

to sending our legislation to the President for his signature later this week.

UNITED STATES APPRECIATION FOR OLYMPIANS
AND PARALYMPIANS BILL

Mr. President, I also wish to speak for just a moment, if I can today, about a bill that hopefully will pass the Senate later today as well.

In just a few weeks, our Olympic athletes will head to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for the 2016 Olympic games. The following month, America's Paralympic athletes will compete in the Rio Paralympic games. These athletes represent what is best about our country. They embody the timeless values of hard work, dedication, and sportsmanship.

Our Olympic and Paralympic athletes—and their families—have made innumerable sacrifices over the many years of training it takes to become a world-class competitor. Training is not cheap, and the vast majority of our amateur athletes put it all on the line without the help of sponsors or endorsement deals to subsidize their expenses.

Many of these athletes have spent virtually their entire lives training for this moment, and I have absolutely no doubt these brave young men and women will represent our Nation with great honor and distinction.

America's Olympic and Paralympic medal winners, in particular, will be greeted with much enthusiasm and great appreciation upon their return. Local communities across America will find ways to honor their returning hometown heroes. Unfortunately, one of the ways the Federal Government will welcome home our Olympic and Paralympic champions is by greeting them with a new tax bill. That is right. The Internal Revenue Service considers these medals to be income and will tax the value of any gold, silver, or bronze medal awarded in competition as well as any incentive award our athletes receive from the U.S. Olympic Committee.

I believe this tax penalty on our Olympic heroes is wrong, and that is why earlier this year I introduced S. 2650, the United States Appreciation for Olympians and Paralympians Act.

This legislation—introduced with Senators SCHUMER, GARDNER, GILLIBRAND, and ISAKSON—would ensure that America rewards the sacrifice and hard work of Team USA by exempting from Federal tax the medals and cash prizes they win at the Olympics and Paralympics.

I am pleased my legislation will pass the Senate later today, sending a strong signal to our athletes as they depart to the 2016 games that their Nation stands behind them. I urge the House of Representatives to take up and pass this legislation before the House adjourns for the August recess.

America's Olympic and Paralympic athletes deserve not only our admiration and respect but also a tax system that acknowledges the many years of training and sacrifice they have en-

ured. Because training for the Olympics is not considered a business enterprise, our athletes cannot deduct the substantial costs they incur over the years as they prepare to represent America on the world stage.

Most countries not only compensate their athletes but also subsidize their training expenses with taxpayer dollars. Our athletes make considerable financial sacrifices to train for the Olympics and Paralympics and as amateurs receive no compensation for their training. The very least we can do is ensure they don't receive a tax penalty when they successfully represent our Nation in the highest level of athletic competition.

Simply put, when it comes to our victorious Olympic and Paralympic athletes, we should celebrate their achievements rather than tax their success.

CONGRATULATING PAIGE MCPHERSON

Mr. President, I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations and best wishes to one of Team USA's shining stars; that is, South Dakota's own Paige McPherson.

Paige grew up in Sturgis, SD, graduating from Black Hills Classical Christian Academy in 2009. She will be competing in Taekwondo at the Rio games and will be striving for her second medal in a row, after claiming a bronze medal at the London Olympic Games in 2012.

I know Paige will represent America—and South Dakota—with great distinction next month, as will all of our Olympic and Paralympic competitors.

I wish to thank the original cosponsors of my legislation, whom I mentioned earlier, as well as Finance Committee Chairman HATCH and Senators SULLIVAN and MORAN for their support. I look forward to seeing our legislation enacted into law this year, and I wish all of our Olympians and Paralympians the very best of luck in Rio.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:53 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION
ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 p.m. will be controlled by the Senator from California, Mrs. BOXER, or her designee; the time from 2:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. will be controlled by the majority; and the time from 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. will be controlled by the two managers.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for 15 minutes.

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

TRAGEDY OF VIOLENCE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I stand here as one of the two Senators from the largest State in the Union to recognize that there is a hole in the heart of America today as we cope with the tragedy of violence on all sides. I am working on comprehensive remarks because I am doing it more, in a way, for myself, and those are not prepared right now, but right now I want to send my deepest condolences to those who are suffering, who have lost loved ones, be those loved ones police officers or community members, and for that matter, so many Americans, so many American families who suffer losses because of violence every day. It is critical that we address this issue. I compliment the voices on all sides—the voices of compassion, reason, and love—and I hope I can add my voice to their voices.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, what several of us are doing on another topic is calling attention to the web of denial that is being peddled in our Nation by special interests and their think tanks and organizations that are working to undermine peer-reviewed climate science. Their goal is to create uncertainty and to delay action on the biggest environmental and public health threat we face today.

Climate change is real, human activities are the primary cause, and the warming planet poses a significant threat to our people and to our environment. That is not my opinion. I am the first one to say I am not a scientist. I rely on scientists, and 97 percent of them have said that climate change is real and human activity is the primary cause.

The level of scientific certainty on manmade climate change is about the same as the consensus among top scientists that cigarettes are deadly, but some of you may remember that up until the late 1990s, the tobacco industry scoffed at the best available science proving that tobacco is addictive and causes cancer. No one in today's world would argue with the fact that tobacco is addictive and causes cancer. In the 1990s, there was a campaign of denial, just as there is for climate change now. Year after year, the tobacco industry attacked the science that showed the link between cigarettes and the threat to human health, as well as the Surgeon General's warning that nicotine was as addictive as heroin and cocaine. Let me share a few of the statements made by or on behalf of the tobacco industry.

In 1970, the Tobacco Institute advertised that the scientific finding that proved a connection between cigarette smoking and lung cancer was wrong. They said: "The Tobacco Institute does not—and the public should not—accept these claims at face value."

In 1971, Joseph Cullman, the chairman of Philip Morris, said: "We do not

believe cigarettes are hazardous; we don't accept that."

In 1988, a lobbyist from the Tobacco Institute submitted written testimony for a congressional hearing stating: "In sum, there is no medical or scientific basis for viewing cigarette smoking as an 'addiction.' The effort to disparage cigarette smoking as an 'addiction' can only detract from our society's attempt to meet its serious drug problem." That was what the cigarette companies said.

At congressional hearings in 1994, executives from the seven biggest tobacco companies testified that they believed nicotine was not addictive. Do you remember the picture of them swearing to that fact?

A tobacco industry doctor said: "The proposed addiction warning and the assumption upon which it is founded are based neither in science nor fact and will have unintended harmful results." This is the tobacco company doctor saying that if you warn people, it will have unintended harmful results. Sure—for his bosses, the tobacco companies, who are paying his salary.

In 1998, Walker Merryman, vice president and chief spokesman for the Tobacco Institute, said: "We don't believe it has ever been established that smoking is the cause of disease."

The reason I spent so much time going through that painful history is that a lot of people died of cancer because the tobacco companies and their think tanks would not tell the truth to the American people. That is why a lot of people died.

At the end of the day, the tobacco companies failed, but there are so many bodies out there because of their heavily funded propaganda campaign. When the people knew the truth, America's smoking dropped from 42 percent in 1964 to 15 percent in 2015. To anybody out there who is still addicted, I pray God that they will get help. There are very few things where we know the cause and effect. We know the cause and effect of smoking—it is not good.

Investigative reporting has clearly shown that those who led the fight against health warnings on tobacco have been involved in the climate denial movement from the beginning. Just as Big Tobacco denied that smoking was dangerous to people's health, Big Oil and other special interests have tried to undermine scientists' warnings about harmful climate pollution by claiming that climate change does not exist.

So we had Big Tobacco spreading the big lie that smoking was non-addictive—they even said at one point that it was good for you—and Big Oil telling us that there is no climate change, that it is a hoax. But if we look at the 97 percent of scientists, what have they told us we are going to see? Higher temperatures, more extreme weather, severe droughts, increased wildfires, decreasing polar ice, and rising sea levels. That is what 97 percent of the scientists said would happen. Guess what. It is happening.

Don't take my word for it. Let me give specifics. Mr. President, 2015 was the hottest year on record. Every month of this year continues to set records. Sea levels are rising many times faster than they have in the last 2,800 years. The 2015 wildfire season was the costliest on record, with \$1.71 billion spent. California, my fantastic home State, is suffering from its worst drought in modern history, and scientists are predicting megadroughts. Rising temperatures are expected to worsen air quality and threaten public health.

The American public sees what is happening, and they understand the need to act. Seventy-one percent of Americans supported the historic Paris agreement to address climate change by reducing harmful carbon pollution. A March 2016 Gallup Poll shows that 64 percent of Americans—the highest percentage since 2008—are worried about climate change. Gallup also found that between 2009 and 2015, a decline in public concern about climate change was linked to a well-publicized campaign of misinformation about climate science.

The fossil fuel industry took a page right out of the tobacco company's playbook, supporting a network of organizations that create a false sense of uncertainty. So let me tell you that I have joined my colleagues on a resolution condemning the effort by the fossil fuel industry to discredit climate science, just as the tobacco industry worked to discredit science that proved tobacco causes cancer.

I want to work with my colleagues to call attention to this web of denial. There are organizations out there—they have beautiful names. They are funded by ExxonMobil, they are funded by the Koch brothers, and organizations like DonorsTrust, which hides the identities of funders and was called the Dark Money ATM in the press. Dark money is a good description because the deep pockets of Big Oil and other special interests have been misleading the American people for many years.

As I close my presentation, I want to talk to you briefly about three organizations based in my home State: the Reason Foundation, the Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy, and the Hoover Institution. These three organizations have been involved in efforts to undermine climate science.

The Reason Foundation has been churning out materials to raise uncertainty. The Hoover Institution, which is affiliated with Stanford University—which has so many wonderful things to commend it, but in my opinion not this—has been identified by the researchers as part of the climate countermovement. I have great respect for the work former Secretary of State George Shultz and others are doing at Hoover. However, I have to point out many articles published under Hoover's name have created uncertainty about climate science, trying to undermine the need for action.

The third organization is Pacific Research Institute, which is a free market think tank that published a number of anti-climate science materials, including the "Almanac of Environmental Trends." Just last month, 31 major scientific organizations basically said there is strong evidence that ongoing climate change is having broad negative impacts on society, including natural resources, the global economy, and human health.

For the United States, climate change impacts include greater threats of extreme weather, sea level rise, increased risk of regional water scarcity, heat waves, wildfires, disturbance of biological systems. We expect to see this increase. This is what the real scientists are saying, the ones who care about our people, our environment. They don't get their paychecks from Big Oil and those who stand to lose if we turn to clean energy.

So the scientists who work for that money from the Koch brothers, this is what they say: The world is warming far less quickly than we thought. A little warming will also extend growing seasons. Now consider the dire prediction regarding global warming and think of climate like golf. It is easy to see where the ball has landed but difficult to construct a model to predict with much confidence where the next ball will land.

We have many other comments by these sham groups that are funded by Big Oil, by the special interests, just like the tobacco industry had think tanks that supported them. You know, fool me once, OK. Fool me again, I am going to find out. We know about these organizations.

ExxonMobil gave a total of \$381,000 to Reason; \$295,000 to Hoover; \$615,000 to the Pacific Research Institute—ExxonMobil. Foundations associated with the Koch brothers provided more than \$1 million to the Reason Foundation and to the Pacific Research Institute. So we know what is going on here, but there is good news. The American people are not asleep at the wheel. They understand what happened with Big Tobacco. They understand the phony science that was put forward by Big Tobacco. Thanks to the leadership of my colleague SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, who has done an extraordinary job—he knows the truth. He knows the truth that these organizations are puppets of the big fossil fuel industry. You know what. They are going to be found out.

The people already do not, in any way, support them. That is why I am optimistic and came to the floor today. The truth will have its day. The people understand. They look out the window and they know.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy for 30 minutes with the Senators from Montana, North Carolina, and Iowa.

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

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS
BILL

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, last week we had a lot going on in terms of national security and foreign policy facing our country and, most importantly, facing our troops, facing our military. The President, the Secretary of Defense, the top leaders in the military were asking a lot of our troops in 1 week. Let me just give you a little example of that.

Just yesterday, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced, from where he is in Iraq, that the United States will be deploying 560 more troops to Iraq in our fight against ISIS. Make no doubt about it, the White House might spin what we are doing over there, but our troops are definitely in combat, fighting to protect us.

At the NATO summit on Friday, President Obama announced that the United States will be deploying an additional 1,000 troops and a separate brigade headquarters to Poland. A lot of us—I think bipartisan—support what is going on at the NATO summit and congratulate the President for a successful summit.

On Wednesday, the President announced he plans to leave 8,400 American troops in Afghanistan—more than he originally planned, a number that a lot of us had been advocating for, maybe even more—to combat the Taliban; again, our troops in action.

On Saturday, we learned that North Korea launched a submarine ballistic missile off the coast of the eastern part of the country. Over the weekend, the Wall Street Journal reported that even after reaching the Iran nuclear deal, the Iranians continue to try to illegally procure nuclear equipment from Germany. Finally, just today, there was an important ruling from The Hague, the tribunal there, about what is going on in the South China Sea, in keeping sealanes open where we just recently had two carrier battle groups—two U.S. carrier battles groups, thousands of sailors in that part of the world.

So what did the Senate do with regard to all the activities facing our troops? What did the Senate do to support these troops whom the President and the Secretary of Defense are asking so much of? Well, a lot of Americans did not see it, but in the late night, on Thursday night, led by the minority leader, unfortunately our colleagues on the other side of the aisle filibustered defense spending, filibustered the Defense appropriations bill.

This is not the first time that has happened. Indeed, that is the bill the other side seems to like to target. Amazingly, they like to target funding for our troops and our military. That is not the first time. It is not the second time. It is not the third time. It is the fourth time, inside of a year, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle filibustered funding our troops, at a

time when national security challenges and what we are asking our military to do are at an alltime high.

What I want to do with my colleagues is talk about this, try to let the American people know this is not what we should be doing. Perhaps the media will talk about this and highlight this a little bit more because we are going to vote again on this appropriations bill, which, by the way, came out of committee unanimously. The Democrats on the committee voted for it.

Yet, somehow, when it comes to the floor, they are going to do another filibuster. They did it last Thursday. It is our hope—and one of the reasons we are on the floor right now—to convince our colleagues to change their ways. I am sure they don't want to have to go home after recess and have to explain to their constituents why they voted not once, not twice, not three times, not four times but five times to filibuster spending for our troops. I hope they don't have to do that. We are going to vote on that again this week.

I am honored to be on the floor with some distinguished Members of the Senate, some of the Members of the class of 2014. I am going to ask the junior Senator from Iowa—who knows a little bit about what she is talking about when it comes to the U.S. military, with 23 years of military service, having just retired as a lieutenant colonel in the Iowa National Guard. I am honored to have her open up and say some words about something that is remarkable that is going on, on the Senate floor—filibustering the spending for our troops at this dangerous time.

It is not what we should be doing. Our colleagues know it. I guarantee you the American people know it. If you ask people, Democratic or Republican: Should we be funding our troops at this moment, the answer, clearly, in every State and every part of the country, would be yes.

Senator ERNST.

Mrs. ERNST. I say thank you to Senator SULLIVAN, the distinguished Senator from Alaska. Thank you for your passion as well. You have served in the Marines, in the Marine Reserves. I thank you for that, for your dedication and your commitment to our United States of America through your service as a marine and now through your service in the Senate.

We are also joined by the Senators from Montana and from North Carolina. I would like to thank my colleagues for joining in a colloquy. The filibuster we have seen on the other side of the aisle sends a message to our troops that we don't care about their security, and we don't care about the Nation's security. We must fund our troops, at a time when, as you stated, the world is virtually imploding.

We see actions going on all around the globe, whether it is from North Africa into Iraq, Syria, North Korea, China, Iran, Afghanistan. We could go

on and on, where our troops are needed for safety and security, where they are needed to keep the fight away from our homeland.

So I thank everyone who is joining in today. I appreciate the thoughts we will be sharing with our constituents and with the audience we have. Hopefully, we will see this projected nationwide, with an outcry of outrage that the Democrats are blocking—are daring to block funding for our national security.

This is a bipartisan bill—a bipartisan bill. The Senate version cleared out of our Senate Appropriations Committee by a vote of 30 to 0, Democrats and Republicans. We came together, bipartisan, 30 to 0.

In total, this bill appropriates \$515.9 billion for our national security. Some \$900 million of this is funding for the National Guard, a critical arm to the security of the United States and where I ended my 23-plus-year career last November in the Iowa Army National Guard.

In fact, my old unit, the battalion I commanded in the Iowa Army National Guard, that battalion headquarters is currently forward-deployed. So the men and women I served alongside, they are out there protecting our freedoms. They are out there securing an area far away from home. They are doing it not just for me and not just for the Senators who are here, but they are doing that for all of you.

The fact that we would reject funding for our forward-deployed troops is appalling to me. Those are my brothers and sisters. These are my friends, my neighbors, my colleagues. They are fighting on behalf of the United States. The United States is now turning its back, with a filibuster, on these troops. So how dare our colleagues block a bill to fund our military, while our troops are forward-deployed. They are out on our frontlines.

I know my colleague from Montana has had some troops who have just recently returned. I know he would like to join us in this discussion as well.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Alaska. I also want to thank Lieutenant Colonel and Senator ERNST for her service to our Nation. Senator ERNST is the first female combat veteran to ever serve in the Senate. It is an honor to serve with her, and I thank her for her service to our country both as a soldier as well as a Senator.

As I speak today, my friends from across the aisle have already—not once, not twice, but three times—blocked consideration of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2017, which will deny our troops the proper funding and support they deserve. I am proud to be standing here with some of my freshmen colleagues, imploring my friends on the other side of the aisle to stop the political games and get back to work, and that starts with funding our military.

We shouldn't be playing these petty political games on legislation that is

and should be historically bipartisan. In fact, this bill, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, passed the House of Representatives in June on a bipartisan vote of 282 to 138, and that included 48 Democrats. That is a very strong bipartisan vote. Over on the Senate side—as a member of the Committee on Appropriations, I recall it clearly—it passed our committee 30 to 0. That is called running up the score—30 to 0 out of the Committee on Appropriations on May 26. Not one Democrat opposed this bill in committee. I ask my colleagues: What in the world has changed? Why did we go from 30 to 0 in the committee and now we are seeing a filibuster here on the floor of the Senate?

Just so we are all clear, when Senate Democrats vote no, here is what they are saying no to: 1.2 million military Active-Duty servicemembers and 800,000 reservists. They are saying no to 10,000 troops engaged in combat in Afghanistan and the additional military in harm's way in Iraq, Syria, and other places throughout the world.

We are seeing ISIS expanding into places like Libya. They are attacking Western targets like Paris, Brussels, and the homeland here, in places like San Bernardino and Orlando. We need to make sure our military forces have the tools they need to win. As Senator MARCO RUBIO once said: It is either we win or they win. There is no middle ground here. Let us give them the tools they need to win. I can tell you one thing: Our enemies are not waiting around for Senate Democrats to fund our military to make it a fair fight.

This bill provides money to replace the munitions and other consumable items being used to defend America against the likes of ISIS, Al Qaeda, and the Taliban. Passing this also gives confidence to our Eastern European allies.

Back in my home State of Montana, we have a rich legacy of service. I am the son of a U.S. marine. My dad served in the 50th Rifle Company in Billings, MT. In fact, our Nation's "peace through strength" strategy can be seen clearly at Montana's Malmstrom Air Force Base. You see, up in Montana, we have one-third of the Nation's intercontinental ballistic missiles. We play a critical role in meeting our Nation's security and military needs. In fact, I have the utmost faith—and always do—in the 1,200 defenders at Malmstrom that provide security for the missiles that silently sit across Montana. I know these airmen will not fail our Nation, but Washington, DC is failing them. Senate Democrats are failing them, and that is unacceptable.

At Malmstrom, the motto on the commander's coin says this: "Scaring the hell out of America's enemies since 1962." And they do so because this body chose duty over politics.

So how can Democrats continue to stand here and say no to our military when so much is at stake, when the House passed a bipartisan bill, when

this body passed a bill by a unanimous vote of 30 to 0 out of committee? We must say yes to our military who fight for us every day and say no to petty politics in Washington, DC. We must stand up for the rights and the freedoms we enjoy. Senate Democrats, stop saying no. Let us debate the DOD appropriations bill.

Finally, I urge my Senate colleagues across the aisle to have the courage to vote against the wishes of their leaders and help us move this legislation forward.

Again, I am proud to stand here with some of my Senate freshmen colleagues and the distinguished Senator from North Carolina, THOM TILLIS. I know Senator TILLIS has some real concerns about what is going on here on the Senate floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I want to thank my friends and colleagues from Montana, Alaska, and Iowa for being here. I particularly want to thank Lieutenant Colonel ERNST for her service. She is now a veteran, but she served bravely. I want to thank my friend from Alaska. He is a marine, and he still answers the call. He is doing the work here in the Senate, but he is prepared to go on a moment's notice wherever we have to go to defend freedom.

I come from North Carolina. This is almost getting personal with me. I am going to talk a little bit about that, but I want to explain to the people who may be watching this on television or to those in the Senate Gallery what we are talking about.

We use the word filibuster, and it is kind of hard to understand, but it is actually pretty straightforward. The Democratic conference has decided to say no to funding our troops. They have decided to say no to providing them a much deserved pay raise. They have decided to say no to funding important training that is necessary to make sure they can complete these highly dangerous and complex missions wherever a threat may occur.

Now, why is it personal to me in North Carolina? Because I have about 100,000 Active-Duty personnel in North Carolina. Fort Bragg in North Carolina is the home of the Global Response Force. That is the base that gets the call from the President when, on a moment's notice, we may have to send hundreds or thousands of men and women to drop out of airplanes anywhere in the world. It is not just jumping out with a parachute. It is jumping out with a hundred pounds of equipment attached to them, it is dropping earthmovers, weather stations, a small city operation anywhere in the world to support a relief effort or to support a combat mission. That takes training. That takes constant training. It takes hours and hours of training to make sure they can complete their mission but, even as important, to make sure they do it safely and that they themselves do not get injured or killed in the process.

Now, we have already heard it said multiple times before, but I think it bears repeating. Why on Earth would the minority leader prevent us from moving to a vote? A filibuster is nothing more than saying no to sending this bill to the President's desk, after 30 Democratic members in the Appropriations Committee said yes. We only need six of them to move this bill to the President's desk.

I guess the minority leader has a hammerlock on all of the Members who want to vote for this bill. They won't come to the floor and show the courage and commitment to the men and women in uniform to do the right thing. That is where we are. That is why it is personal to me.

What do I tell the 100,000 Active-Duty military in North Carolina when I go home? I am sorry, but the minority leader has decided you are not a priority, in spite of the fact that we go to Committee on Armed Services hearings weekly and we hear the threat level has never been greater and in spite of the fact that we see the rise of ISIS across all of the Middle East, now in Europe, and it is threatening our homeland.

In spite of all of these threats, we tell the men and women in uniform and their commanders that politics win over the principle of funding our troops and saving our Nation and protecting our Nation. I think that is despicable.

We know we have enough votes to send this bill to the President because they voted for it before. We only need a third of them to vote for this now and send it to the President's desk.

I could go on, and if we have time, I hope Senator SULLIVAN will ask me some questions because I have spent a lot of time down at Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg. Ask me about whether or not the leader of FORSCOM and the leaders down there responsible for the 82nd Airborne Division and the XVIII Airborne Corps think they have enough money and they can keep our men and women safe. Ask them about the conditions at Camp Lejeune and the conditions we ask these men and women to serve in after we tell them we are not going to give you money to keep you safe so that you can complete your mission.

This is politics at its worst. We need to send this bill to the President's desk. We need to show respect for the men and women who have sworn an oath to lay down their life for the cause of freedom. This is a failure on the part of the minority leader and on the part of any other person who would sit there and refuse to move to a bill that every single one of them in the Appropriations Committee supported.

I appreciate Senator SULLIVAN's elevating this dialogue to the extent that he will, and we shouldn't stop until we fulfill the promise that is our first and foremost constitutional obligation, which is to protect this Nation. The

people voting against this bill and preventing it from getting to the President's desk, in my opinion, are failing to live up to their oath.

I want to thank Senator SULLIVAN and Senator ERNST again for their service, and I thank my colleague for bringing this to the attention of the American people.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I thank Senator TILLIS, and he put his finger on it when he said it is personal. I think it is personal to all of us.

Senator ERNST talked about it. She literally has her former colleagues, the troops she commanded, in Afghanistan right now. There is nothing more personal than that.

Just like Senator TILLIS and Senator DAINES, the great State of Alaska also has thousands and thousands of Active-Duty Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marines servicemembers, reservists, and veterans, and they are wondering why. I get asked: Why would the minority leader filibuster spending for America's troops? Isn't that like the most important thing the Congress does—national defense? Why?

Why on Earth would they consider doing it a fifth time before we go home on recess? The one thing we should be doing before we take a 2-month recess—when, as Senator ERNST said, the whole world is imploding with national security challenges—is voting to fund our troops. So why? I really don't know the answer.

At one point, the minority leader came to the floor last year and said the bill was "a waste of time." I am not sure most Americans would agree with him on that. Then they made some kind of excuse: Well, we need to make sure the appropriations bill fits with the bipartisan budget agreement from last year. Well, it does. Nobody is making that argument. He was even recently quoted as saying he doesn't want his party to be "at the mercy of Republicans." In essence, that blocking our defense budget gives his political party leverage. Well, I will tell you who gets leverage from blocking this funding—our enemies and our adversaries, not our troops.

There is one other myth here, and I hear it a lot. When these procedural votes happen in the Senate, the troops don't really see it. They do not really understand it. Heck, this vote they took to block it last time on Thursday night was almost at midnight. Maybe nobody saw it. But I want to ask Senator ERNST: Do you think the troops see this? Do you think they understand what is going on? Do you think your troops in Afghanistan or in the Iowa National Guard or all the other military members we have gotten to know through our positions on the Committee on Armed Services see what is happening? How do you think that impacts morale?

Mrs. ERNST. I thank my colleague. Yes, of course, they pay attention. They see what is going on in the Senate. We track this. I tracked this when

I was a young captain serving in Kuwait and Iraq. We track this because it is so important that we have the funding necessary for our personnel—just basic funding of our human resources obligations to the U.S. Armed Forces.

As to our personnel, we have to have funding to update our equipment, and we have to have the funding for the training necessary so that our men and women are ready and able to forward deploy. Even when they are forward deployed—in Iraq, Afghanistan, or you name it—they pay attention.

It is vitally important that what we do here today is to vote on the DOD appropriations bill. We have to stop this filibuster. Our troops are paying attention. Their families are paying attention. Their families here in the United States want to know the Senate is doing the right thing by protecting our military, making sure we have the troops necessary, the equipment necessary, the training necessary to make sure that when they forward deploy, they come home safe again. That is No. 1—making sure they are properly trained, equipped, and manned so they come home safe.

So yes, Senator SULLIVAN, they do pay attention. As we are standing here debating the importance of this appropriations bill, we have almost 10,000 troops serving today—right now—in Afghanistan. We have almost 5,000 troops in Iraq. Our special operators are deployed throughout the world protecting our Nation.

Just last week I had the opportunity to visit a hospital and see one of those special operators, and I am going to come back to that special operator in just a second.

I stated before that the world is imploding, and we only have to look at the headlines over the past several days to see what a risk our globe is in. North Korea test fires a ballistic missile from a submarine on July 9. The Chinese Navy holds a live fire drill in the South China Sea—even after the international court has ruled against their claims in the region. Iran, which is now, oddly enough, being fueled by taxpayer dollars after the horrific nuclear deal our administration entered in, drove their boats dangerously close to ours once again. They came dangerously close to American ships. And U.S. intelligence reports come forward saying ISIS is "adapting" to our current efforts.

These are the things, folks, that keep me up at night. These are the things that keep many of us up at night. But what lets us rest a little more at ease is knowing that we have our airmen, marines, soldiers, and sailors who are forward-deployed guarding our homeland. What puts my mind at rest is knowing we have these brave men and women doing their job for us. They are not failing us.

Back to the special operator I visited in the hospital last week, this young man—forward-deployed into a theater in the Middle East—had been shot four

times. Two weeks ago when I went into his hospital room, he was standing up. This special operator was pretty proud to show me his wounds—standing up, shot four times. He didn't bemoan the fact that he had been injured severely; what he was bemoaning was the fact that he was not with his unit.

He said: Ma'am, I have no idea how long it is going to take me to heal, but I am ready to go back and serve with my unit. I am ready to go back.

These are the men and women we need to be funding, folks. They are our defense—our national defense. So I am asking that the filibuster end and that we take a vote on the DOD appropriations bill.

I know we would like to hear a little more from my colleagues—again, I thank them for coming to the floor—the Senator from Montana, the Senator from North Carolina. And I thank the Senator from Alaska for leading us in this discussion today.

I yield the floor to the Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, it is certainly an honor to think that we are standing here as Senators with two distinguished veterans: Lieutenant Colonel Ernst and Senator SULLIVAN, who served in the U.S. Marines. In fact, tonight I will be at the Iwo Jima memorial, at a parade, with my daughter, honoring my dad, a marine, and honoring the men and women who served and wore the great uniform of the U.S. military.

There is one group who is cheering right now, and that is our enemies. They are cheering the fact that this body cannot get a defense appropriations bill passed. Maybe we should tie congressional pay to this bill. You know what. We could ask the minority leader: Let's put congressional pay in here. Maybe that will get the body to act, to move forward, if we say: If we are not going to fund our military, let's not fund this body right here. If we can't pass the Defense appropriations bill, we shouldn't get a paycheck here in Washington, DC.

We ought to stand with the men and women who depend on the appropriations. What this body is saying no to—this filibuster is saying no to military personnel; it is saying no operations; it is saying no to the procuring we need to take the fight to the enemy; and it is saying no to research and development, testing and evaluation to make sure our men and women who wear the uniform of the U.S. military have the very best tools they need to defeat a very real enemy.

I thank my freshmen colleagues for coming to the floor today. I thank Senator SULLIVAN for leading this effort as we are discussing why we need to stop the filibuster and pass the Defense appropriations bill.

Mr. TILLIS. Senator SULLIVAN asked Senator ERNST whether people in uniform are watching. Let's talk about other people watching. What about the families of those men and women in

uniform, the ones whom Democrats have decided to say no to for a pay raise?

My wife and I have adopted Fort Bragg, where she started a program called Baby Bundles where we create these bundles to give to expectant families, E4s and below. These men and women have very little. They are serving their Nation and are not making a lot of money. We are trying to do our best to make up for that by providing them with these gifts as they bring a child into the world.

But what about the mother or father who is left behind as their loved one is somewhere in harm's way? What are they thinking about when they come home during training and say: You know, we are just not getting the jumps we were getting. We are not getting the equipment we were getting. And, sweetie, I am about to be deployed.

That is happening. That is what this "no" stands for. That is what this action on the part of the Democrats stands for.

We need to vote for this bill. We need to show military families and men and women in uniform that we support them. I encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to move this bill to the President's desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 minute to conclude this colloquy.

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

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues who bring honor to the Senate by coming down here and talking about this important issue.

Those watching at home should be calling their Senators and telling them: Fund our troops. Fund our troops.

When there are so many national security challenges out there, we need to make sure we do not go on a 2-month recess without funding our troops and moving forward on this bill. We should not move forward on a vote to have another filibuster vote, the fifth one in a year—the only bill that seems to get the focus of our colleagues and the minority leader to filibuster.

We need to do the right thing. We need to do the right thing by the American people, and we need to do the right thing by our troops. Fund the troops. Break the filibuster. We need to move forward.

I certainly hope my colleagues on the other side are going to finally see the light and vote to move forward funding for our military, national security, our troops, and our families.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time now will be controlled by the two managers.

The Senate minority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what does the previous order say?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time is equally divided until 3:30 p.m.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I will take some of that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

ZIKA VIRUS FUNDING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate's work is that of legislating. The art of legislating is rooted in good faith, and, always, legislation by definition is the art of compromise. In order to accomplish things for the American people, the Senate must work together in good faith, but I am seeing very few good-faith efforts from the Republicans on Zika, among other things. What I am seeing is one cynical Republican ploy after another.

It is clear now that Republicans are not going to provide President Obama and the country with the \$1.9 billion in emergency Zika funds that public health officials need, but Democrats still want to get as much funding as the experts tell us they need in order to stop Zika. To that end, the President of the United States, Leader PELOSI, and I have made several entreaties to the Republican leaders—that is, Senator MCCONNELL and Speaker RYAN—pleading with them to work with us. Last Thursday, the administration tried to schedule a meeting with Speaker RYAN and Senator MCCONNELL in the same room with Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell and Director Shaun Donovan, the leader of the Office of Management and Budget. This was an opportunity for Republicans in Congress and the administration to get on the same page about Zika and chart a path forward. Speaker RYAN and Senator MCCONNELL said no to me. They wouldn't even meet with two members of the President's Cabinet.

Democrats are disappointed, but we continue to look for solutions. The only solution at this point that would get doctors, researchers, and public health experts the immediate Zika funding they need is to pass the bipartisan Senate compromise as soon as possible. We were willing to do more, but the Senate compromise I just mentioned passed this body with 89 votes and could pass again today if it were brought up by the Republican leader for a vote.

I spoke with the Republican leader personally and asked him to consider this legislation as a stand-alone bill. And we would be willing to do even more. I told him that. He would not commit one way or the other. Yesterday, I had my staff reach out to the Republican leader's staff. We haven't heard back. Instead of getting back to my office with a substantive response, the Republican leader came to the floor this morning and made accusations that were wild and unfair about what we are proposing. I guess that was the Republican leader's response to our good-faith offer. I guess that was it. But that is not the way the Senate should operate.

Now it is clear that the Republican leader has been stringing us along. He

never had any intention of coming back to negotiate a deal. Republicans have no desire to work with us to get a bipartisan Zika funding bill to the President now or at any time in the near future. It has all been a charade. Republicans are interested in one thing only: attacking Planned Parenthood. Zika is the sideshow. What Republicans really show their interest in is undermining women's health by taking potshots at Planned Parenthood. They are good at this. They have been doing this for years, and they will use Zika, Ebola, and anything else to do it.

There is a frightening shortage of integrity in this body, and it is getting worse every day. It doesn't have to be that way. Democrats and Republicans can work together and should work together, and we should work in good faith.

The chair and ranking member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee have an agreement that if Democrats agree to go to conference on this Energy bill, Senator MURKOWSKI has given her word to side with Senator CANTWELL in order to produce a consensus-based conference report they can both support. She made that same commitment to me personally. So Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator CANTWELL will work together to represent the Senate at the conference—not represent Democrats or Republicans but the Senate. That is terrific. Senators CANTWELL and MURKOWSKI have proven in the past that they can work on good, strong legislation without poison pills and with strong bipartisan support. So I look forward to them working with other conferees to complete a final energy bill that Democrats can support and the President will sign.

The basis of this legislation has been going on for 4 or 5 years—4 or 5 years. The effort was led by Senator SHAHEEN for years. We almost got it done, but we had Republican obstruction on it. So we are where we are now. We can't legislate for things done in the past, but the Republican leader should take a cue from the senior Senator from Alaska.

We still want to work together with Republicans to get something done on Zika. It is important to the American people. That would require a good-faith approach from our Republican colleagues. That is not here right now, and it is too bad.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time in the quorum call that I am about to suggest be charged equally against both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, in just a matter of minutes this afternoon, we will proceed to a motion to go to a formal conference on S. 2012, which is the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016. There is no doubt in my mind that we should agree to go to conference with the House on this broad bipartisan measure.

I want to begin my remarks with a reminder of both the process that we followed to reach this point and the many, many good provisions that the process has allowed the Senate to include within our Energy bill. From the very beginning, we have committed to the regular order, committee-oriented process.

I want to acknowledge the strong working relationship with my friend and colleague on the committee, the ranking member, Senator CANTWELL from Washington. We set out working this together. We set out with a view in mind that we needed to update our country's energy laws. In order to get a good product, we were going to have to work cooperatively and collaboratively and in an open, transparent, and inclusive process. That is what we did. That has been a goal that was worth working toward, and I think the effort that we made as a chair and as a ranking member brought in support from both sides of the aisle and allowed us to come to this place today.

Our Energy Policy Modernization Act is the result of listening sessions, legislative hearings, bipartisan negotiations, a multiday markup held last July, and a multimonth floor process earlier this year. That process concluded with an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote, as 85 Senators voted in favor of the first major Energy bill to pass this Chamber in nearly a decade.

After we passed our bill, it went over to the House. They responded with a series of measures that had already passed their Chamber. While what they sent back has been criticized by some, I certainly think the House was restrained in its process. They could have passed a highly partisan package that would have been more difficult to reconcile with our bill, but I think they developed a more measured response and chose by voice vote to ask the Senate to conference with them. Now it is our turn.

The very last procedural step is for the Senate to vote to proceed to go to a formal conference. After waiting more than a month—actually, I think we are probably at about 6 weeks now—we will have that vote in the next 10 minutes or so. In looking at all the significant provisions included within our bill, all of which are at stake today, I think this should be a very easy choice for all of us to make.

Our bill includes priorities from 80 different Members of the Senate, including 42 members of the Democratic caucus. When we vote to go to con-

ference, it is no exaggeration to say that at least 80 of us within this body will be voting on whether or not to advance our own ideas and our own policy suggestions.

Let me give you a couple of examples. Our bill contains a bipartisan provision from Senators BARRASSO and HEINRICH, as well as 16 others that would streamline the LNG export approval process. The bill contains an entire title on energy efficiency that was written by Senator PORTMAN and Senator SHAHEEN, as well as 13 other Members.

The resources title that I developed with the ranking member is a balanced package of some 30 lands and water bills, including a bipartisan sportsmen's provision that the Senate adopted by a vote of 97 to 0. We made innovation a key priority to promote the developing of promising technologies. We have Senators ALEXANDER, PETERS, CAPITO, MANCHIN, WYDEN, and many others to thank for that.

We also focused on grid modernization, cyber security, the National Park Centennial, and conservation policies. These are all bipartisan efforts. All of those are a part of this bill.

Now we have to vote to determine whether we will keep going in the last stretch of this legislative process or whether the Senate says: All that work that you did—we are not going to move forward with it. I don't think that is a good option, and I hope it is an option this Chamber will reject.

My very strong preference is that we keep going. I think we should agree to conference with the House of Representatives because I know the conference process can produce a worthy bill that becomes law. I think it is fair to say that it will not include everything that is on the table right now, but anyone who has looked at what each Chamber has passed knows there is plenty out there that we can agree on.

I have a few assurances from Members who may be a little bit hesitant to move forward this afternoon. First, I will reiterate my personal commitment to a final bill that can pass both Chambers and be signed into law by the President. That doesn't mean we are going to unilaterally disarm ourselves in conference negotiations, but my objective here is to deliver a law. That means it can't be the House product necessarily or the Senate product necessarily. It has to be something the Chambers can both agree on and the President can sign into law. I intend to lead the conference committee the way I led the Senate process—by looking for common ground, by being open, by being fair and inclusive, and by seeking consensus over partisan division.

You don't have to take just my word for it. A couple of weeks ago, the two House chairmen who will be most heavily involved in the Energy bill conference also released a joint statement that reinforces how we intend to proceed. Here is what the House Energy

and Commerce chair, FRED UPTON, as well as the House Natural Resources chairman, ROB BISHOP, said on June 20:

At the end of the day, our goal is to get something to the President that he will sign into law. From our perspective, a bill that the President will veto is a waste of time and effort and casts aside the hard work we've put in up to this point. We remain committed to working in a bicameral, bipartisan manner and remain hopeful that we can set aside our differences and move ahead with a formal conference between the two chambers.

In addition to my approach and the approach the two House chairmen have embraced, there are institutional protections that will help ensure that this process stays on track. If Members are part of the conference committee and decide at the end they don't want to sign the conference report, then they don't have to sign it. As we have seen in recent days, conference reports require 60 votes to end debate on them, meaning our bill will need to remain bipartisan in order to pass.

To me, the best argument for going to conference on an energy bill is still the one we started with; that is, it is way past time. It has been almost a decade now. The last time Congress passed a major energy bill was December of 2007. With almost a decade's worth of changes in technologies and markets taking place since then, our policies have simply become outdated.

There is a whole list of organizations and individuals that have urged us as a Chamber to get moving with a conference, whether it is the Alliance to Save Energy, the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Business Council for Sustainable Energy, the American Chemistry Council, the chamber of commerce. They go and on.

There is an urgent need to update and reform our Nation's energy policies. We are overdue. Our policies are deficient. We have advanced many, many good ideas, but we need to get this over the finish line. That is exactly what going to conference will allow us to do.

The Energy Policy Modernization Act gives us a chance to do all of that. We have a chance now to take that next step forward on this broad bipartisan bill—keep it going, proceed to conference, allow ourselves to write a good final bill that we can then send to the President's desk.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I join my colleague from Alaska, the chair of the Senate Energy Committee, to urge my colleagues today to move forward on going to conference on the Energy bill.

My colleagues will remember we passed a bill 85 to 12, I think it was, and included a great deal of provisions on—my colleague just said—modernizing the electricity grid, building next-generation investments in energy, smart buildings, advanced composite

materials, energy storage and improving cyber security, critical infrastructure, and the energy workforce for tomorrow.

This was a very worked-over process, both in committee and on the Senate floor, and it was a very collaborative effort among our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. It did take some discussion with our House colleagues because the package they passed was a very different product. I will say, it was a very less worked product on a bipartisan basis and certainly a product that had a lot of veto threats in it.

Our House colleagues have made some comments about that legislation that have made it helpful for us to move forward. We met with our colleagues, the Natural Resources and Energy Committee chairs, Mr. BISHOP and Mr. UPTON. They basically said: Look, they didn't want to waste time on things that would be vetoed by the President of the United States, so we took that as a good sign that they were willing to sit down and talk about legislation that could move forward in a positive fashion.

Senator MURKOWSKI's staff, my staff, and we together have rolled up our sleeves and tried to look at ways in which we could talk about how we move forward from here so that all of our colleagues could have confidence that we are going to work on something that would be a final product that really would get to the President's desk. I thank my colleague from Alaska for her indulgence in that process. I know she had conversations with Senator REID about no poison pills and wasn't going to sign off on those kinds of activities.

We are here to say to our colleagues: Let's continue the good bipartisan effort that existed in the Senate bill and work with our colleagues in the House to resolve these issues. As my colleagues know, there are many thorny issues that still need to be addressed. Even though the Senate worked out many of its issues, there are still several thorny issues that are in the House bill, such as water, fire, and a variety of other issues which will take some dialogue and give us an opportunity to talk. If we can reach a conclusion, great, but if we can't, I think we have all decided that moving forward on the basis of an energy policy we can agree to is a very important concept for all of us.

As my colleague from Alaska said, it is time to move forward on an energy policy, and I encourage my colleagues to vote yes on this motion. Let us continue to work to protect these key provisions and move forward so we can get a bill to the President's desk.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

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

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to disagree to the House amendment, agree to the request from the House for a conference, and the Presiding Officer appoint the following conferees: Senators Murkowski, Barrasso, Risch, Cornyn, Cantwell, Wyden, and Sanders with respect to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

John McCain, John Cornyn, Marco Rubio, Deb Fischer, Rob Portman, Roger F. Wicker, Richard Burr, Joni Ernst, David Vitter, James M. Inhofe, Dean Heller, Pat Roberts, Lamar Alexander, Ron Johnson, Tom Cotton, Thom Tillis, Mitch McConnell.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to disagree to the House amendment, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and to appoint conferees with respect to S. 2012, a bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 84, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 125 Leg.]

YEAS—84

Alexander	Corker	Hirono
Ayotte	Cotton	Hoeben
Baldwin	Crapo	Isakson
Bennet	Daines	Johnson
Blumenthal	Donnelly	Kaine
Blunt	Durbin	King
Booker	Enzi	Kirk
Boozman	Ernst	Klobuchar
Boxer	Feinstein	Lankford
Brown	Fischer	Leahy
Burr	Flake	Lee
Cantwell	Franken	Manchin
Capito	Gardner	Markey
Cardin	Gillibrand	McCain
Carper	Grassley	McCaskill
Casey	Hatch	McConnell
Cassidy	Heinrich	Menendez
Collins	Heitkamp	Merkley
Coons	Heller	Mikulski

Moran	Risch	Tester
Murkowski	Rubio	Thune
Murphy	Sasse	Tillis
Murray	Schatz	Toomey
Nelson	Schumer	Udall
Peters	Sessions	Warner
Portman	Shaheen	Warren
Reed	Stabenow	Whitehouse
Reid	Sullivan	Wyden

NAYS—3

Paul	Perdue	Scott
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NOT VOTING—13

Barrasso	Graham	Shelby
Coats	Inhofe	Vitter
Cochran	Roberts	Wicker
Cornyn	Rounds	
Cruz	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 84, the nays are 3.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Cloture having been invoked, the question is on agreeing to the compound motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2016—CONFERENCE REPORT—Continued

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the conference report to accompany S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the conference report to accompany S. 524.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

(The remarks of Mr. ALEXANDER pertaining to the introduction of S. 3169 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

JUDICIAL VACANCIES

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, the American public is well aware that there is a vacancy on our U.S. Supreme Court and, in addition, that there is obstruction going on in terms of our path to do what the Senate is supposed to do—confirm a President's nomination to the Supreme Court. Because it is the Supreme Court, because that term has come to an end and we have seen a number of 4-to-4 ties, because of the consequence and the gravity of what it is that the Supreme Court does, that has garnered a lot of attention. It has resulted in the calling for the Republicans in the Senate to do their job, to not obfuscate and declare that they won't hold hearings or won't schedule a vote on President Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland. As a consequence, that vacancy may persist for well over a year when all is said and done.

I rise today to draw attention to the fact that that is not the only judicial