. His career in the music industry has blossomed in the United States, where with his first band he sold over 50,000 records, and he has toured the United States and other countries. Currently, he works out of his house in Richmond, where I live, and he has a recording studio, and he has sold a combined 1.5 million records through the span of his youthful music career.

The United States is his home. Richmond is his home. It is where his career is, and it is where his family lives. His mother, his stepfather, and his two half brothers are all American citizens. Andreas, Swedish born, is a Dreamer.

For fun, he is branching out from music to, I guess, demonstrate the Swedish-Virginian talent for barbecues. Now he is into barbecue competitions in Virginia, and he wants to enter more competitions in the future.

Neither Gloria nor Andreas are the typical snapshot you might think of when you think of a Dreamer; one a Nigerian lawyer and one a Swedish music producer.

Bruna Cardosa, whose friends call her Mel, is from Hampton, VA, in the Tidewater area. She works with children and family services issues. She is a DACA recipient. Her whole goal is to use her education to do social work. She also would like to combine her social work background and degree with a future degree in law to help immigrants like herself. She works for a nonprofit that focuses on mental health needs.

I think we all know how significant mental health needs are in the country and how many people have never been diagnosed or, if they get diagnosed, they don't get treatment. This is an important issue, and the organization she works for helps people to make sure they can find the financial support they need to access the mental healthcare they need.

Before she worked with this family services agency, she formed a coalition called I-CAUSE with other DACA recipients in Hampton Roads to help undocumented students be able to afford higher education. She has received numerous scholarships, honors, and awards that have allowed her to pursue her higher education and, specifically, she was a recipient of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, to get her social work degree.

With her academic success and her passion to help others, Brunna is exactly the kind of Virginian we love to celebrate because she is a person of accom-

plishment who is taking her own skills and not just benefiting herself but benefiting others. That is as Virginian and American a value as there is.

The fourth student I will mention is somebody I have come to know a little bit, Giancarla Rojas. Giancarla is a DACA recipient here in the Northern Virginia area. She came to America a decade ago to be reunited with her parents, whom she had not seen for 7 years.

In an article in the Washington Post that highlighted her particular story, Giancarla said that she spoke only Spanish when she came here and that the way she and her father perfected their English was by riding in the car and singing Beatles songs and Chicago songs. The Presiding Officer is too young to remember the band Chicago. This is a geezer-style band. Yet it is interesting to think of somebody from Central America coming and deciding, with her dad, that she will listen and sing to geezer rock on the radio as a way of learning English. I don't think the Beatles gave her an English accent, by the way, but it did teach her to speak English quite well.

The article mentioned that when she came to the United States, even the most simple homework assignments were virtually impossible for her. She had to study so hard to succeed—much harder than others—because of the language difficulties, but, very quickly, she was not just doing well, she was in honors classes, and she wanted others to succeed. As in the other stories that I have mentioned, she has made a passion of assisting others to do what she has done—to learn English, to prepare for citizenship tests.

She was prompted to advocate for Dreamers when a school counselor told her: Sorry for you. College is not an option because you will have to pay out-of-State tuition. Her family couldn't afford it. Instead, when the counselor told her that, she decided to join a lawsuit, and the lawsuit led to Virginia's offering in-state tuition to those who were living here and paying taxes and succeeding like Giancarla.

She maintained her high GPA. She earned admission to Radford University, a wonderful university in southwestern Virginia. She was the first Dreamer to be accepted at Radford. She was given a full scholarship, and she graduated with a bachelor's degree in international economics in May of 2016. She is determined and committed to serving her community just like the other 13,500 Dreamers in Virginia.

This is a very important issue. After saying that the Dreamers are great kids and that they had "nothing to worry about with me," I was disappointed when the President said: I am going to terminate the program in 6 months. I viewed it as a little bit of a broken promise. Yet there was something in that announcement that, frankly, I think we have to grapple with, which is that no Executive action is as good as a statutory fix. An Executive action can be changed by this

President or that. So, even though I supported President Obama's DACA Executive order, I recognized that it was not the same as a statutory fix.

We do need Congress to act on this. I was proud to have been one of nearly 70 Members of this body in June of 2013 to have voted for a comprehensive immigration reform bill that included the Dream Act—a permanent statutory solution for these Dreamers. We need to find that permanent solution. The dialogue that we are having about the Dream Act is championed by Senator DURBIN and is cosponsored by many, including me. It is bipartisan and has the cosponsorship of LINDSEY GRAHAM. There is also the BRIDGE Act, which has been proposed by Republican Members, which also tries to solve the Dreamer issue, as well as the letter in the House that I mentioned the other day.

It seems as though we are in the time in which we are having this discussion in seriousness, and we are on the path to finding a permanent solution. We need to do this. These families are law-abiding, tax-paying, hard-working, setting-example kinds of families. You will find them serving in the military and starting businesses and succeeding as these young people are, whom I have described.

This is a season in which we have a lot on our plate. We have budgetary issues, and we have the CHIP insurance program for kids. We have a lot on our plate between now and when we adjourn for the holidays at the end of the month. This is an issue that we can solve, and I am heartened to see the discussion reaching a boil. I am heartened to see bipartisan support for these Dreamers, but I am not surprised because, when you read their stories, you will see why their cases are compelling and why not just Members of this body and the House but also the American public strongly support a permanent resolution.

I encourage my colleagues to do this. Let's do it soon. We will be proud of ourselves if we do, and we will be able to be proud of the accomplishments of the young people like those whom I have described.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO RICH HEFFRON

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise today to offer a tribute to a friend, a leader, and one-of-a-kind, Rich Heffron.

My colleagues in the Delaware congressional delegation—Senator CARPER and Congresswoman BLUNT ROCHESTER—join me in congratulating Rich Heffron on his long record of service to

Delaware. Rich will soon be retiring as the president of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, and I wanted to take the time today to honor his many contributions not just to Delaware's business community but to our legal, educational, and governmental communities, to all of Delaware.

Rich moved from Philadelphia to Wilmington back in 1971, attending Delaware Law School and serving as an intern for then-Senator Joe Biden. Rich later functioned as finance director for Joe Biden's 1978 senatorial campaign. Rich's career took off in 1985 when he started as a special assistant and top aide to then-Wilmington mayor Dan Frawley. Mayor Frawley wisely recognized Rich's business acumen and promoted him to director of the Department of Real Estate and Housing in 1987. There, Rich helped establish the Wilmington Housing Partnership and became one of Mayor Frawley's most trusted advisers, a key part of his "kitchen cabinet."

Rich later departed Wilmington city government in 1992 to embark on his journey with the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, where he would serve for more than a quarter of a century. Mayor Frawley was sad to lose Rich but recognized his great value to our entire State through the chamber. "If I were the president of the state chamber, I would want to be able to communicate across political lines, across community and business lines," then-Mayor Frawley said. "Rich has demonstrated that reach that goes beyond partisan."

At the State chamber, Rich managed the government affairs department and was the organization's chief advocate for Federal, State, and local issues, and it was in this role that I first met him. Under Rich's great and lasting leadership, the State chamber has been a strong organization, representing the business community on a very wide range of issues. He expanded the chamber's advocacy role across the State and recently helped guide the modernization of the Coastal Zone Act and advocated for the creation of the Delaware Prosperity Partnership to help Delaware's economic development for the future.

His insight was and still is frequently sought after in many policy areas, including government fiscal and tax policy, healthcare issues, land use management, and workers' compensation. Rich's depth of knowledge has been a resource for everyone who has spoken with him. His weekly emails, webcasts, and television and radio appearances are insightful, informative, and engaging. In short, he has long had his finger on the pulse of Delaware.

Throughout his tenure at the chamber, Rich has served on many boards and commissions, and I will mention just a few: the Governor's Workers Compensation Advisory Commission, the Workers Compensation Health Care Advisory Panel, and the Delaware Health Care Commission.

Rich also made educating the next generation of Delawareans of all backgrounds a priority as an adjunct faculty member teaching business and political science at Delaware Technical and Community College and at Wilmington University.

Rich's opinions, his style, and his voice have been sought out for nearly 30 years by business leaders, elected officials, and Delawareans alike up and down our State, and all those who got to know Rich Heffron got to know him as a friend.

Our Governor, John Carney, had this to say about Rich just the other day:

Rich exemplifies the Delaware Way. He has great relationships with legislators and elected officials on both sides of the aisle. He takes a long-term approach to issues rather than an ideological or short-term approach because he realizes we are here to work together and get something done that will benefit our state. We owe Rich an incredible debt of gratitude for what he has done for the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, for what he's done to support job creation for Delawareans, and for what he has done to improve the Great State of Delaware.

Former Delaware State representative Bobby Byrd, a longtime friend and former coworker of Rich's, also spoke of his long career of service to our community. Bobby Byrd said:

Not only has Rich been a lifelong Democratic Party activist, he has also been a very competent advocate for Delaware's business community. He is truly an example of the Delaware Way.

Although Rich is now retiring, his voice and his counsel will never be far away, and, in retirement, his Temple Owls sports teams will be just a bit closer.

I personally wanted to say to Rich my great thanks for the many ways in which you have encouraged and advised and supported me in the 8 years I worked in the private sector in manufacturing and the 10 years I served in county government and now in my 7 years here in the Senate.

Many in this body find it hard to understand when Senator CARPER and I talk about this Delaware Way, where we all work together and find ways to solve problems, but the idea that a Democratic Party activist is the long-serving and well-regarded head of our State chamber of commerce is just one small example of that Delaware Way.

Rich, no one has been a better, more trusted source of advice to business leaders, community leaders, and political leaders alike than you.

It is appropriate that this is the eve of Delaware Day, when almost 230 years to the day tomorrow, the brave Delaware delegates, risking their lives and everything they had, met at the Golden Fleece Tavern in Dover, DE, and unanimously voted to make Delaware the first State to ratify our Constitution. Tonight, we will celebrate again our annual Taste of Delaware event in honor of Delaware Day.

Tonight, Rich, we will toast you at our seventh annual Taste of Delaware event, an event that wouldn't be possible without you and the State chamber's unyielding support. The Taste of

Delaware event is a great example of what it means to bring people together from across our State, from our three counties, from north and south, and to travel to Washington and share with all of our colleagues here in the Senate some of what makes Delaware special.

Rich, you and your team have created a wonderful Washington tradition, attracting literally thousands of guests and dozens of Delaware's culinary staples to celebrate the First State here in the Nation's Capital. And, Rich, you yourself have been the best example I could provide to my colleagues of what it is that makes Delaware so special.

You will be missed, Rich, in your role at the State chamber, and I wish you and Colleen and your family all the best in your well-deserved years of retirement.

Thank you.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING AL HILL, JR.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would like to begin my comments today by offering my condolences to the family of my friend, Al Hill, Jr. Al was the oldest grandson of the legendary Texas oilman H.L. Hunt, and he passed away last Saturday.

Al was many things to many people. We shared in common as alumnus the fact that we both went to Trinity University, but the difference between us is that Al was a star tennis player and I was not. He later popularized the sport as president of World Championship Tennis. During the rest of his career following his education, he worked in the energy industry, was a commercial real estate developer, and most of us knew him as a prominent philanthropist, along with the entire Hill family.

Al positively impacted the lives of more people than I can count, including mine, and I simply want to say how much we will miss him.

SAFER PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. President, the second person I would like to talk about today, and the focus of my remarks, is a Texas woman named Lavinia Masters. Lavinia is not famous in a sense, but she is near and dear to my heart because of her courage.

When Lavinia was 13 years old, she was sexually assaulted at knifepoint by a man who broke into her family's home. Her parents were sleeping upstairs and immediately called the police.

Lavinia was taken to the hospital in Dallas, where a forensic exam was performed and DNA evidence was collected in a rape kit, but then it sat there. The evidence sat around for 20

years untested, believe it or not. When other victims of sexual assault had similar forensic exams performed, their rape kits were added to Lavinia's, warehoused, not tested, and eventually a backlog began.

More than two decades later, in 2005, Lavinia's rapist had not yet been identified. She calls the frustration and anxiety of having to wait year after year "pouring salt on the wound." She didn't know who the rapist was, and she didn't know if he was still around or whether her life was even in jeopardy.

One day, Lavinia saw a TV commercial about a new initiative to clear backlogged rape kits. She called the Dallas Police Department, and, fortunately, officers reopened her case. Soon thereafter, her untested rape kit was located. When it was finally tested, it turned up a DNA match for her perpetrator. Well, the rapist was already in jail for other crimes he had committed, but because of the statute of limitations—which bars prosecuting somebody after a certain period of time—she couldn't even press charges, which is a shame.

This case, and Lavinia's courage in coming forward and letting us talk about her case, demonstrates the importance of testing these rape kits. It is important not only because the power of DNA testing will allow you to identify whom the perpetrator was, but it will also allow you to exonerate or exclude somebody whose DNA does not match that in the rape kit.

All of this illustrates problems inherent in untested rape kits that lie in storage lockers and laboratory counters across this country. These kits contain forensic evidence with the potential to solve a crime. As Lavinia's case demonstrates, frequently, people who commit sexual assault don't just do it once; they are serial offenders, and they will keep going until they are caught.

Unfortunately, in Lavinia's case, because of the 20-year interval from the time she was assaulted, it is unknowable how many times her assailant committed similar acts of sexual violence against other people before he was finally stopped.

These rape kits contain forensic evidence with the potential to solve a crime, to put a rapist behind bars, and to provide victims with closure and vindication, and society with justice. The good news is, we have made great strides in recent years—not only in my State but the United States—in dealing with this problem.

One recent report from the Department of Public Safety indicates that there are still more than 2,000 kits that remain untested in Texas. That is unacceptable, but nationally the problem is even much bigger, with as many as 175,000 rape kits that haven't been analyzed. In other words, Lavinia Masters is not alone. She is joined by other Texas women, courageous women, like Carol Bart, who came forward with her

story to help other women and potential victims avoid their fate.

Their cases are why the bill I authored earlier this year is so important. It is called the SAFER Program Reauthorization Act. SAFER is an acronym for Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting. Victims of sexual assault—scarred by painful memories and physical trauma—can't afford to wait for more efficient procedures and funding that is easier to come by. They need their stories to be heard and the evidence tested.

My bill reauthorizes a program that was created in 2013, which has helped law enforcement reduce the national rape kit backlog. There are many jurisdictions like the city of Houston, for example, which, a few years ago, took this on their own and didn't wait around for the Federal Government or additional funding. It was just amazing how many hits they got on these untested rape kits that matched up to other reported crimes as well. It allowed them to solve not only unsolved sexual assault cases but other crimes by putting people at the scene of the crime who claimed to be somewhere else, for example.

My bill reauthorizes this program created in 2013, which has helped law enforcement reduce the national rape kit backlog. I am happy to have the support of my friend and colleague Representative TED POE, who is cosponsoring the bill in the House. The original legislation bears the name of the Debbie Smith Act, the name of another brave woman who stepped up and used her personal tragedy for good. We named the Debbie Smith Act after her. It allowed us to then use Federal funds and make them available to test untested rape kits. Actually, that original legislation improved it to 35 percent and required 7 percent of them to be used as audits on existing rape kit programs. The problem is, when we started, we didn't even know how many untested rape kits there were because there was no audit program, and much of the funds that were being used for the Debbie Smith Act were being used for administrative or other purposes and not to test rape kits. These audits are important. They have had the potential to uncover thousands more untested rape kits across the United States, each with evidence to be used to bring criminals to justice.

The reauthorization I sponsored goes one step further than the original legislation. It also ensures that pediatric forensic nurses are eligible for training so, once they complete it, they are better equipped to respond promptly and appropriately to children suffering from abuse.

Finally, this bill extends the sunset provision of the SAFER Program, which will ensure the longevity of our program with a proven history of success. I am grateful this SAFER Act has enjoyed the support of a broad range of bipartisan supporters in this Chamber, including the senior Senator from Minnesota and the Senators from Nevada

and Colorado, each of whom are original cosponsors.

Here is the problem. This bill has now passed the Senate but is waiting for action in the House. It is December, and we know the clock is ticking. It is imperative that the House act to reauthorize this program before the end of the year. While I am confident it will, time is running out. We need to make sure this money is allocated for the SAFER Program for the new year and that not only the testing continues but the audits continue so we can find other rape kits, like those of Carol Bart and Lavinia Masters, that need to be tested, perhaps sitting on an evidence locker shelf somewhere in a police department.

This week, a coalition of advocacy groups and law enforcement agencies called for the House to pass the SAFER Program Reauthorization Act in a timely fashion. They said the promise of SAFER has yet to be fully realized. They pointed out that the Nation is at a reckoning point when it comes to sexual assault and harassment. They are absolutely right. We have reached a critical turning point.

Today, as more and more survivors reach out to report these life-altering crimes, it is certainly not the time to let authorization for SAFER lapse. Fortunately, I know and these law enforcement and victim rights groups know that our colleagues in the House share their beliefs. Like I said, I know we are going to get this done, but time is running out, and I hope our colleagues in the House will take up this legislation—which has no controversy at all associated with it—and get it passed and get it to the President.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, Moody's Investors Service is one of America's credit rating agencies. It is not an environmental organization. It doesn't have any activity in the debate over climate change. That is not what it does. What Moody's does is to analyze the ability of companies and government agencies that issue debt to meet those debt obligations. These Moody's ratings matter because they determine the interest rates that States, counties, municipalities, and companies must pay.

There was some interesting news last week. Moody's declared it is time for cities, counties, and States along our coasts—Alaska is an example of a State with a lot of coast—to wake up to the growing risk of climate change. Moody's has adopted credit indicators

“to assess the exposure and overall susceptibility of U.S. States to the physical effects of climate change.”

The managing director said this:

What we want people to realize is: If you're exposed, we know that. We're going to ask questions about what you're doing to mitigate that exposure.

Moody's looked particularly at coasts and at the share of a State's economic activity generated by its coasts and coastal communities. It counts the amount of homes built on flood plains, and the risk of extreme weather damage in that State or community as a share of the State's economy. “That is taken into your credit ratings,” Moody's said.

It makes sense, obviously. Communities that face rising seas that face heavier storms, that face increased flood damage will bear greater costs of mitigation and repair. If property values drop as a result, so does revenue. Moody's realizes that investors need to take that information into account in analyzing bonds. So it is going into the Moody's ratings.

Think about that. The truth of climate science has gone beyond the warnings of scientists, which we ought to have heeded a long time ago. You have outstanding scientists at the University of Alaska who are studying ocean acidification, sea level changes, all of that—and we probably would have listened to those scientists but for the influence of the fossil fuel industry here. The truth of climate science has gone beyond the warnings of government agencies, national laboratories, and our military services—warnings which have been there for a long time and which we also ought to have heeded and probably would have but for the political influence of the fossil fuel industry. It has even gone beyond the warnings of our coastal States and communities and the coastal regulators, even beyond the warnings of the insurance and reinsurance industries—all of which we have refused to heed to placate the fossil fuel lobbyists—but now the financial referees who score credit risk are baking climate change risks into the assessment of coastal communities' credit-worthiness.

Moody's is not going to assess this risk just in blue States. Coastal communities in every corner of the country—in blue States and red States, alike—are facing climate change risk to their citizens and their economies. Let's take a look at North Carolina.

I visited North Carolina in 2014 to see the effects of climate change along our southeast coast. The problems I saw there bore a striking resemblance to what is happening in our shorefront towns in Rhode Island. The coastal folks who I met in North Carolina were every bit as concerned as coastal Rhode Islanders.

I visited the marine science facility at Pivers Island, where scientists from Duke University, the University of North Carolina, North Carolina State, East Carolina State, and NOAA are all

studying sea level rise and other effects of climate change. I met with the North Carolina Coastal Federation at their coastal education center in Wilmington, where a bipartisan group was united in concern over the exposure of their coastal communities to rising seas and fiercer storms. I flew out over the Outer Banks to see where sea level rise is slowly swallowing and relocating them.

The Outer Banks were formed millennia ago by the interaction of seas and sand. They are dynamic barriers that move with tides and storms. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, “the Outer Banks, particularly the ocean side, have always been hazardous places for man.” Nevertheless, they have become permanent homes to over 30,000 people, and they attract over \$1 billion of tourist spending in that county.

According to a recent comprehensive article by InsideClimate News and The Weather Channel, one beach near East Seagull Drive in Nags Head “has been eroding at about six feet per year”—six feet per year. Rapid erosion threatens shorefront homes and brings the ocean ever closer to major roads and infrastructure. State engineers scramble to keep Outer Banks roads and bridges open and to rebuild them stronger and higher. This isn't just a North Carolina issue. This is a story familiar to many coastal communities.

A Union of Concerned Scientists study reports that sea level rise is doubling the number of communities along the coast facing what the study calls “chronic inundations and possible retreat” in the next 20 years.

GAO, which we depend on for a great many things here, recently reported that coastal areas face particularly high financial risks—hence the Moody's decision—and that annual coastal property losses from sea level rise and increased storms would run into the billions of dollars every year in the short run, reaching over \$50 billion every year by late century. Every year it will be over \$50 billion in loss to coastal properties if we don't pay attention.

GAO referenced a report that estimated a total of “\$5 trillion in economic costs to coastal property from climate change through 2100”—\$5 trillion in economic costs to our coastal communities.

That is a story that Rhode Islanders see coming at us as well. Our barrier beach communities like Matunuck Beach and Green Hill in South Kingstown see rapid erosion.

The top photo here from North Carolina shows one of the two remaining homes at East Seagull Drive in Nags Head, the site I talked about. You can see that there is an exposed septic tank where all the sand has been washed off, and you can see that there is limited beach left. At high tide, that house is over water.

On the bottom is a strikingly similar picture of houses in Green Hill, RI.

This photo was taken after the April 2007 nor'easter that tore through New England. This family's septic tank is also exposed from the sand that has been removed all around it, and the pilings here are keeping the home above the water. By 2009, this home got repaired, but it had to be moved back from the seashore and up a dune bank. You can only move back so far from rising seas before you start bumping into people's property behind you.

My predecessor, Senator John Chafee, who was once the chairman of our Environment and Public Works Committee, owned a family house in Matunuck, RI, where I remember swimming as a young man. The Chafee house is now completely gone, lost to rising seas.

Rhode Island's coast took a real lashing in 2012's Superstorm Sandy. These images are from Matunuck, where Sandy's storm surge wiped away beaches and exposed shorefront houses to the raw power of the sea.

The historic Browning Cottages up here were family homes for generations. Two of those historic homes had to be demolished. The third could be relocated inland. You can see from these shoreline maps the retreat of the shore to sea level rise and what it has done to these beachfront communities. Here in Nags Head, these little red squares are all where houses used to be that the sea moved in on, and they couldn't move backward. They had to be demolished and moved away. Only two remain—these two.

As you can see by the old shorelines, not that long ago coastal homes had yards of beach in front of them that is now lost. Storms, as well as sea level rise, can change all of that.

If you look at this Rhode Island map, you can see the steady loss of beach along this shore. But it tells two stories. Not only is it the story of the gradual loss of beach to rising seas, but it is also the story of the sudden devastation that a storm can wreak. This red line is how far the beach got pushed back in the hurricane of 1938. One big storm just scoured that beach clean. Now we are back behind that. Here is the 2014 line in blue.

If you look at this site on Google right now, you can see that it has gone even further back. Along Matunuck and the coastline, this is an establishment called the Ocean Mist. You can have a great time in the Ocean Mist. It is a great place.

Not very long ago, you could walk out the front of the Ocean Mist and down onto the beach, and you could walk dozens of yards across beach where people play volleyball and took the sun and hung out before they got to the sea. This is the Ocean Mist today. It has had to be propped up on pilings as the sea comes underneath it.

North Carolina and the Federal Government are having to spend millions of dollars replenishing the Outer Banks' beaches. The State now has to nourish more than 100 miles of beach

compared to just a dozen miles it worried about a few decades ago.

Western Carolina University has tallied up more than \$300 million spent by the State on beach nourishment from 2007 to 2016. Another \$64 million is expected to be spent by local government near Nags Head this year and \$48 million more in 2018. Nationwide, we spend about \$3.1 billion on beach nourishment.

EcoRI reports that Rhode Island lost about 90,000 cubic yards of beach sand just from Superstorm Sandy. Over \$3 million of Federal funding had to be used to help rebuild those Matunuck beaches after the storm.

Beach nourishment, seawalls, bulkheads, and rock armaments—you name it—are all temporary stopgaps that must eventually yield to rising seas. As this happens, there will be a constant drain out of local treasuries as communities have to spend more and more to keep up with the rising seas, and there will be a gradual loss of revenue into local treasuries as valuable oceanfront properties that pay local property taxes are lost. That is why Moody's is starting to score this issue in coastal communities.

One solution that coastal communities can come up with is to ignore this. In 2010, North Carolina's Coastal Resource Commission Science Panel on coastal hazards recommended that a sea level rise of 1 meter—39 inches—be adopted as the amount of anticipated rise by 2100. That was back in 2010. Since then, data compiled and analyzed by NOAA shows that that number was way too low, that the worst case potential for sea level rise on those shores is about twice that—2 meters of sea level rise.

Here is what the Raleigh News & Observer reported: The State "adopted a 30-year forecast that figures the rise at 8 inches." The odds of that coming true are virtually nil.

Ask Moody's how credible that estimate is in face of the evidence. Moody's is going to be going there and looking at this stuff, and they are not going to buy phony-baloney assertions that you are only going to see 8 inches of sea level rise when NOAA is predicting 2 meters. They are going to be rated on not being ready because they are not responding to the obvious science.

Climate denial works in politics because of the massive political influence of the fossil fuel industry, but it really is not going to matter to Moody's assessors.

In Rhode Island, our Coastal Resources Management Council is now planning for a worst case scenario of 9 to 12 vertical feet of sea level rise along our shores by the end of the century—9 to 12 vertical feet. Colleagues may want me to laugh that off and say: No, it is too inconvenient to talk about that; it really ticks off our fossil fuel friends. I will never, ever ignore this. I can't ignore this, and we as a body should not ignore this. No amount of

beach nourishment will protect Rhode Island from that.

At 10 feet, we will lose 36 square miles of extremely valuable shorefront land—people's homes, people's businesses, the marinas and fishing piers that people depend on. That is 36 square miles lost because we can't say no to the fossil fuel industry around here.

We must act on climate change now to give coastal States any chance to avoid these worst case scenarios. We have to help coastal communities plan for the changes we can't avoid.

A recent report from Texas A&M and Rice University researchers highlights what they called—get this—the "growing disconnect between the 100-year FEMA floodplain and the location of actual flood losses" and, again, the "growing consensus over the inability of the FEMA-derived floodplains to capture actual loss."

On average, about a quarter of insured flood losses occur outside the map's flood plains, and in some cases, more than 50 percent of flood losses occur outside of what the maps said would be flooded areas. With bad mapping, we are leaving local communities at a terrible handicap.

We go back to that GAO report quantifying those coastal risks. It notes: "Given the potential magnitude of climate change and the lead time needed to adapt, preparing for these impacts now may reduce the need for more costly steps in the decades to come." But it also points out that "the Federal Government does not have governmentwide strategic planning efforts in place to manage what it called "significant climate risks before they become Federal fiscal exposures." The Federal Government does not have governmentwide strategic planning efforts in place.

We have to give local communities better support. Bad maps and no planning is not support. Our coastal homes, our coastal economies, and our coastal heritage are all at stake, and bad maps and no planning aren't meeting those responsibilities.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The Senator for Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to talk about the pending business, which is the tax proposal going into a conference committee between the House and the Senate. As I am sure the American people now know, at 2 a.m., on early Saturday morning, the Senate passed its version of tax reform. The House had already done that. We were working on a House bill. Now the motion before us is to take that bill and send it to a conference. We would be better off sending it back to committee so that we could have public hearings and understand what we are voting on, rather than sending it to the conference committee.

I hope, though, that we will take advantage of the conference to deal with

the three fundamental flaws that were included in both the House and Senate bills. First was the process that was used that did not allow us to really know what we were doing. As a result, it is my understanding there are numerous provisions in both the House and Senate bills that will not work and will require changes.

Secondly, we professed to want to do this to help middle-income families, but, in reality, both the House and the Senate bills hurt middle-income families. I hope that will be corrected in conference.

Third—and there is no dispute about this whatsoever—the House bill and Senate bill will add anywhere between \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion to the deficit of this country. We shouldn't be deficit-financing a tax reform bill.

Let me first talk very briefly about process. Let's not repeat the mistakes that we made. It is outrageous that late Friday night we got a 500-plus page amendment to the pending bill and tried to read it, but we couldn't even read the handwritten changes that were put in the margins, and then we were asked to vote on that later in the evening. That process is just not befitting the U.S. Senate, and it is not befitting a democratic process in which we have an opportunity to read and understand, and the public has an opportunity for input, before we attempt to modify and change dramatically the Tax Code of this country.

So I hope that the conference committee will have a very open process, that there will be opportunities for input, and that we all will understand what is being done.

Secondly, it is critically important that this bill be corrected so that it really does help middle-income families. This bill doesn't do that. It provides massive tax cuts for the wealthy and significant cuts in business taxes, which are made permanent, while the relief given to middle-income families is temporary, and many middle income families will end up paying more in taxes. The House bill and the Senate bill have that fatal flaw.

One of the premises here is that if we give businesses big tax cuts, they are going to take those tax cuts and give workers higher wages. That just doesn't happen. There have been significant profits by American companies, but we have seen in too many of those cases that those profits have gone to buybacks, their stock, and to increase the value for their shareholders. It is their right to do that. But we shouldn't be pretending that we are going to be cutting taxes to help workers of these companies when, in reality, their first priority is going to be the shareholders and increasing the value of their stock.

We need to make sure that this bill, at the end of the day, will help middle-income families, and that is our focus, not the House bill or the Senate bill that focuses on our most wealthy taxpayers and the business community

rather than focusing on middle-income families.

Then, third, the deficit—and I find this unconscionable. I will just lay this out. I find it unconscionable, when we have worked to say that the deficit is hurting our country and we need to work together to rein in the debt of America, yet we find the Republican Party prepared to acknowledge a \$1.5 trillion deficit in their budget instructions. In reality, if this bill were to become law as passed by the U.S. Senate, it would increase the deficit by \$2 trillion if we extend all the tax provisions, and even if we accept dynamic scorekeeping, which is changing the rules—\$1 trillion of deficit. So under any of the assumptions, we are adding to the debt. That is just plain wrong. If our priority is to recognize that our debt is something that is wrong for our children and grandchildren, that we are wealthy enough today to pay our own expenses, then we must make sure that the bill that returns from a conference committee does not add one penny to the deficit. That should be a commitment that we are all ready and willing to make.

Let me also bring up a couple of other issues that I hope the conference committee will consider. The Senate bill includes the elimination of the required coverage under the Affordable Care Act. What does that mean? Well, it means that when it is fully implemented, 13 million Americans aren't going to have health coverage. That is what it means. It means that we are going to again see an increase in those who use the emergency rooms of our hospitals as their primary care centers because they have no health insurance. It means that people will be entering our healthcare system in a more costly way because they are not going to get preventive healthcare, because they don't have health insurance to cover preventive healthcare. It means that we are going to see a lot of people who can't afford their healthcare because they don't have health insurance.

Before the Affordable Care Act, we know that healthcare costs were the No. 1 reason for bankruptcy. We will see personal bankruptcies increase. And guess what. We are going to see uncompensated care go up. When uncompensated care goes up, guess who pays the bill? All of us do through higher premiums. It is called cost shifting.

Why is that in this tax reform bill? Do my colleagues want to know the reason? Because it gets scored as a savings by the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation. It is a savings because we are going to be spending less money in health subsidies, in the Medicaid Program. It cuts the Medicaid Program.

This is a phony savings from the point of view of our Tax Code, but guess what the Senate did with that savings. They used it to make permanent the tax cuts for businesses. In other words, they spent the savings in

the Tax Code to help corporations with permanent tax changes, and individuals didn't get that.

Well, I hope the conference will correct that by eliminating this health provision from the Tax Code. It shouldn't be in this bill. It is wrong on policy and it is wrong on process and it is wrong on fiscal responsibility. I hope, for all of those reasons, that provision will be eliminated.

Then, the bill passed by the Senate includes another provision that shouldn't be in a tax reform bill; that is, opening up Alaska to drilling. First of all, the policy is wrong. We should protect this pristine area of our Nation. Secondly, we don't need more sites for fossil fuels. We know that our future is in renewables; our future is in a more carbon-friendly environment. So from that point of view, it makes no sense. Then, on process, putting it in this bill makes no sense at all. So I hope my colleagues will correct that mistake that is in the Senate bill.

Then, both the House and Senate bills still have an assault on State and local governments in so many different ways. We make it so much more difficult for State and local governments to handle the problems in our communities. I was speaking to the mayor of Baltimore this week about our problems with public safety. I know the challenges our Maryland General Assembly will face in January, in dealing with transportation infrastructure, in dealing with public education, in dealing with the challenges of our environment. All of those issues are going to be more difficult for the State of Maryland and all of our States and all of our local governments and our municipalities to be able to handle if either the House or the Senate bill becomes law. But to add insult to injury, we then take away the State and local tax deduction so that county taxpayers and State taxpayers, who are the same people who are paying Federal taxes, will have to pay a tax on a tax.

Senator WYDEN brought to my attention something that is pretty fundamental. With the first income tax that was passed by the U.S. Congress, the deduction they allowed was for State and local taxes. Of course, the Constitution had to be amended, and the States had to consent to the amendment, and that is how we got the income tax. It was a fundamental decision made that under Federalism and respect for the different levels of government, we wouldn't impose a tax on a tax. Now, over 150 years later, we are talking about removing that deduction. That is outrageous from the point of view of the Constitution and the principles of the Constitution on Federalism.

There are also some consequences that I am sure my colleagues haven't thought about as to what impact that is going to have on property values, what impact that is going to have on a lot of other issues; they haven't thought that out. But it is just wrong from a policy point of view.

There are many provisions in the House bill that are not in the Senate bill, but now that we are going to conference, we have to be concerned about them. Are we going to restrict what individuals can deduct for medical expenses? That is in the House bill. So if you are a family that happens to have a child that has severe medical needs, are we now going to say that we are not going to allow them to deduct those costs that they have to pay for out-of-pocket?

The House bill contains restrictions on the deduction of education costs for those who have student loans. Are we going to make it more expensive for families to be able to afford higher education? It is already too expensive. Are we going to increase that cost?

We also have a restriction in the House bill that deals with mortgage interest deductions. I have already talked about the impact of the Senate bill and the House bill have on SALT—that State and local tax deductions have on the value of real estate, but when we restrict the deductions on mortgage interest, it has an even more dramatic impact on property values.

So there is a lot of work that is going to have to be done in conference. As I said, the best way to proceed is to send this bill back to the committee. Let's have open public hearings. Let's work together.

I know my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I have worked with my Democratic and Republican colleagues, and I know that when we work together, we produce some really great results. It is not hard for Democrats and Republicans to work together on the Tax Code, because we share the same goal. We know our Tax Code needs to be reformed. We know that there are burdens in our Tax Code that need to be eased. I honestly believe that Democrats and Republicans believe we shouldn't be adding to the debt, and we should be helping middle-income families. So it seems to me that this is not a heavy lift for Democrats and Republicans to come together in order to write the right tax bill for this country.

So I hope we take advantage of this opportunity, as we have a new look at the Tax Code, to deal with the fundamental flaws that are in both the House and Senate bills. I am not terribly optimistic because I know what the House and Senate have already passed. But I urge all of my colleagues to find a way that we can really fix our Tax Code, help middle-income families, and certainly not add to the deficit of this country. That should be the mutual desire of all Members of the U.S. Senate.

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

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

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, just this morning, a newspaper here on the Hill had an article with the headline "Experts find tax plan riddled with glitches." That is because, without a single hearing on the legislation, last week the majority rushed through a complete overhaul of America's Tax Code for the first time in 31 years, and we never had the opportunity to have full consideration of the merits of the proposal. We have now discovered that they have even screwed up the research and development tax credit, which is something American businesses rely on every single day.

This process, I am sad to say, was no accident. Had we had time to digest and debate this bill in the full light of day, it would have never withstood public scrutiny. My hope is that over the coming week or so, when the American public can actually see what is in this bill, it will not withstand their scrutiny.

Instead of making an honest case to the people, which they deserve, the proponents of this bill have sold this legislation not based on what is actually in this bill but with falsehood after falsehood.

First, they claim that the tax cuts wouldn't benefit the wealthiest Americans. Last week in Missouri, President Trump said:

This is going to cost me a fortune. . . . This is not good for me.

That was entirely consistent with a conversation that I was part of—which has also been reported publicly, so I am not revealing any confidences—when the President called in from Asia to a room full of Senators and said that this tax bill is so bad for the rich, that he had to throw in the estate tax on top of it in order to give wealthy Americans something, and he continues to perpetuate this myth in front of the American people.

The reality is that under this plan, the 572,000 taxpayers in America who are fortunate enough to make \$1 million or more will have an average tax cut of \$59,000. By 2027, 62 percent of the benefits in this plan will go to the top 1 percent—those with an income level of over \$2 million. As I said on the floor last week, we are borrowing \$34 billion from our children to give to the approximately 500,000 taxpayers in America who are lucky enough to earn more than \$1 million.

The point I want to make today is, that claim is false.

They also say that this plan is focused on the middle class. Last week, President Trump said: "The beating heart of our plan is a tax cut for working families." Under this plan, in the first and best year—and when I say "best year," this means the year that the tables look the best for the Republican argument, for the sponsors of the bill. Every year after that, it gets worse. The 90 million taxpayers in America who make \$50,000 or less will

get an average tax cut of \$160 a year. That is what they will get on average. Millions of middle-class taxpayers, under this bill, will actually see a tax increase if this law passes, and that number will grow over time. So it is not true that this is a middle-class plan. This is a tax cut for the wealthiest Americans masquerading as a middle-class tax plan.

They have passed around a few crumbs to the middle class and said: You should be satisfied with this. We promise you that you will benefit from the trickle-down benefits of the massive tax cut we are paying for by borrowing from our children.

The next thing they say is, we will supercharge economic growth, and that will lead to more jobs and higher wages. But today corporations are sitting on record amounts of cash. The highest income Americans are earning a larger share of income than at any point since 1928, right before this country fell into the Great Depression.

I was in business for a long time, and I believe in our capitalist system. I believe that people who do well and are successful are living the American dream. But the argument that these businesses and high-income households need a tax cut just doesn't add up.

On the other hand, most Americans have not had a pay raise in a generation, even as the cost of housing, healthcare, childcare, and higher education climb ever out of reach every year. Helping these Americans is not only the right thing to do, but if you want to jump-start the economy—these are the customers who shop at businesses—this bill does nothing to address their needs.

Bank of America recently surveyed companies to ask what they would do with their tax cuts. A vast majority said they would use the money to pay down their debt and buy back shares. At least corporate America is being honest about what they will do with this bill, unlike politicians in Washington. Neither of that does much for workers. Maybe that is why, in the full glare of the TV lights—again, you can't make it up. It is not fake news. When President Trump's top economic adviser, just before we were having a vote on this bill, asked a room full of CEOs to raise their hands if they plan to reinvest the tax cuts, hardly any did. He asked, why aren't hands up? According to Goldman Sachs, the effect on economic growth in 2020 and beyond "looks minimal and could actually be slightly negative."

Fourth and finally—and this is the one that is in some ways most galling—they claim the tax cuts will pay for themselves. They said that in 2001 when George Bush first cut taxes, that it would pay for itself. It is exactly the same rhetoric we are hearing today—no difference. Some of the people are different. Some of the people are the same. Guess what. In 2001, after those cuts, the deficit rose. Then they cut taxes again in 2003, and the deficit rose.

I remind us all that when George Bush became President, Bill Clinton had left behind not a deficit but a surplus—a \$5.6 trillion surplus projected over 10 years.

Every credible analyst who has looked at this bill has said these tax cuts will not pay for themselves. In the face of that history and in the face of the experts, they continue to maintain that they will pay for themselves.

It seems to me that if you think the best thing we can do with this money and the best thing we can do to deal with this massive deficit is to cut taxes for the wealthiest people in America, you should pay for it. Pay for it. We can't get the Children's Health Insurance Program passed—which is a drop in the bucket compared to this—because it has been hard to find a pay-for. We can't get the disaster assistance that so many of our States need because it is so hard to pay for. If you have conviction that this really is going to do what you are going to say it is going to do, pay for it. Don't borrow the money for this.

If we are actually going to borrow \$1.4 trillion from our children, then it would seem to me that we should have the decency to at least invest in their future.

It seems Washington has the money to spend \$83 billion to cut taxes on estates worth over \$11 million—which is what they call the death tax, which now applies to estates worth over \$1 million—but it can't lift a finger to do something about the fact that today in America, just 9 out of 100 kids born into poverty will complete college.

We apparently have the money to give the wealthiest Americans a \$59,000 tax cut, but we don't have the money to extend reliable high-speed broadband to rural America, which would cost about \$40 billion—less than 3 percent of the entire cost of the bill.

Apparently, Washington has the money to borrow \$1.4 trillion from our children, but we don't have \$8 billion to pay for the Children's Health Insurance Program, which covers 9 million kids and pregnant women who cannot afford private health insurance.

We care enough, it seems, about special interest carve-outs that we made in the dead of night as a way of passing this tax bill by getting this vote based on that tax break and this vote based on that tax break, but we cannot lift a finger to tackle the opioid epidemic ripping across our country and claiming 50,000 lives a year.

Every year I come to Washington and hear from my colleagues on the other side that we don't have the money to prevent forest fires across the West, to keep rural schools open, or to find \$400 million for the Arkansas Valley Conduit and bring clean drinking water to some of the poorest counties in Colorado. Now, they have spent \$1.4 trillion not to invest in the health and opportunity of our communities but to fritter it away on tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. If Republicans pass this

flawed, partisan, budget-busting bill, do not ever, ever let them say to you that we don't have the money to tackle the challenges that are most meaningful to our communities.

We should have passed a bipartisan bill to begin with. We could have crafted a bipartisan bill. I believe the corporate rate is too high and isn't competitive. I believe that. I know there are people on the other side who, like Senator MARCO RUBIO and Senator LEE, believe we should increase the child tax credit for middle-class families and for families who are poor.

We had an opportunity, if we were faithful to the rhetoric I heard around this place for years, to actually remove special interest loopholes, focus on the middle class, and not add to our debt. For years, on the corporate side, I have heard people say we are going to broaden the base and reduce the rate. Instead, we are lowering the rate without cleaning up the code. A once-in-a-generation opportunity, after 31 years, and we say, you know what, we are going to leave those loopholes in place, and we are going to lower the rate. Forget about broadening the base.

The same thing is true on the individual side. It is adding complexity to our code. All this stuff that they are doing on these passthroughs is going to add complexity and require more accountants and more lawyers for people to fill out their tax return. This is all as a result of the majority wanting to go it alone. When you don't look for votes from the other side, it means you are going to be stuck with the most extreme wing of your party. When you don't have to make a compromise because you are reaching across the aisle, it means the people who are the most absolutist on your side get their way. That is what happened here.

Furthermore, there are no hard decisions made in this bill. This is another example of Washington, unlike county commissioners, city council people, superintendents, mayors, and Governors, who actually have to make hard choices year in and year out to make their budgets work—this place always finds the path of least resistance. Forget about broadening the base and closing loopholes. We are going to give you a tax cut because it is easier.

I really hope that over the next week, the American people learn what is in this bill. If they do, I think we will have the chance to defeat it and then pass a bipartisan bill, which actually cleans up the code, lowers the corporate rates to make it more competitive, and enhances the child tax credit to give the American people who work for a living a tax cut.

Do you know what else we could do? We could invest in our infrastructure to create American jobs here and be able to help ensure this generation of Americans does what previous generations of Americans have done, which is to invest in the next generation, to make sure they have more opportunity, not less. This bill is the worst

of all worlds from the perspective of the high school students I met with before I came to the floor. Not only are we not investing in them, we are borrowing the money from them. This is no different than any one of us living in a house and sticking our kids with the mortgage. That is what is happening as a result of this bill, and we should defeat it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

COMPOUND MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move that the Senate insist on its amendment, agree to the request of the House for a conference, and authorize the Chair to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is pending.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote on the pending compound motion occur at 3 p.m. today; further, that if the motion is agreed to, Senators KING and STABENOW each be recognized to offer a motion to instruct conferees, and that the Senate vote on the motions in the order listed with no intervening action or debate; further, that there be 2 minutes of debate between each vote, equally divided in the usual form; finally, I ask that following disposition of the Stabenow motion, the Senate stand in recess until 5:10 p.m. to accommodate an all-Members briefing.

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

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, about a year ago, the American people voted for fundamental change in this country, and, last week, Republicans in the Senate continued to deliver. We passed a plan to give Americans substantial tax relief. This legislation is exactly what people were asking for last November, and it is exactly what this country needs now.

Because of this Republican plan, people will be able to keep a lot more of their hard-earned money. They are going to find that their taxes will be simpler and fairer. They are going to see our economy getting stronger and healthier. That is good news for our country, and it is, certainly, good news for the American people. This legislation was an important promise that Republicans made, and it is a promise that Republicans have kept. It is just the latest Republican accomplishment that is helping Americans.

Another thing that the Republicans are providing is tremendous relief from Washington regulations. I think that a lot of people lost track of exactly how much damage the Democrats and the Obama administration did to the American economy. The Obama administration added 285 major regulations during the course of the previous administration. Every one of them imposed a burden on Americans. The total cost of these rules was \$122 billion per year. That was both the direct cost

in terms of money and also counting the time needed to fill out the paperwork that was created by these excessive rules. Twenty-one of these rules were actually finalized after the 2016 Presidential election. That is after the American people spoke and said that they wanted change. Yet President Obama went straight on with piling more regulations onto the backs of the American people.

One of the first things that Republicans in Congress did this year was to start striking down unnecessary, burdensome, costly regulations from the Obama years. Republicans wiped 15 of these major rules off the books. Major rules are rules that cost over \$100 million in terms of the compliance cost, the actual cost, and the time cost. That is going to save Americans as much as \$36 billion over time.

One of these rules was an important part of President Obama's war on coal. It was called the stream buffer rule. It was designed to shut down a lot of the coal mining that is going on in this country. It would have destroyed up to a third of the coal mining jobs in America. So we passed a congressional resolution that protected coal mining jobs and protected American energy independence. We struck down 14 regulations like this one in the first few months of this year.

In October, Republicans blocked a 15th rule. This was the new regulation from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The rule was written during the Obama administration, and Obama appointees at the agency finalized it last summer. This is the agency that has been in the news recently because it has been so out of control. Republicans in Congress had to step in and get rid of an unnecessary rule that was really, in my opinion, just a payoff by the Democrats to trial lawyers.

Republicans have saved Americans \$36 billion by getting rid of rules and regulations. Democrats, on the other hand, have cost the American people \$122 billion a year in costs due to rules and regulations.

Republicans in the Senate also took a major step in this tax relief legislation by repealing the ObamaCare insurance mandate. This takes ObamaCare from being a mandatory program to being a voluntary program. It is going to save a lot of Americans a lot of money. In 2015, there were over 6.7 million Americans who paid this tax. The average tax penalty for the American people this past year was \$700. It is a big deal to give American families relief from that tax burden. It is also a big part of rolling back this idea that Washington knows best what works all across the country. The ObamaCare insurance mandate is more than a tax, and the damage it does is more than just the paperwork and money that people have to pay. It is an outrageous and unfair requirement that people have to buy something that isn't right for them and their family but the government says they have to buy it.

When Republicans struck down this mandate, we gave people back the freedom they had to decide for themselves and to make their own choices.

The Republicans in Congress have been very busy saving Americans from the burdens and injustices of these Obama regulations. I can state that we have a very strong ally in the Trump administration, because President Trump has been the deregulator in chief. Since his very first day in office, he has been rolling back the regulations that have constrained people over the previous 8 years. He froze action on nearly 2,000 Obama administration rules that hadn't taken effect yet. He wrote a new rule for his administration—when one new rule comes in, two go out. In other words, for every significant new regulation, his administration would offset it by getting rid of two other rules. That is how to make a difference in Washington. That is how the President was able to remove 860 ineffective, duplicative, and obsolete regulations in just his first 6 months in office. That is a very big difference from what the Democrats in Washington did, and we have already started seeing the results.

The American economy has created 2 million jobs since President Trump was elected a little over 1 year ago. Our economy grew at a rate of 3.3 percent last quarter. The unemployment rate dropped to 4.1 percent. Last Friday, the Washington Post had two items on one page. The first stated that consumer spending had increased in October and incomes grew. The article said: "The October rise indicates that consumer spending, which accounts for 70 percent of economic activity, began the fourth quarter with healthy momentum."

The second article, appearing on the same day in Washington Post, Friday, noted that weekly applications for unemployment aid fell for the week. It said that when the number of unemployment applications are low like this, it is a sign that hiring is healthy. It is a sign that employers are confident enough to keep workers on the payroll.

During the Obama years, Washington Democrats piled all of these regulations onto the economy. Because of them, economists said they had expected future growth to be around 1.8 percent. President Trump and the Republicans in Congress are cutting the regulations, and the economy is growing at 3 percent. That is the kind of change that is possible under Republican pro-growth policies.

That is why we are confident that we are on the right track. It is why we are confident that the economy is going to continue to accelerate under the tax relief we passed this past week. It is why we are confident that America will continue to thrive when we give people relief from the Washington regulations and start to unwind the redtape. That is what the American people voted for a little over a year ago. That is what Republicans are delivering in Congress and in the White House.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

DACA

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in reminding all of our Members, but particularly our friends on the other side of the aisle and the Administration, that there is a very real human cost for each day we delay taking corrective action on President Trump's unnecessary decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or DACA.

There was no need for the Trump administration to create this crisis. There was no reason to throw nearly 800,000 Dreamers and their families into such uncertainty. Yet the President—despite the fact that most Americans from both political parties support a solution for the Dreamers—decided that he needed to overturn this initiative for little more reason than the fact that it was put in place by President Obama. These young people, who are American in every way but on paper, may be uprooted and moved to countries that are totally foreign to them. Yes, their parents broke the rules to bring them here as children, but their departure now will be our loss. These are the basic economic facts and common sense. Moreover, these young people have become our classmates, neighbors and coworkers, the parents of our children's friends and an undeniable part of our American community.

I thank many of my colleagues who spoke eloquently here to put names and faces to the young people who are affected by this crisis. I would like to associate myself with their remarks. I have also had an opportunity to meet with Dreamers in Rhode Island who were brave enough to share their stories with me and with my staff. I hope to meet more of them, but I can state that these are exactly the kind of hard-working young people who we should be encouraging to put down roots in our communities.

Skeptics should know the facts. Dreamers have been subjected to deep scrutiny. They faced background checks by immigration officials, they have paid significant fees, and they have followed the rules. It is simply untenable to continue to delay a resolution of their status in our country any longer. Indeed, too many of my colleagues seem to be in no hurry to reach a meaningful agreement on passing the bipartisan Dream Act. This has been an effort that has been led by Members on both sides of the aisle because many—unfortunately, not enough yet—on both sides of the aisle believe that these young people are American in their values and in their commitment to this country. They will contribute to this country. They already are.

There seems to be this illusion that we have until March 5, the official end date for DACA, to continue to try to

fix this problem. There are others who seem to believe that this crisis, which was prompted by President Trump's decision, is an opportunity to gain concessions in other areas. This approach of waiting to try to game the crisis is wrong. It is certainly wrong for the young people who are waiting nervously—in fact, “nervously” is too mild a term—to determine whether they can stay and contribute to this great country, as they are already doing.

We have an opportunity, but we have to take it quickly to ensure that these young men and women can find a way to stay in this country and contribute to this country. It remains my sincere hope that my colleagues will come to the table in good faith to pass the bipartisan Dream Act. Again, let me state that there are Members on both sides who recognize that these young people are making great contributions to the country, and this is the only country they have known. Many of them were infants when they were brought here. They are American in every way except on paper.

We need to make progress on this. We don't have until March. We have to do this as quickly as possible.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President and colleagues, the Republican tax plan is now racing to completion in secrecy and shame. Republicans are finishing it in secret because it is a shameful scheme the American people overwhelmingly oppose.

Today the Senate is going to debate whether to go to conference with the House to resolve the differences between the two plans that the Republicans have passed on a wholly partisan basis. Not a single Democrat in the House and not a single Democrat in the Senate is in support of this bill. I think it is clear that the conference committee that will meet in the days ahead is nothing more than theater. It is not going to be an honest debate in the light of day. There will not be an honest debate that the American people can listen to on the prospect of \$10 trillion worth of tax policy changes that will reach into corners of every part of this country and every household in America.

The truth is, Republicans from the other body and the Senate are hashing out differences right now—right now, behind closed doors. They are packing the bill with even more goodies, even more loopholes for the well connected and special interests. There is no telling what swamp creatures have crawled up to Capitol Hill to get their fingers on this bill at the eleventh hour. The basic proposition on offer is this: taking money and healthcare away from middle-class Americans to pay for tax cuts for the multinational corporations, the powerful, and the well connected. That proposition isn't going to change. Apparently, now the Trump administration is calling for

more speed and even more secrecy, just so the President can claim a victory and Republicans in Congress can appease megadonors, who made it clear they are frustrated by a sputtering agenda.

What unfolded here last week is a black mark on this storied institution of the Senate. It was the climax of a process marred by recklessness and partisanship. This took place after 17 moderate Democratic Senators tried again last week, while the Senate still had the opportunity, to have a bipartisan plan. Well, I renewed my plan, my ideas—the only two bipartisan Federal income tax reform bills in decades, written by senior Republicans and moderate Senators. Bipartisan plans were discussed yet again last week before the Senate took off on this reckless course.

Senators did come to the floor last Wednesday and Thursday prepared for a debate, but it was cut short by the partisan reconciliation process—just 20 hours, evenly divided between the two sides. Wednesday turned into Thursday, and there was no final Republican bill. Then Thursday became Friday, and still Republicans had their plan hidden in the shadows. Then on late Friday—late Friday, well after dark—I was handed, personally, a new version of a 500-page bill by a key official in the Republican caucus who said: Here is the bill.

There was no opportunity for review or debate. The distinguished majority leader had said to me personally during the course of the afternoon, when I was asking every 30 minutes, that there would be plenty of time—plenty of time—to review the bill. Not only was there not plenty of time, there was essentially no time, and it reached a point as we heard from our colleagues last week, that notes on technical material were scribbled into the margins.

We had questions about education provisions that seemed to benefit one academic institution. There are plenty of them that are deserving in Oregon and Pennsylvania, but this would seem to benefit just one. Special interest handouts were air dropped right up, apparently, to the very last minute, with huge giveaways to oil companies and hedge funds. The unintelligible lines became a metaphor for what this whole debate was all about—haphazard work that not a schoolteacher in America would give a passing grade to, if some kind of work product like that was submitted to them.

Of course, this is what the majority party here, the Senate Republicans, said was a full and honest debate. The technical term here is “regular order,” but the fact is, those \$10 trillion of tax changes were made in secret. When the bill that was brought to the floor finally appeared, it was clear that Republicans had played “hide the ball” with their tax plan until the very last minute.

There was not a single hearing on the specifics of the legislation. I heard so

many times in the debate that there were 70 hearings. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I wish I had a nickel for every time I heard that there were 70 hearings. There was not one single hearing—not one—on the specific provisions of that legislation. There was no bipartisan input. No Member of this body can possibly claim to have read everything before they voted.

Now the recklessness continues. Republicans are sticking with the con job on the middle class as they work out the differences between their two plans, again, behind closed doors. Whatever product comes out of these negotiations is still going to raise taxes on millions of middle-class Americans and drive a dagger into the heart of the Affordable Care Act. Why? To pay for yet more handouts to faceless, multinational corporations. There are still going to be bigger tax cuts for those multinational corporations that ship jobs overseas than there will be for those businesses that create red, white, and blue jobs here at home.

What ought to cause even more alarm for Americans over the coming weeks are the special interest goodies that are still being packed in—the handouts nobody yet knows anything about.

Down on K Street, they seem to be licking their chops as they read the bill the Republicans wrote so quickly and carelessly. It looks to me like a whole flock of tax lawyers are scheming and planning their next moves.

According to reports, the big sticking point in the negotiations between Republicans isn't about how you are going to help middle-class families or how you are going to protect healthcare, they are debating whether the corporate handouts ought to get bigger. They are already slashing the corporate rate down to 20 percent, and now they are debating whether corporations should actually be required to pay it.

I note that in both of the tax plans I put together that were bipartisan, written with two conservative Republican Senators close to the majority leader, during all of those talks, we didn't hear about corporations saying they had to have a tax rate of 20 percent.

The American people do not want this plan to become law. I heard that this past weekend. I had two town meetings in communities where Hillary Clinton had a lot of support and in communities where Donald Trump had a lot of support, and I am telling you this tax cut bill is unpopular all over. It is hard to write a tax cut bill that is unpopular, but somehow Senate Republicans actually managed to do it. That is what I heard in townhalls and when I met with folks last weekend at Fred Meyer, our iconic store. We heard it all over. I can promise every Member of this body the American people have a sense of what is coming now.

The Republican deficit hawks who flew away when the proposition of a

\$1.5 trillion budget-busting tax bill came up, they are going to come flying back. They will be flying over the horizon, returning. There is already a whole lot of frightening Republican talk about the fiscal crisis facing our country, exploding deficits, spending run amok. In fact, Republicans haven't even waited for this tax plan to become law to crack out the fiscal crisis talking points. We hear all the talk, the President at rallies and talking on national television about entitlement reform. It is a whole lot of focus group-tested code for cutting the safety net, the lifeline programs for the vulnerable: Medicaid, Social Security, Medicare, the anti-hunger programs. That sure looks like what is next on the slash-and-burn to-do list.

Here in the Congress, the Speaker said a few weeks ago we have a lot of work to do in cutting spending. Ways and Means Chairman BRADY talked about welfare reform and tackling the entitlements. The Freedom Caucus, the far right folks in the Freedom Caucus, are using the tax bill to lock in promises on spending cuts and the safety net programs, and nobody knows yet what secret guarantees they have been given.

Last week, as Republicans were getting ready to spend a trillion and a half dollars on handouts to corporations—just put your arms around that for a moment, Mr. President—I heard for years in the Finance Committee and the Budget Committee about how Republicans want to be fiscally minded and tight with a dollar. Right away, out of the gate, they said we will spend a trillion and a half dollars in handouts to corporations—corporations already awash in money. What we heard is the leadership of the other side of the aisle saying we are already spending ourselves into bankruptcy, and they were blasting what they called liberal programs for the poor.

The chairman of our committee, whom I admire greatly, said: When it comes to helping the vulnerable, we don't have the money anymore. We don't have the money anymore for the vulnerable, but somehow we can borrow billions of dollars to have a \$1.5 trillion handout to multinational corporations awash in money? It sure indicates to me some out-of-whack priorities.

Then we heard our colleague from Pennsylvania, Senator TOOMEY, say on the floor that there wasn't a secret plan to cut Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security. I give my colleague from Pennsylvania credit for his honesty because he is right about one thing. They are not keeping this tax plan a secret. Republicans are talking about the tax plan and the prospect of these entitlement cuts now in the open. The tax plan may be secret, but the plans for cutting entitlements are going to be right out in the open.

Colleagues, I want to close with this. I heard this weekend, and I hear at every stop I make, that the people of

this country do not want this partisan tax plan to become law. They understand what is happening now. The working people and the middle class are being forced to pay for handouts to multinational corporations; that the Republican plan puts the interests of the politically connected above the interests of hard-working American families. I believe the American people are going to stand up and fight against any fear-mongering attack launched by the so-called deficit hawks who, as they come flying back, are clearly looking at cutting Medicare, Medicaid, anti-hunger, and anti-poverty programs.

It is not too late. It is not too late while this process continues between the House and the Senate to change course. Instead of going to a sham conference—a sham conference that is little more than diversionary theater—there could be a real and bipartisan debate on a tax plan that would give every American a chance to get ahead.

I have been particularly struck by my conversations with our former colleague Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey. He calls almost every few days because he, along with President Reagan, were the authors of the last bipartisan plan. I am particularly struck by how he describes when Democrats and Republicans came together. Bill Bradley, former Knicks celebrity all over the country, he would fly all over the United States to meet with colleagues like the distinguished Presiding Officer from North Carolina. He would fly all over. Now, we can't get Republicans to walk down the corridor of the Dirksen building to have a conversation about how we ought to have a chance to give everybody a good tax plan so everybody in America can get ahead. That is what I sought to do with Republican colleagues, former Senators Gregg and Coats, who are plenty conservative.

So it is not too late for my Republican colleagues to do an about-face and say we can do better than this. I don't, for the life of me, understand why we can't have Republicans and Democrats, on the basis of the overwhelming unpopularity of this bill, now say we can do better than this and change course.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, last week I came to the floor to talk about why we needed to pass the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. I am proud to say that the Senate has passed that bill. I expect the Senate to move to conference with the House this week, and I am confident that the final bill will be an even better bill than the bill passed by ei-

ther the House or Senate. More importantly, I am confident that it will get us on track for real tax relief for working families, and we will have this bill on the President's desk by the end of this year.

Last week when the bill passed, I said that it isn't just about changing the trajectory of our economy, it is about changing the future we hand to our kids and our grandkids. I really think that is what this bill will do.

There is a lot of talk in Washington about things that, frankly, will never turn out to be the facts—maybe they are the alternative facts—but one thing I think will happen is that working families will see, in one of their first paychecks next year, that this tax bill and these tax cuts really affect them. Whatever your paycheck is—reflected in what you start getting paid on January 1—in virtually every case, working families are going to have more take-home pay, and those numbers are pretty big.

A few weeks ago, I was at Patriot Machine in St. Charles, MO, and spoke to the employees who work there. The one thing they were concerned about was, what does this mean to me? What does this mean to my family? What is my take-home pay going to look like next year?

Mr. President, you and I said many times during this debate that the two things we were committed to were more take-home pay immediately by taking less out of it and even more take-home pay in the future by doing things that make our economy more competitive and make that paycheck bigger to start with.

Middle-class families, working-class families, and this country have lost a lot of ground with the slow growth we have had and the almost no growth in some years we have had in the past 10 years. We need better jobs, we need higher wages, and we need the government to let people take home more of what they earn.

This bill will allow them to do that. It will double the standard deduction. That is the deduction that is about \$6,000, and suddenly it is \$12,000, and for a couple, it is \$24,000. You start the tax process on something the size of a postcard by deducting that \$12,000 or that \$24,000 off what your W-2 forms say.

The Senate bill doubles the child tax credit, so you go from a thousand to another thousand, and you take that credit off your tax obligation.

Ninety percent of the people are going to fill out their taxes just that way. It is a form that you may not even have to turn over to sign the bottom and say, here is what I need to send back; here is what my tax obligation is.

Helping families has been and continues to be at the heart of what this whole debate should be about—at one end, more take-home pay, and at another end, more competition that allows us to have better jobs to start with.

I am absolutely convinced that the United States of America has more money on the sidelines right now than ever before in the history of the country and more money overseas because of our barriers to bringing money back, because our Tax Code didn't really anticipate international competition in the way that it has developed. It has more money that wants to come back than ever before. Those things are going to make a difference to the security that our country has and the access to the world marketplace. We couldn't be better located to compete all over the world than we are now.

Those things, along with what has happened in the effort to stop the regulatory overreach and the effort to put people on judicial benches who are going to rule based on what the law says—this tax bill on top of that, with capital coming in to our economy, is going to make a big difference. It will help mainstream businesses that want to reinvest, innovate, expand, create jobs. That is going to happen with this bill.

This bill came through the regular order process. It came through a committee that knew how to defend it. Every Senator had the opportunity to offer any amendment they wanted to offer to improve the final product.

American families have been stuck with a broken tax code for the last couple of decades, and that is going to end when the President signs this bill into law. We shouldn't have to wait any longer. We need to get this done this year, and we can.

FUNDING OUR MILITARY

Mr. President, I want to talk a little bit about another bill that we passed for the 56th consecutive time. There are a lot of things that Congress doesn't manage to get to every year, but the No. 1 priority of the Federal Government is to defend the country, and we show that in how we prioritize that authorization bill that gives those who serve in uniform the very best possible opportunity to serve us and serve us safely.

Senator MCCAIN would be the first to say that we have fallen behind in the last 8 years in what we need to be doing to maintain the advantage that we always want our troops to have, and, of course, he is right. He and Senator REED brought a bill to the floor, and that bill was passed into law. That will make a big difference in our obligation to provide for the common defense.

When we send men and women in uniform into harm's way, we never want that to be a fair fight. We want to give every possible advantage—a training advantage, an equipment advantage, an intelligence advantage—to the people we have asked to defend us.

In the next few weeks, as we appropriate the money to do what the authorization bill calls for, we are going to see a step-up in a way that has not happened in 8 years now and will happen, I am convinced, this year. This bill meets that responsibility.

I want to talk about a provision in that bill that I think particularly is reflective of the families who serve.

The strength of our military is in the families of our military. Somebody said to me not too long ago: We generally in the military recruit single young adults, and we retire men and women with families. Those families who become part of this process—soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, during the time they serve—provide the real backbone of our military strength. They have a million responsibilities when somebody in that family deploys. They look at the holidays we are now in the middle of different from the way most other families look at the holidays. The person who is there keeping the family together when somebody deploys often—more and more of the time now—has their own career. They are paying the bills. They are keeping the kids in school. They are facing, for the most part, the challenges that so many single parents face today, but these are single parents based on one of the two partners in that team being deployed somewhere else. They have to do these things while they are worried about the person they care so much about who is in harm's way. Then when that part of their life is over, they become a family supporting a veteran and whatever challenges that veteran has from their service.

So the bill we passed this year demonstrates our appreciation for our military families by including the Military Family Stability Act. This is a bill I introduced with Senator GILLIBRAND. That act provides for more flexibility for military families. It allows military families, for the first time, to meet one of the challenges they have when every 2 or 3 years they get a new assignment.

If you are trying to stay because your spouse needs to finish a job or your kids need to finish a school year, that is really not part of the process anymore, but it now can be. We have a provision in law now that allows families to meet the challenges of a child finishing or starting a school year when their family thinks they should or a spouse completing a job or starting a job based on their schedule rather than the military's schedule. This will help people stay in the military. It rewards the support that families give to the military. It allows the family to either move early or to remain at their current duty station for up to 6 months while their spouse begins a new assignment or while their spouse stays a little longer behind to complete that assignment. The spouse has to assume the responsibility for how they take care of themselves in that interim, but the money follows the family or stays with the family.

Right now, we have said to the family who wants to deal with that timing in a different way: Well, you can move early, but you have to pay to move early, or you can stay later, but you have to pay to stay later.

I have talked to so many people in the military, who have had a career in the military, who have stories to tell about the reasons they have left or the reasons they have almost left—because we just didn't have this reasonable ability for a work purpose or an education purpose or kids or spouses, either one—one woman we had in as a witness on this was finishing her Ph.D., and she needed to go a little earlier to get the semester started. Teaching as a graduate assistant, she needed to get there a little early to get the semester started. I think she was told at the time: Well, if you get a divorce from your husband, we will see that you relocate, but as long as you are married, you are going to have to go when he goes. And he didn't go at the time they were told he was going to go. All those things can be much easier dealt with now, and fortunately that is now part of our law.

I want to once again thank Chairman MCCAIN particularly and Samantha Clark on his staff, who worked so hard to finalize this provision.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN SAM BURKE

Mr. President, I also would like to recognize an individual who has been absolutely vital to my work on the National Defense Authorization Act, my work on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, and really the overall national security issues we deal with. Capt. Sam Burke, our military detailee, has been with us for the last year. I think this has been a benefit for him, but I know it has been a benefit for us. Sam is a proud Missourian. I have had a number of military detailees. He is the first Missourian we have had. He is a military detailee who has been absolutely instrumental in the Military Family Stability Act and has brought his experience to our office. Sam was instrumental in helping us finish that act.

Sam has been with us a year. His parents still live in Charleston, MO. His father, Jim Burke, is a fourth-generation farmer in Mississippi County. His mother, Jeanne, is a special education teacher who retired recently. Sam's brother, Evin, is carrying on the farming tradition and works with his father as a fifth-generation farmer.

As you would imagine, Sam was raised the right way, with strong Missouri values, but those Missouri values were, I am sure, definitely enhanced by the effect of the U.S. Naval Academy, where Sam went to school and graduated in 2010. He has deployed to Okinawa, Japan, been in support of multiple exercises throughout Southeast Asia, including Cambodia and Thailand. He has been a real resource for us. He has provided an important perspective on a number of foreign policy issues, ranging from Colombia, to Australia, to Russia, to the Balkans. He has been a great help on veterans issues and a tremendous asset to our office from day one.

I wish Captain Burke all the best in the next chapter of his military career.

I thank his fiancée, Sarah, and all his family and friends who support him for the sacrifices he has made serving the country and will continue to make. He is a first-class marine, a consummate professional, and an exceptional individual. We are going to miss him, but the country is going to continue to benefit from his service.

For Sam Burke and all those who serve, we are grateful. For the hard-working families in America, I think we are taking a right step with the tax act, just as we took the right step for military families with the Military Family Stability Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I enjoyed hearing the remarks of my fellow Senator from Missouri. I wish Sam well in his next deployment as a military liaison, and I thank him, as well, for serving our country.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

I come to the floor today to talk about tax reform and its benefits for middle-class families across this Nation. First I wish to highlight a program that is critical to these families, especially children; that is, the State Children's Health Insurance Program or, as it is referred to across the Nation, CHIP.

For more than 20 years—and really since the very beginning, when I first began serving in the West Virginia House of Delegates—CHIP was one of the first programs for which I became a strong champion. That is because I understood how critical it was then for families in West Virginia and how critical it is now.

When I was in the State legislature in the nineties, I served on the committee charged with creating and implementing the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

My voting record on this issue has been very clear. As a Member of the House of Representatives and now in the U.S. Senate, I have voted numerous times to fund and expand the CHIP program.

In my State of West Virginia—a smaller State—22,000 children are in the West Virginia CHIP program. That includes over 10,000 families. It is essential for these working families. It is essential that we recognize that some working families are unable to get insurance. Maybe they can get it for the person who is working, or the spouse, but a lot of times it is prohibitive to get insurance for the children at the same time. That is where CHIP comes in. It is preventive. It is for sickness and illness. It has really helped to improve the health of our young people in the State of West Virginia.

I was pleased that the bill passed out of the Finance Committee with strong bipartisan support, and I want to thank them for their efforts.

I have also spoken with Leader McCONNELL, and he is very favorable about the need to reach a solution for

this by year's end. Thousands of West Virginia families and children who rely on this program need to know that it is going to be there. We know we are running up against a funding deadline and expiration; we have already passed the expiration date.

So I look forward to working together with Members of the Senate on both sides of the aisle to reauthorize CHIP and the CHIP program as soon as possible. That will be a good Christmas present.

Mr. President, another issue I wish to speak about is a policy that I think will greatly benefit families in West Virginia and across this Nation; that is, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that we passed last week. I was very proud to vote for that—proud because I understand what this legislation can mean to the working families and so many people in our States. Today, I would like to explain exactly why I did vote for the bill.

First I wish to speak about the 83 percent of West Virginia families who file and don't use itemization. They file the short form. For those families—83 percent of those filers—that is double the standard deduction, double the child tax credit, which means significant tax savings.

I voted for the bill because it cuts taxes for folks in all income brackets. These are the people who are tired of Washington telling them how to spend their hard-working dollars or, even yet, Washington spending their hard-working dollars for them. Now we are telling these hard-working men and women that they can keep more of their own dollars to make those decisions. They can decide how to spend it. This is not a novel idea, but I think a very welcome increase in our tax dollars coming home. They will be welcomed by every individual family. So whether they are spending it on something that helps them today or tomorrow or whether they are saving for the future, let's let them make that decision. The point is that decision should be theirs.

I also voted for this bill because it helps American businesses of all sizes. It will empower our small businesses to grow and thrive. We had a small business that came to Capitol Hill last week from the Eastern Panhandle. Many of them had different reasons as to why this was going to help their small businesses. Yes, a tax cut means more money for them to invest in their own business and is a big positive for many of them. But one particular small business owner said: Do you know what I really want? I want more time with my family, more time to devote to my family and my church. So while I am an owner of a small business and devote all of my time to the small business, give me the time back that it takes me to comply with the U.S. Tax Code. Simplify this, and give me that time to devote to my family and my church.

I also feel that not just small businesses are going to grow, but it is also

going to help men and women have more job opportunities and higher wages. When it comes to our larger businesses and corporations, it makes them more competitive. Even in a small State like mine, 50 percent of our private workforce works in a larger—well, actually works for a small business; I think it is 30 percent who work for a larger corporation. But as that corporation becomes more competitive globally and our products become more competitive, the result of that is going to be higher wages, more sales, more jobs, more opportunities, more expansion into our State and not beyond our borders.

I voted for this bill last week because it gives our economy a big boost. I challenge anybody who is watching this closely or feels in their family or in their State budget or in their personal budget—who says that this country's economy is growing fast enough or is robust enough or everybody is benefiting. We know that is not the case. We see it in our towns.

I live in a relatively small area. Communities in my State of West Virginia and across this country have been forced to deal with the consequences of a struggling economy—shuttered stores, closing schools, falling real estate prices. This is what happens when everything contracts or stays so stagnant. It has really affected many aspects of our lives. I voted for this tax bill because I am just not OK with that.

I am not OK with standing still. If you are standing still, you are losing. We need to move this economy forward. We need to make it work for everybody. So, basically, I have had enough.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act represents a new direction for America—one that provides hope, prosperity, and a chance to really turn things around for a lot of people.

Of course, as with many legislative accomplishments of this magnitude, concerns have been raised from some of those who feel differently. That is what a conference committee is about. We hear concerns. We have heard them from our constituents, and I am sure the House has heard them from their constituents. That is what the conference committee is all about. I have been raising the ones that I have heard in West Virginia to my friends who are going to be a part of the conference process.

So, as I have said many times, this is a significant moment for our country. I believe we haven't done major tax reform in 31 years. It is well past time. It will provide a significant opportunity, and it requires big and bold action. We do a lot of little things around here that help people, and those are great. But it is rare that we can do something big and bold that is going to help so many people in this country.

Let me go back to my statistics. Eighty-three percent of the people in West Virginia file without itemization.

They are going to be getting a doubling of the standard deduction, a doubling of the child tax credit—a tax cut, tax relief. Keep the money; make the decisions in your own family. It is predicted because of the simplification factor that that number of 83 percent will actually rise in many States, mine included.

I think this big and bold action we are about to embark on is something we can look at with great pride. I ask my colleagues on both sides to sincerely look at this and join us in our efforts to provide tax relief, tax reform, tax cuts, and an economic boost to our country—which we so desperately need.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to follow my esteemed colleague from West Virginia. I wish to join her in her comments and emphasize what she emphasized so well—that this really is all about hard-working taxpayers across this country, not just in terms of making sure they keep more of their hard-earned dollars after taxes but making sure that their wages and income go up. Over the last decade, we have seen real stagnation in terms of wages and income. So as we work on this tax package, we want to make sure that across all income groups, we see real tax relief.

The other aspect of this bill is that it is pro-growth. It is about stimulating investment across this country by entrepreneurs, by innovators, by small companies—and, with big companies, bringing money from overseas back home to America, to create jobs in America. As we create those jobs, that competition for labor pushes wages and salaries higher. So it really is a two-for. It is about real tax relief for hard-working Americans, and it is about making sure that their wages and income go up.

These are just some of the estimates that have been put forward so far as to the impact that this tax relief package will have. According to the Council of Economic Advisers, there will be \$4,000 in higher wages. So that is what I am talking about. It is not just tax relief; it is about higher wages. For an average family of four—median income, average family of four—there will be a savings of \$2,200 in taxes. That is from the nonpartisan Tax Foundation.

So it is the combination of both of those things: higher wages, lower taxes.

It comes from creating more jobs. The estimate is, again from the Council of Economic Advisers, almost 1 million more jobs. It is those jobs that not only create opportunity, but that competition for workers is what pushes those wages higher.

Also, a 3.7-percent larger economy—that larger economy is a very important consideration, as well, because by growing the base, even with lower taxes, you generate more revenue,

more revenue for the government to invest in our priorities and to reduce the debt and deficit over time. Of course, we have to find savings where we can, but at the same time we have to have economic growth to address debt and the deficit, and that is exactly what we create, not just through tax relief but the combination of tax relief and the regulatory relief that we have done through the course of this year. It is that regulatory relief and that tax relief that really empower our small businesses across the country, which are really the backbone of our economy. We are talking farmers, ranchers, small businesses of all kinds. We are talking entrepreneurs. We are talking innovators. We are talking about the job creators in this country, creating more jobs and opportunity, and the wage earners and the workers benefiting through lower taxes and higher wages.

This next chart shows that the tax relief really comes across all income groups. That is something that obviously has been discussed, and that is what we are doing here. We are making sure that across every single income group, there is a tax cut. So the effort is to focus on lower income, middle-income workers, but to make sure that there is tax relief across all groups.

The way we focus on lower income workers is by increasing the standard deduction. We more than double the standard deduction from about \$6,000 today to \$12,000 for an individual. So for a married couple, that is \$24,000. For a single individual who has dependents whom he or she is taking care of, whether those are children or maybe a parent or a relative, it is \$18,000 for an individual.

Now, with that higher standard deduction, we will find that 9 out of 10 people will not itemize. They will not itemize. That means their tax return will be one page. They can complete it on one page. It is simple, easy, and then they can send it in.

That is 9 out of 10 filers with this new higher standard deduction. It not only makes sure we provide relief to low- and middle-income taxpayers, but it makes it much simpler to fill out that tax return.

At the same time, we keep other deductions and exemptions that are very important to people. For example, the child tax credit is doubled. The child tax credit goes from \$1,000 to \$2,000. We are doubling the child tax credit. To help with college, we make sure people can open a 529 savings account so they can save money for college and for the education of their young people.

Businesses will be encouraged to provide paid family and medical leave by receiving a tax credit to partially offset the pay of an employee who is caring for a child or a family member.

Other important deductions that we continue—the mortgage interest deduction. That is very important. We continue the deductibility of the mortgage interest on your home. We continue

that very important and very popular tax deduction. We continue the deductibility of charitable contributions. For charitable organizations that need those contributions to continue to fund their important activities, we continue that tax deductibility. We continue the child and dependent tax care credit, the adoption tax credit, the earned-income tax credit to help families with children, working families with children. We continue the 401(k) retirement deduction. That was one that had been discussed, and there was concern expressed that that might be reduced, and we didn't. We continue the deductibility of medical expenses. For example, seniors or others who may have a lot of medical expenses can continue to deduct the cost of those medical expenses.

In all these cases, we have worked very hard to make it simpler and to make sure that for low- and middle-income workers, we are providing that tax relief.

This next chart goes to what we call passthroughs. As I mentioned earlier, the heart and soul of our economy are small businesses. We want to make sure that we are providing tax relief for small businesses across this country so that they can invest, create more jobs, and hire more workers.

For larger businesses or businesses that are multinational, what we are doing is making our Tax Code competitive. What that does is that creates an incentive for the larger companies to bring capital back home that is currently overseas, invest it in America, and create jobs in America. That is called repatriation.

Leading economists estimate that there is more than \$2.5 trillion that U.S. corporations have overseas that they would bring back home, bring back to America with this tax relief, and invest in America. That is all about them building plants at home, creating jobs at home, creating American jobs, rather than investing somewhere else in the world. That not only creates jobs and more opportunity—again, that push for higher wages and income—it also brings back revenue that helps pay for this tax cut for the individuals and for smaller companies as well. When they come back and invest here, that generates tax revenue in America rather than somewhere else, in some other country.

We want the larger multinationals to come back and invest in America. For our smaller companies, our passthroughs, we want to make sure they have the ability, through regulatory relief and tax relief, to expand and grow their businesses. That is what you see here.

With the work we have done for small businesses across every income group, small businesses are getting a tax break. The reason it is done across income groups is that passthroughs are taxed at the individual level. So whether it is a sub S corporation or a partnership or a limited liability partnership or a limited liability corporation,

the income earned by those small businesses is passed through to the owners and the investors, and then it is taxed at that individual level. So what we show is, across the board, those small businesses are keeping more of their money so they can put it in plant and equipment rather than send it to the Federal Government.

I am going to go through some of the things that we have either kept or added for small businesses, particularly some, for example, in the ag area, which is very important to my State, but things that we have kept that really help all small businesses. They include, first, lowering the rate. We start by lowering the rate. Across every income group, we lower that tax rate.

The House plan has four different tax rates. We have seven different tax rates, which compares to the seven that we have right now, but we drop them all. We reduce each one of those rates. That is important to understand because that is the objective. We want to make sure that tax relief is provided across the board.

There has been some discussion about, well, does that create more complexity in terms of having seven different tax rates the way we do today? Really, it doesn't. The complexity in determining what you have to pay in taxes comes from calculating your taxable income. That is what we have greatly simplified, as I described earlier. By keeping the seven tax rates, we make sure we provide an income break across every different income group, every different business group. Again, this is about providing tax relief. It starts with lowering, obviously, those rates for businesses.

We also provide other very important incentives for investment. Remember, this is about pro-growth investment to grow the economy and increase wages. One of those is expensing. That is very important. When a business puts out cash to invest in plant and equipment, they are out those dollars. If they can't deduct that expense up front, it is a lot harder for them to make that expenditure.

For the first 5 years, we provide full expensing. That is incredibly important. Whether it is a farm in my State of North Dakota or a small business in my colleague's State of North Carolina, if they can write off that expense—that plant, cattle, equipment, whether it is new farm machinery or any kind of business equipment—then they are able to make that investment and grow their business.

We not only provide that full expensing for the first 5 years—with a step-down over the next 4—on a permanent basis, we keep section 179 expensing, which is a very popular investment incentive for small business. That ensures that small businesses can expense up to \$1 million a year in plant and equipment, and it doesn't start phasing out until they get over \$2.5 million in expenditures. On a permanent ongoing basis, that provides incredible cer-

tainty for the millions of small businesses across this country to keep investing—buying new plants, new equipment, growing their business—and that is the absolute backbone of our economy and job creation.

Those are the kinds of provisions that make such a huge difference for our companies and that we have included in this tax relief package.

Where are we in the process? We have moved our bill through the Senate. The House has moved their bill through the House. Now we are headed for conference. We need to continue to work to get the best possible product and pass it on the floor, and our objective is to get that done before the end of the year.

This process is important. I am going to mention a couple of things in closing here that show the importance of this process—moving it through the Senate, moving it through the House, and working in conference committee to get the very best product we can for the American people.

For example, as we have moved this package through Senate, one of the things we added that I think is incredibly important is that you can deduct up to \$10,000 in property tax. On your homestead, if you have property taxes up to \$10,000, we have now included that in the Senate package. That is a very popular deduction that is important to many people. We added it in the Senate. The House has it. This is going to come out of conference and include that property tax deduction. I think it is very important and very helpful to getting a good tax relief package.

Another one that I worked on directly is making sure that car dealers and implement dealers—these are small businesses across the country—can continue to deduct the interest on their floor plan. So for their cars on the lot, the inventory that you go and look at when you buy a car, or, if they are in the ag business, the tractors and the equipment they have—they can deduct that interest. That is incredibly important for them to be able to do business. That has been added as we have advanced this package.

Another provision is IC-DISC. It sounds complicated, but it is simply an incentive for companies that will export. Big companies do a pretty good job of exporting, and they have a lot of ways to do it, but for small companies, when they are making product in our country and are trying to send it to Australia or somewhere else, that is a tough proposition. We give them help through that IC-DISC program. Again, that is another example of how we targeted some of these tax deductions to small businesses or kept some of these programs that really help small businesses and, again, make this package as pro-growth as we possibly can.

At the end of the day, it is about keeping more of your hard-earned dollars after taxes, but it is also about growing this economy. Growing this economy is the rising tide that lifts all

boats. That is what we are about. We can sit here and not do something like that and say: OK, business as usual. That is not what the American people want. The American people sent us here to make changes, real changes that are going to help us grow our economy, create more jobs, and create more opportunity; that are going to do more for border security; that are going to strengthen our military and strengthen law enforcement, the rule of law in this country; that are going to improve our healthcare. So these are the kinds of things we have to get done. These are the kinds of things the American people have sent us here and said: Hey, we need to get going on these things. That is exactly what we are doing.

I certainly call on all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join together and get this done, get this tax relief done for the American people, and get it done before the year end.

With that, I will defer to my esteemed colleague from North Carolina.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, the tax cuts we passed last week—whether they are in North Carolina or North Dakota, working families are going to benefit from them. Over the course of the next days and weeks that we negotiate with the House on a final package that will go to the President, we are going to hear all kinds of interesting claims made on the Senate floor.

I was presiding, Mr. President, before you relieved me from the Chair, and I heard one of the speeches we are going to hear several times—we passed this tax bill so that we can actually now cut support for people who need the government safety net. That sounds absurd. It sounds absurd on several levels. No. 1, it is not a very kind thing to do. No. 2, it is not a very wise thing to do.

Let me put in another claim. I can try to put them together. They are saying that we are passing a tax increase on working families in America. What they forget is the dot, dot, dot—maybe 7 or 8 years from now if we decide to raise taxes. Highly unlikely. But in the here and now and next year, after this tax bill gets passed, working families are going to get a tax cut.

How on Earth can you look at a standard deduction doubling—we are going from \$6,000 to \$12,000 per individual and \$24,000 per family. What does the standard deduction mean? Some people may not understand it. It is pretty simple. That standard deduction means that money isn't going to get taxed. So we are increasing the number of people who will not pay taxes.

One of the brackets we haven't talked about, and I think we should, is the number of people who go to a zero tax bracket under the Senate plan and, to a large extent, under the House plan. Then we talk about the child tax

credit. Now let's talk about a working mother, a single mom with a child. The first \$12,000 isn't going to be taxed, and then another \$2,000 per child would not be taxed before you would even be subject to tax. That is the reality of this plan. It is not an increase in taxes.

Those who oppose this plan are trying to talk about a hypothetical possibility 7 or 8 years from now that I don't believe is going to happen. One of the reasons why I believe it is highly unlikely to happen is because we are going to have economic growth from this tax plan.

The way you get economic growth—you also have to recognize that in the United States, we have the highest corporate tax rate in the world. When people are trying to set up shop today, they don't have to necessarily set up shop in the United States to do business in the United States; they go to the lowest cost jurisdiction. I don't fault a business for doing that. When I am confronted with maybe the desire to set up a business in, say, North Carolina or somewhere else in the United States, if it is going to cost me substantially more, of course I am going to make the business decision to go where I have the most resources necessary to produce the product or service that I want to provide.

By cutting corporate taxes and by cutting what we call the passthrough tax, which is handling all businesses, whether they are a C corporation or a passthrough entity—I won't get into the details, but they are the two different ways businesses set up to pay their taxes. By lowering that tax burden on businesses, we are going to see economic growth.

After the tax cuts are put into place, we are immediately going to see a reduction in the tax burden for working families. That is going to be from the increases in deductions and the lowering of the tax burden. Over time, we are going to see additional money going into the pockets of working families, because I firmly believe that through economic activity, we are going to see an upward increase in wages. We are going to see median incomes go up. We are going to see people lifted out of poverty. The reason I believe that is because we have done it in North Carolina. We were roundly criticized—the same way people did on this floor—when I was serving in the State legislature, and we delivered on a promise we made if we got a majority in the State of North Carolina. We went on to decrease the tax burden on businesses and decrease the tax burden on individuals, and we have seen our income to the State go up—more money, more resources in the State to do good things for people in North Carolina. One of the good things we do is continue to lower the tax burden because our economy is growing at rates it has not seen in decades in North Carolina. That is what is going to happen in the United States.

It also provides us with resources to help those who truly need help. The

other argument that suddenly we are going to pay for this tax cut by harming people on Medicare and Medicaid is absurd. All of us here have mothers and fathers, aunts and uncles, maybe brothers and sisters who rely on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security as their primary source of income. How anybody can come to this floor and say that I am going to tell my 85-year-old mother—Mom, I am sorry if you are watching this because I know you hate it when I mention your age—who relies on Medicare and relies on Social Security that we are going to come to this Chamber and betray that trust and break that promise that we made to them is absurd.

Are we talking about things we can do so I can make a promise to these pages when they get old someday—I know it is hard for you to imagine you are going to get old someday, but you will. What we are talking about is making sure that we can fulfill that promise for the generations who have not yet relied on Medicare and Social Security. If we don't act, we are going to harm the very people whom other people in this Chamber profess to be helping.

We have a fiscal crisis out there that we have to deal with, but it has no connection to what we are trying to do with tax reform. People say we passed the tax reform bill so that we can harm other people and pay for the tax cuts through cuts to our entitlement programs or safety net programs. It is not happening. We justified this tax package based on what we believe to be economic growth. This tax bill will be funded through economic growth. This tax bill will be funded by more people making higher wages, more businesses being successful and hiring other people, and the United States being more competitive on the global stage. That is how we pay for this tax package.

Again, I speak from a bit of experience because we did tax reform over the last 5 years in North Carolina. It wasn't perfect. That is why we came back and made some changes after we realized there were some unintended consequences, which is the last thing I will talk about.

We are now going into what they call conference. Today, what you are observing is a period of time that we have to pass through in the Chamber before we can vote to go to conference. When we go to conference, it means that the House and the Senate will get together and we will try to work out our differences. One of the things we have to do is work out some things that we have identified that may be unintended consequences of the bill, to make sure that we minimize any negative impact that wasn't thought through until we can begin to work through some of the models. That is going to happen. I think the conferencing process will produce a better bill.

But more than anything else, we need to recognize that it is time to deliver on a promise we made to the

American people. We need to be the Congress that, for the first time in over 30 years, actually delivers on the promise of reducing the tax burden and getting the economy back on track—the way it hasn't been for quite some time.

That is why I am proud to have voted for the tax plan. That is why I will be proud to vote for the plan that goes to the President's desk. That is why I will be proud to stand in this Chamber, just a couple of years from now, and demonstrate that the courage we are displaying by moving forward with this bill is going to produce a result for the American people that benefits every single person all across the socioeconomic spectrum.

I appreciate the opportunity to tell the American people again: Don't necessarily believe everything that is going to be said in this Chamber in the next couple of days or couple of weeks. American people, don't be afraid when you hear that one or the other party is working hard so we can harm people who rely on our safety net. Don't believe it. It is not true. Don't believe that we have decided that it was a great political strategy to raise taxes 7 years from now. Don't believe that it is an immediate tax increase, because that is empirically untrue.

Believe that we are doing everything we can to fulfill our promise, and believe that, if we do this, everybody in the United States is going to benefit. We are going to be a stronger nation. We are going to be a more competitive Nation, and we are going to have a point in time in Congress when we actually came here and did what we said we were going to do.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 16 years ago I introduced the DREAM Act. The idea behind the legislation was that if you were brought here to America as a child by your parents, you are undocumented, you grew up in this country, you don't have a serious criminal record, and you have completed school, you deserve a chance to earn your way into legal status into America. You had nothing to say about the decision of your family to come here. You have grown up in this country. If you want to be a part of our future, you should be given a chance. It was a pretty basic idea. It has been debated for a long time.

President Barack Obama stepped up and said: Since we haven't passed that law, I will create something called DACA, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

Under that Executive order, the people I just described can be protected

from being deported for 2 years at a time. They have to go through a criminal background check, they have to pay a \$500 fee, and they get the temporary ability to live in the United States without fear of being deported and to work in this country.

Well, 780,000 young people came forward and signed up and went on with their lives—going to school, getting jobs, becoming part of America. DACA-eligible people joined our military. They weren't American citizens, but 900 of them joined our military, willing to sacrifice their lives in defense of a country which doesn't legally recognize them as lawful immigrants. Some 20,000 of them became teachers in schools all across the United States. Most of them are students, who are working because they can't qualify for Federal assistance to go to school, and there are some amazing stories.

So there they were kind of in limbo—half here, half not here—uncertain about their future, but with the protection of that Executive order. President Trump came in and said: It is over. As of September 5, he ended this DACA protection—saying, prospectively, that the final day for it is March 5, 2018—for 780,000 people. The President then said to Congress: Now, do something. Pass a law. Take care of these people.

Well, 3 months have passed and we have done nothing—nothing. In fact, we have done little or nothing on the floor of the Senate for the last several months. We haven't done this, and it is still unresolved as to whether or not they are going to have a chance to be a part of America's future or for young people like them to have a similar chance—unresolved.

We have to do something about that and we have to do it soon because every day 120 of these young people lose their protection under DACA. That is almost 1,000 a week. So far, 10,000 of them have fallen out of protection under DACA.

What does it mean under practical terms? First, it is the fear of being deported. You are no longer protected. You are undocumented in America. You can be deported: A knock on the door, and you are gone.

Do these young people know that? Of course they do. I see them every weekend. I sit down with them. They are emotionally distraught over the possibility of their lives ending as they know it—being deported to countries they have never been to before, facing languages they don't know.

Think about that possibility. You are 18 or 19 years old, and now you are being deported back to Bolivia, where you have never been. You may not speak Spanish very well, but now you are going to be tossed back into Bolivia where you came from.

So now the question is this: What will we do about this? Will Congress act or wait?

Some voices on the floor of the Senate have said: Well, let's try to get around to this next year. Well, you cer-

tainly can't look at the floor of the Senate today, or virtually any day, and say we are so swamped with work we just can't take this up. Of course we can, and we should.

I want to salute my Republican colleagues, a number of whom have stepped up and said: Let's sit down and work this out once and for all. These young people deserve a chance. Let's give them that chance. Their stories are nothing short of inspiring.

This is Yuriana Aguilar. Yuriana Aguilar was 5 years old when her family brought her here from Mexico. She grew up near Fresno, CA, where she was quite a good student. She was in the top 1 percent of her high school class and graduated as valedictorian. She was involved in a lot of activities, was a member of the high school Junior ROTC Program, volunteered at retirement homes, and, with a group called Tree Fresno, planted trees in her community.

She first learned about her immigration status when she was a senior in high school. She thought she was OK. She learned she was wrong. She tried to apply for financial aid, and they said: You are not documented. You are not legally in America. She came here at the age of 5, and she learned about it much later in life.

She didn't give up. She just said: This can't be the end of my story. She was accepted at the University of California, Merced. She majored in biological science, made the dean's list every semester, and was on the chancellor's honor list.

She conducted research in marine biology, as well as in atherosclerosis. Excuse me, Yuriana, if I messed that up; I am a liberal arts lawyer. It looks like that. It is the question of the buildup of fat, cholesterol, and other substances in arteries. She continued her community service, volunteered for the Boys and Girls Club, for a local hospital, and with the church's Sunday school program.

After she graduated, she couldn't pursue her dream of becoming a scientist because she was undocumented, but she didn't give up. She said: This can't be it. So she volunteered at a research lab, where she wasn't going to get paid but where she was able to continue studying and learning.

Then, President Obama created DACA, the Executive order I referred to, in 2012. Because of that, she was allowed to apply to the University of California, Merced, for the Ph.D. program in quantitative and systems biology. Her research focused on sudden cardiac death, the leading cause of natural death in the United States.

Last year, Yuriana became the first undocumented person at the University of California, Merced, to receive a Ph.D. Listen to what the dean of the School of Natural Sciences said:

Yuriana's work is stunning, and it will have significant impact on our knowledge of the workings of the heart at the cellular level. The potential benefit of her research in cardiac care is enormous.

She is now a postdoctoral fellow and instructor at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, a city I am honored to represent. I was just with her last week. This is a picture of her in her lab.

She continues her research on heart health, thanks to DACA, but it is coming to an end. President Trump has ended the program that allows her to stay and study in the United States of America.

She is not going to give up, she says. She wants to bring her medical knowledge and expertise back to the Central Valley in California, where she grew up. During her childhood, she saw how people's financial situations often determined their healthcare. She wants to establish a research-based hospital to make sure that the same top quality healthcare is available even for lower income families.

She sent me a letter. She told me about the day that DACA was announced. She was in a research lab doing what she loves to do. She had a human heart in her hand that was beating with an artificial valve outside the body, and when she saw the news, she cried. She said: "I'm finally out of the shadows."

So can she wait? Should she leave? Those are the basic questions we face. Should we do something now? Should we roll up our sleeves, Democrats and Republicans, and solve this problem? Should there be any doubt that we want Yuriana to stay in the United States and continue this amazing research?

Of course, we do. Here we are, trying to attract foreigners to come study in the United States on the mere chance that they will turn out to be as productive as this young lady with her Ph.D. is going to be. She made it through American schools. She beat the odds when it came to college and graduate degrees, without her having the help of government loans. She is a pretty determined young woman. Her determination is not only going to mean that she has an opportunity for a great life; it is an opportunity to make the lives of so many of us better.

This is a simple issue of justice and fairness. That is what is at the heart of it. People come to the floor and want to make this about so many other issues in the immigration system. Can I tell you this? Our immigration system is a mess. It is broken down. It has so many problems. I know. I sat for 6 months and drew up a comprehensive immigration bill with my fellow Republican and Democratic colleagues. We passed it in the Senate, and the House wouldn't even consider it. Our immigration system is broken.

Please do not put on Yuriana's shoulders the responsibility of fixing every part of our immigration system. Give her the chance that she needs to make America a better nation. Give her the justice that she deserves through her hard work and determination. That is what this comes down to. If we make

the Dream Act the law of the land, young people like Yuriana can prove that they can work their way into legal status, work their way into citizenship, and become valuable parts of America's future.

Please, to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, let's roll up our sleeves and do what we were sent to do—solve problems, pass laws, and make sure that we set the stage for America to be a better nation in years to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, a little bit later this afternoon, I am going to be offering a motion to instruct conferees in connection with the tax bill that may be one of the most simple, straightforward motions ever offered in this body.

I will read it in its entirety: We move that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill, H.R. 1, be instructed to insist that the final conference report not increase the Federal budget deficit for the period of the fiscal years 2018 through 2027.

It could not be more straightforward: Don't increase the budget deficit. Why? This chart basically tells the story.

We are headed, literally, into uncharted territory with regard to our national debt. It is a threat to this country. It is a threat to our national security. It is a threat to every man, woman, and, especially, to every child, because they are the people who are going to have to pay this debt.

This is the history of our debt, in constant dollars, going all the way back to the Revolutionary War, and it tells a very powerful story.

At the very beginning of our country, in 1790, we incurred a big piece of debt to pay for the Revolutionary War. They paid it off. There was another mountain of debt to pay for the Civil War. It was paid off. The debt goes up again to pay for World War I, and it was paid off. Then it goes up for the Great Depression and then to a peak in World War II.

What happened after World War II?

As we all know, World War II was fought—our country was defended, and victory was achieved—by something that has been called the “greatest generation,” and the “greatest generation” paid its bills. It paid off the debt from World War II. It went down in the seventies and then back up again in the eighties. Here is where we are today. The bill that was passed in the dead of night, early on Saturday morning, adds \$1.5 trillion to that debt—\$1.5 trillion.

We are adding to the debt at a time of low unemployment, enormous growth in the stock market, and a relatively strong economy. It is not perfect, by any means, but compared to where we were 5 or 6 years ago, we are in positive territory on the economy. That is when you should pay down debt, not add to it unnecessarily.

If we were in a crisis, if we were in a recession, if we were in a conflict that required immediate mobilization, that is when you would want to add to the debt. That is what you borrow for. We are borrowing to pay park rangers' salaries, and we are borrowing to pay for the ordinary operation of government. Now we are borrowing to give major tax cuts during a time of relatively positive economic growth. I know that it is not as high as it should be and as high as we want it to be, but this bill we passed, which is going to add to the debt, is not going to do much of anything to assist us with growth.

The analysis of the Joint Committee on Taxation is that it will add eight-tenths of 1 percent to GDP growth in 10 years. That is almost immeasurable. It doesn't come close, by the way, for paying for itself. It doesn't come close—maybe 15 or 20 percent. By the way, that is an interesting number because all of the studies that I have seen about tax cuts and their effects on economic growth indicate that they do about 20 percent of their cost. The other 80 percent is eaten by our kids.

It is unethical what we are doing. If 5-year-olds knew what we were doing and could vote, we would all be out of a job because they are the ones who are going to have to pay this bill. You see this mountain climbing, and it doesn't take a lot of imagination to see that we are going to be higher than at World War II in a matter of a few years, added to by this bill that we just passed the other night. It is unconscionable. It is unnecessary.

If, indeed, we were going to expand the economy by 3 or 4 percent a year and everybody were to say that that was what we were going for, then, maybe—OK?—3 percent a year times 10 is 30 percent growth. We are talking about eight-tenths of 1 percent over 10 years—not per year, over 10 years. My motion is very, very simple: Don't come back with a bill that adds to the deficit.

There are lots of ways that we can do tax reform. There are lots of ways that we can cut corporate taxes and make ourselves more competitive. We can do offshore tax cuts. There is a lot of ability to do this without hammering the deficit. In fact, I understand that, as of this morning, we improved the finances of this bill by mistake to the tune of \$389 billion—a mistake in the bill that we passed—because we did it so fast that nobody knew what was in it. I have a new rule. The faster a bill goes through the Congress, the worse it is, and I think that is what we have seen in this case.

We can deal with tax reform. We can increase our competitiveness. We can get our taxes aligned, particularly our business taxes, with the rest of the world without loading this debt onto our children. A tax cut, when all you are doing is borrowing to fill the hole, is not a cut. It is a shift of the tax from you to your kids.

You are on your deathbed. You are lying there, and you say to your chil-

dren: Come on over. I will give you my last words.

They go over, and they are listening. They want wisdom.

What you say is this: Here is the credit card. We had a great trip to Acapulco. You can pay for it.

That is not responsible. Nobody would do that. Yet that is exactly what we are doing in this bill. It is wrong, and it is not necessary.

I think one of the questions that we are going to have to ask and answer and that we are going to see—is it going to play out—is what companies are going to do with this newfound income when the taxes are cut dramatically from 35 percent to 20 percent. Is that money going to go into new plants and equipment? Is it going to go into wages? Is it going to increase people's wages and productivity? Is it going to go into stock buybacks, which raise the values of the stocks? That is great for the owners, but it doesn't do a thing for the workers, and it doesn't do much for the U.S. economy.

Again, my motion could not be more straightforward and simple: Work on the tax bill in conference, but I think that you are going to have a hard time making a good bill out of it. Whatever you do, come back with something that is deficit-neutral. By the way, that is where this discussion started.

Last January, the leadership in both Houses and in both parties was talking about deficit-neutral tax reform. Somewhere along the way, it became: Let's break the bank; let's add new debt for our kids; let's create a situation in which we are not going to have any slack when we need it. No business would run this way, and it is wrong for us to try to run the country this way.

I am going to make this motion. Many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been talking to me and to the country for years about the dangers of the deficit. Suddenly, I predict, if this bill becomes law, at about the time the ink is dry, they are going to say: Oh, my Lord. We have a deficit. Look at that. I didn't know that. We are going to have to cut spending. We are going to have to cut Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security because we have this huge deficit.

We don't have to add to it and make it worse in this tax bill.

That is what is really bothering me, because the very people who have been talking to me and to whom I have been listening for 20 years about how serious the deficit is, I was fool enough to believe. I think it is a serious problem, and I think we need to address it, but this is the opposite of addressing it. We are making it worse at the very time that we should be talking about paying down the debt, not adding to it.

We can do better. The American people expect more of us. We can do better, and I believe and deeply hope that we will come to our senses and do better in connection with this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I want to express strong support for Senator KING's motion and for the argument that he is making about the debt. I couldn't agree more.

I also rise to speak on my motion to instruct, which I will be offering in just a few moments, to direct the conference committee for this bill to add a provision that would return the corporate tax rate to its current levels if wages do not increase by at least \$4,000. That is the promise that has been made over and over to working men and women—that these cuts that are being made and changes that are being made will result in at least \$4,000 in increased wages, in people's pockets. I think they have the right to know that the majority means that when they say it and to make sure that that is written into the final bill.

The reason for this motion is very clear. As I indicated, Republicans have promised American families an increase in incomes of \$4,000, \$7,000, even \$9,000. I think that is great, and I would strongly support that. There is no evidence that this approach will do that, and, so far, there has not been a willingness to put language in to guarantee that that is what will happen for middle-class working men and women.

President Trump has called this bill, in his words, a "great, big, beautiful Christmas present" for the American people. I would argue that, in reality, at this point, it is a great, big, beautiful Christmas present for the wealthiest 1 percent. As for middle-class families, not so much—it is more like a lump of coal.

It keeps a loophole that let's corporations write off their expenses when they ship jobs overseas, but if you move from one end of the country to Michigan for a great new job, you cannot write off your moving expenses. Big businesses can keep deducting their State and local taxes, but, sorry, middle-class families: You can only deduct a small portion of your State and local taxes. When they talk about making it simpler and closing loopholes, none of that is in this bill. In fact, oil companies will enjoy a brand new \$4 billion offshore tax loophole. Meanwhile, 87 million American households that earn less than \$200,000 a year will get a tax increase. I will say that again: 87 million American households that earn less than \$200,000 will get a tax increase. Health insurance premiums would go up 10 percent and keep going up, while 13 million fewer people will have health insurance coverage. If that is what is considered a great big beautiful Christmas present, I would imagine Michigan families would say: No, I will keep the gift receipt and take it back to the store.

Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said: "On the personal side, middle-income families are getting cuts and rich people are getting very little cuts."

Unfortunately, when added all up, he was very tricky. He said on the personal tax side, but when adding it all

up together, all of these proposals together mean that folks like Secretary Mnuchin and others in the Cabinet in their income brackets will be the real winners.

White House Budget Director Mick Mulvaney is making promises too. He said: "The White House, the President, is not going to sign a bill that raises taxes on the middle class, period."

I assume, then, that means he will not sign this bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 minute more.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. STABENOW. Thank you.

The White House also promised the average American family would get a \$4,000 raise in the tax plan. That is why I am here. What I am saying to the folks in Michigan is, the proof is in your paycheck.

That is what this motion is all about. If my Republican colleagues are serious about putting more money in the pockets of the middle class, which I want to do, I urge them to support this motion. We need to make sure that if folks are going to be promised at least \$4,000 more in their wages, they get it.

This motion would say, these new tax cuts only go forward if people get their \$4,000. The proof is in their paycheck. That is what this motion is about, and if my colleagues really believe what they are saying and what the President has said, they will support this motion to make sure that guarantee is there for middle-class families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The question is on agreeing to the compound motion.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 306 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Barrasso	Cornyn	Gardner
Blunt	Cotton	Graham
Boozman	Crapo	Grassley
Burr	Cruz	Hatch
Capito	Daines	Heller
Cassidy	Enzi	Hoeven
Cochran	Ernst	Inhofe
Collins	Fischer	Isakson
Corker	Flake	Johnson

Kennedy	Perdue	Shelby
Lankford	Portman	Strange
Lee	Risch	Sullivan
McCain	Roberts	Thune
McConnell	Rounds	Tillis
Moran	Rubio	Toomey
Murkowski	Sasse	Wicker
Paul	Scott	Young

NAYS—47

Baldwin	Harris	Nelson
Bennet	Hassan	Peters
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Booker	Heitkamp	Sanders
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Udall
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murray	

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander Franken

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I have a motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maine [Mr. KING] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 1 be instructed to insist that the final conference report not increase the Federal budget deficit for the period of fiscal years 2018 through 2027.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on the motion.

The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, this could not be a more simple motion. It simply says to the conferees to bring us back a tax bill that is deficit-neutral. It can be done. It should be done.

We are in a period now where we have no business adding to the Federal deficit. We know this bill will add at least \$1 trillion to the deficit—probably more—if the middle-class tax cuts are extended, as everyone expects they will be. This is a burden we are placing on our children and our grandchildren. We are giving ourselves a tax cut and letting them pay for it. I believe that is wrong. It is bad policy.

We are also utilizing whatever slack we have, as far as debt goes, now, when we are in relatively good times, and we will not have it available when we have a problem, such as a recession or some kind of—heaven forbid—attack on our country.

The motion is very simple. This is a time when we should be paying down debt and not adding to it. If our children—if our 5-year-olds—knew what we were doing in this bill and could vote, we would be out of a job.

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

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask for our colleagues to vote no on the motion to instruct, unless you happen to believe that 2 percent and below growth is the new normal for the American economy, and we have nowhere to go but down as a country; that people don't react to incentives to keep more of what they earn and businesses invest more in jobs and in pay that people can take home and spend to enhance their standard of living; and unless you are satisfied with the fact that companies are incentivized to keep earnings abroad and not bring them back home and invest in pay and jobs here in America. If you believe there is no better, brighter future for the American people, yes, vote for the King motion to instruct.

If you believe we can and will do better under this bill, vote no.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "nay."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 307 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Harris	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hassan	Peters
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Heitkamp	Sanders
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Udall
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—50

Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rubio
Cochran	Inhofe	Sasse
Collins	Isakson	Scott
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Kennedy	Strange
Crapo	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Daines	McCain	Tillis
Enzi	McConnell	Toomey
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Young
Flake	Paul	

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander Franken

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Michigan.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I have a motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Ms. STABENOW] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 1 be instructed to insist that the final conference report includes a provision causing the corporate tax rate to revert to 35 percent in the event that real average household wages do not increase by at least \$4,000 by 2020 as a result of the enactment of the bill.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am making a motion to instruct the conferees with language at the desk to put in place a guarantee that middle-class families will receive the raises my Republican colleagues are promising them. In other words, for people watching all of this, the proof is in your paycheck.

This motion would direct the conference committee for this bill to add a provision that would return the corporate tax rate to its current rate if wages do not increase by at least \$4,000. The President has said they will. Our Republican colleagues—we saw posters all last week saying at least \$4,000; in fact, we have heard as much as \$9,000.

This is important for families because corporate profits are already at record highs and wages are at record lows. If people are really going to get \$4,000 more in their pocket in wage increases, colleagues across the aisle should be willing to vote for this guarantee. The proof is in their paycheck.

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

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, the United States has the highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. We are simply noncompetitive, which is why businesses are moving out of America, overseas, to lower taxed countries. If our colleagues on the other side of the aisle think that is a good idea, then they ought to vote with the distinguished Senator from Michigan, but we think it is a terrible idea to ship American jobs and American investment overseas.

We happen to agree, by the way, with Barrack Obama's 2011 State of the Union Message as well as the positions taken by the distinguished ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator WYDEN, and the Democratic leader, Senator SCHUMER. We need to get back in the game, become more competitive, and all Americans will benefit from that.

We urge the Congress to maintain the current competitive corporate rate. I yield the floor.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "nay."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 44, nays 54, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 308 Leg.]

YEAS—44

Baldwin	Harris	Peters
Bennet	Hassan	Reed
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Nelson	

NAYS—54

Barrasso	Flake	Murkowski
Blunt	Gardner	Paul
Boozman	Graham	Perdue
Burr	Grassley	Portman
Capito	Hatch	Risch
Cassidy	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cochran	Heller	Rounds
Collins	Hoeven	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Kennedy	Strange
Cruz	Lankford	Sullivan
Daines	Lee	Thune
Donnelly	Manchin	Tillis
Enzi	McCain	Toomey
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander Franken

The motion was rejected.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 5:10 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4:29 p.m., recessed until 5:10 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LEE).

TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT—
Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators RUBIO and BOOKER be recognized to make motions to instruct and that their motions be the only motions in order remaining; further, that there be up to 10 minutes of debate on the motions concurrently, and upon the use or yielding back of time on the motions, all remaining time on the House message be expired, and the Senate vote on

the Rubio and Booker motions to instruct in the order listed with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I have a motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. RUBIO] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1 be instructed to insist that any conference report shall increase the refundable per-child tax credit to no less than \$2,000 and that the credit be expanded to benefit more low-wage parents.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, this has to do with the child tax credit. We had a debate about it last week. I want to explain to everybody why it is so important that we continue to focus on it. Irrespective of whether we agree with the final outcome and whether the numbers were high enough in the Senate bill—and I continue to believe they were not—they are significantly better than the House position on this matter. I want to explain why.

The loss of the personal exemption hits middle-income families to the tune of about \$600. That has to be made up for. If you add to that the fact that over the last 15 years because of inflation, the value of the child tax credit has declined by over \$300, that leads you to the conclusion that the break-even point for a child tax credit that deals with the middle-income family hit and the erosion of the value of the credit due to inflation brings you to \$1,900. As a result, if you wanted to actually help families be better off than they are today, which is the goal of tax reform, the \$2,000 amount in the Senate bill is basically the break-even point, plus \$100. The House, unfortunately, in their bill only calls for \$1,600.

The first part of this motion to instruct is to ensure that the increase in the child tax credit, to our conferees instructing, be no less. Maybe it is more, but it can be no less than the \$2,000 that is in the Senate bill.

The second part, which was the topic of our debate, is the impact on low-income workers or workers in the lower part of the income scale—firefighters, teachers, police officers, construction workers, welders, home health aides. These are working people, the backbone of our country, the people who have suffered the most over the last 25 or 30 years, as the economy has made some people very profitable but left far too many American workers behind. Their anxieties, their daily concerns, the challenges they are facing really underpin a lot of the anxiety in our country, both electoral, political, and economic. Their primary tax liability is the payroll tax. If you make \$40,000 a

year, the biggest chunk of the taxes you pay is the payroll tax.

By the way, when I hear people say that people making \$40,000 or \$30,000 a year don't pay taxes, they are wrong. They pay taxes. They take money out of your paycheck. They paid a tax. It is irrelevant whether it is a payroll tax or an income tax. Those are taxes. When I hear people say that, it is offensive. Working people across the income scale pay taxes. Unfortunately, that is not recognized in a lot of the debates that are going on here about working people.

One of the things the Senate bill does do is it lowers the threshold upon which the tax credit begins to apply from \$3,000 to \$2,500. Again, not nearly enough, but it is certainly better than the House position. We can't regress on that point.

The second part of this instruction is, it asks the conferees to ensure that the final bill expands benefits so more low-income, low-wage parents and workers will be able to benefit from the child tax credit.

I remain surprised that there is not more consensus to support the reality that we need to do more to help working people in this country, and the child tax credit is one of the best tools to do it. I hope that what comes back from the conference committee is as good as or better than what we put out in the Senate. If it is worse, there are going to be problems.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I have a motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Jersey [Mr. BOOKER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on H.R. 1 be instructed to insist that the final conference report does not contain any provisions that would increase the number of individuals who do not have health insurance or increase health insurance premiums.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, my motion to instruct the Senate conferees would simply insist that the final conference report does not increase the number of individuals who do not have health insurance and does not increase health insurance premiums.

It has been stated on this floor by my colleagues on this side of the aisle that this bill is a blow to our deficit, that it is a blow to our budget, and that it is going to hurt families, particularly in States like mine, with the elimination of the State and local tax deductions. We also know that it could be a bill that could literally threaten the lives of Americans as well.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has said that it will increase premium costs by 10 percent and cause 13 million people to lose their cov-

erage, increase premiums and hurt people.

We know that this bill as it is currently written threatens Americans who rely on Medicaid, including children, people with disabilities, and seniors in nursing homes, because of the bill's potential to impact a State's ability to access funds for its Medicaid Program—again, the State and local tax deductions.

It is also going to possibly trigger cuts to Medicare. Because the bill that passed the Senate would possibly add \$1.5 trillion to the deficit, it could trigger automatic cuts to government programs, including an annual cut of \$25 billion to Medicare. A cut that size will significantly limit Medicare beneficiaries' access to essential health services in everything from cancer screenings to chemotherapy.

I urge my colleagues to support my motion. The Senate conferees must insist that the final conference report of this harmful bill at the very least does not contain any provision that would increase the number of Americans who do not have health insurance or that would increase health premiums for already cash-strapped American citizens.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute in opposition.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, this harkens back to a moment earlier in this debate when the Senator from Oregon, the ranking member of the Finance Committee, described the repeal of the individual mandate as driving a stake through the heart of ObamaCare. Think of what a confession this is by our colleagues on the other side of what a disaster ObamaCare is—that it is dead, that it is done if people are not forced against their wishes to purchase a product that does not suit their families' needs and/or that they cannot afford. What kind of business model—what kind of person?—could possibly justify having to force people to buy its product? This is not only an egregious affront to any sense of personal freedom, but it is proof positive that this doesn't work.

There is another aspect to this as well, and that is that the tax that we impose on people who cannot afford these ObamaCare plans but that they are forced to buy is a regressive tax that falls wildly disproportionately on lower and middle-income folks. In my State of Pennsylvania, 83 percent of the families who are hit with this tax live in households that earn less than \$50,000.

I urge my colleagues to reject this motion.

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

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

VOTE ON MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The question is on agreeing to the motion by the Senator from Florida.

The motion was agreed to.

VOTE ON MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion by the Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "nay."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 47, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 309 Leg.]

YEAS—47

Baldwin	Harris	Nelson
Bennet	Hassan	Peters
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Booker	Heitkamp	Sanders
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Udall
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murray	

NAYS—51

Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Gardner	Perdue
Boozman	Graham	Portman
Burr	Grassley	Risch
Capito	Hatch	Roberts
Cassidy	Heller	Rounds
Cochran	Hoeven	Rubio
Collins	Inhofe	Sasse
Corker	Isakson	Scott
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Kennedy	Strange
Crapo	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Daines	McCain	Tillis
Enzi	McConnell	Toomey
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Young

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander	Franken
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The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. STABENOW. 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.

CHIP AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am coming to the floor again to focus on the fact that the clock is ticking for families in Michigan and across the country—men and women, children, older people, younger people who use the community health centers, as well as those who have their children covered under the Children's Health Insurance Program. The Federal funding for those programs stopped September 30—67 days ago. We have had votes. We have had bills. We have had nominations come before us. There have been divisiveness and controversy. It would be wonderful if we could stop for 1 day and do something that has bipartisan support.

The fact is that CHIP covers 9 million children, and 100,000 of those are in Michigan. We passed a bill out of the Finance Committee in September. I want to laud our chairman, Senator HATCH, and our ranking member, Senator WYDEN. It was a bipartisan bill. There was only one "no" vote. We reported it out. I assumed we would want to get this done before September 30, when the funding ran out.

Instead, here we wait, 67 days later. There are 9 million children at risk because of this inaction—100,000 children in Michigan.

The truth is that today, thanks to CHIP and thanks to a variety of healthcare efforts across the country, 97 percent of the children in our country have access to a doctor. In Michigan, it is actually higher; it is 97 percent of our children. So if a child has juvenile diabetes, if they have a cancer or asthma or just fall out of a tree and break their arm or have bronchitis or the flu, whatever it is that is happening to children, parents have the peace of mind under the MICHild Program to know that they can take their child to a doctor whom they have a relationship with and who knows their children, instead of going to the emergency room.

We also know that emergency rooms are the most expensive way to provide care. They are necessary. They are important for emergencies but not for the daily routines of life, when someone could be seeing a doctor. It costs more; uncompensated care costs more, and when someone uses the emergency room when they could be seeing a doctor, then everyone else pays for that with their insurance rates going up.

So MICHild in Michigan and the Children's Health Insurance Program across the country work. They save money. They save lives. In fact, as soon as January, in Michigan, families are going to start to get notices that the funding will go away, that the medical care will go away. It is not a great way to start the new year: Merry Christmas. Happy New Year. Your child is not going to be able to go see their doctor anymore. We don't have to have that happen because we have strong bipartisan support for this.

It is the same thing with community health centers. Twenty-five million people are able to see a doctor or a nurse and get the care they need through a community health center in their community. There are 300,000 veterans who are able to see a doctor through a community health center, and there are 7.5 million children as well.

In Michigan, our health centers are all over the State. We have some 260 different clinics around Michigan that serve 681,000 people and, again, almost 13,000 veterans. Starting in January, they are going to begin to lose funding at different times—some in February, some in March, some in April—because of local funding streams. But starting in January, in Michigan, health centers are not going to have the funding they need. The majority of their funding—70 percent of their funding—comes through the program that expired September 30, and we know that this also doesn't have to happen.

My friend Senator ROY BLUNT and I have put in legislation. We have a letter signed by 70 Members—not 7—70 Members of this body, over two-thirds of this body signing a letter supporting the continuation of community health centers. Yet we can't get that brought up either.

We thought the original plan was to bring up CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and include community health centers with it, and get that done before September 30. The clock is ticking every single day, and it has not been done. Folks may be trying to hold it hostage politically for some reason or trying to work on some deal at the end of the year. In the meantime, families are worrying, men and women are worrying, and veterans are worrying about what is going to happen, whether or not they are going to continue to get their healthcare.

Let me go back to where I started. Today is 67 days, and tomorrow it will be 68 days since the funding for two healthcare programs that have had broad bipartisan support over the years and broad bipartisan support today—67 days since that funding has stopped.

I would like to close with a story from a gentleman named Darin, whose life was changed by one of Michigan's community health centers. He shared his story with me.

Darin was an unemployed truck-driver when he moved to Jackson, MI, 4 years ago. He hadn't seen a doctor for a decade, and, in his words, he was "a complete mess." He had diabetes, congestive heart failure, and he had no energy. He needed an oxygen tank to walk. He started seeing Dr. Roy at the Center for Family Health, which is a great health clinic in Jackson. He told her he didn't want to just be stable; he wanted to get better. So they went to work so that he could get back on his feet and get back to work.

Darin got his diabetes under control. He improved his lung function, got rid of the oxygen tank, and quit his pain pills. Darin said:

I went from being . . . hardly able to move to where I feel like I can do almost anything. Dr. Roy saw me at my lowest, and she has seen me improve so much that she celebrates with me. Dr. Roy kicked me in the seat of the pants, and I will always thank her for it.

Darin got his kick in the seat of the pants, and, Mr. President, with all due respect, I believe Members of this body could use one too.

There are 25 million people who count on community health centers for their care—their children's care, the care of their moms and dads. There are 9 million children who are covered under the Children's Health Insurance Program. They have been waiting and worrying for long enough; 67 days is long enough. I am hopeful that there will be a sense of urgency from colleagues to get this done.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The Senator from Utah.

TAX CUTS AND JOBS BILL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, last week, the Senate came another step closer to providing real tax relief to the middle class and providing a much needed boost to our economy. Yes, I am talking about the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

That bill spent years in the making. As my chief legislative focus for many years, tax reform is not some off-the-cuff effort. No, we have been researching, holding dozens of hearings, commissioning bipartisan working groups, and working with our friends on the other side of the Capitol and down the street at the White House for some time now.

This bill is going to put another \$2,200 in the pockets of the average American family. This bill is going to boost the economy. It is going to grow jobs and finally help end the wage stagnation we have been faced with for years.

This bill is going to unleash the American spirit, bringing businesses back home where they started and encouraging other businesses to both come from abroad, as well as to grow from within. Once again, America will be open for business.

I have not been alone in this process though, not by a long shot. In fact, tax reform has been a priority for many of my colleagues, including some who are no longer serving. I am talking, of course, about people like Congressman Dave Camp and Senator Max Baucus, who did a lot to move this effort forward. I feel gratified to have been here and to have worked with my colleagues to get this far.

As efforts this year began in earnest, we set out to build on the work of our former colleagues and to give low- and middle-income Americans some much needed relief and to give our country an opportunity to compete in the global economy. Our bill will do that, but as we all know, these great reforms are

not quite yet promised to the American people. There is still work to do as we work to iron out our differences with the House and make sure every section of this bill is ready to be eased into law or passed into law.

That said, I think we deserve to celebrate a little bit and, more importantly, to thank everyone for their work to get us to this point. So many people—both in and out of Congress—have worked hard to get us this far, and I want to express my appreciation for their efforts. Of course, I can't thank everyone in a single floor speech, but I do want to thank some who may be within earshot of this Chamber.

First and foremost, I need to thank Secretary Mnuchin and Director Cohn for their commitment to this effort and their help in getting it done. It is good to finally have an administration that is willing to lead out on tax reform. I also want to thank the distinguished majority leader who also did so much to secure the details of the bill and shepherd it through the Senate. Furthermore, I want to thank Chairman BRADY and Speaker RYAN over in the House of Representatives, as well. They, too, have been great partners and leaders in this endeavor.

I also need to thank the staff from the leader's office, including Sharon Soderstrom, Brandan Dunn, Antonio Ferrier, Hazen Marshall, Erica Soares, Terry Van Doren, Don Stewart, and Jane Lee.

Of course, I want to thank the Members of the Senate Finance Committee who put in countless days, weeks, and months in preparing this legislation and helping to get it passed. All of our majority Members contributed greatly to this process, and I am most grateful.

I also want to thank the tax legislative assistants from each of the committee members who helped to craft this bill; namely, Chris Allen, Sam Beaver, Joseph Boddicker, Chris Conlin, Shay Hawkins, Randy Herndon, Bart Massey, Monica McGuire, Mike Quickel, Zachary Rudisill, Andrew Siracuse, Robert Sneed, Derek Theurer, and Mark Warren, all of whom did an outstanding job in helping us to produce this bill.

I also thank the committee's legislative directors: Charles Cogar, Ken Flanz, Chris Gillott, Brad Grantz, Amber Kirchoefer, Kurt Kovarik, Jessica McBride, Sarah Paul, Landon Stropko, Jay Sulzmann, Stephen Tausend, Pam Thiessen, and Christopher Toppings.

In addition to all of the Senators and staff on the Finance Committee, I need to thank some others. As we all know, this process has been a joint effort with our friends on the Budget Committee. I need to thank Senator ENZI, once again, for his leadership on that committee to give us the reconciliation instruction that made this all possible. Additionally, I would like to thank members of his staff, including Joe Brenckle, Jim Neill, Betsy McDonnell,

Matt Giroux, Paul Vinovich, Becky Cole, Eric Ueland, Thomas Fueller, and the rest of the Budget Committee team.

Closer to home, I thank the staff of the Finance Committee, who have done so much of the heavy lifting here. I need to single out Mark Prater, my chief tax counsel, who has served the committee for decades, and whose knowledge and expertise on these matters is recognized by everyone here and by pretty much everyone everywhere else. I also express my thanks to the rest of my committee tax staff: Jennifer Acuna, Tony Coughlan, Christopher Hanna, Alex Monie, Eric Oman, Marty Pippins, Preston Rutledge, and Nick Wyatt.

Additionally, I need to thank my staff director, Jay Khosla, who quarterbacked the staff through this whole ordeal and who has spent many years with me as we have laid the groundwork and started construction on this undertaking. I want to thank the other members of my senior team as well, including Matt Hoffmann, Jeff Wrase, Julia Lawless, Jennifer Kuskowski, Chris Armstrong, and Bryan Hickman. I need to thank the communications staff on the committee: Katie Niederee, Nicole Hager, and Joshua Blume.

I also need to thank a couple of former staff members: Chris Campbell, my former staff director, who worked for years on this effort. While he is now at Treasury, I am sure he is celebrating right now along with us. I would also like to give a thank-you to Jim Lyons, my tax counsel, who, unfortunately, passed away a little over a year ago. He contributed greatly to this effort for a number of years, and his steady presence has definitely been missed.

Other bodies deserve our thanks as well. Tom Barthold and his team at the Joint Committee on Taxation made themselves available at all hours to help us get this bill written and ready to pass, as did the staff at the legislative counsel's office, led by Mark McGunagle and Jim Fransen, as well as those who work with Elizabeth MacDonough in the Parliamentarian's office.

I am so grateful to all of you for your sacrifices and talents that have allowed us to craft this impressive package.

Unfortunately, though, there are too many people to thank in a single floor speech. So, please, let me express my gratitude to the countless individuals who have helped in this endeavor over the years. This would not have been possible without you.

Before I close, I would like to reiterate that we are not yet there though. I know I will not rest and that I can count on the rest of you to keep going until we have this over the finish line. We are so close to finally giving the American people the Tax Code, and, in turn, the economic growth not only they but their children and grandchildren deserve. It is my solemn commitment to keep working and get this done for all of us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have been doing oversight of the executive branch for a very long time. I have done it as ranking member, I have done it as chairman, I have done it when my party held the White House, and I have done it when the other party held the White House.

Earlier this year, I stood up for the rights of my Democratic colleagues to do oversight of the Trump administration, even while they are in the minority. I did it because it was the right thing to do. Lots of people give lip service to the notion of bipartisan oversight, but very few actually practice it. It is tough. You have to be willing to work with colleagues in the other party to ask tough questions of your own political allies.

You can't just ask. If you actually want answers, you have to follow through. True bipartisan oversight is impossible unless it is a two-way street. If Democrats are unwilling to ask hard questions and force answers from their own political allies, then there is simply no way to move forward together in good faith. Both sides need to be committed to getting the whole story—not just the half they think helps their side. Regardless of whether my Democratic colleagues join me, I am interested in that whole story.

There are two major controversies plaguing the credibility of the Justice Department and the FBI right now. On the one hand, the Trump-Russia investigation, and then on the other hand, the handling of the Clinton investigation. Any congressional oversight related to either one of these topics is not credible without also examining the other.

Both cases were active during last year's campaign. Both cases have been linked to the firing of the FBI Director. I have been trying to explain this to my Democratic colleagues for months. The political reality is, half of the country thinks our law enforcement establishment gave Hillary Clinton and her aides a pass. These questions go to the heart of the integrity of our Federal law enforcement and justice system.

They are not going to go away just because Clinton lost the election. The independent inspector general at the Justice Department certainly isn't ignoring that issue. Democrats and Republicans in Congress have asked the inspector general to look into a host of issues involving the handling of the Clinton investigation during the campaign. His hard work has already uncovered some pretty disturbing information.

Over the past week, the press has reported that an FBI agent was removed from the special counsel's team and de-

moted at the FBI due to—what do you think—political bias. The agent was at the very center of both of these high-profile investigations. High-ranking FBI agent Peter Strzok reportedly used his work phone to send anti-Trump and pro-Clinton text messages to another FBI agent with whom he was having an illicit and immoral relationship.

This man was the Deputy Assistant Director for the FBI's Counterintelligence Division. He worked on the investigation of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's use of a private server to conduct—what do you think—official business.

According to news reports and according to documents, it looks like he also helped draft Comey's controversial public statement ending that case of Hillary Clinton and emails. Specifically, he apparently edited out language that suggested legal jeopardy for Clinton. Press reports state he opened the FBI's investigation of allegations of collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia. It has been reported that he was one of the two FBI agents who interviewed former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn.

Can you imagine if the shoe were on the other foot? What if a high-ranking FBI official got caught expressing pro-Trump political bias on his work phone while leading what is supposed to be a professional, objective, and non-partisan search for the truth? Why, of course, if that were happening, Democrats would go ballistic, and they would have every right to go ballistic. This man held a crucial position of public trust, charged with protecting this country from counterintelligence threats. He was a key part of Director Comey's Clinton investigation and his Russia investigation. I have been saying for months that these two cases are forever linked. You cannot separate them.

The same people in the same agency handled both cases at the same time, and now a huge segment of the American people have no faith that these cases were treated, as they should be, impartially. I don't blame the American people.

It is interesting that before he was fired, FBI Director Comey lectured our Judiciary Committee and lectured the public about how the men and women of the FBI "don't give a rip about politics."

I believe that for most of the hard-working, rank-and-file FBI agents, that is absolutely true. Their jobs normally don't involve controversial political questions, and their own political views aren't relevant because they are professionals.

But no human is perfect, and no organization is immune from error. It does no good for the leaders of the FBI to pretend that its senior management is above all reproach, that they would never show any improper political bias, and that they would never make mistakes.

The only way to protect against bias or misconduct is to recognize that it

exists and to confront it, not to hide it from Congress and the American people.

The law and the facts, whatever they are, should guide the work of the FBI and the Justice Department. If politics infected the Department's decisions during a hotly contested national political campaign, we would have to look at it. That is true whether it occurred in the Clinton case, or in the Trump-Russia case, or if it included both.

Anyone claiming to do bipartisan oversight of the executive branch has to examine both. Ignoring either half of this story simply will not be credible with the other half of the country.

Everyone thought Hillary Clinton was going to be President—everyone. The perception of a huge segment of the public is that the whole Washington establishment worked overtime to get her name cleared before the Democratic Convention last summer. The FBI even called its case "Mid Year Exam."

Director Comey testified that the former Attorney General refused even to name the FBI's work and investigation. That is how political it became. It was really the Attorney General who was at that time insisting on calling it not an investigation but "a matter"—m-a-t-t-e-r—whatever that means.

We have learned that Director Comey started drafting his exoneration statement long before the investigation was done. It looks like there was a rush to clear her. It looks like the fix was in. I know Democrats don't want to hear that. They only want to talk about Trump.

There is a double standard here in the way they desperately want to go after the President but ignore all other potential wrongdoing in the previous administration. It stinks to high heaven.

But Democrats have visions of impeachment dancing in their heads. Rather than reserve judgment and carefully examine the facts—all of the facts—they are jumping to all sorts of conclusions.

The Judiciary Committee has an obligation to do a deep dive into the firing of James Comey and both of the two controversial political investigations that preceded it. Unfortunately, the Democrats are preventing any truly bipartisan path forward. They appear to be assuming the conclusion at the outset.

They complain publicly, and they complain privately that I am not doing enough to investigate "obstruction of justice," but "obstruction of justice" is a legal term of art. It is a conclusion, not evidence. That is not how I conduct my investigations.

I do not make my conclusions first and try to shoehorn the facts to fit my conclusions. I try to get the facts and then go where those facts lead.

Let's consider examples of where investigations have uncovered facts that point to "obstruction."

Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon both lied to investigators. That is obstruction, and that behavior got one of them impeached and forced the other to resign.

We also recently learned that Hillary Clinton's lawyers used a program called BleachBit to delete 33,000 emails under subpoena by the House of Representatives.

Now, those government records—and they are government records—can never be recovered. Those facts certainly look like obstruction, but we don't have all of the facts here yet.

So far, I have seen no credible evidence that President Trump has told anyone to lie. I also have seen no credible evidence that he or his aides have destroyed records being sought by investigators.

Many people firmly believe that the President fired the FBI Director in order to improperly halt an investigation of Lieutenant General Flynn.

Now, I am not only willing but I am eager to delve deeply into all of the circumstances surrounding Director Comey's removal, but to claim at the outset that his removal was obstruction of justice puts the cart before the horse.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article by the well-known liberal law professor Alan Dershowitz.

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

[From The Boston Globe, Dec. 5, 2017]

SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN MAY BE PROVOKING A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFLICT
(By Alan M. Dershowitz)

Senator Dianne Feinstein may be provoking a constitutional conflict between the legislative and executive branches of our government. The California Democrat has said that Congress is investigating whether President Trump engaged in obstruction of justice by firing FBI Director James Comey and taking other actions to halt the Russian investigation.

Feinstein said: "I think what we're beginning to see is the putting together of a case of obstruction of justice. I think we see this in the indictments—the four indictments and pleas that have just taken place.

"And I see it, most importantly, in what happened with the firing of Director Comey, and it is my belief that that is directly because he did not agree to lift the cloud of the Russia investigation, that's obstruction of justice."

No, it isn't.

Feinstein does not seem to understand that under our constitutional system of separation of powers, the president cannot be charged with a crime for merely exercising his authority under Article 2 of the Constitution. This authority includes firing the director of the FBI, for whatever reason or no reason. It also includes the authority to tell prosecutors who to prosecute and who not to. A president's motives may not be the basis for a criminal charge. Nor is it proper to psychoanalyze the president in a search for possible evil motives. All presidents act out of mixed motives, including self-aggrandizement, political advantage, partisan benefit, and personal pique.

Consider, for example, President Barack Obama's benighted decision, as a lame duck,

to tie the hands of his successor by unilaterally changing the longstanding American policy with regard to the United Nations condemnation of Israel. The president, over the objection of many members of Congress and most Americans, instructed his UN ambassador not to veto a Security Council Resolution that declared the Western Wall, the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, and the access roads to Hebrew University and Hadassah Medical Center hospital, to be illegally occupied territory. Why did Obama exercise his authority in so pernicious a manner? I believe, and many Americans believe, that he did it out of spite and pique: to get even with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. If I am right, and I am sure that this was at least one of his motivating considerations, could he be charged with a crime for abusing his authority for personal vengeance? Of course not. We can condemn him, as I and others have. But we must all acknowledge that he had the authority to do what he did, regardless of his bad motives.

Ironically, it was the effort of the Trump administration to prevent the lame-duck president from tying the hands of the president-elect, by not vetoing the UN resolution, that formed the basis for the lying charge levied against General Michael Flynn. For whatever reason, Flynn lied—but what he lied about was entirely lawful.

Trump would have been within his constitutional authority to pardon Flynn, as Flynn hoped he would do. That would have kept him from cooperating with the special counsel and becoming a government witness. Had the president done that, he would have acted entirely lawfully, as President George H.W. Bush did when he pardoned Caspar Weinberger in order to stop the Iran-Contra investigation. Although special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh complained bitterly that the Bush presidential pardon had the intent and effect of completely closing down his investigation, no one suggested that Bush had committed the crime of obstruction of justice. Why? Because that was Bush and this is Trump—a pure ad hominem distinction that should be given no weight by the law.

It would do violence to our constitutional separation of powers if a president could be charged with a crime simply for exercising his constitutional authority. Checks and balances do not include the power to criminalize—through the vague obstruction of justice statute—presidential actions authorized by Article 2. Both Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton were accused of obstruction of justice, but in both cases they were accused of going well beyond the mere exercise of their constitutional authority. Nixon was accused of telling subordinates to lie to the FBI, paying hush money to potential witnesses, and destroying evidence. Clinton was accused of trying to get witnesses, such as Monica Lewinsky, to lie. These charges constitute acts—independent crimes—that go well beyond a presidential authority. Trump has not been accused of any acts that would independently constitute crimes. The entire case against him, as outlined by Feinstein, consists of constitutionally authorized acts that were well within the president's authority under Article 2. That is an enormous and consequential difference under our system of separation of powers.

So, until and unless there is proof that Trump has committed an independent criminal act—beyond acts that are within his constitutional prerogative—it would be unconstitutional to charge him with obstruction of justice, regardless of what Feinstein and others believe his motive may have been.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Now, Professor Dershowitz is not a fan of Donald

Trump, and he and I probably would not agree on many issues, generally speaking.

The title of his article is "Senator Dianne Feinstein may be provoking a constitutional conflict." Professor Dershowitz strongly disagrees with the ranking member's statement on "Meet the Press" the weekend that Comey was fired: ". . . directly because he did not agree to lift the cloud of the Russia investigation, that's obstruction of justice."

This is how Professor Dershowitz replied:

No, it isn't. . . . under our constitutional system of separation of powers, the president cannot be charged with a crime for merely exercising his authority under Article 2 of the Constitution. This authority includes firing the director of the FBI, for whatever reason or no reason.

That is not to say that the President can engage in illegal conduct. But the professor's point, as I understand it, is that when a President takes an action that is within the scope of clear constitutional authority and discretion, it should be a political question not a criminal one.

The Judiciary Committee still needs to investigate the circumstances surrounding Comey's firing and the Flynn investigation. Those facts may have nothing to do with the obstruction but could still provide important insight about the potential reforms of how the FBI and the Justice Department operate.

For example, he explains how President Trump could have halted any investigation of Flynn if he really wanted to. This is what the professor says:

Trump would have been within his constitutional authority to pardon Flynn, as Flynn hoped he would do. That would have kept him from cooperating with the special counsel and becoming a government witness. Had the president done that, he would have acted entirely lawfully, as President George H.W. Bush did when he pardoned Caspar Weinberger in order to stop the Iran-Contra investigation. Although special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh complained bitterly that the Bush presidential pardon had the intent and effect of completely closing down his investigation, no one suggested that Bush had committed the crime of obstruction of justice.

Then, finally, Professor Dershowitz explains what real obstruction looks like and how it is different from a President's merely exercising his constitutional authority. So I, once again, quote the professor:

Both Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton were accused of obstruction of justice, but in both cases they were accused of going well beyond the mere exercise of their constitutional authority. Nixon was accused of telling subordinates of lie to the FBI, paying hush money to potential witnesses, and destroying evidence. Clinton was accused of trying to get witnesses, such as Monica Lewinsky, to lie. These charges constituted acts—independent crimes—that go well beyond presidential authority. Trump has not been accused of any facts that would independently constitute crimes. The entire case against him, as outlined by Feinstein, consists of constitutionally authorized acts that

were well within the president's authority under Article 2. That is an enormous and consequential difference under our system of separation of powers.

But our constitutional system of checks and balances is too important to throw it aside when it isn't politically convenient. You don't have to be a Trump fan to worry about the consequences of taking shortcuts in going after your political opponents. That is why bipartisan investigations are so very valuable.

When it works, a bipartisan inquiry can provide comfort that all angles have been explored and explored thoroughly.

But it takes two to tango, as they say.

Earlier this year, Ranking Member FEINSTEIN expressed concerns about reports that former Attorney General Lynch asked Director Comey to downplay the FBI's investigation as merely, a "matter" instead of using the term "investigation" during the campaign. Yet, since then, the ranking member has told me plainly that she will not join in any oversight of the FBI's Clinton email investigation.

Even on Trump-Russia oversight, where we have been able to cooperate a great deal, there have been similar problems.

First, all year, I have wanted to learn more about the origins of the dossier that largely kick-started the FBI's investigation of the Trump campaign.

In July, the ranking member joined me in a bipartisan letter seeking voluntary cooperation from the firm that produced the dossier. The dossier was based largely on Russian sources within Russia and was put together by a former British spy. It made salacious and unverified claims about Trump. The company responsible for producing it—Fusion GPS—was uncooperative.

In response to our bipartisan request, it dumped on the committee about 32,000 pages of press clippings and 8,000 pages that were entirely blank. Since then, it has provided zero additional documents.

The founder of Fusion GPS initially indicated that he would rely on his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination rather than testify at the committee hearing in July. He later agreed to a private staff interview but refused to answer dozens of key questions.

I would like to compel him to answer questions and compel him to provide the documents that Senator FEINSTEIN and I both asked him in July to provide voluntarily, but under our committee rules, I don't have the authority to do that on my own.

Why would Democrats not want to follow up and get the documents from Fusion GPS that we already asked for together—in other words, in a bipartisan way? Do they not want to know more about how this company put together its anti-Trump dossier from Russian Government sources?

Well, in light of recent news, the resistance from Democrats to this line of

Trump/Russia inquiry is now a little more understandable. It turns out that the Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee are the ones that paid Fusion GPS for the information they gathered from Russian Government sources.

I don't know whether the ranking member or her staff knew the facts earlier this year when I was trying to persuade her to do bipartisan followup work with Fusion GPS, but I do know that unless both sides are willing to ask tough questions no matter where the facts lead, there can be no bipartisan oversight.

We have learned that the Democratic National Committee paid for an anti-Trump dossier based on information from Russian Government sources. Second, we have learned that the inspector general uncovered evidence of partisan bias by a senior FBI official at the center of both the Clinton and the Trump-Russia investigations, which led to his dismissal from the Mueller team.

Before that news broke, back in October of this year, I wrote to the FBI official requesting voluntary cooperation and a private transcribed interview with the committee. The ranking member did not sign that letter. The committee has received no letter in reply. We are still waiting for documents from the FBI about his and other officials' participation in the draft Comey statement.

The FBI should comply voluntarily, but if they don't, I would issue a subpoena to require that the documents be provided and that the witness sit for a deposition. However, under our committee rules, I don't have the authority to do that without support from the ranking member.

Finally, I have long had concerns that the scope of the FBI Clinton investigation was artificially narrow. Recent revelations about these text messages showing political bias only heighten these concerns.

In recent Federal court rulings, the FBI said that the scope of the investigation was limited in two ways. First, it was limited to two issues dealing with the handling of classified information. Second, the scope of the FBI review was limited to the time when former Secretary Clinton was at the State Department. But what if there was evidence of crime not related to the mishandling of classified information? What if the facts showed some obstruction such as intentional destruction of documents after she was Secretary of State? Why exclude those topics from the scope of the inquiry? Who made those decisions? Why were those decisions made? Was there any political bias in those decisions? Certain areas should not be declared off limits beforehand in an investigation. An investigation should go—common sense—where the facts take it.

In multiple letters to the FBI last year, I raised concerns about the scope of the FBI investigation. I asked Direc-

tor Comey back in May of 2016 whether the Justice Department had improperly narrowed the scope of the investigation to look at the mishandling of classified information and ignore other important legal issues. I wish to quote from that letter:

If federal records on the private server were hidden or destroyed, then there may have been a violation of 18 USC Section 2071, which prohibits concealing or destroying such Federal records.

If any of the deleted emails were responsive to Congressional inquiries or to agency inquiries, such as ones from the State Department Inspector General, then there may have been violations of 18 USC Sections 1505 and 1519, respectively.

Later in my letter, I specifically asked whether the Justice Department limited the FBI's investigation in any way.

Then-Director Comey eventually responded months later. He claimed that the FBI did investigate whether the unlawful obstruction of Federal records occurred. But an FBI agent said under penalty of perjury that the FBI investigation did not include destruction of Federal records. So which is it? Who is telling the truth? The FBI agent who signed the affidavit, or is Mr. Comey right? Did the FBI really examine whether Secretary Clinton and her associates used the server to avoid Federal records retention requirements, or did Mr. Comey simply pay lipservice to that concern and focus only on classification issues?

Understanding what really happened is incredibly important, and let me tell my colleagues why. During the course of the FBI's investigation, it recovered thousands of work-related emails that were not turned over to the State Department by Secretary Clinton. The FBI also recovered work-related emails that Secretary Clinton and her associates apparently deleted. All of this is clear evidence of alienation of Federal records. Indeed, even the FBI's now-public investigative files show that the FBI had knowledge that Federal records were deleted.

The FBI's interview summary of Secretary Clinton said that she was asked about "a PRN work ticket, which referenced a conference call among PRN, Kendall, and Mills on March 31, 2015." I am going to repeat that. She was asked about "a PRN work ticket, which referenced a conference call among PRN, Kendall, and Mills on March 31, 2015." PRN stands for Platte River Networks, the company that administered Secretary Clinton's nongovernment server. Kendall is David Kendall, her lawyer. Mills is Cheryl Mills, her former Chief of Staff at the State Department.

Paul Combetta, the administrator of her server, was also on the conference call and was interviewed multiple times by the FBI. He admitted that he lied to the FBI in his initial interviews and got immunity from the FBI in exchange for agreeing to tell them the truth. According to the summary of that interview, Mr. Combetta deleted Secretary Clinton's email archives on March 31, 2015.

So we have a conference call with Secretary Clinton's attorneys on March 31, 2015, and on that very same day, her emails are deleted by someone who was on that conference call, using special BleachBit software. The emails were State Department records under subpoena by Congress.

What did the FBI do to investigate this apparent obstruction? According to affidavits filed in Federal court, absolutely nothing. The FBI focused only on the handling of classified information. Maybe now we know why.

Recently released FBI records show that by May 2, 2016, Mr. Comey sent around a draft of his statement exonerating Secretary Clinton. The FBI interview with Mr. Combetta hadn't even happened yet. The exoneration statement was already in progress before the key witness had coughed up the truth about deleting Federal records under subpoena by Congress.

Did the FBI look at obstruction in the Clinton case? Mr. Comey said the FBI looked very hard at obstruction, but that is hard to believe. Director Comey began drafting an exoneration statement in April or early May of 2016. That is months before he publicly announced that he would not recommend charges on July 5, 2016.

According to the testimony of senior FBI officials, Comey began drafting his statement early because the FBI knew where the investigation was headed. That is according to testimony of senior FBI officials. But at that point, the FBI had not yet interviewed 17 witnesses. That ought to be understood. They hadn't yet interviewed 17 witnesses. And one of those witnesses—can you believe it—was Secretary Clinton. Others included her closest aides and associates. How can you possibly know where an investigation is headed without interviewing the main witnesses and the subject of the investigation?

Maybe none of this raises any concerns for Democrats, but it should. The American people deserve to have the whole story. Congress and the public have a right to understand whether the fix was in from the very beginning. If so, then it must take steps to make sure it never happens again.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO WALLACE "WALLY" MATTISON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermonters have a legacy of service unmatched in the Nation. While new generations carry on this tradition, we continue to owe so much to the bravery of those men and women who

served in the past. One of the members of this distinguished community is Wallace "Wally" Mattison, a native of Bennington, VT. Mr. Mattison served in the famed 29th Infantry Division, 115th Regiment as a light machine gunner. He fought on the frontlines in Normandy and throughout Europe from 1943 to 1945, during which time he was wounded. His commitment unwavering, he returned to service after his recovery.

Our State and Nation have praised Mr. Mattison's essential contributions, but the recognition of his service extends beyond our shores. Earlier this month, France, a country Mr. Mattison helped liberate from Nazi control, awarded him with their highest civil and military distinction: the Legion of Honor. With the receipt of this award, he joins an exclusive group that includes Dwight Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, and select others who have served and sacrificed on behalf of the citizens of France.

It is impossible to fully express the gratitude I feel for Mr. Mattison's service. Vermonters, Americans, and citizens of the world owe him a debt that cannot be repaid with words or awards. We can, however, share these stories of bravery and sacrifice. That is why today I would like to pay tribute to Wallace "Wally" Mattison, and I ask unanimous consent that a Bennington Banner article highlighting his past service and recent receipt of the Legion of Honor, entitled, "To us, you are a true hero," be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Bennington Banner, Nov. 23, 2017.

TO US, YOU ARE A TRUE HERO

(By Derek Carson)

For his service in France in World War II, Wallace "Wally" Mattison has been presented with France's highest civil and military distinction.

Mattison, a resident of Pownal and native of Bennington, was honored on Wednesday by Valery Freland, the Consul General of France in Boston. The ceremony took place at the Vermont Veterans Home. Mattison was incorporated into the 29th infantry division, 115th regiment in 1943, and served as a light machine gunner on the front lines of the Normandy invasion before participating in the Battles of Saint Lo and the Battle for Brest, during the latter of which he was shot while advancing on a German garrison. The bullet barely missed his spine. Upon his recovery in 1945, he continued to serve, participating in the capture of several German cities. He later served as a captain and acting chief of the Bennington Police Department.

Col. Al Faxon, chief operating officer of the Veterans Home, said that there had not been a Legion of Honor ceremony at the home during his tenure there, and he knew of no other recipients from Bennington. Freland said that Mattison was one of fewer than 10 Legion of Honor recipients this year in his district, which covers all of New England.

The French Legion of Honor was established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. Mattison was honored as a chevalier, or knight, of the order. American recipients of the honor include many who have served

France or the ideals it upholds, including Dwight Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point as an institution. Today, there are about 93,000 members of the order around the world.

"It's such an honor to have this ceremony in our home," said Faxon. "Without our French allies, we probably would not have won the American Revolution . . . The French aided the colonists by providing military personnel, armaments, and loans. King Louis XVI approved financial assistance to the American colonists only four days after Benjamin Franklin and his comrades requested it. Could you imagine getting a bank loan in four days today?"

"If you see the king, tell him we said thank you," joked Faxon to Freland.

During the ceremony, Mattison was surrounded by several generations of his family. At first, he was determined to keep a straight face throughout, but after hearing words of praise from Faxon, State Rep. Mary Morrissey, U.S. Sens. Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders, U.S. Rep. Peter Welch, and Gov. Phil Scott, he finally broke down and began to cry. "You people," he said, "are too good to me." When Faxon offered him the opportunity to say a few more words, Mattison declined.

"The Mattison family has a long and proud history of dedicated service," said Morrissey. "It was just several months ago that we were honoring Wally's brother Erwin for his 60 years of service with the Bennington Fire Department. Today we honor Wally, a purple heart recipient, for his brave and honorable World War II military service in France."

"Wally's service-above-self model is well-documented, both by his military service to our country and then for his 40 years of service for our community, county, and state, as a police officer who rose through the ranks to become a captain and acting police chief," she said.

Morrissey also read the letters from Governor and U.S. Congressional delegation, who she said all expressed their heartfelt regret that they were unable to attend. Leahy asked that a flag be flown over the U.S. Capitol in Mattison's honor: That flag was presented to Mattison, after being folded in the ceremonial fashion by Faxon and Lieutenant Junior Grade Daniel Tiff.

Mattison will be honored by the Vermont State Legislature when it returns in January.

Finally, the time came for Freland to present Mattison with the award. Flanked by the U.S. and French flags, the consul general quoted French President Emmanuel Macron's words earlier this year, when he said, "It is a privilege to be speaking here before you today and I know who I owe that to. I owe it to all those who, a little over 70 years ago, rose up against a barbaric regime which seized my country, France. I owe it to the nations who heard the cry of these resistance fighters and who sent their children, from America, Africa, Oceania and Asia, to French shores to help."

"They did not all know what France was, but they knew that defeat for France also meant the defeat of the ideals that they shared, that they were proud of and for which they were willing to die. They knew that their freedom and their values depended on the freedom of other men and women living thousands of kilometers from them."

After Freland had finished reciting the lengthy list of honors and awards Mattison had received throughout his military career, Mattison added, "I got a good conduct medal, too!"

"We remember the ultimate sacrifice made by so many of your comrades, who are now laid to rest in France," said Freland to Mattison. "I know you are very modest, but to us, you are a true hero."

TRIBUTE TO REIDUN NUQUIST

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the question would be suitable for the game show "Jeopardy:" Name the oldest long-distance hiking trail in the United States. Answer: What is the Long Trail?

The 272-mile trail that runs the spine of the Green Mountains in my home State of Vermont was built over the course of two decades, from 1910 to 1930, and has provided countless hikers with spectacular climbs and remote camping in the decades that followed. No hiker's pack would be complete on the journey without a small pocket reference book simply known as the Long Trail Guide, a bible of sorts for these backwoods adventurers.

The guide was first published by the Green Mountain Club, the steward of the Long Trail, in 1917 and has since been revised 27 times. So when the club recently decided to chronicle 100 years of Long Trail Guide history to mark the anniversary, they turned to a very experienced hiker and a dedicated volunteer to take on the job: Reidun Nuquist.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Reidun and her husband, Andrew, for many years. They reside in my hometown of Montpelier, and like so many other Vermonters, they share a deep respect and appreciation for the natural wonders that make Vermont such a special place to live. They also share a generosity of spirit, dedicating much of their spare time to preserving our natural habitat and helping maintain the Long Trail for generations to come.

I was very pleased to read about Reidun's latest effort in a recent edition of the Vermont publication *Seven Days*, and I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

REIDUN NUQUIST NAVIGATES A CENTURY OF
LONG TRAIL GUIDES

(By James Tabor)

In November 1944, an American soldier fighting in Europe wrote this in a letter home:

"I keep a worn out 1935 edition of the Guide Book in my foot locker to always remind me of what I'm fighting for."

That "Guide Book" just happened to be the Long Trail Guide, and the GI's words hint at how important these little tomes have been over the years, in so many ways to so many people. The plural "tomes" is appropriate here; while most people think of the guide as a book, there have been, in fact, 28 versions, all published by the Green Mountain Club, beginning with the first in 1917 and culminating in this year's Centennial Edition.

As that homesick soldier's note suggested, over the decades these volumes have achieved significance far beyond that of mere guidebooks, for two good reasons. One is that, as the number of weekenders who become (or aspire to become) end-to-enders signifies, the Long Trail is not just a trail. Hiking it is a coming-of-age accomplishment, a badge of honor, a bucket-list item, a family bond and more. The other reason is that

the inspiration, dedication and perspiration of the guides' editors and contributors have resulted in the kind of quality that labors of love generally produce.

Such longevity and excellence, the current GMC leadership realized, shouldn't go unchronicled.

"With the 100th anniversary edition, it became clear that the history of the guide had not been told and that this was the perfect opportunity to do so," GMC executive director Mike DeBonis said in a telephone interview.

That decision might have been simple, but finding an author was another story. Any candidate would have to be an expert and diligent researcher. "This would not be an easy book to research or to write," DeBonis explained. "Because not all the backstory is written down in one place, it would require reading all the old guides, as well as finding and digging through archives and interviewing past editors and contributors."

Another consideration: One little book about a lot of other little books could have significant yawner potential. The author of this little book would have to be creative.

As it turned out, though, the perfect candidate was near at hand: Reidun Nuquist, a Norwegian-turned-Vermont, devoted outdoorswoman and longtime GMC devotee. And she had long been a contributor to the Long Trail guides.

Now 77, Nuquist immigrated to the U.S. in 1963 after marrying Andrew Nuquist, a past GMC president. The couple moved to Montpelier in 1970, and Reidun enjoyed a career as a librarian for the Vermont Historical Society and the University of Vermont's Bailey/Howe Library. She and Andy have one son, a fiftysomething Bostonian who inherited his parents' passion for the outdoors in general and hiking in particular.

Nuquist's own affinity for the Long Trail and the GMC produced, as DeBonis noted, "a tremendously strong connection to club history." In addition to being a Long Trailer herself—one who has hiked the trail end to end—Nuquist has served as president of the GMC's Montpelier chapter and spent more weekends than she can remember volunteering for grinding pick-and-shovel work on trail-maintenance crews. Frequent contributions to club newsletters and to the guidebooks—including a chapter in *A Century in the Mountains: Celebrating Vermont's Long Trail*—demonstrated her gift for writing.

And so, in May 2016, the GMC gave Nuquist the job of tackling the centennial retrospective.

When reached by phone, Nuquist explained how to pronounce her first name: "Rye like in bread, dune like in sand." If a voice can twinkle, hers did. A subsequent visit to her hillside home, with its neat woodpile and mustard-yellow doors, only reinforced that impression of buoyancy—all the more surprising given that she's currently battling serious illness. Ensnared in an easy chair, with a white knit cap and a shawl around her legs to ward off chill, Nuquist fielded questions with smiles and stamina for more than an hour.

Asked how she approached the Long Trail project, Nuquist admitted, "I was delighted to be asked to do the book, but I did wonder how I was going to approach a retrospective of 28 separate guides. I knew this had to be more than a bibliographic project. It had to be interesting to general readers."

She paused and grinned. "I figured the way to do that was to write about people."

So she did—a very good thing for readers of *A Century of Long Trail Guidebooks: A Retrospective*, published by the GMC in October. It's short—just 90 pages—and the table of contents indicates that it's much more than a "bibliographic project." For starters, rath-

er than employing a predictable chronological progression, Nuquist divided the book into seven chapters that focus on the trail guides' essential elements: origin, evolution, illustrations, hiker advice, trail descriptions, maps and editors.

Her writing of these chapters renders a book that could have been literary Xanax into one that's alive with wit, irony and insight. Some examples:

The guidebook carried business advertisements through 1940 but just for the Long Trail Lodge and state agencies, before they ceased altogether—something we may be grateful for.

Some past advice may strike us as quaint or amusing . . . For fending off mosquitoes, a hiker could follow John Muir's recipe for a repellent of "three parts of oil or pine tar, two parts of castor oil and one part of oil of pennyroyal."

Attentive readers were never shy about pointing out errors. The 1932 edition labeled two mountains as Vermont's third highest, Mount Ellen (4,135 feet) and Camel's Hump (4,093 feet). Theron Dean, having climbed both numerous times, was called on to referee. He awarded the distinction to Mount Ellen, intimating that the guidebook editors had been "in a slightly muddled condition after partaking of a church supper in Burlington."

Like much of her own writing, Nuquist's carefully chosen excerpts from the guides accomplish two key goals: leavening the pages with wry humor while delivering interesting, often fascinating information.

[The] first guidebook was also a yearbook and as such holds valuable club history. In addition to lists of officers, trustees, and committee and section members, it included bylaws and GMC articles of association. The latter stipulated that the club was to "make trails and roads in the Vermont mountains, to erect camps and shelter houses therein, to publish maps and guide books thereof" [author's emphasis]. The membership lists of local club sections (chapters) showed an impressive number of women; of the Brandon Section's thirty-one members, half were female.

The 2nd (1920) guidebook had detailed advice on what to carry and how to carry—down to what to put in each pocket: "Left shirt: handkerchief, postals [postcards], notebook, pencil. Right shirt: guide-hook, money securely pinned in bag or envelope. Left trousers: matches in flat tin box, waterproof. Right trousers: pocket knife, strong twine. Left hip: toilet paper. Fob pocket: compass on lanyard." The only thing left for the hiker was to select the contents of the right hip pocket!

Nuquist also quotes other writers—book authors, newsletter contributors, journal keepers, letter penners—liberally and to good advantage. Here, for example, is memoirist James Gordon Hindes describing his experience of overnighting with companion John Eames at Frank Beane's Hanksville farm one July.

We slept in the same bed but could hardly see one another—a soft but prominent ridge of feathers billowed between us. Gawd, but it was hot!

A bit further on, in a section devoted to hikers' navails with shelter-gnawing porcupines, Nuquist cites a verse from a 1989 Margaret MacArthur folk song:

They saw a lump of a beast all covered with spikes.

Not what they expected to see on their hike. "What'll we do?" "Get the guide book from the pack.

It says knock him on the nose with the back of the axe."

Over a century, a few people have been so important to the Long Trail's evolution that

Nuquist might have considered a chapter titled "Titans of the Trail." Instead, she opted for the less obvious and more graceful approach of weaving their stories throughout her chapters as their ages and achievements suggest.

To cite a few examples, the aforementioned Dean was probably the editor of the very first guidebook. Dr. Louis J. Paris was "the glue that held the GMC together in the early years." Charles P. Cooper, "the hardest working executive the Club has had," spent weeks, in all weather, nailing hand-painted white discs to trees and rail-crossing posts. "The GMC was his hobby," writes Nuquist, but, judging by his actions, it was much more than that.

The same could easily be said of Nuquist, for whom, over nearly half a century, the Long Trail has meant work, play, adventure, friendships, family and joy. All of which makes reading her new book nearly as much fun as hiking the trail itself.

CONFIRMATION OF KIRSTJEN NIELSEN

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the nomination of Kirstjen Nielsen to serve as Secretary of Homeland Security. While I believe that Ms. Nielsen has a solid understanding of the Department that she seeks to lead, I am not yet convinced that she will be a counterweight to the rabid anti-immigration policies coming out of the White House.

I appreciated the opportunity to speak to Ms. Nielsen prior to the vote about my concern over the status of the Dreamers and temporary protected status, TPS, recipients. Dreamers were brought to this country through no fault of their own and are in limbo after the President abruptly canceled DACA and set arbitrary renewal and termination deadlines. TPS recipients, many of whom have been here for almost two decades, would have their lives endangered if forced to return to their home countries.

While I understand that Ms. Nielsen cannot make ironclad commitments on how she would handle these issues, I could not in good faith support her nomination without clearer guidance and assurances about how she and the administration intend to resolve these matters. Many of my colleagues who supported her predecessor, General Kelly, have complained bitterly that promises he made to them have not been kept. Moreover, both as General Kelly's chief of staff at DHS and later as his deputy at the White House, I have to assume the Ms. Nielsen has been very involved in the development and implementation of the immigration policies of this administration. My vote yesterday was not so much a vote against Ms. Nielsen, as it was a vote to protest the anti-immigration policies flowing from the Trump administration.

I am hopeful that, in the coming months, Ms. Nielsen will be able to provide a check on the worst impulses of this White House. I am not yet convinced that will happen and hope to be proven wrong. I do look forward to

working with Ms. Nielsen once she is sworn in.

GAO CFPB RESPONSE

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter from the Government Accountability Office, GAO, be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. GOVERNMENT
ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2017.

Subject: Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection: Applicability of the Congressional Review Act to Bulletin on Indirect Auto Lending and Compliance with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act

Hon. PATRICK J. TOOMEY,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR SENATOR TOOMEY: You asked whether a Bulletin issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection (CFPB or the Bureau) on March 21, 2013, on Indirect Auto Lending and Compliance with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act is a rule for purposes of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). CRA establishes a process for congressional review of agency rules and establishes special expedited procedures under which Congress may pass a joint resolution of disapproval that, if enacted into law, overturns the rule. Congressional review is assisted by CRA's requirement that all federal agencies, including independent regulatory agencies, submit each rule to both Houses of Congress and to the Comptroller General before it can take effect. For the reasons discussed below, we conclude that the Bulletin is a general statement of policy and a rule under the CRA.

BACKGROUND CFPB Bulletin

When consumers finance automobile purchases from an auto dealership, the dealer often facilitates indirect financing through a third-party lender, referred to as an indirect auto lender. In the Bulletin, CFPB "provides guidance about indirect auto lenders' compliance with the fair lending requirements of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA) and its implementing regulation, Regulation B." Specifically, the Bulletin relates to policies used by some indirect auto lenders that allow dealers to mark up the interest rate charged to the consumer above the indirect auto lender's "buy rate." The lender then compensates the auto dealer based on the difference in interest revenues between the buy rate and the actual rate charged to the consumer in the contract executed with the auto dealer. In the Bulletin, CFPB states that the incentives created by such policies allow for a significant risk for pricing disparities on the basis of race, national origin or other prohibited bases.

The fair lending requirements of ECOA make it illegal for a creditor to discriminate in any aspect of a credit transaction on the basis of race or national origin, among other characteristics. The term "creditor" is defined to include "any assignee of an original creditor who participates in the decision to extend, renew, or continue credit." Regulation B, which implements ECOA, further defines a creditor to expressly include an "assignee, transferee, or subrogee of the creditor" who "in the ordinary course of business, regularly participates in a credit decision, including setting the terms of the credit." In the Bulletin, CFPB states that there are a variety of practices used by indirect lenders, but that information collected "suggests that the standard practices of indirect

auto lenders likely constitute participation in a credit decision under the ECOA and Regulation B."

In the Bulletin, CFPB discusses the legal theories under which indirect auto lenders who are determined to be creditors under ECOA could be held liable for pricing disparities on a prohibited basis when such disparities exist within an indirect auto lender's portfolio. In its final section, the Bulletin states that indirect auto lenders "should take steps to ensure that they are operating in compliance with the ECOA and Regulation B as applied to dealer markup and compensation policies," and then lists a variety of steps and tools that lenders may wish to use to address significant fair lending risks.

The Congressional Review Act

CRA, enacted in 1996 to strengthen congressional oversight of agency rulemaking, requires all federal agencies, including independent regulatory agencies, to submit a report on each new rule to both Houses of Congress and to the Comptroller General before it can take effect. The report must contain a copy of the rule, "a concise general statement relating to the rule," and the rule's proposed effective date. In addition, the agency must submit to the Comptroller General a complete copy of the cost-benefit analysis of the rule, if any, and information concerning the agency's actions relevant to specific procedural rulemaking requirements set forth in various statutes and executive orders governing the regulatory process.

CRA adopts the definition of rule under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which states in relevant part that a rule is "the whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of an agency." CRA excludes three categories of rules from coverage: (1) rules of particular applicability; (2) rules relating to agency management or personnel; and (3) rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice that do not substantially affect the rights or obligations of nonagency parties. CFPB did not send a report on the Bulletin to Congress or the Comptroller General because, as stated in their letter to our Office, in their opinion the Bulletin is not a rule under CRA.

ANALYSIS

At issue here is whether a nonbinding general statement of policy, which provides guidance on how CFPB will exercise its discretionary enforcement powers, is a rule under CRA. CFPB states, and we agree, that the Bulletin "is a non-binding guidance document" that "identifies potential risk areas and provides general suggestions for compliance" with ECOA and Regulation B. Moreover, the Bulletin is a general statement of policy that offers clarity and guidance on the Bureau's discretionary enforcement approach.

CFPB argues, however, that because the Bulletin has no legal effect on regulated entities, the CRA does not apply. The Bureau asserts that "taken as a whole, the CRA can logically apply only to agency documents that have legal effect." It suggests that there are two categories of general statements of policy: (1) those that are intended as binding documents, to which CRA applies, and (2) those, like the Bulletin, that are non-binding and not subject to CRA. CFPB claims that the Bulletin is the type of general statement of policy that is not a rule under CRA. However, as explained below, CRA requirements apply to general statements of policy which, by definition, are not legally binding.

The Supreme Court has described "general statements of policy" as "statements issued

by an agency to advise the public prospectively of the manner in which the agency proposes to exercise a discretionary power." In other words, as stated by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in *Pacific Gas & Electric Company v. Federal Power Commission*, a statement of policy announces the agency's tentative intentions for the future:

"A general statement of policy . . . does not establish a 'binding norm.' It is not finally determinative of the issues or rights to which it is addressed. The agency cannot apply or rely upon a general statement of policy as law because a general statement of policy only announces what the agency seeks to establish as policy."

The Bulletin provides information on the manner in which CFPB plans to exercise its discretionary enforcement power. It expresses the agency's views that certain indirect auto lending activities may trigger liability under ECOA. For example, it states that an indirect auto lender's own markup and compensation policies may trigger liability under ECOA if they result in credit pricing disparities on a prohibited basis, such as race or national origin. It also informs indirect auto lenders that they may be liable under ECOA if a dealer's practices result in unexplained pricing disparities on prohibited bases where the lender may have known or had reasonable notice of a dealer's discriminatory conduct. In sum, the Bulletin advises the public prospectively of the manner in which the CFPB proposes to exercise its discretionary enforcement power and fits squarely within the Supreme Court's definition of a statement of policy.

Moreover, as the *Pacific Gas & Electric Company* decision quoted above makes plain, general statements of policy by definition are not legally binding, and our prior decisions have held that non-binding general statements of policy are rules under CRA. For example, we recently decided that Interagency Guidance on Leveraged Lending, issued jointly by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (referred to collectively as the Agencies), was a rule under CRA (Interagency Guidance decision). We found that the Interagency Guidance was a general statement of policy describing the Agencies' expectations for the sound risk management of leveraged lending activities. It explained the types of financial transactions that concern the Agencies and that might motivate them to initiate a supervisory review. The Bulletin similarly states CFPB's concerns that indirect lenders' markup and dealer compensation policies may result in discriminatory lending practices, and sets forth its expectations that indirect auto lenders take steps to ensure that these policies do not result in pricing disparities on prohibited bases.

We reached our conclusion in the Interagency Guidance decision, and in other prior GAO decisions, by examining CRA's definition of a "rule," which includes "the whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy." This definition has three key components: (1) an agency statement, (2) of future effect, and (3) designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy. We noted that this definition is broad, and includes both rules requiring notice and comment rulemaking and those that do not, such as general statements of policy. We decided that the Interagency Guidance fell squarely within CRA as an agency action that constituted a "statement of general . . . applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret or prescribe . . . pol-

icy." Similarly, the CFPB Bulletin at issue here is a statement of general applicability, since it applies to all indirect auto lenders; it has future effect; and it is designed to prescribe the Bureau's policy in enforcing fair lending laws.

Additionally, in a decision issued in 2001, we decided that a "record of decision" (ROD) issued by the Fish and Wildlife Service in connection with a federal irrigation project was a rule under CRA. We found that the ROD was a general statement of policy regarding water flow and ecosystems issues in both the Trinity and Sacramento Rivers whose essential purpose was to set policy for the future. In deciding that a general statement of policy is a rule for CRA purposes, this and other prior decisions cite to the legislative history of CRA, which confirms that rules subject to CRA requirements include general statements of policy.

CFPB did not raise any claims that the Bulletin would not be a rule under CRA pursuant to any of the three exceptions, and we can readily conclude that the Bulletin does not fall within any of the those exceptions. The Bulletin is of general and not particular applicability, does not relate to agency management or personnel, and is not a rule of agency organization, procedure or practice.

CONCLUSION

The Bulletin is a general statement of policy designed to assist indirect auto lenders to ensure that they are operating in compliance with ECOA and Regulation B, as applied to dealer markup and compensation policies. As such, it is a rule subject to the requirements of CRA.

If you have any questions about this opinion, please contact Robert J. Cramer, Managing Associate General Counsel.

Sincerely yours,

THOMAS H. ARMSTRONG,
General Counsel.

TRIBUTE TO STANLEY SPEAKS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a longtime public servant and regional director of the northwest region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in my State, Mr. Stanley Speaks. Stan has served the tribes of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest well since 1982. His distinguished career with the Federal Government spanned more than 59 years and has resulted in highly recognized and extraordinary accomplishments that stem from his established knowledge, experience, and management leadership.

Stan graduated from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK, and later obtained a master's degree in education administration. By 1959, he had begun his long career with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He served as the regional director in western Oklahoma and Kansas and came to the northwest region in 1982. There he served 14 agencies, 3 irrigation projects, and oversaw a trust land base of 6.3 million acres, covering five Northwest States. Stan also had the fiduciary trust responsibility to 45 Northwest Tribes with a membership totaling 115,000 Native-American people. As a Tribal member of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, Stan was inducted into the Chickasaw National Hall of Fame in 2002.

Stan has devoted his life's work to the advancement of Tribes and Indian

people. He has worked hard to uphold and protect Tribal treaty rights, and through his stewardship of trust property and natural resources, trust income has helped meet the individual and family needs of Tribal members. He became the regional director at a time when the Western Oregon Tribes were being restored.

Stan has long been a champion for Tribal veterans. He has supported housing, the expansion of veterans benefits, and access to healthcare. He, along with his lovely wife, Lois, are a staple at the annual veterans dinner sponsored by the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians each July.

He has assisted the federally recognized Tribes in my home State of Oregon with both advice and financial assistance on a variety of business and economic development ventures. His efforts have created hundreds of job opportunities for Indian and non-Indian people in every Tribal community across Oregon and the Northwest.

Stan has achieved countless victories for Native Americans, which will have long lasting beneficial impacts for years to come. He has been critical in maintaining the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes. Oregon has benefited from Stanley Speaks' career management and leadership contributions. His legacies of achievement for our Tribes will live on to benefit not only this generation, but for generations yet to come. I thank Stan for his service to Indian Country and to this Nation.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLOTTE BOBICKI

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and thank a dedicated community leader and civil servant, Charlotte Bobicki. She served as my regional representative in Alamosa, CO, and the San Luis Valley for 8 years.

Charlotte began her career as a first grade teacher in Albuquerque, NM. In the early 1960s, she taught second grade in Yellow Springs, MD, while her husband, Tom, served in the Army at Fort Detrick, MD.

In the late sixties, Charlotte and Tom returned to Alamosa, CO, where she was born and had attended college. Charlotte taught fifth and sixth graders at Alamosa Evans Intermediate School. She then worked with special education students before transitioning to Alamosa Middle School, where she taught math and science and served as the assistant principal. Later she became principal at Polston Primary School.

In 1997, Charlotte was elected as an Alamosa County Commissioner, where she served two 4-year terms. In 2005, Senator Ken Salazar hired her as his regional representative in Alamosa. When I was appointed to the Senate, I asked Charlotte to continue as the regional representative to Alamosa for the San Luis Valley, and she has served in that role for the last 8 years. Since

then, I have repeatedly relied on her counsel and deep knowledge of the valley.

Her relationships and devotion to the community have been invaluable, and I will miss her insights and perspective. It has been an honor to work with Charlotte, and I wish her a long and happy retirement. I know our friendship will continue for years to come.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR MICHAEL
"PAKO" BENITEZ

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Maj. Michael "Pako" Benitez for all of his hard work on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota while working in my Washington, DC, office.

Pako entered military service in 1997 and has devoted his career to the United States Armed Forces. Before his time in my office, Pako served as a flight commander and F-15E instructor weapons system officer. Pako's experiences and expertise have been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Pako for his service to our country. I wish him continued success in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO SHELLI COFFEY

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize Shelli Coffey for all of her hard work on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota while working in my Washington, DC, office.

Shelli has spent her career working at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, spending time in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. Shelli's insight into regulations and community banks has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Shelli for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. CHARLES
MCMILLAN

• Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, it is an honor to recognize Dr. Charles McMillan for his leadership and service at Los Alamos National Laboratory as he plans his retirement at the end of this year.

For 6 years, Dr. McMillan has served as director of Los Alamos, which employs some of the best and brightest minds in the Nation and is indispensable to our Nation's security and scientific and technology innovation.

It has been a pleasure to work with Dr. McMillan to support LANL's national security missions and position the lab so it will continue to play vital role in nuclear security, cutting-edge research, and scientific advances in the decades ahead.

Under Dr. McMillan's leadership, LANL has undertaken critical work to modernize our nuclear weapons complex through the Stockpile Stewardship Program.

The multidisciplinary science and engineering at LANL has also produced new materials and technologies with applications such as earth system modeling, supercomputing analysis, exploration of Mars, and improved responses to global health crises.

I have especially appreciated Dr. McMillan's commitment to working with the lab's surrounding communities in northern New Mexico.

The incredible success of Los Alamos depends on building trusting relationships with local communities.

I have been proud to work with Dr. McMillan to bring together LANL leadership, regional colleges, universities, and public schools to train more New Mexicans to become part of LANL's future workforce.

I am grateful for the steps Dr. McMillan has taken to engage with the regional coalition of LANL communities on important issues such as contracting with local small businesses and cleaning up legacy waste.

I commend Dr. McMillan for his incredible record of service to our Nation addressing some of our most complex issues and challenges.

It has been an honor for me to know Charlie, and I wish him the best in all of his future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO MARGIE ALT

• Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, Margie Alt belongs on the Mount Rushmore of environmental advocates. For more than three decades, first at U.S. PRIG and then Environment America, Margie has been one of the leading generals in this monumental fight to combat climate change and protect our environment.

It was Margie's vision that transformed U.S. PIRG and Environment America into the powerhouse environmental advocacy organization it is today, with more than 1 million members across the country. Because of her leadership, EA doesn't just stand for Environment America, it also stands for everywhere in America, because that is where she planted the seeds of grassroots change and political activation.

As a tireless consumer protection champion, she has ensured that America's air and water is clean, our beaches and waterways are protected, and the public is safeguarded from toxic threats. She led groundbreaking work to organize the majority of State Renewable Electricity Standards in America, laying the foundation for the clean energy revolution that is now unstoppable. Her voice, passion, and strategic brilliance have been indispensable as the environmental movement she helped build takes on climate deniers and corporate polluters.

For her entire career, Margie has stood up for the public's health, stood

against the special interests who would despoil our lands, and stood for integrity and progress. She is truly Massachusetts' commitment to public service personified. America has been fortunate to have had Margie Alt's extraordinary leadership for these many years, and I have been fortunate to call her my friend.●

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE
NINCEHELSE

• Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I recognize George Nincehelsner, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all the hard work he has done on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

George recently graduated from the University of Nebraska where he majored in criminal justice and received minors in Arabic, national security, and global studies. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience and who has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to George for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL
INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC
ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

• Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, today I wish to formally recognize the 40th anniversary of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, NIAAA, which is headquartered in Indianapolis, IN. Since its founding in 1977, the NIAAA has established itself as a leading professional organization for educational-based athletic programs for academic institutions nationwide. This association plays a critical role in the development of our young people as athletic administrators work tirelessly to provide access to extracurricular activities, teach strong work habits, and promote civil engagement.

December of 2017 will mark the 40th year since launching the NIAAA mission. The organization has since grown to over 11,000 members nationwide. Currently, its core curriculum consists of 45 courses with a budget over \$1.8 million. Despite the known fact that physical activity improves the overall personal development of young adults, evidence argues that the quality of coaching impacts the developmental effects of extramural sports. To ensure that positive, professional development is preserved, the NIAAA offers resources for secondary school athletic administrators to manage safe, high-quality athletic programs for all students. Along with professional educational opportunities, the NIAAA has participated in 10 years of scholarship donations totaling to \$120,000 and recognizing 600 students as scholarship essay winners.

The NIAAA's commitment to its mission and its efforts to provide developed leaders is inspiring. In acknowledgement of its success, the NIAAA became the first national association to be accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement in the post-secondary division. The NIAAA has also developed the only all-inclusive Professional Education Program and Certification Program for secondary school athletic administrators.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the NIAAA for their renowned administrators and for their dedication to America's youth. As one of Indiana's Senators, I am honored to represent the NIAAA and commend their commitment to responsible athletic administration.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:17 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1164. An act to condition assistance to the West Bank and Gaza on steps by the Palestinian Authority to end violence and terrorism against Israeli citizens.

H.R. 3317. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the penalty for female genital mutilation, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3731. An act to provide overtime pay for employees of the United States Secret Service, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to clause 11 of rule I, the Speaker removes the gentleman from Oregon, Mr. Walden, as a conferee and appoints the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Upton, to fill the vacancy thereon to the bill (H.R. 1) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:35 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 228. An act to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3317. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the penalty for female genital mutilation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3731. An act to provide overtime pay for employees of the United States Secret

Service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

S. 2192. A bill to strengthen border security, increase resources for enforcement of immigration laws, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2199. A bill to authorize appropriations for border infrastructure construction, to provide conditional resident status to certain aliens, and to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to include grounds of inadmissibility and deportability for alien members of criminal gangs and cartels, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, December 6, 2017, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 371. An act to make technical changes and other improvements to the Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. COLLINS, from the Special Committee on Aging:

Special Report entitled "America's Aging Workforce: Opportunities and Challenges" (Rept. No. 115-191).

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. GRASSLEY:

S. 2195. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide an Inspector General for the judicial branch, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MURPHY:

S. 2196. A bill to amend chapter 83 of title 41, United States Code (popularly referred to as the Buy American Act) and certain other laws with respect to certain waivers under those laws, to provide greater transparency regarding exceptions to domestic sourcing requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 2197. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the credit for increasing research activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2198. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate the financing for the Hazardous Substance Superfund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 2199. A bill to authorize appropriations for border infrastructure construction, to

provide conditional resident status to certain aliens, and to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to include grounds of inadmissibility and deportability for alien members of criminal gangs and cartels, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2200. A bill to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. COONS:

S. 2201. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve college access and college completion for all students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2202. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the National Transportation Safety Board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2203. A bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 349. A resolution commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the 2d Infantry Division; to the Committee on Armed Services.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 611

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 611, a bill to amend the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to meet the needs of homeless children, youth, and families, and honor the assessments and priorities of local communities.

S. 949

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 949, a bill to require the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to create a classification that more accurately reflects the vital role of wildland firefighters.

S. 950

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 950, a bill to correct problems pertaining to human resources for career and volunteer personnel engaged in wildland fire and structure fire.

S. 1203

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of

S. 1203, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a program under which the Administrator shall defer the designation of an area as a non-attainment area for purposes of the 8-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard if the area achieves and maintains certain standards under a voluntary early action compact plan.

S. 1514

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1514, a bill to amend certain Acts to reauthorize those Acts and to increase protections for wildlife, and for other purposes.

S. 1718

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1718, a bill to authorize the minting of a coin in honor of the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1746

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1746, a bill to require the Congressional Budget Office to make publicly available the fiscal and mathematical models, data, and other details of computations used in cost analysis and scoring.

S. 1870

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1870, a bill to amend the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 to secure urgent resources vital to Indian victims of crime, and for other purposes.

S. 1879

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1879, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1919

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1919, a bill to end the use of body-gripping traps in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

S. 1945

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1945, a bill to regulate large capacity ammunition feeding devices.

S. 1990

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1990, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the amounts payable by the Department of Veterans Affairs for dependency and in-

demnity compensation, to modify the requirements for dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain veterans rated totally disabled at the time of death, and for other purposes.

S. 2109

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2109, a bill to count revenues from military and veteran education programs toward the limit on Federal revenues that certain proprietary institutions of higher education are allowed to receive for purposes of section 487 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 2155

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2155, a bill to promote economic growth, provide tailored regulatory relief, and enhance consumer protections, and for other purposes.

S. 2159

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2159, a bill to require covered harassment and covered discrimination awareness and prevention training for Members, officers, employees, interns, fellows, and detailees of Congress within 30 days of employment and annually thereafter, to require a biennial climate survey of Congress, to amend the enforcement process under the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights for covered harassment and covered discrimination complaints, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 2195. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide an Inspector General for the judicial branch, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, to help ensure that our Federal judicial system remains free of corruption, bias, and hypocrisy, today I rise to reintroduce the Judicial Transparency and Ethics Enhancement Act. This important bill would establish within the Judicial branch an Office of Inspector General to assist the Judiciary with its ethical obligations as well as to ensure taxpayer dollars are not lost to waste, fraud, or abuse. Ensuring a fair and independent judiciary is critical to our constitutional system of checks and balances.

During my many years in Congress, I've worked hard to strengthen the oversight role of Federal Inspectors General who serve as the first line of

defense against fraud, waste and abuse. The facts demonstrate that the institution of the Inspector General has been crucial in detecting, exposing and deterring problems within our government. In collaboration with whistleblowers, Inspectors General have been extremely effective in their efforts to expose and help correct these wrongs.

I've come to rely on IGs and whistleblowers to ensure that our tax dollars are spent according to the letter and spirit of the law. And when that doesn't happen, we in Congress need to know about it and take corrective action.

During the past fiscal year, Congress appropriated roughly \$7 billion in taxpayer dollars to support the Federal judiciary. Put in context, the Small Business Administration and the Corporation for National and Community Service each received less funding than the judiciary but both entities have an Office of Inspector General. If we in Congress believed that these entities could use an Inspector General, doesn't it make good sense that the Judiciary would deserve the same assistance?

Beyond fiduciary factors, the current practice of self-regulation of judges with respect to ethics and the judicial code of conduct has time and time again proven inadequate. In fact, in the past seven years, the Senate received articles of impeachment for not one but two Federal judges.

In the first case, former Judge Samuel B. Kent, although charged with multiple counts of sexual assault, pled guilty to obstruction of justice. It took a criminal investigation by the Department of Justice to uncover his false statements made to his colleagues who were assembled to investigate him as well as substantiate the horrendous claims made against him.

In the second case, you will recall that the Senate found former Judge G. Thomas Porteous, Jr. guilty on multiple articles of impeachment, including accepting money from attorneys who had a case pending before him in his court and committing perjury by falsifying his name on bankruptcy filings. This Judge's misbehavior came to light through a federal criminal investigation, after which another judicial committee had to be organized to investigate their fellow judge.

Moreover, in each case the disgraced judge tried to game the system in order to retain his \$174,000 salary. Rather than resign their commissions, each first tried to claim disability status that would allow each to continue to receive payment, even if in prison. Then both played chicken with Congress daring us to strip them of their pay by impeaching and convicting them. I am pleased that we put our foot down and said "No."

The Judicial Transparency and Ethics Enhancement Act would establish an Office of Inspector General for the judicial branch. The IG's responsibilities would include conducting investigations of possible judicial misconduct, investigating waste fraud and

abuse, and recommending changes in laws and regulations governing the federal judiciary. The bill would require the IG to provide the Chief Justice and Congress with an annual report on its activities, as well as refer matters that may constitute a criminal violation to the Department of Justice. Further, the bill establishes important whistleblower protections for judicial branch employees to help keep the judiciary accountable.

Judges are supposed to maintain impartiality. They're supposed to be free from conflicts of interest. An independent watchdog for the federal judiciary will help its members comply with the ethics rules and promote credibility within the judicial branch of government. The Judicial Transparency and Ethics Enhancement Act will not only help ensure continued public confidence in our federal courts and keep them beyond reproach, it will strengthen our judicial branch.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2195

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Judicial Transparency and Ethics Enhancement Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR THE JUDICIAL BRANCH.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND DUTIES.—Part III of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"CHAPTER 60—INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

- "Sec.
"1021. Establishment.
"1022. Appointment, term, and removal of Inspector General.
"1023. Duties.
"1024. Powers.
"1025. Reports.
"1026. Whistleblower protection.

"§ 1021. Establishment

"There is established for the judicial branch of the Government the Office of Inspector General for the Judicial Branch (in this chapter referred to as the 'Office').

"§ 1022. Appointment, term, and removal of Inspector General

"(a) APPOINTMENT.—The head of the Office shall be the Inspector General, who shall be appointed by the Chief Justice of the United States after consultation with the majority and minority leaders of the Senate and the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives.

"(b) TERM.—The Inspector General shall serve for a term of 4 years and may be reappointed by the Chief Justice of the United States for any number of additional terms.

"(c) REMOVAL.—The Inspector General may be removed from office by the Chief Justice of the United States. The Chief Justice shall communicate the reasons for any such removal to both Houses of Congress.

"§ 1023. Duties

"With respect to the judicial branch, the Office shall—

"(1) conduct investigations of alleged misconduct in the judicial branch (other than

the United States Supreme Court) under chapter 16 that may require oversight or other action within the judicial branch or by Congress;

"(2) conduct investigations of alleged misconduct in the United States Supreme Court that may require oversight or other action within the judicial branch or by Congress;

"(3) conduct and supervise audits and investigations;

"(4) prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse; and

"(5) recommend changes in laws or regulations governing the judicial branch.

"§ 1024. Powers

"(a) POWERS.—In carrying out the duties of the Office, the Inspector General shall have the power to—

"(1) make investigations and reports;

"(2) obtain information or assistance from any Federal, State, or local governmental agency, or other entity, or unit thereof, including all information kept in the course of business by the Judicial Conference of the United States, the judicial councils of circuits, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, and the United States Sentencing Commission;

"(3) require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses, and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, and documents, which subpoena, in the case of contumacy or refusal to obey, shall be enforceable by civil action;

"(4) administer to or take from any person an oath, affirmation, or affidavit;

"(5) employ such officers and employees, subject to the provisions of title 5, governing appointments in the competitive service, and the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates;

"(6) obtain services as authorized by section 3109 of title 5 at daily rates not to exceed the equivalent rate for a position at level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of such title; and

"(7) the extent and in such amounts as may be provided in advance by appropriations Acts, to enter into contracts and other arrangements for audits, studies, analyses, and other services with public agencies and with private persons, and to make such payments as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the Office.

"(b) CHAPTER 16 MATTERS.—The Inspector General shall not commence an investigation under section 1023(1) until the denial of a petition for review by the judicial council of the circuit under section 352(c) of this title or upon referral or certification to the Judicial Conference of the United States of any matter under section 354(b) of this title.

"(c) LIMITATION.—The Inspector General shall not have the authority to—

"(1) investigate or review any matter that is directly related to the merits of a decision or procedural ruling by any judge, justice, or court; or

"(2) punish or discipline any judge, justice, or court.

"§ 1025. Reports

"(a) WHEN TO BE MADE.—The Inspector General shall—

"(1) make an annual report to the Chief Justice and to Congress relating to the activities of the Office; and

"(2) make prompt reports to the Chief Justice and to Congress on matters that may require action by the Chief Justice or Congress.

"(b) SENSITIVE MATTER.—If a report contains sensitive matter, the Inspector General may so indicate and Congress may receive that report in closed session.

"(c) DUTY TO INFORM ATTORNEY GENERAL.—In carrying out the duties of the Of-

fice, the Inspector General shall report expeditiously to the Attorney General whenever the Inspector General has reasonable grounds to believe there has been a violation of Federal criminal law.

"§ 1026. Whistleblower protection

"(a) IN GENERAL.—No officer, employee, agent, contractor, or subcontractor in the judicial branch may discharge, demote, threaten, suspend, harass, or in any other manner discriminate against an employee in the terms and conditions of employment because of any lawful act done by the employee to provide information, cause information to be provided, or otherwise assist in an investigation regarding any possible violation of Federal law or regulation, or misconduct, by a judge, justice, or any other employee in the judicial branch, which may assist the Inspector General in the performance of duties under this chapter.

"(b) CIVIL ACTION.—An employee injured by a violation of subsection (a) may, in a civil action, obtain appropriate relief."

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for part III of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"60. Inspector General for the judicial branch 1021".

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 349—COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 2D INFANTRY DIVISION

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 349

Whereas October 26, 2017, is the 100th anniversary of the organization of the 2d Infantry Division;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division— (1) was established in October 1917 at Bourmont, France, as the Second Division;

(2) was the first division organized on foreign soil; and

(3) has been proudly serving since 1917;

Whereas, the 2d Infantry Division is the only Army unit that has ever been commanded by a Marine Corps Officer because, at the time of activation, the 2d Infantry Division—

(1) was composed of both Army and Marine units; and

(2) was commanded during World War I by—

(A) Army officers Major General Omar Bundy and Major General James G. Harbord; and

(B) Marine Corps generals Brigadier General Charles A. Doyen and Major General John A. Lejeune;

Whereas, since the heroic start of the 2d Division, the 2d Division has played an integral part in United States history by serving in—

- (1) World War I;
(2) World War II;
(3) the Korean War;
(4) the Cold War;
(5) Operation Iraqi Freedom;
(6) Operation Enduring Freedom; and
(7) current operations in Korea;

Whereas, the 2d Infantry Division— (1) drew its first blood at the Battle of Belleau Wood, France in June 1918; and

(2) contributed to shattering the 4-year-old stalemate on the battlefield during the Chau-Thierry campaign that followed;

Whereas, the 2d Division played a central role in other monumental struggles of World War I, such as—

- (1) the defense of the Aisne;
- (2) the Battle of Soissons in the Aisne-Marne Offensive;
- (3) the Saint-Mihiel Offensive;
- (4) the Meuse-Argonne Offensive; and
- (5) the Battle of Blanc Mont Ridge;

Whereas, immediately after the 2d Infantry Division, commonly known as the "Indianhead Division", was established, the 2d Infantry Division started to build a prestigious reputation for its service during World War I;

Whereas, following World War I, the 2d Infantry Division was 1 of only 3 United States divisions to remain on active duty, which is a strong testament to the accomplishments of the 2d Infantry Division;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division—

(1) remained on occupation duty in Germany to enforce the Armistice until July 1919; and

(2) came to the United States for the first time in July 1919, having fought in every major United States engagement and emerging as the most decorated United States Division of the American Expeditionary Forces;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during World War I, the 2d Infantry Division was the recipient of—

- (1) French Croix de Guerre with Palm, Streamer embroidered AISNE-MARNE;
- (2) French Croix de Guerre with Palm, Streamer embroidered MEUSE-ARGONNE; and
- (3) French Fourragère;

Whereas the 2d Division established the new home of the Division in Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to test new concepts and innovations for the Army;

Whereas, in 1937, 2d Infantry Division became the first command reorganized under the new triangular concept, having 3 separate regiments in the division;

Whereas, Headquarters, 2d Division was redesignated on August 1, 1942, as Headquarters, 2d Infantry Division;

Whereas, in June 1944, the 2d Infantry Division was called to action and made the assault landing on Omaha Beach 1 day after D-Day, June 7, 1944, which began the liberation of northern Europe from Nazi control;

Whereas, during World War II, the 2d Infantry Division fought bravely in France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia from 1944 to 1945;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division continued to provide invaluable service throughout World War II, including by—

- (1) fighting for the liberation of France and Belgium;
- (2) fighting for the liberation of Trévières on June 10, 1944;
- (3) assaulting and securing Hill 192;
- (4) capturing Tinchebray on August 15, 1944;
- (5) capturing the vital port city of Brest, which was liberated in September 1944 after a fierce 28-day battle fought in streets and alleyways;
- (6) fighting at the Battle of the Bulge, where the 2d Infantry Division pierced the dreaded Siegfried Line and held critical roads leading to the cities of Liège and Antwerp;

(7) capturing the city of Breisig on March 10 to 11, 1945;

(8) crossing the Rhine to relieve the 9th Armored Division in Hadamar and Limburg an der Lahn on March 21, 1945;

- (9) capturing Merseburg on April 15, 1945;
- (10) capturing Leipzig on April 18, 1945; and
- (11) crossing into Czechoslovakia and attacking the city of Pilsen on 4 May, 1945;

Whereas 6 members of the 2d Infantry Division received the Congressional Medal of

Honor for their gallantry actions during World War II;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during World War II, the 2d Infantry Division was—

(1) the recipient of the Belgian Fourragère World War II;

(2) cited in the "Order of the Day" of the Belgian Army for action at Elsenborn Crest; and

(3) cited in the "Order of the Day" of the Belgian Army for action in the Ardennes;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division returned home to Fort Lewis, Washington on April 15, 1946;

Whereas elements of the 2d Infantry Division arrived in Korea via Pusan, on July 31, 1950, becoming the first United States unit to arrive directly in Korea from the United States;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division helped repel attackers on the Pusan Perimeter during a 16-day attack beginning on the night of August 31, 1950, in a battle in which 2d Infantry Division clerks, bandsman, technical personnel, and supply personnel all joined the fight to repel the attackers;

Whereas, the 2d Infantry Division was the first unit to break out of the Pusan Perimeter and led the Eighth Army drive to the Manchurian Border;

Whereas, on November 26, 1950, with the intervention of the Chinese in the Korean War, the 2d Infantry Division was tasked with protecting the rear and right flank of the Eighth Army;

Whereas, the 23d Regimental Combat Team, 2d Infantry Division, and the French Battalion were cut off and surrounded by 3 Chinese Divisions on February 13, 1951 at Chipyeong-ni, but fiercely fought freezing weather conditions and overwhelming Communist forces for more than 3 days, killing over 5,000 enemies while possessing about 1/10 of the enemies' strength;

Whereas the 23d Regimental Combat Team, 2d Infantry Division, gave the first major defeat to the Chinese at the battle of Chipyeong-Ni, a turning point in the Korean War;

Whereas 20 members of the 2d Infantry Division earned the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Korean War;

Whereas, in recognition of exemplary service during the Korean War, the 2d Infantry Division was the recipient of—

- (1) the Presidential Unit Citation Streamer embroidered HONGCHON;
- (2) the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation Streamer embroidered NAKTONG RIVER LINE; and
- (3) the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation Streamer embroidered KOREA;

Whereas, after 3 years of fighting in Korea, the 2d Infantry Division was transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington, arriving on October 7, 1954;

Whereas, the 2d Infantry Division was restructured with personnel and equipment from the 10th Infantry Division in the spring of 1958, and moved to Fort Benning, Georgia;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division provided support for 3 brigades supported by armor, cavalry, and artillery under the Reorganization Objective Army Division concept in April 1964;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division returned to Korea on July 1, 1965, and exchanged personnel and equipment with the 1st Cavalry Division;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division was assigned to guard portions of the demilitarized zone to keep the peace and help deter war on the Korean peninsula;

Whereas members of the 1st Battalion, 23d Infantry, 2d Infantry Division, were killed in an North Korean ambush on November 2, 1966;

Whereas 16 members of the Armed Forces of the United States were killed by enemy attacks in the demilitarized zone;

Whereas Captain Arthur G. Bonifas and First Lieutenant Mark T. Barrett of the United Nations Joint Security Force were attacked and killed during a routine tree-trimming operation on August 18, 1976;

Whereas, in response, the United Nations Command launched Operation Paul Bunyan at 0700 hours on August 21, 1976, when a Republic of Korea Special Forces Company, the 9th Infantry, and B Company, 2d Engineer Battalion, moved in to cut down the infamous Panmunjeom Tree while supported by B-52 bombers and F-5 and F-11 fighter jets aboard a Midway Task Force aircraft carrier standing by just offshore;

Whereas members of the 2d Infantry Division, proudly wearing "Imjin Scout" patches, patrolled the demilitarized zone throughout the 1980s until 1992, and then remained deployed along the border;

Whereas the 3d Brigade, 2d Infantry Division—

(1) was reactivated at Fort Lewis, Washington on April 16, 1995, as part of I Corps; and

(2) became the first interim Brigade Combat Team in the Army in May 2000, later to be equipped with Stryker vehicles;

Whereas, in the defense of United States interests, the 4th Brigade deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from November 2003 to November 2004;

Whereas, in August 2004, the 2d Brigade, 2d Infantry Division, deployed with the Republic of Korea Army, representing the first operational deployment from the Republic of Korea;

Whereas the 2d Brigade Combat Team, 2d Infantry Division, was given control of the Eastern half of Ar-Ramadi under the direct command of the 1st Marine Division;

Whereas elements of the 2d Infantry Division were attached to the 2d Marine Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom, a reversal of their respective roles during World War I, where the 5th and 6th Marine Regiment of the 1st Marine Division fought under the United States Army 2d Infantry Division;

Whereas the 2d Brigade, 2d Infantry Division, fought in the Fallujah Offensive in November 2004, which provided Iraqis the opportunity to vote in the historic national elections of January 2005;

Whereas the 2d Brigade, 2d Infantry Division, provided humanitarian relief to hospitals, schools, and hundreds of Iraqi civilians who had been displaced;

Whereas the 2d Brigade, 2d Infantry Division, redeployed from Iraq to Fort Carson, Colorado in August 2005;

Whereas the 3d Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2d Infantry Division, deployed from Fort Lewis, Washington, to assist the Iraqi security forces with counterinsurgency operations in the Ninewa Province in support of Iraqi Freedom from June 2006 to September 2007;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division transformed into the Republic of Korea-United States Combined Division with a Republic of Korea Army unit on June 3, 2015, in a cooperative designed to strengthen the operational capabilities of both the Republic of Korea Army and the United States Army;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division is the last remaining permanently forward-stationed division in the United States Army;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division has been deterring aggression and maintaining peace on the Korean Peninsula since 1965;

Whereas the 2d Infantry Division received 2 Korean Presidential Unit Citations for its outstanding service in Korea from 1950 to the present; and

Whereas, since the establishment of the 2d Infantry Division in 1917—

(1) elements of the 2d Infantry Division have been present all over the world, assisting in combat and noncombat missions for 100 years;

(2) more than 13,200 members of the 2d Infantry Division have sacrificed their lives in combat; and

(3) 40 members of the 2d Infantry Division have received the Medal of Honor in total: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates “A Century of Service”, the 100th anniversary of the 2d Infantry Division on October 26, 2017;

(2) commends the 2d Infantry Division, now known as the “Indianhead”, for continuing to exemplify the motto of the 2d Infantry Division, “Second to None!” and “Fight Tonight!”;

(3) honors the memory of the more than 13,200 members of the 2d Infantry Division who lost their lives in battle;

(4) expresses gratitude and support for all members and veterans of the 2d Infantry Division and their families; and

(5) recognizes that the 2d Infantry Division holds an honored place in United States history.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I have 8 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room SD-406 to conduct a hearing on the following nomination: R. D. James, of Missouri, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army, Department of Defense.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Adapting to Defend the Homeland Against the Evolving International Terrorist Threat”.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

The Committee on Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room SD-226 to conduct a hearing entitled “Firearm Accessory Regulation and Enforcing Federal and State Reporting to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NCIS).”

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-

628 to conduct a hearing on S. 1870, “The Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment Act”.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-628 to conduct a hearing on S. 644, “Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act of 2017” and S. 1770, “Hualapai Tribe Waters Rights Settlement Act of 2017”.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-562 to conduct a hearing entitled “America’s Aging Workforce: Opportunities and Challenges”.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SUPERFUND, WASTE MANAGEMENT, AND REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

The Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight of the Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-406 to conduct a hearing entitled “Challenges Facing Superfund and Waste Cleanup Efforts Following Natural Disasters”.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEAR EAST, SOUTH ASIA, AND COUNTERTERRORISM

The Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, and Counterterrorism of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Beyond ISIS: Countering Terrorism, Radicalization, and Promoting Stability in North Africa.”

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a military fellow in my office, Capt. Sam Burke, be granted floor privileges for the duration of my remarks.

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

DISCHARGE AND REFERRAL—S. 2146

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 2146 and the bill be referred to the Committee on Finance.

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

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2192

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk that is 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 (S. 2192) to strengthen border security, increase resources for enforcement of immigration laws, and for other purposes.

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

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2199

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2199) to authorize appropriations for border infrastructure construction, to provide conditional resident status to certain aliens, and to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to include grounds of inadmissibility and deportability for alien members of criminal gangs and cartels, and for other purposes.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of Calendar No. 167, the nomination of Susan Bodine to be an Assistant Administrator of EPA. I further ask that there be 30 minutes of debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on confirmation with no intervening action or debate, 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.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2017

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, December 7; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that

following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each until 11 a.m.; I further ask that at 11 a.m., Senator STRANGE be recognized for up to 30 minutes; finally, that at 11:45 a.m., the Senate proceed to executive

session to consider the Balash nomination as under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come be-

fore the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:46 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF FINLAND'S
CENTENNIAL

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise on behalf of the Congressional Friends of Finland Caucus in recognition of Finland's Centennial. For a generation of Finns, this is the most significant commemorative year in their lifetime.

The significance of the anniversary comes with good reason. A century ago, on December 6, 1917, Finland declared itself an independent republic and rejected its status as an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia. As is often the case, independence is not easily won. Soon after breaking away from Tsarist Russia, the country descended into civil war with neighbor pitted against neighbor. However, from the struggle of war, something incredible happened: the Finnish people emerged with renewed purpose and a new national identity.

After 100 years of democracy, Finland has become a shining example to the world of what monumental achievements can be made in a short time. Today, Finland is the pinnacle of Nordic values and culture, a proud member state of the European Union, and a key political and economic partner of the United States. The deep relationships between the United States and Finland cannot be overstated. The United States is the third largest trading partner of Finland and in addition, around 250 Finnish-owned companies, which directly employ about 34,000 people, are based in the United States. Truly, US-Finland relations have never been stronger.

And just a few short months ago, President Trump hosted President Niinistö at the White House. There the Presidents discussed Finland's leadership of the Arctic Council, the coalition to defeat ISIS, and cybersecurity. Furthermore, President Trump pledged an additional half-million dollars to the Fulbright Finland Foundation so that the United States could send more of our brightest students to study and form lasting relationships in Finland.

Our peoples share many common values and interests that make Finns and Americans readily identify with one another. Hard work and the drive to succeed have benefitted both our peoples and embody some of our most deeply-held virtues.

In light of these shared interests and the strong relationship between our peoples, I congratulate all Finns on 100 years of independence. Continued cooperation between our nations will make Finland's second century as robust and vibrant as the first and my colleagues in the House and I look forward to closely working with our Finnish counterparts towards that end. Thank you, Finland, for being a valued friend to the United States and happy centennial.

HONORING THE MINNESOTA CHAPTER OF THE COUNCIL ON AMERICAN ISLAMIC RELATIONS

HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today in recognition of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Council on American-Islamic Relations—Minnesota Chapter (CAIR-MN). CAIR-MN works, as part of a nationwide network of chapters, to diligently protect and enhance some of the fundamental principles that have shaped America since its inception. They fight to defend the constitutional right to religious freedom. They promote community engagement, inspire civic activism, and defend civil liberties. CAIR-MN's work with Muslims in America has expanded the notions of social justice in our communities and supported the active participation of all our nations' citizens and residents.

Today, too many Americans have a distorted, inaccurate, or unclear understanding of Muslims, who they are, and what they believe. Fortunately, for ten years now, CAIR-MN has taken on the truly difficult, necessary, and rewarding task of dispelling misinformation, enhancing our society's understanding of Muslims and Islam, and combatting bigotry and intolerance. It is my hope that CAIR-MN will continue its remarkable contribution to our society for many more decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing CAIR-MN for the ten years of invaluable service they have provided to the State of Minnesota and the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING THE MULTIFAITH ALLIANCE FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES AND AFYA FOUNDATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an important event in my district-sponsored by the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees and the Afya Foundation. Last week, these two organizations collected much-needed supplies to benefit those who have suffered from the Syrian civil war.

The Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees has a powerful story to tell. A coalition of over 90 organizations, it has facilitated a partnership between Israeli and Syrian organizations to help deliver critical humanitarian assistance, including food and medicine, to people inside Syria. Containers of donated assistance arrive at Israeli ports, where the Israeli Defense Forces transport the supplies to the Syrian border for distribution by Syrian organizations inside Syria.

Joining the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees is the Afya Foundation, which has a

record of collecting supplies for humanitarian crises all over the world.

The event in Yonkers, New York will build upon similar events and campaigns which have raised over \$66 million of life-saving assistance.

I applaud the participants in Yonkers, the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees, the Afya Foundation and all those Americans who have made an effort to help those in desperate need in Syria. I recognize that the Syrian crisis will not be resolved by sending humanitarian assistance. For that, we will need a political solution. However, if we can help a family access food and medicine, help them realize that America has not forgotten them, then we can offer them hope for an end to the violence and war.

HONORING CARTER GILMORE

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and service of a pillar of the Oakland community, the Honorable Carter Gilmore. Although Mr. Gilmore passed away in 2006, the Oakland African American Museum and Library will be unveiling an exhibit focused on his life and career on December 9th, 2017.

Carter Gilmore was born on May 30th, 1926 in Grapeland, Texas, and served in the US Navy during World War II. In 1947 he married Liz Hampton, and the couple soon moved to Oakland, where Mr. Gilmore worked as a plant manager for Granny Goose Foods.

In 1977, Mr. Gilmore made history when he became the first African American elected to the Oakland City Council. During his tenure, which lasted until 1990, Mr. Gilmore made important contributions to the City of Oakland through his role in the creation of the citizen's police review board, and the city's anti-blight ordinance, among many other initiatives and accomplishments.

In addition to his work on the City Council, Mr. Gilmore was also an active member of his church, Bethel Missionary Baptist, starting when he first moved to Oakland in the 1950's.

Mr. Gilmore's life was guided by a belief that we should all work to improve our communities, and the lives of our neighbors. He was also staunchly committed to civil rights.

That belief in social justice led him to join the Alameda branch of the NAACP, and he later served as the chapter president. He also served as president of the NAACP's Northern California division. In 1990, he helped lead the investigation into racial discrimination against African American employees at UPS, resulting in the largest settlement in the NAACP's history to that point.

On a personal note, Carter was one of the first people to act as a mentor and advisor to me as I began my career working for Congressman Dellums. He always took time to

• 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.

help clarify issues for me, and he was a true trailblazer who educated our community about the importance of black political power. I will always remember his wise counsel and his friendship.

Though Carter Gilmore died in 2006, his trailblazing legacy as the City of Oakland's first African American elected to the City Council continues to inspire younger generations to aspire for heights that they may not have ever considered without his example.

Today, the Oakland African American Museum and Library is unveiling an exhibit dedicated to Carter Gilmore's life and legacy. Therefore, on behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, I join the family and friends of Carter Gilmore in celebrating his life of public service. I offer my sincerest gratitude to him for all that he did to pave the way for future generations of community-oriented leaders.

HONORING MELODY
WATTENBARGER

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Melody Wattenbarger, the CEO and President of Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico. Ms. Wattenbarger has worked tirelessly to fight hunger for over 30 years.

As CEO and President of Roadrunner Food Bank, Melody created innovative approaches to aid families facing hunger across New Mexico. Her leadership enabled the food bank to assist 70,000 people each week. She created and strengthened key partnerships across communities, including partnerships with schools, doctors, private industry leaders, senior centers, and food pantries. Melody was the founding President of the board for the New Mexico Association of Food Banks from 1999 to 2004 and continues to hold a seat on the board

Melody Wattenbarger's leadership in hunger relief has not only helped New Mexicans; she was the founding executive director of the High Plains Food Bank in Amarillo, Texas, she worked for the National Food Bank Network (Feeding America), and she regularly served on a variety of Feeding America committees. Melody was named the 2017 John van Hengel Fellow by Feeding America. The award "recognizes the recipient for their leadership, local impact, national influence, commitment, and entrepreneurial spirit in the area of hunger relief."

I am proud to honor Ms. Melody Wattenbarger for her leadership in the fight against hunger. Her efforts are inspirational to the entire community in New Mexico. I am confident that even in retirement she will remain an advocate for families experiencing hunger and her community will be better for her involvement.

CONDEMNING ETHNIC CLEANSING
OF ROHINGYA AND CALLING FOR
AN END TO ATTACKS IN AND AN
IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO
RAKHINE, BURMA

SPEECH OF

HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 90, which condemns ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calls for an end to the attacks, and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma.

Many consider the Rohingya one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.

The stories that have come out in recent weeks and days are devastating and horrific.

The waves of brutally violent campaigns against the civilians—marked by mass killings, sexual violence, and forced displacement—have resulted in one of the fastest-growing refugee crises of our time.

Women, who account for the majority of those inside the refugee camps, face widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence, and some are even being sold as sex slaves.

Just like our zero-tolerance policy towards persecution within our borders, we must be crystal clear that the United States will not tolerate the persecution of innocent men, women, and children around the world.

I strongly believe that, with the help of the international community, we will find a peaceful solution to this crisis, despite various obstacles in our way.

This resolution is one step forward in that direction.

HONORING SERGEANT MAJOR
ROBERT HAWKINS

HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sergeant Major Robert Hawkins of the United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our Nation. Sergeant Major Hawkins will soon transition from his current assignment as an Army Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the House of Representatives to serve in The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology.

A native of Alexandria, Virginia, Sergeant Major Hawkins began his military career as an Airborne Infantryman in 1990. He subsequently served in assignments to Fort Kobbe, Republic of Panama; Fort Myers, Florida; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Fort Polk, Louisiana; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and thrice at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Sergeant Major Hawkins has served in multiple leadership and staff positions throughout his career. His combat deployments include one tour in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and three tours in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2014, Sergeant Major Hawkins was selected as a Fellow in the Army Congressional Fellowship Program. He subsequently served twelve months as a Defense Legislative Fellow in my office, representing the First Congressional District of Minnesota. While working on my team, I came to know Sergeant Major Hawkins as a shining example of the Army Values set forth in the Noncommissioned Officer Creed. Competence is indeed Sergeant Major Hawkins' watchword, and his commitment to doing what good NCOs do, accomplishing the mission taking care of his teammates, was second to none.

For next two years, Sergeant Major Hawkins served as a Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the United States Army House Liaison Division. As the primary liaison between Members of the House of Representatives, their Staffs, Committees, and the Army, he has provided insight and understanding of Army policies, actions, operations, and requirements. His first-hand knowledge of the military, its culture, and traditions has been of tremendous value to Congressional offices. Sergeant Major Hawkins was especially effective in his service to Members and staff as he escorted them on fact-finding and oversight delegations within and outside the United States. Members and staff found him to be a thoughtful, intelligent, and dedicated Soldier in the best traditions of America's Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a pleasure to know and serve with Sergeant Major Hawkins during his time as an Army Congressional Fellow and Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the House of Representatives. On behalf of a grateful Nation, it is my honor to recognize the selfless service and sacrifice of Sergeant Major Robert Hawkins and his family. I wish Sergeant Major Hawkins the very best as he begins a new chapter of dedicated service to our nation in the United States Army.

NORTHWEST INDIANA ISLAMIC
CENTER 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I congratulate the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center, as its members and leaders join together to celebrate the center's 25th anniversary. In honor of this special occasion, the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center will be hosting an anniversary dinner on December 10, 2017, at the Avalon Manor in Merrillville, Indiana.

In the early 1990's, a small group of the Muslim population in Northwest Indiana decided to purchase property in the area with a vision to provide a spiritual home for its members, offering religious education and a place for prayer, worship, and community services. The original structure, completed in 1992, was quickly outgrown as the membership grew. In 1999, a new prayer hall and community center were completed. Today, the center is home to over one hundred families, and Friday prayer services are attended by more than three hundred individuals. The Northwest Indiana Islamic Center provides numerous activities and services, accommodating Muslim and non-Muslim individuals and families throughout

Northwest Indiana. These include consultation services, Qur'an reading and memorization services, ceremonial and religious services, interfaith dialogues, humanitarian relief services, and numerous youth programs, to name a few. In addition, there are two Islamic weekend schools and two Islamic full-time schools on its premises.

Northwest Indiana is not only grateful, but proud to have the support of the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center for the past twenty-five years. I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to recognize the exceptional leadership of this noteworthy organization. The Board of Trustees includes Arshad Malak, Hakam Safadi, Hytham Rifai, Nabil Shabeeb, and Wahbi Adad. The Board of Directors is comprised of President Abdul Fatah Adisa, Vice President Omar Estwani, Treasurer Isam Abdo, and Secretary Ferrass Safadi, as well as former Presidents Fadel Shaaban and Shahabul Arfeen, and Osama Salameh, Ashraf Tebry, and Rami Musleh. For their significant contributions to their community, the members and leaders of the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center are worthy of the highest praise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center on its 25th anniversary. For their remarkable dedication to service and for touching the lives of countless individuals, the organization's leaders and members are worthy of the blessings that have been bestowed upon them.

HONORING HARRY O. BLACKWELL

HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Trenton's beloved Harry O. Blackwell, affectionately known as "Chubby."

I was saddened to hear of his untimely passing; he was a tireless advocate for youth programming for decades in our capital city.

When we examine the life and passion of Chubby Blackwell, his compassion for the youth cannot be ignored. He dedicated his life to mentoring and teaching young people skills that could transform their future. Countless Trenton youth have memories of participating in sports leagues, golf lessons, and summer camps because of Chubby Blackwell.

Chubby's advocacy for children was effective because he made it his business to know the whole family. For many, Chubby Blackwell was that consistent and strong life force that kept them on the straight and narrow. Chubby had a zero tolerance for foolishness; his love was not always friendly—sometimes tough—but always consistent.

Today as we celebrate Chubby we celebrate a life of service to others whose impact will be felt for generations because his commitment was purposeful and motivated by love.

God Bless Chubby Blackwell and thank you to his beautiful family for having shared him with countless young people and indeed this entire community.

I urge my colleagues to join me in remembering the life of Chubby Blackwell and send-

ing our sincere condolences to his friends, family, and to the families he has helped over the years. May Chubby be blessed and rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR PRO-TEM YVONNE JOHNSON

HON. MARK WALKER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson, from Guilford County. I am honored to acknowledge Mrs. Johnson as she receives The Order of the Long Leaf Pine. Awarded for exemplary service to the community and the State of North Carolina that is considered above and beyond the call of duty, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine is among the most prestigious awards conferred by the Governor. Mrs. Johnson has continually worked to make a positive impact in North Carolina. The citizens of Greensboro, Guilford County, and the entire state of North Carolina are truly fortunate to have Mrs. Johnson, an outstanding representative of our community and country. I join with her family, friends, and the Sixth District in thanking Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson for her dedicated service to the city of Greensboro and the United States of America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for the votes on the Motion to Go To Conference on H.R. 1 (Roll Call No. 653) and the Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 1 (Roll Call No. 654). Had I been present, I would have voted nay on Roll Call No. 653 and I would have voted yea on Roll Call No. 654.

REMEMBERING NEIL ETSON

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to remember Neil Etson of Olney, Illinois, who passed away on December 2, 2017, at the age of 93 surrounded by his family at the homestead he built fifty years ago.

Neil dedicated his life to service to others, serving his country, his church, and his community.

In May the Rotary Club of Richland County presented Neil with the Quilt of Valor for his service during World War II, where he served honorably as a Staff Sergeant with the 766th Military Police Battalion.

However, anyone who met him knows that Neil's first and foremost priority was his family, especially Frances, his wife of 66 years, their three children, ten grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

The Olney community has lost a dedicated entrepreneur and community leader. Yet while we mourn his loss, we should remember that Neil Etson's legacy lives on in his family and in the three children's books that he authored based on a lifetime of stories shared with his family.

CONDEMNING ETHNIC CLEANSING OF ROHINGYA AND CALLING FOR AN END TO ATTACKS IN AND AN IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO RAKHINE, BURMA

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support of House Concurrent Resolution 90 which condemns the attacks against civilians by Burma's (also known as Myanmar) security services and calls on Burma's Commander-in-Chief, Min Aung Hlaing, to end such attacks in the state of Rakhine.

I share the sentiments of this Resolution that expresses appreciation for the government of Bangladesh for providing refuge to those fleeing violence.

As the Resolution does, I, too, condemn the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army attacks, but also warn that these attacks do not justify the response that has resulted in severe human rights violations and atrocities against civilians.

Rightfully so, the Resolution calls on Burma's government and military and security forces to: (1) implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, and (2) allow humanitarian access to refugees and internally displaced persons.

Further, the bill urges support and access for the United Nations Fact Finding Mission to Burma, and I strongly support that effort.

The Resolution calls on Burma's military and government to allow refugees to return to Burma and to change laws and policies that have contributed to insecurity in the state of Rakhine.

And last but not least, the Resolution calls on the President to impose sanctions on those responsible for human rights abuses, including members of Burma's military and security services.

Over the past month, 436 thousand Rohingya have fled from their homes in Myanmar's western Rakhine State to neighboring Bangladesh.

This is the second exodus of Rohingya, members of a Muslim ethnic minority, in the past year.

The current exodus, like the previous one in October 2016 that led 87 thousand to flee, is being driven by a brutal government crackdown following attacks by armed Rohingya.

Despite calls from international rights groups for stronger action to stop the violence, there appears to be little appetite within the wider international community for more robust intervention.

Permitting the current crisis to unfold, however, eats away at its credibility and threatens peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

On August 25, militants attacked 30 police posts and an army base in northern Rakhine

State, killing ten police officers, a soldier, and an immigration official.

Following this attack, the government designated the organization responsible, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), also known as Harakah al-Yaqin, a terrorist group.

Security forces have responded with indiscriminate force against the Rohingya community.

Shamefully, security forces have razed entire villages to the ground and have killed, tortured, and raped civilians.

The United Nations has previously described the October 2016 violence against the Rohingya as “crimes against humanity,” and on September 11 the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Raad al-Hussein, referred to the current situation as “a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.”

The government of Myanmar (also known as Burma) has denied these accusations.

Instead, Myint Swe—a former chief of military intelligence—said that “people from abroad have fabricated news claiming genocide.”

I am all too familiar with the instance of a head of government denying his own shameful actions by blaming an imaginary fake news source.

The Myanmar government insists it is only targeting “terrorists.”

With hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fleeing, many of whom are women and children, the government’s claim rings false.

The UN estimates that children make up about 60 percent of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Although Myanmar has refused to allow international fact-finding missions into the country, groups including the UN, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International, which interviewed Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, have documented atrocities committed by security forces.

I am proud to be on the right side of history today, standing here in Congress, to speak out on my support for these human rights organizations that fight against anti-democratic governments that would go as far as backing genocide.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MRS. ANNIE JACKSON

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Annie Jackson of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who passed away at the age of 99 on October 27, 2017. Mrs. Jackson was born in Waynesboro, Georgia and received her education in the Georgia State School system. She held a variety of jobs in her lifetime and retired from the Broward County School System, where she worked for over 29 years.

At the age of fourteen, Mrs. Jackson’s spiritual life began at the Third Chapel Church in Midville, Georgia. She later joined and continued to serve at New Hope Baptist Church, until her health began to fail. Married to the late Mr. Jackson, Mrs. Jackson spent her time ministering to the needs of her church, family, and community.

Mrs. Jackson led her family by example as a strong Christian loving mother, and endless server of her community. Fond memories of her will forever remain with her son Rayford Smith; her sisters Florence Smith and Mae Julian Smith; four grand-children; three great grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren; a great-great grandniece; her caretaker and host of other relatives and friends.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Annie Jackson will be remembered by the many people she touched in her 99 years of life. She was truly a shining star of the Fort Lauderdale community. I am so grateful to honor her life and legacy. She will be missed tremendously.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. LARRY
SPIKES

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Mr. Larry Spikes for thirty five years of dedicated service to the constituents of Kings County.

A Central Valley native, Larry Spikes attended California State University, Fresno, where he received his Bachelor’s of Science degree in Accounting in 1981 and later received his Master’s degree in Public Administration in 1992. He and his wife, Kristine, have been married for thirty five years and have three children, their son, Austin and twin daughters, Madison and Taylor.

In 1981, Larry began his career at the County of Kings as an Accountant before transferring to the Administrative Office as Deputy County Administrative Officer (CAO) in 1986. He served in that capacity until November 1993, when he was named County Administrative Officer.

In 1996, Mr. Spikes served on California Governor Peter Wilson’s Trial Court Funding Task Force on Court Employees and from 1997 to 2016, he served as the Representative for the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) on the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

Additionally, Larry served as the President of the County Administrative Officer’s Association of California from October 2002 to October 2003. In 2008, he was appointed as a board member for the California State Association of Counties Finance Corporation where he served until 2015. He was elected to a CAO’s position on the County Medical Services Program Governing Board in 2012. Today, Mr. Spikes is currently serving on the Court Facilities Advisory Committee for California Supreme Court Chief Justice Tani Cantil Sakauye.

Outside of work, Mr. Spikes is a long-time member of the Rotary Club of Hanford and serves on the board of the Disabled American Veteran’s Charities of Central California.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Mr. Larry Spikes on his retirement, for his service to the people of Kings County and wishing him well as he embarks on the next chapter of his life.

HONORING DAVID WEINSOFF

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of David Weinsoff for his 12 years of dedicated service as a member and Mayor of the Fairfax Town Council.

After graduating from University of New York at Binghamton with a bachelor’s degree in History, Mr. Weinsoff pursued a Juris Doctor at the University of Bridgeport School of Law (now Quinnipiac College School of Law). Mr. Weinsoff has since built a distinguished legal career prosecuting citizen suits under the federal Clean Water Act, the California Coastal Act, and local government laws representing the government and nonprofit agencies.

In the mid-nineties Mr. Weinsoff relocated from San Francisco to Fairfax, California, with his wife and young child. In addition to building his private practice, Mr. Weinsoff deepened his commitment to public service and the environment through volunteer roles on the Town of Fairfax Planning Commission, Marin Municipal Water District’s Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee, and as a founding member of the Fairfax Open Space Committee, among others. And, after retiring from seven years on the Marin Conversation League Board, he continued to support the organization as its legal counsel.

Mr. Weinsoff was elected to Fairfax Town Council in 2005. Over the course of his 12-year tenure, he would serve two terms as mayor and vice mayor, as well as on a wide array of community boards and organizations, including the Marin County Flood Zone 9 Advisory Board, the Ross Valley Fire Department Board, and the Measure “A” Committee. Known for his active leadership, the strength of his convictions and his commitment to public service, David’s enduring contributions to Fairfax and to Marin County will be felt for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, David Weinsoff’s service has left many lasting and positive impacts on his community, and I am certain he will continue his public service in a variety of ways in the days ahead. It is therefore fitting and appropriate that we honor him on the occasion of his final town council meeting, and extend to him our appreciation for his past—and future—civic engagement.

VILLAGE OF MAMARONECK
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, We are fortunate in New York’s 16th Congressional District to have some of the finest first-responders anywhere in the country. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the Village of Mamaroneck, where the Village Volunteer Fire Department has provided its citizens with courageous fire protection for 129 years.

The Village of Mamaroneck Volunteer Fire department is comprised of a highly skilled

dedicated team committed to providing the highest level of safety, protection of life, property and the environment to those who live, work or play in our community. The five fire companies that comprise the department: Hook & Ladder Co., No. 1, Mamaro Engine & Hose Co. No. 1, Columbia Engine & Hose Co. No. 2, Volunteers Engine & Hose Co. No. 3, and Halstead Manor Engine & Hose Co. No. 4 operate out of four fire stations with over 200 volunteers. The Mamaroneck Fire Department operates with five Engines, two Aerial Trucks, two Utility Trucks, three Chiefs Vehicles, and one Fire Boat and responds to approximately 800 fire emergencies a year.

The Mamaroneck Fire Department has always done an outstanding job keeping its citizens safe, and as a result The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman is honoring the department at their 25th Anniversary celebration. They have chosen to acknowledge an incredible partner in the community. I too would like to congratulate the Village of Mamaroneck Fire Department Day in recognition of the significant impact they have made and continue to make in the community, and as a partner with The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman in serving the elders of our community.

ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHT TO
COMBAT EXTREMISM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I held a hearing on advancing human rights to counter extremism. Today's hearing explored ways to combat violent extremism by advancing fundamental human rights—in particular, freedom of religion.

Advancing freedom of religion, both as an end in of itself and as means to achieve peace, stability and human flourishing, should be a core objective of U.S. foreign policy.

Religious liberty is opposed, however, by extremists who seek to impose their vision of an ideal society upon all. Oftentimes, the "choice" they give to those who seek to adhere to the beliefs they were raised in boils down to convert or die.

This clash manifests itself in numerous parts of the world, in varying degrees of intensity, but is particularly acute in certain Muslim-dominated regions, where groups such as ISIS, al-Nusra, Boko Haram and al-Shabaab seek to bring all under their sway.

To personalize this, let me tell you about a victim of Boko Haram that I have gotten to know.

On a trip to Nigeria, at an IDP camp in Jos, I met Habila Adamu.

Dragged from his home by Boko Haram terrorists, he was ordered to renounce his faith.

With an AK-47 pressed to his face, he was asked "are you ready to die as a Christian." With amazing courage Habila answered, "yes, I am ready to die as a Christian."

He was asked a second time and he repeated his answer—"yes I am ready to die as a Christian."

This time, the terrorist pulled the trigger. A bullet ripped through Habila's face. He crumpled to the ground, left for dead.

By some miracle, he survived.

I asked Habila to come to Washington, D.C. to tell his story. At a Congressional hearing I chaired, Habila told my committee—"I am alive because God wants you to have this message—knowing Christ" is so much "deeper" than merely knowing Boko Haram's story of hate and intolerance.

He closed his testimony with this—"do everything you can to end this ruthless religious persecution. . . but know Christ first"

It should be stressed that extremist groups such as Boko Haram coerce and oppress not only members of other faiths, but also and in particular members of the Muslim faith whose interpretation of Islam differs from that of the extremists. They also target converts, whose consciences lead them to choose a different path.

To combat these extremists, the ideological battlefield is just as important as the territorial one. By emphasizing human rights principles, we counter extremist messaging, support moderate voices and promote the popular aspirations of people around the world who simply want to live in peace and freedom.

Last year, an important weapon in the fight against extremism was passed by Congress and signed into law: The Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. This law provides tools and resources to our State Department to integrate religious freedom into our diplomacy the world over in order to counter violent extremism abroad.

In building upon the landmark International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, this law addresses the changed circumstances in the world since 1998 by designating non-state extremist groups such as Boko Haram and ISIS as "violent non-state actors," making it easier to ostracize and apply financial sanctions against their members, thereby helping starve extremists of resources.

The law strengthens the ability to investigate and monitor religious persecution, creating a "Designated Persons List" of violators while also setting up a database of those detained, imprisoned and tortured for their faith, so that the victims are not forgotten, but rather can be more readily advocated for. Indeed, the Frank Wolf Act elevates the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, thereby enhancing the ability to advocate on behalf of victims of religious persecution.

Finally, the Act requires that our Foreign Service Officers undergo training in religious liberty, so that they are able to integrate this important tool into their daily work.

Before we move on to my colleagues' remarks, I would like to thank my friend and colleague, Congressman FRANCIS ROONEY, the former United States ambassador to the Holy See, for his interest in this subject Today's hearing was brought about in large part due to his persistent interest in these themes, and I want to thank him for joining our subcommittee for this hearing today.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MRS. NEZZIE MARION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy Mrs. Nezzie O. Mar-

ion of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who passed away at the age of 102 on October 14, 2017. Born on May 15, 1915 to Mr. & Mrs. Allanza and Katie Oglesby, Mrs. Marion was Georgia-born and raised.

Married to the late Mr. Willie Preston Marion in 1937, the young couple moved to Fort Lauderdale in 1940. Mrs. Marion's spiritual life began at a young age. She was a faithful member of the New Mount Olive Baptist Church for 77 years, where she served on the Usher Board and the Pulpit Aide Ministry.

Mrs. Marion led her family by example as a strong Christian loving mother, embodying what it means to be a true servant to her community. Fond memories of her will forever remain with her four children: Willie Marion, Polly Harden, Lonzie Marion, and Beverly Hardemon; two sisters: Mary Caldwell and Annie Wallace; eleven grandchildren, nineteen great grandchildren, and eight great-great grandchildren, along with a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and other loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Nezzie O. Marion will be remembered by the many people she touched in her 102 years of life. She was truly a blessing to the Fort Lauderdale community. I am so pleased to honor her life and legacy. She will be dearly missed.

ENHANCING VETERAN CARE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 1266, the Enhancing Veteran Care Act.

I support this legislation because it would establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the capacity to conduct independent analysis of the healthcare services provided by the VA to our nation's veterans.

The Enhancing Veteran Care Act would authorize the Secretary to contract with nonprofit private healthcare auditors and investigators to investigate a VA Medical Center and to then, assess and report deficiencies found at the medical center.

This bill will not vacate the authority of the Inspector General or the Government Accountability Office from conducting investigations of VA medical facilities.

Mr. Speaker, the reason this important legislation is needed is illustrated by the tragic and heart breaking cases of thousands of veterans who were left waiting for care for serious medical conditions.

The debt that we owe to our nation's veterans is immeasurable. Their sacrifices, and those of their families, are freedom's foundation.

Without the brave efforts of all the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and Coast Guardsmen and women and their families, our country would not live so freely.

In the State of Texas we have 1,099,141 Veterans under the age of 65 and 590,618 who are over the age of 65. There are over 1,689,759 veterans living in our state.

The 18th Congressional District has 20,607 under age 65 and 9,844 Veterans over the age of 65.

Nationwide more than 9 million veterans and their families enrolled in the VA health care system in 2014,

In the city of Houston, the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Hospital Center, serves the health care needs of thousands of veterans and their families.

The DeBakey Veterans Hospital Center provides support to veterans and their families who are amputees, cancer, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injury, and have visual impairments.

The Medical center provides family support services through its Fisher House that provides living suites at no cost to family members of hospitalized Veterans and military members.

The devotion and dedication of family members who provide care to our nation's wounded warriors should not be forgotten.

Last month was National Caregivers Month to show our caregivers how grateful we are for them.

Today, 5.5 million spouses, parents, children, and other loved ones care for our wounded warriors and 15 percent of caregivers spend 40+ hours a week providing care for our military families.

The wounds of war and the recovery process may be long in healing, which is why it is important that as members of Congress we provide them with the best healthcare treatment possible.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to pass S. 1266.

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 Thursday, December 7, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

DECEMBER 12

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet
To hold hearings to examine digital decision-making, focusing on the building

blocks of machine learning and artificial intelligence.

SR-253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the permitting processes at the Department of the Interior and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for energy and resource infrastructure projects and opportunities to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of federal decisions for such projects.

SD-366

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the cost of prescription drugs, focusing on an examination of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report "Making Medicines Affordable: A National Imperative".

SD-430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act.

SD-226

2 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy

To hold hearings to examine the future of Zimbabwe.

SD-419

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard

To hold hearings to examine national ocean policy, focusing on stakeholder perspectives.

SR-253

DECEMBER 13

Time to be announced

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Kenneth L. Marcus, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, and Johnny Collett, of Kentucky, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, both of the Department of Education, Scott A. Mugno, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary, and William Beach, of Kansas, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, both of the Department of Labor, and other pending nominations.

TBA

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine safeguarding American agriculture in a globalized world.

SR-328A

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine using force, focusing on strategic, political, and legal considerations.

SD-419

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To receive a closed briefing on Department of Defense global counterterrorism operations.

SVC-217

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Personnel

To hold hearings to examine an update on research, diagnosis, and treatment for traumatic brain injury/concussion in servicemembers.

SR-222

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SH-216

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

SD-406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act, focusing on responding to mental health needs.

SD-430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Elizabeth L. Branch, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, R. Stan Baker, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Georgia, Charles Barnes Goodwin, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, Matthew J. Kacsmatyk, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, Matthew Spencer Petersen, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, and Eli Jeremy Richardson, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Tennessee.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold hearings to examine the consumer welfare standard in antitrust.

SD-226

DECEMBER 14

10 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Margaret Weichert, of Georgia, to be Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget, and John Edward Dupuy, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Office of Personnel Management.

SD-342

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S7859–S7896

Measures Introduced: Nine bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2195–2203, and S. Res. 349. **Page S7891**

Measures Reported:

Special Report entitled “America’s Aging Workforce: Opportunities and Challenges”. (S. Rept. No. 115–191) **Page S7891**

House Messages:

Tax Cuts and Jobs Act: By 51 yeas to 47 nays (Vote No. 306), Senate insisted on its amendment to H.R. 1, to provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, agreed to the requested conference with the House thereon, and the Chair was authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate, after taking action on the following motions to instruct conferees proposed thereto:

Pages S7859–7879, S7891

Adopted:

Rubio Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that any conference report shall increase the refundable per-child tax credit to no less than \$2,000 and that the credit be expanded to benefit more low-wage parents. **Pages S7880–81**

Rejected:

By 48 yeas to 50 nays (Vote No. 307), King Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report not increase the Federal budget deficit for the period of fiscal years 2018 through 2027. **Pages S7878–79**

By 44 yeas to 54 nays (Vote No. 308), Stabenow Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report includes a provision causing the corporate tax rate to revert to 35 percent in the event that real average household wages do not increase by at least \$4,000 by 2020 as a result of the enactment of the bill. **Page S7879**

By 47 yeas to 51 nays (Vote No. 309), Booker Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report does not contain any provisions that would increase the number of individuals who

do not have health insurance or increase health insurance premiums. **Pages S7880–81**

Urban Indian Health Parity Act—Referral Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Committee on Indian Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 2146, to extend the full Federal medical assistance percentage to urban Indian organizations, and the bill then be referred to the Committee on Finance. **Page S7895**

Bodine Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at a time to be determined by the Majority Leader, in consultation with the Democratic Leader, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of Susan Parker Bodine, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; that there be 30 minutes of debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form, and that following the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination, with no intervening action or debate. **Page S7895**

Balash Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 11:45 a.m., on Thursday, December 7, 2017, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of Joseph Balash, of Alaska, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior, as under the order of Tuesday, December 5, 2017. **Pages S7895–96**

Messages from the House: **Page S7891**

Measures Referred: **Page S7891**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S7891**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S7891**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S7891**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S7891–92**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S7892–95**

Additional Statements: **Pages S7890–91**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S7895**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S7895**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—309) **Pages S7878–79, S7881**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:46 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, December 7, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S7896.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATION

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of R. D. James, of Missouri, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army, Department of Defense, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

SUPERFUND AND WASTE CLEANUP FOLLOWING NATURAL DISASTERS

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight concluded a hearing to examine challenges facing Superfund and waste cleanup efforts following natural disasters, after receiving testimony from Bryan W. Shaw, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Chairman, Austin; Matthew Rodriguez, California Environmental Protection Agency Secretary, Sacramento; and Tracy Hester, University of Houston Law Center, Houston, Texas.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: On Tuesday, December 5, 2017, Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1118, to reauthorize the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1901, to require global economic and political pressure to support diplomatic denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including through the imposition of sanctions with respect to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and any enablers of the activities of that Government, and to reauthorize the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 447, to require reporting on acts of certain foreign countries on Holocaust era assets and related issues, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. Res. 150, recognizing threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world and reaffirming freedom of the press as a priority in efforts of

the United States Government to promote democracy and good governance;

S. Res. 139, condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights, with amendments; and

The nominations of Eric M. Ueland, of Oregon, to be an Under Secretary (Management), James Randolph Evans, of Georgia, to be Ambassador to Luxembourg, Kenneth J. Braithwaite, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway, M. Lee McClenny, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay, Christopher Ashley Ford, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary (International Security and Non-Proliferation), and Yleem D. S. Poblete, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Verification and Compliance), all of the Department of State, and Brock D. Bierman, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

COUNTERING TERRORISM IN NORTH AFRICA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism concluded a hearing to examine beyond ISIS, focusing on countering terrorism, radicalization, and promoting stability in North Africa, after receiving testimony from Nathan A. Sales, Ambassador-At-Large and Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Bureau of Counterterrorism, and Joan Polaschik, Deputy Assistant Secretary, both of the Department of State.

DEFENDING THE HOMELAND AGAINST THE EVOLVING TERRORIST THREAT

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine adapting to defend the Homeland against the evolving international terrorist threat, after receiving testimony from Mark E. Mitchell, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict; Lora Shiao, Acting Director of Intelligence, National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence; Nikki Floris, Deputy Assistant Director of Counterterrorism, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice; and Robin Taylor, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Intelligence Operations, Office of Intelligence and Analysis, Department of Homeland Security.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported S. 1870, to amend the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 to secure urgent resources vital to Indian victims of crime.

INDIAN AFFAIRS LEGISLATION

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 664, to approve the settlement of the water rights claims of the Navajo in Utah, to authorize construction of projects in connection therewith, and S. 1770, to approve the settlement of water rights claims of the Hualapai Tribe and certain allottees in the State of Arizona, to authorize construction of a water project relating to those water rights claims, after receiving testimony from Alan Mikkelsen, Deputy Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, and Chair, Working Group on Indian Water Settlements, Department of the Interior; Utah Lieutenant Governor Spencer Cox, Salt Lake City; Thomas Buschatzke, Arizona Department of Water Resources Director, Phoenix; Russell Begaye, The Navajo Nation, Window Rock, Arizona; and Damon Clarke, Hualapai Tribe, Peach Springs, Arizona.

FIREARM ACCESSORY REGULATION AND ENFORCING REPORTING TO NICS

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine firearm accessory regulation and enforcing Federal and state reporting to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), including S. 2135, to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and S. 1916, to prohibit the possession or

transfer of certain firearm accessories, after receiving testimony from Senator Cortez Masto; Heather Wilson, Secretary of the Air Force, and Glenn A. Fine, Acting Inspector General, both of the Department of Defense; Thomas E. Brandon, Acting Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and Douglas E. Lindquist, Assistant Director, Criminal Justice Information Services Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, both of the Department of Justice; David W. Slayton, Texas Office of State Court Administration, Austin; J. Thomas Manger, Montgomery County Police Department, Gaithersburg, Maryland, on behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs Association; Stephen P. Halbbrook, The Independent Institute, Fairfax, Virginia; David B. Kopel, Independence Institute, Denver, Colorado; and Heather Gooze, Las Vegas, Nevada.

AMERICA'S AGING WORKFORCE

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine America's aging workforce, focusing on opportunities and challenges, after receiving testimony from Laurie McCann, AARP, Washington, D.C.; Fernan R. Cepero, YMCA of Greater Rochester, Rochester, New York, on behalf of the Society for Human Resource Management; Ralph Jellison, Orland, Maine; and Lisa Motta, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 23 public bills, H.R. 4558–4580, were introduced.

Pages H9708–09

Additional Cosponsors:

Page H9710

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

S. 140, to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund (H. Rept. 115–441);

H.R. 1800, to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer certain Federal land to facilitate scientific research supporting Federal space and defense programs, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–442);

H. Res. 647, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 477) to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies;

providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3971) to amend the Truth in Lending Act and the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 to modify the requirements for community financial institutions with respect to certain rules relating to mortgage loans, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 123) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–443);

H.R. 1148, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand access to telehealth-eligible stroke services under the Medicare program, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–444, Part 1);

H.R. 3120, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the volume of future electronic health record-related significant hardship requests (H. Rept. 115–445, Part 1);

H.R. 3263, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the Medicare independence at

home medical practice demonstration program, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–446, Part 1);

H.R. 3271, 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, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–447, Part 1);

H.R. 3245, to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to increase civil money penalties and criminal fines for Federal health care program fraud and abuse, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–448, Part 1);

H.R. 2557, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of certain DNA Specimen Provenance Assay clinical diagnostic laboratory tests, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–449, Part 1); and

H.R. 4300, to authorize Pacific Historic Parks to establish a commemorative display to honor members of the United States Armed Forces who served in the Pacific Theater of World War II, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–450). **Pages H9707–08**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Fortenberry to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H9667**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:38 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H9671**

Privileged Resolution—Intent to Offer: Representative Al Green (TX) announced his intent to offer a privileged resolution. **Page H9682**

Question of Privilege: Representative Al Green (TX) rose to a question of the privileges of the House and submitted a privileged resolution. Upon examination of the resolution, the Chair determined that the resolution qualified. Subsequently, the House agreed to the McCarthy motion to table H. Res. 646, impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, of high misdemeanors, by a yea-and-nay vote of 364 yeas to 58 nays with four answering “present”, Roll No. 658. **Pages H9682–83**

Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017: The House passed H.R. 38, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a means by which non-residents of a State whose residents may carry concealed firearms may also do so in the State, by a recorded vote of 231 yeas to 198 noes, Roll No. 663. **Pages H9685–9703**

Rejected the Thompson (CA) motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with amendments, by a yea-and-nay vote of 190 yeas to 236 nays, Roll No. 662.

Pages H9701–03

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–45 shall be considered as adopted, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. **Page H9685**

H. Res. 645, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 38) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 232 yeas to 194 noes, Roll No. 660, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 236 yeas to 189 nays, Roll No. 659.

Pages H9674–82, H9683–84

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure. Consideration began Tuesday, December 5th.

Enhancing Veteran Care Act: S. 1266, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with nonprofit organizations to investigate medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ yea-and-nay vote of 423 yeas with none voting “nay”, Roll No. 661; and

Pages H9684–85

Condemning ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calling for an end to the attacks in and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma: H. Con. Res. 90, amended, condemning ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calling for an end to the attacks in and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ yea-and-nay vote of 423 yeas to 3 nays, Roll No. 664;

Pages H9703–04

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: “Condemning ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calling for an end to the violence in and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma.”. **Page H9704**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Five yea-and-nay votes and two recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H9683, H9683–84, H9684, H9685, H9702, H9702, and H9704. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Committee Meetings

WORKPLACE LEAVE POLICIES: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR EMPLOYERS AND WORKING FAMILIES

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing entitled “Workplace Leave Policies: Opportunities and Challenges for Employers and Working Families”. Testimony was heard from Hans Riemer, President, Montgomery County Council, Maryland; and public witnesses.

BUSINESS MEETING; MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee held a business meeting on subcommittee membership; and a markup on H.R. 453, the “Relief from New Source Performance Standards Act of 2017”; H.R. 350, the “Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act of 2017”; H.R. 1119, the “SENSE Act”; H.R. 1733, to direct the Secretary of Energy to review and update a report on the energy and environmental benefits of the re-refining of used lubricating oil; H.R. 1917, the “Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2017”; H.R. 2872, the “Promoting Hydropower Development at Existing Nonpowered Dams Act”; and H.R. 2880, the “Promoting Closed-Loop Pumped Storage Hydropower Act”. The committee resolution on subcommittee membership passed, without amendment. H.R. 453, H.R. 350, H.R. 1733, and H.R. 1917 were ordered reported, without amendment. H.R. 2872, H.R. 2880, and H.R. 1119 were ordered reported, as amended.

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING FINANCE: PRIVATE SECTOR PERSPECTIVES ON HOUSING FINANCE REFORM, PART IV

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled “Sustainable Housing Finance: Private Sector Perspectives on Housing Finance Reform, Part IV”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS TO COMBAT EXTREMISM

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled “Advancing Human Rights to Combat Extremism”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BREXIT: A NEGOTIATION UPDATE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats held a hearing

entitled “Brexit: A Negotiation Update”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. POLICY TOWARDS TIBET: ACCESS, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing entitled “U.S. Policy Towards Tibet: Access, Religious Freedom, and Human Rights”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans held a hearing on H.R. 4465, the “Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Extension Act of 2017”. Testimony was heard from Representative Curtis; Henry Maddux, Director, Recovery Programs, Utah Department of Natural Resources; Andrew Colosimo, Government and Corporate Affairs Manager, Colorado Springs Utilities, Colorado; and a public witness.

SMALL BUSINESS MERGERS, ACQUISITIONS, SALES, AND BROKERAGE SIMPLIFICATION ACT OF 2017; COMMUNITY INSTITUTION MORTGAGE RELIEF ACT OF 2017; FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 477, the “Small Business Mergers, Acquisitions, Sales, and Brokerage Simplification Act of 2017”; H.R. 3971, the “Community Institution Mortgage Relief Act of 2017”; and H.J. Res. 123, the “Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2018”. The Committee granted, by record vote of 8–4, a structured rule for H.R. 477. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–43 shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only the further amendment printed in part A of the Rules Committee report, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which 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 amendment printed in part A of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section

2, the rule provides for consideration of H.R. 3971 under a structured rule. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–44 shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only the further amendment printed in part B of the Rules Committee report, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which 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 amendment printed in part B of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section 3, the rule provides for consideration of H.J. Res. 123 under a closed rule. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. The rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Chairman Hensarling and Representative Maxine Waters of California.

FROM LAB TO MARKET: A REVIEW OF NSF INNOVATION CORPS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Research and Technology held a hearing entitled “From Lab to Market: A Review of NSF Innovation Corps”. Testimony was heard from Dawn Tilbury, Assistant Director, Directorate for Engineering, National Science Foundation; and public witnesses.

NASA’S NEXT FOUR LARGE TELESCOPES

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Space held a hearing entitled “NASA’s Next Four Large Telescopes”. Testimony was heard from Thomas Zurbuchen, Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; Cristina Chaplain, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine Department of Defense acquisition reform efforts, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider the nomination of Kevin K. McAleenan, of Hawaii, to be Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, 2 p.m., SD–215.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act, focusing on progress and the path forward for medical innovation, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider the nominations of Leonard Steven Grasz, of Nebraska, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit, James C. Ho, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, Don R. Willett, of Texas, to be a Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, Terry A. Doughty, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, Terry Fitzgerald Moorer, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Alabama, Mark Saalfield Norris, Sr., to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee, Claria Horn Boom, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky, John W. Broomes, to be United States District Judge for the District of Kansas, Rebecca Grady Jennings, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky, and Robert Earl Wier, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Environment, hearing entitled “The Mission of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency”, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled “Examining the Office of Financial Research”, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit, hearing entitled “Legislative Proposals for a More Efficient Federal Financial Regulatory Regime: Part II”, 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Counterterrorism Efforts in Africa”, 9:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications,

hearing entitled “Examining the Department of Homeland Security’s Efforts to Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction”, 10 a.m., HVC-210.

Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Congressional Workplace: Examining Reforms to the Congressional Accountability Act”, 10 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation”, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled “Transforming the Department of the Interior for the 21st Century”, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Federal Lands, hearing on H.R. 805, the “Tulare Youth Recreation and Women’s History Enhancement Act”; H.R. 1349, to amend the Wilderness Act to ensure that the use of bicycles, wheelchairs, strollers, and game carts is not prohibited in Wilderness Areas, and for other purposes; H.R. 3371, the “Modoc County Land Transfer and Economic Development Act of 2017”; and H.R. 3961, the “Kissimmee River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2017”, 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Information Technology, hearing entitled “Oversight of IT and Cybersecurity at the Department of Veterans Affairs”, 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled “New Names, Same Problems: The VA Medical Surgical Prime Vendor Program”, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, December 7

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, December 7

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 11 a.m.), Senator Strange will be recognized for up to 30 minutes.

At 11:45 a.m., Senate will begin consideration of the nomination of Joseph Balash, of Alaska, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at approximately 12:30 p.m.

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.J. Res. 123—Continuing Appropriations Act, 2018 (Subject to a Rule). Consideration of H.R. 3971—Community Institution Mortgage Relief Act of 2017 (Subject to a Rule).

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