

any way. I repeat, he was the most visionary and inspirational leader I have ever known.

Let me repeat some of the accomplishments my friend the Republican leader just outlined. He was the Prime Minister of Israel twice, Acting Prime Minister twice, President of Israel, Minister of Defense twice, Minister of Finance, Minister of Transportation, and he served in eight other Cabinet posts. That is a pretty good record.

Shimon Peres was a brilliant man who spoke 6 languages and authored 11 books. He was the definition of a statesman. He was a guiding light for peace—always for peace. He made Israel and the Middle East and the world a better place.

Above all, we should all learn something from this good man. Here is what he said, and this is how he lived his life:

Optimists and pessimists die the same way. They just live differently. I prefer to live as an optimist.

That really says it all. He lived his entire life as an optimist. From the challenges he and his family faced because of the Holocaust to his work for a lasting peace to secure Israel, he never wavered in his hope for the world. He was always looking forward. He had some political battles. The leaders of Israel had all been in the military fighting. He never served in the military, but his abilities were so pronounced that he was able to succeed, as I have outlined in his résumé.

The last time I talked to him, I called him and I said: One of my prize staff members, Jessica Lewis, is coming to Israel with her dad, and her father has never been to Israel. I have told them how I feel about you. Is there any way you could meet them?

And he met them. Of course he did. He spent time with them. That is who he was, a person whom I so admired, and he had time for Jessica and her dad.

I join the people of the world in mourning the passing of this good, kind, and inspirational man. I send my deepest condolences to his family and the people of Israel. I am so happy that the delegation of people who are going to attend his funeral will be led by the President of the United States, Barack Obama.

I will miss Shimon Peres. The world will forever miss this good person.

FUNDING FOR FLINT, MICHIGAN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am happy to see the progress that has been made in the House of Representatives with respect to Flint, MI. This is a step in the right direction toward advancing funding for the people of Flint in the lameduck. However, I do have some concern. The statement of my Republican colleague, the leader of the Senate, was that he and Senator INHOFE would work toward funding. This should be easy. Why can't they just say they will do it? This is not deficit

spending; this is money that the people of Michigan have allowed—STABENOW and PETERS—to be given up. It is Michigan money that is going to be used in a different way. The money is already there. We overwhelmingly supported it.

So, as I have said before, we will continue to exercise caution moving forward, but I am glad to see that progress has been made. If it were up to me, I believe these three nationally declared emergencies—Louisiana, \$2.8 billion—what happened in Baton Rouge and other parts of Louisiana was devastating. There were rainstorms that even the coast of Louisiana had never seen before—never seen before. Thousands of structures were damaged, and hundreds of them were destroyed. I think they are entitled to work on fixing all of that. We should do as we do with emergencies.

The Presiding Officer is from Texas, and we have stepped forward every time there has been an emergency in Texas and taken care of it, whether it was an explosion that blew up a facility there, whether it was floods. The many problems Texas has had over the last decade, we have taken care of them, as we should.

I think West Virginia, which has an emergency declaration of \$310 million—that should be taken care of.

A much smaller one but a very important one to the people of Maryland—small in proportion to the two I just mentioned—that is nationally declared. We should take care of it.

So I hope we will not continue to mourn the fact that these emergencies occur, these national disasters occur; we have to take care of them. I hope we can do that. It would be the right thing to do.

I look forward to continuing to try to work something out on the CR. We are not there yet, but I hope we can get that done expeditiously.

Mr. President, I ask that the Chair announce the business of the day.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 5325, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: A bill (H.R. 5325) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell (for Cochran) amendment No. 5082, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell amendment No. 5083 (to amendment No. 5082), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 5084 (to amendment No. 5083), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 5085 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 5082), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 5086 (to amendment No. 5085), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with in-

structions, McConnell amendment No. 5087, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 5088 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 5087), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 5089 (to amendment No. 5088), of a perfecting nature.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Chamber is vacant, so 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. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

JUSTICE AGAINST SPONSORS OF TERRORISM ACT—VETO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the veto message to accompany S. 2040, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Veto message to accompany S. 2040, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 hours of debate equally divided between the leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am honored to open the debate today on the effort by this body and by the U.S. Congress to give the loved ones of the victims of terrorism on 9/11 their day in court—simple justice.

Fifteen years ago we stood in horror as our country suffered the worst terrorist attack on the United States in the history of our Nation. Nearly 3,000 innocent lives were lost, including heroic first responders, firemen, police, and beloved honorable men and women—148 of them from my home State of Connecticut. Over these years, I have watched and listened to them in their strength and courage as they have tirelessly sought to make this system of justice work in the memory of their loved ones.

The terrorists who struck on 9/11 tried and failed to destroy that system of justice and the ideals of this Nation. Our hearts were broken, but our country and our ideals were not.

Over the past 15 years, I have been honored to work with those families. Today gives us the opportunity to move forward with legislation, despite the President's veto.

I deeply respect the President and the reasons that he has given for vetoing the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, but I urge my colleagues to move swiftly and soundly to reverse this veto so these families can have their day in court. That is what the legal system of this country is designed to do. It is the system where I spent my career before the Senate

working to ensure accountability for wrongdoers and the restoration of victims' rights—promises to citizens that are made by our Constitution that there will be a neutral and fair forum to determine their claims.

These families will never get their loved ones back, but they deserve justice and a day in court. That is why today we will, I hope, override the President's veto.

Fifteen years after that tragedy we are still learning facts, but there is mounting evidence that the Saudi Government—or at least organizations and operatives within the Saudi Government—aided and abetted one of the most massive crimes in the United States. In our system, the truth behind those facts deserves to be presented in a court—a court of law where fairness and justice will be assured. This measure does not prejudge a verdict or issue a judgment. It gives both sides a fair day in court.

If the Saudi Government had no involvement in 9/11, it has nothing to fear. But if it was culpable, it should be held accountable. That is the basic principle of this measure.

When all is said and done, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act simply closes a loophole that was created by the courts, contrary to the intent of this body. That loophole, in effect, permits foreign governments to aid and abet crimes against the citizens of this country as long as its aiding and abetting occurred outside of our borders. Think of it as a missile launched from another country by terrorists with the support and assistance of that foreign government. That foreign government can evade any and all responsibility simply because the missile was launched outside our borders. Similarly, the missile of terrorism can be launched outside our borders and the foreign government, including Saudi Arabia, is able to evade all responsibility under the decision made by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in New York, which created that loophole. So that foreign government can give terrorists bags of money and tons of explosives to carry out murder within our borders, as long as it does so outside our borders. That is wrong.

The principle here is broader and bigger than Saudi Arabia or even the 9/11 victims. It is about simple justice. Our law should recognize the reality that global crimes can be sponsored and supported outside our borders and inflict grave harm, including murder, on the citizens of our country within our borders.

This loophole will be closed by this measure for the benefit of not only the 9/11 victims but also potential victims in the future. It will send a message and deter violent crime in this country aided and abetted by foreign governments in the future. It will deter that kind of violence through an ideal and a tradition that is uniquely American. It is a system of justice that imposes accountability and makes sure that everybody has a fair day in court.

I know questions have been raised about potential retaliation or reprisal against members of our military or citizens in other countries. This Nation should stand firm and strong against terrorist violence. We have nothing to fear as long as we do not engage in supporting or sponsoring the kind of violence that occurred on 9/11 here. We must trust that our government would never be responsible for that kind of aiding and abetting of deliberate killing of innocent civilians, the purposeful massacre of people who are innocent.

I am honored to begin this debate. I hope it will be closed in a way that vindicates the rights as well as the interests of our country. I am proud to join colleagues on both sides of the aisle. This measure has been bipartisan from the start.

I particularly thank my colleagues Senator SCHUMER and Senator CORNYN for their leadership. I believe a bill unanimously passed by both houses of Congress, strongly supported by both sides of the aisle, deserves to become law. I trust and believe it will today.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold?

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Yes.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is not in a quorum call.

The Senator is recognized.

OSHA AND ANHYDROUS AMMONIA STORAGE

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to address a recent ruling from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. Last week, the court issued a ruling that was a victory for America's ag producers and a rebuke to Washington regulators. Specifically, the court ruled the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, violated the law when it imposed new limits on anhydrous ammonia storage.

I realize many of my colleagues may not be familiar with anhydrous ammonia. But for those of us who make our living from the land, it is the most cost-effective and commonly used fertilizer in production agriculture. Anhydrous ammonia is an essential input for ag producers in Nebraska and all across this country. It allows them to produce more food while using less land, less water, and, yes, less fertilizer.

Producers receive anhydrous ammonia from retail facilities. In Nebraska, these facilities are primarily farmer-owned cooperatives, found in more than 400 locations across the State. These facilities store anhydrous ammonia in tanks on their property, and since 1992, these tanks have been exempt from certain OSHA regulations. But in 2015, OSHA issued a new standard affecting these retail fertilizer facilities, and they did so illegally, without public notice or industry input.

OSHA's new standard would have required retailers to provide documenta-

tion that these tanks fit certain specifications. If a retailer couldn't produce that paperwork, then he or she would be required to purchase an entirely new tank. These tanks are expensive. The starting price is in the neighborhood of \$70,000. Furthermore, anhydrous ammonia tanks vary in size from State to State, and several tank manufacturers are no longer in business. OSHA's unrealistic expectations made it impossible for these retailers and producers to obtain the needed paperwork, which meant that these retailers would have been forced to purchase those pricey new tanks, even though their old ones worked just fine. Understandably, this became a major headache for retailers and producers.

For example, in my home State of Nebraska, Central Valley Ag Cooperative, which is located in York, anticipated compliance costs of \$5.6 million. This includes an additional \$100,000 of ongoing compliance costs every year. In Elmwood, NE, Midwest Farmers Cooperative estimated producers would spend \$20 to \$28 more per acre when applying fertilizer to their fields. Given the current state of the farm economy, these increased costs would have been devastating. They would have forced many farmers to leave the industry altogether.

That would be heartbreaking enough, but there was another, even more troubling aspect to OSHA's standard. They never put it through the required public notice and comment process. OSHA is required by law to conduct this process, as are most Federal agencies, whenever they issue a new regulation or standard. The public notice-and-comment period is a built-in safeguard. It allows those who would be affected by a proposed regulation to have their voices heard, and, ideally, the government would listen to their voices. But OSHA didn't follow the rules. They did not listen. They didn't even try to listen. They said their new policy was effective immediately. That was unacceptable to me.

In response, this summer I introduced bipartisan legislation with Senator HEIDI HEITKAMP known as the FARM Act. We offered this legislation to provide relief to farmers and force OSHA to follow the law.

Last week, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit reinforced this legislation by forcing OSHA to vacate their illegal and harmful standard. With this ruling, an important precedent has been set. The court made it clear: OSHA improperly expanded the scope, complexity, and costs of regulation on ag facilities that handle anhydrous ammonia. By disrupting the supply of a vital fertilizer, OSHA would have disrupted farming operations. Worse, they would have harmed farmers' ability to do their jobs and also to provide for their families.

I am relieved that the courts came in and upheld the rule of law. America's ag producers will now face one less hardship. They can focus on feeding the

world and providing for their own families.

At the same time, I remain appalled that OSHA would so brazenly disregard the law in the first place. This is another example of why the American people don't trust the Federal Government. Honestly, I don't blame them. When the Federal Government doesn't follow its own law, it destroys public trust. Out-of-control agencies, like OSHA, which do not follow the law need to be stopped when their overly burdensome regulations hurt Americans.

Let the American people do their jobs. Let them raise their families, earn their living, and pursue their life's purpose. When the bureaucracy fails to do this, it is the responsibility of Members of Congress to step in. I am glad that I have done so.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time spent in a quorum call before the vote on the veto message to accompany S. 2040 be charged equally against each side.

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

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.

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.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as the Senate knows, today we are considering the President's misguided decision to veto a piece of legislation that passed this body unanimously by unanimous consent and likewise passed the House of Representatives with no dissenting votes.

In our polarized politics of today, this is pretty much a close-to-miraculous occurrence because Democrats and Republicans, Senators and House Members, have all agreed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, which gives the victims of a terrorist attack on our own soil an opportunity to seek the justice they deserve—all of us have come together and agreed this is appropriate and the right thing to do.

At a time when international terrorism is spreading, FBI Director Comey yesterday warned of a terrorist diaspora. The Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act will send a strong message that those who sponsor terrorist attacks on American soil, including foreign governments, will answer to those victims and pay for the death and destruction they cause.

Current law already allows for American victims to sue foreign governments for many different offenses committed by their employees—commercial wrongs, assault, drunk driving, rape, human trafficking, among others. That is already part of existing law.

JASTA would clarify that sponsoring an act of terrorism in America is added to that list. If we allowed lawsuits against foreign governments for bar fights, contract breaches, drunk driving, then we should allow the victims of a terrorist attack on our soil the opportunity for their day in court as well. This is an important piece of legislation, and it is straightforward. That is why I believe we got the unanimous support in both bodies that we have.

I want to make clear, though, that this has not been a quick process. This legislation has been pending since 2009, and we have worked through a number of Members' concerns they have expressed along the way in order to modify the legislation and build the consensus we now have achieved. There have been many different drafts and feedback from Members, a lot of consultations with family members who have been affected, and a lot has gone into this legislation. That means this bill has been negotiated and hammered out over a long period of time, and that is the reason we were able to garner such strong support from both bodies to get the bill passed.

Last Friday, the President chose to ignore the voices of American terrorism victims by vetoing this legislation. Fortunately, today this Chamber will have a choice and have a chance to exercise our constitutional prerogative under article I, section 7 of the Constitution. We will have a chance to act as a check on President Obama to override his veto.

I have read President Obama's veto message, and it is not persuasive. That is because it described a bill that doesn't exist and misrepresents the state of the law. He cites concerns that the bill would "create complications" with some of our close partners. The truth is, JASTA only targets foreign governments that sponsor terrorist attacks on American soil, plain and simple. I don't know how that would create complications with some of our close partners.

The financing of terrorism in the United States is not behavior we should tolerate from any nation, allies included. How can anyone look the families in the eye and tell them they shouldn't have the opportunity to seek justice against a foreign government responsible for the death of their loved one?

The President has claimed this legislation would result in a flood of lawsuits against Americans by foreign governments. What the President ignores is that we are already being sued by foreign nations under the current state of the law, but a law like JASTA applied reciprocally will open no such floodgates.

The President even had the audacity to claim this legislation might lead to lawsuits against members of the military, but had he read the plain text of the bill, he would know this bill only allows for lawsuits against foreign gov-

ernments, not individuals. He would also know it contains a specific exemption for our Armed Forces.

Finally, JASTA is not a sweeping legislative overhaul that dramatically alters international law. It is an extension of law that has been on the books since 1976. Once again, there are numerous exceptions that prevent foreign governments from shielding themselves from litigation when they cause harm.

The President has also complained this applies to conduct committed abroad, but today and for 40 years our law has been replete with immunity exceptions that apply to conduct committed abroad. This bill just adds another exception.

At the end of the day, this vote is about doing what is right for the American people. Some of our colleagues have expressed concerns about how it might be interpreted by some of our allies, but the fact is, this legislation does not mention any particular country. All it does is it carves out an exception to this notion of sovereign immunity for conduct committed in a terrorist attack on American soil.

The whole idea of sovereign immunity comes from England and our Anglo-American inheritance in our law. The notion is that the King in England could do no wrong so you couldn't sue the government, but we have recognized the injustice that would cause, even in our own country, when Congress has passed numerous exceptions under which the U.S. Government can be sued in our own court, recognizing that equal justice under the law does not create a situation where it should not tolerate a situation where the government was simply immune from litigation and paying its fair compensation in individual lawsuits.

This legislation is about pursuing justice and the legal process it continues to serve as a foundation to our Republic. At its core, this bill is about respecting the voices and the rights of American victims. I believe we have many important allies around the world with whom our interests are aligned, but when our interests diverge, and it is a question of protecting American rights and American values, I think we should always do that rather than somehow subjugate those rights and values to the interests of some foreign government.

This is not about severing our relationship with any ally. This is simply a matter of justice. This is about respecting the voices and the rights of the American victims. At about noon today, this Chamber should vote overwhelmingly to override President Obama's veto of the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act because the families have already suffered too much. They have already suffered untold tragedy, and they deserve to find a path to closure that only justice can provide.

I, like many of my colleagues, have had a chance to meet with a number of

the families of the victims of 9/11. Their stories are heartbreaking, and I know none of us will forget where we were on that fateful day. Our country has changed undeniably, but for these families, that day and each day serve as a tragic reminder of deep, personal loss.

One of these family members whom I have had the chance to get to know is Marge Mathers, who now calls Texas home. Marge's husband Charles worked on the 99th floor of the North Tower of the World Trade Center. She says she turned on the television that fateful day and watched in horror as the tower in which Charles was working collapsed.

Marge moved to Texas soon after September 11, but her grieving—and our Nation's grieving—continues and of course will never completely end. Long ago, I pledged to Marge and to other families I have met that I would do my very level best to help them right this wrong and to provide them an opportunity to make their case in a court of law. So we will fix this law by extending this 1976 provision, the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, to allow the families and the victims of the 9/11 tragedy to seek justice in a court of law in an American court.

These families should have the right to make their case. These families should have the freedom to have their day in court, to have a judge hear their case, and to hold accountable those who played a role in their suffering. That is what this legislation is all about, providing them the freedom to do so.

The families of the 9/11 terrorist attacks that occurred in the United States have waited a long time, and I am hopeful they will not have to wait any longer for the opportunity to pursue justice. I hope every Member of this body will join me in supporting this bill one more time and we will vote to override the President's veto and further the cause of justice for these victims.

Mr. President, 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. REID. 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.

FUNDING FOR FLINT, MICHIGAN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to give the people of Flint, MI, the assurance that they are going to get some help after more than a year. I have had an opportunity to meet with Senator STABENOW. I talked with her a number of times this morning. I have had occasion to visit with the majority leader, and I have spoken with Leader PELOSI. I am convinced that there is going to be help for Flint in the lame-duck. They have been wait-

ing for help, they deserve help, and I am very happy that it is going to come. The people there deserve relief. What is going on there has been wrong, but now I feel very comfortable in being able to say that the people of Flint, MI, will get help. I have had conversations with people who have been given the assurance by the Republican leadership that something will happen in the lame-duck. We have been waiting a long time to get this done, and it is going to happen.

As I indicated a minute ago, I have had a number of conversations with Leader PELOSI this morning, and she—I never want to say what someone said, but I can say that I felt comfortable, after speaking with her, that the House feels comfortable with where they are on Flint, and we feel comfortable here in the Senate.

I really appreciate the hard work of Senator STABENOW and Senator PETERS because they have been tireless, relentless to make sure the people of Flint, MI, get some help.

I think it should be a good day for the Senate. It should lead to our being able to move forward on the continuing resolution. There are a couple of outstanding issues, but I think they should be able to be resolved.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, 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. CARDIN. 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. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to speak about the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, better known as JASTA.

I am going to support the veto override, but it is not without concern for the potential unintended consequences. I have come to the conclusion that the risk of shielding the perpetrators of terrorism from justice outweighs the risks on how other countries might respond to and perhaps compromise U.S. interests.

Fifteen years have passed since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, but in my home State of Maryland and across the country, the pain caused by the events of that terrible day is still very real. The 9/11 attacks were a national tragedy for the United States, but we were personally devastated for fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, and children in Maryland and throughout the country. The 9/11 victims and their families deserve meaningful relief, and I cannot support putting obstacles in the way of victims of terrorism seeking justice.

I understand that this legislation may have an effect on long-held sovereign immunity principles, and I share some of those concerns that the President has articulated in his veto mes-

sage. I share the President's view about the importance of upholding sovereign immunity to the extent that we can and to the extent that it makes sense, but the principles of sovereign immunity were put in place at a time when acts of international terrorism were not as common. Exceptions to sovereign immunity have grown over time as times have changed. In today's world, it is my view that we must make sure that the international community understands that there is a clear distinction between those who oppose terrorism and those who sponsor terrorism. Those who commit or support terrorist acts in the United States should face the full weight of our justice system.

JASTA's intended purpose is to create a tort exception that allows victims and their families to seek justice for acts of international terrorism in the United States that are caused by terrorist torts of a foreign state or its officials. Terrorism victims and their families in the United States should be able to have their day in court. We cannot, in good conscience, close the courthouse door to those families who suffered unimaginable losses.

I have confidence in the American jurisprudence system and that we will get this right in order to respect the lawful acts of governments but also to hold those who sponsor terrorism accountable under our system of justice.

The legislation restricts the application of this exception. It only applies to acts of terrorism on U.S. soil. It establishes a standard that is greater than negligence in order to be able to have an actionable claim. There is an ability for the government to stay the proceedings to negotiate a settlement. So the U.S. Government can intercede. I think these exceptions were put in and negotiated in order to try to deal with some of the legitimate concerns that were initially raised.

As ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I recognize that there are risk factors in terms of how other countries may respond to the enactment of JASTA. As a nation with hundreds of thousands of troops that serve abroad, not to mention multiple foreign bases and facilities, the United States of America is a country that benefits from sovereign immunity principles that protect our country and our country's interests, its Armed Forces, government officials, and litigation in foreign courts. Therefore, there is a concern of unintended consequences, including irresponsible applications to U.S. international activities by other countries.

While I have faith and confidence in the American legal system, the same faith does not necessarily extend to the fairness of legal systems of other countries that may claim they are taking similar actions against America when they are not. So we need to follow closely how other countries respond and try to mitigate the risks of the United States abroad.

In my role as the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, I intend to do just that. I will seek to work with my colleagues to try to mitigate these risks, and I similarly support the efforts of the State Department and Department of Defense to mitigate any risks to our diplomacy, assets, and troops abroad that may be caused by the enactment of JASTA.

I intend to explore with my colleagues the possibility of whether we need or will need additional legislative action. Such additional legislation would allow justice for family members of the victims of the 9/11 attack while ameliorating some of the potential adverse consequences of JASTA.

Near my Baltimore office in the Inner Harbor of Maryland, there has been created a memorial to the victims of the 9/11 attacks. Inspired by an artifact of the New York World Trade Center, the memorial consists of three 22-foot-long twisted and torn amalgamated steel columns from the Twin Towers. The memorial provides a place for contemplation and a site to remember and reflect upon the events of September 11, 2001, while paying tribute to the 69 Marylanders who lost their lives that day. Each year on September 11, Baltimore's World Trade Center will act as a sundial to mark the chronological inscriptions of the events of that tragic day. Today we hold close in our hearts and prayers those Marylanders who died on that day, as well as the families and friends whose lives have been altered forever.

There are no actions we can take to sufficiently heal the pain and suffering so many thousands of Americans carry with them 15 years after that fateful September day, but our constituents and fellow citizens are asking for a path to justice. This legislation creates that path, and having weighed both sides carefully, I am compelled to uphold it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last Friday, President Obama vetoed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, JASTA. Given the overwhelming, bipartisan support this legislation enjoys in both the Senate and the House, I was surprised and hence very disappointed the President disregarded the will of the People and chose this course of action. He chose to use his veto pen, but today it is my hope and expectation that the Senate will exercise its constitutional authority to override that veto.

This legislation has been a truly bipartisan effort since the day it was introduced. I joined Senators CORNYN and SCHUMER as an original cosponsor last year.

Our bill is sponsored by 16 members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. And if you know anything about the Judiciary Committee, you know that getting 16 members of our committee to agree on any legislation is no small

task. We have some very conservative members, as well as some very liberal members. Getting all of those members on board with this important legislation is a testament to just how broad its support really is.

I moved this legislation out of our committee unanimously in February, and then the full Senate passed it unanimously in May. The House followed suit and passed it in September. Like the Senate, the House passed the legislation unanimously.

That is how this legislation arrived on the President's desk. It was sent to him with unanimous support in both the Senate and House, from Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals.

But it has run into some opposition. Of course, it is not opposed by the victims of 9/11 and their families. They aren't asking for legislation that tips the scales in their favor. All they want is the opportunity to present their case in a court of law. And that is what this legislation would give them.

The legislation has run into opposition because it is opposed by Saudi Arabia, who has been making threats against the United States about what it might do if Congress stands with the American people and 9/11 victims and their families, instead of the Saudis. Now, according to press reports, the Saudis have gone out and hired an army of lobbyists to work furiously in a last-minute attempt to derail it.

So on what exactly has the White House and Saudi Arabia based its opposition?

They have made a lot of claims, but the one you hear most often is that if the United States stands with the 9/11 victims on this legislation and provides them the opportunity to make their case in court, then other countries could try to haul U.S. soldiers and other personnel into their courts.

But what this claim ignores, of course, is that JASTA does not allow lawsuits against individuals, only foreign governments, JASTA expressly prohibits lawsuits arising from "acts of war." So any claim by the President that this is all about protecting U.S. personnel from being hauled into foreign courts just doesn't hold water.

The second most common argument some are making is that if Congress stands up to the President, the Saudis and their lobbyists, and this legislation becomes law, then the Saudis will respond by pulling their money out of U.S. securities. Well, let's set aside the fact that this appears to be an empty threat. It is highly unlikely that they would follow through on it. But even if they did, there would be plenty of buyers for those securities. But more importantly, is this really how we should be deciding policy? What kind of message would that send to other foreign governments?

The message would be clear: if you want to influence U.S. legislation, make sure to buy up U.S. debt, and then threaten to sell that debt any

time the United States Congress does something you don't like.

We absolutely cannot be intimidated or bend to that type of threat. That would send a terrible message to the rest of the world.

So, it is unfortunate President Obama vetoed this important legislation and that we now need to have this vote.

But, it is my hope and expectation that the Senate—and the House—will stand with the 9/11 victims and their families, and stand up to the President, the Saudis, and their army of lobbyists.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, the decision whether to override the President's veto of the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act has been a difficult one.

Every Member of this body has vivid memories of September 11: the fires raging in the towers, smoke billowing from the Pentagon, a plane destined for the Capitol, but taken down by brave Americans—the sense that this Nation would never be the same.

I strongly support the ability of Americans who are victims of terrorism on U.S. soil to receive compensation and their fair measure of justice. That, at its core, is the goal of this bill.

I have met with the families. I know many of those killed or injured in the attacks were not only the breadwinners in their families, but also mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, cousins and friends. I know the families' deep and abiding sense of grief is just as intense today as it was 15 years ago.

This bill has elements that are very strong and have my unqualified support. For example, it expands the Antiterrorism Act to allow victims to hold accountable individuals who aid and abet or conspire to commit terrorist attacks.

I have decided to support the bill today, but continue to be concerned about unintended consequences that may require Congress to revisit this bill in the future.

My key concern relates to the exception to the immunity of foreign governments. Proponents of this bill argue that the exception is narrow, that it applies only if a foreign nation, with ill intent, takes unlawful actions that cause an act of terrorism on our soil.

But other nations that are strongly opposed to American actions abroad could respond by using the bill as an excuse to adopt laws that target our own government's actions.

A September 15 Washington Post editorial said it well: "It is not a far-fetched concern, given this country's global use of intelligence agents, Special Operations forces and drones, all of which could be construed as state-sponsored 'terrorism' when convenient."

Those of us on the Senate Intelligence Committee know that, if other countries respond to JASTA in this

manner, it could jeopardize our government's actions abroad. If that happens, it is likely that our government would be forced to defend against private lawsuits, which could pose a threat to our national security.

I had hoped some agreement could be reached to narrow the bill's scope to limit those unintended consequences, such as by limiting the bill to the September 11 attacks.

I believe the threat of unintended consequences is real and must be mitigated. To that end I have signed a letter with several of my colleagues who feel as I do that this issue will have to be revisited.

I intend to work with my colleagues on a bill that would limit this bill to the 9/11 attacks, which were singularly devastating to our country. In addition, I intend to look into whether we should limit the bill to apply only to those directly impacted by an attack—including individuals, their estates and property damage, rather than companies with only tangential connections.

Mr. GRASSLEY. 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. CORKER. 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. CORKER. Mr. President, over the course of the last several days, I have met with the victims of 9/11 and, like many people in this body have, I don't think I have ever met a more gracious, genuine, sincere group of people. I know they have sought some way of expressing their desire to seek justice in what happened on 9/11. We all have constituents who come up and meet with us. These people certainly have not been from the State of Tennessee, but I have to say, they have presented their case in a way that is most heartfelt, and I have tremendous empathy for all they and their families have gone through. Yesterday, on the way outside the building, a gentleman came up to me, recognized me, and told me about sitting in his home and seeing the planes go overhead, seeing them kill his wife. He talked to me about the conversation he had with the FBI agent, whom they have now gotten to know, about what had happened.

Senator SCHUMER and Senator CORNBYN have done a remarkable job in shepherding through this piece of legislation. I give them tremendous credit for what they have done. I do want to say, I don't think the Senate nor House has functioned in an appropriate manner as it relates to a very important piece of legislation. We have had no hearings in the U.S. Senate this Congress, and we have had no vote—no vote whatsoever—of record on this piece of legislation. As a matter of fact, today will be the first vote. There is no doubt by fact that we went

through the unanimous consent process and no one objected. No one objected. No doubt that registered our "yes" votes, if you will, without a record on this piece of legislation.

Yesterday I brought my niece and nephew to this building before it opened, and I told them about the fact that there is a place in the back here that from time to time I have gone to pray before a big vote, and how in recent times there haven't been many votes that have been that decisive or that have weighed on me as much as this vote today. Today is one of those votes.

I have tremendous concerns about the sovereign immunity procedures that could be set in place by other countries as a result of this vote. I do. For that reason, I have circulated a letter that lays out those concerns, and numbers of people within this body have signed that letter. They have said we feel there could be in fact unintended consequences as a result of what we know is going to happen today.

I have seen our country's standing in the world be eroded over the course of the last several years. I know there is debate over that. In my opinion, I have seen our standing erode. I am concerned about the consequences that over time this vote will have on that. At the same time, I believe the victims of 9/11 do deserve an outlet, a way, themselves, of seeking justice in this particular case.

This, to me, is not about Saudi Arabia, it is about us, and I don't think the Senate has yet gotten it right as it relates to the best way for the 9/11 victims to seek that justice. I know this bill provides them a way for that to occur. I don't think it is perfect. I think a better way might have been to establish some type of tribunal, where experts could come in and really identify what actually happened on discretionary decisions that took place within the country of Saudi Arabia.

We make decisions around here that we believe are to be in our national interests. I have had tremendous difficulty with this one. That is the reason we have generated a letter of concern to the two sponsors of this bill who have handled this in the manner they have. They have done an exemplary job. To me, the Senate has not functioned quite in the manner that it should, nor has the House, and I think we end up today with an imperfect solution.

I have concerns about this legislation not having a waiver. I have concerns about the fact that over time, if this continues to build upon itself, we as a body—a body that, to me, could use some great strengthening. To me, we have a body that is in the process of building itself back to the place it ought to be, and we have done that over the last couple of years. Let's face it. The institution of the United States Senate itself has diminished over time, and we have work to do to overcome that.

On balance, I think this bill has problems. I think we will be dealing with overcoming this over time, and I know numbers of us have joined together to express that, but I do think that to be consistent and to give the victims who have lost so much an opportunity to express themselves in this way is the appropriate thing to do at this time.

I have read the concerns that have been expressed by the head of our Joint Chiefs. I read the letter that came over from the President. Certainly, there are significant and important points to have been made. As a matter of fact, 6 months ago those points might have led us to a slightly different place today.

So with tremendous reservations and concerns about where this legislation is going to lead us, with tremendous empathy toward the victims—who have lived through so much, have seen loved ones gone, it has affected their lives and will affect their lives for the long term—I am going to support passage of this legislation today, but I do so understanding that there could be in fact unintended consequences that work against our national interests, and with a determination—should that occur—to work with others within this body to try to overcome that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a bipartisan letter to Senators CORNBYN and SCHUMER regarding S. 2040, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, from myself and Senators CARDIN, GRAHAM, FEINSTEIN, ALEXANDER, WARNER, ROUNDS, REED, ROBERTS, COONS, FLAKE, UDALL, COATS, NELSON, THUNE, SHAHEEN, KING, CARPER, COTTON, MCCASKILL, SULLIVAN, MERKLEY, RISCH, SCHATZ, MCCAIN, HEITKAMP, HIRONO, and BENNET be printed in the RECORD.

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

SEPTEMBER 28, 2016.

Hon. JOHN CORNYN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS CORNYN AND SCHUMER: We are writing regarding the anticipated override of the president's veto of S. 2040, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA).

We appreciate the efforts that you have undertaken to allow the families who lost loved ones on September 11, 2001 to have additional recourse.

We have a great deal of compassion for the families and respect their desire for justice. We understand your purpose in drafting this legislation is to remove obstacles so those who commit or support terrorist acts in the United States face the full range of consequences of the U.S. legal system. However, concerns have been raised regarding potential unintended consequences that may result from this legislation for the national security and foreign policy of the United States. If other nations respond to this bill by weakening U.S. sovereign immunity protections, then the United States could face private lawsuits in foreign courts as a result of important military or intelligence activities.

We would hope to work with you in a constructive manner to appropriately mitigate those unintended consequences.

Sincerely,

Bob Corker (R-TN), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Mark Warner (D-VA), Mike Rounds (R-SD), Jack Reed (D-RI), Pat Roberts (R-KS), Chris Coons (D-DE), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Tom Udall (D-NM), Dan Coats (R-IN), Bill Nelson (D-FL).

John Thune (R-SD), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Angus King (I-ME), Tom Carper (D-DE), Tom Cotton (R-AR), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Jim Risch (R-ID), Brian Schatz (D-HI), John McCain (R-AZ), Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Michael Bennet (D-CO).

Mr. CORKER. With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor. I know the distinguished Senator from New York who sponsored this bill wishes to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, how much time is left on each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democrats have 14 minutes remaining. The majority has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to finish my remarks and the vote occur immediately thereafter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Tennessee. I know he comes at this with the best of intentions and spirit. We disagree, but he is an expert on foreign policy, and we all respect his judgment.

I rise to speak on behalf of my bill, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, or JASTA. Soon we will vote on whether to override the President's veto of this bill. This is a decision I do not take lightly, but as one of the authors of this legislation and a firm believer in its purpose, I believe the Senate should confidently vote to override, and I will lay out the reasons why as clearly as I can.

The bill is near and dear to my heart as a New Yorker because it would allow the victims of 9/11 to pursue some small measure of justice, finally giving them the legal avenue to pursue the foreign sponsors of a terrorist attack that took the lives of their loved ones.

Unfortunately, the courts in New York have dismissed the 9/11 victims' claims against certain foreign entities alleged to have helped the 9/11 attacks. These courts are following what I believe is a fundamentally incorrect reading of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. Do we want it established inflexibly in precedent that foreign countries, directly responsible for financing terrorist acts on U.S. soil, are beyond the reach of justice? I don't think so. I don't think that. In an age where we have state sponsors of terrorism, I don't think that is what the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act ever intended.

For the sake of these families, it should be made clear—beyond a shadow of a doubt—that every entity, including foreign states, will be held accountable if they are sponsors of heinous acts like 9/11. It is very simple. If the Saudis were culpable, they should be held accountable. If they had nothing to do with 9/11, they have nothing to fear.

I might add, the families are not simply seeking justice for themselves. They want to make sure Saudi Arabia or any other country in the future knows they will pay the consequences if they aid and abet terrorism. In a certain real sense, they are lighting a candle.

When tragedy befalls somebody in a horrible and irrational way, a vicious way—as has befallen these families—the natural instinct the Scriptures tell us is to curse the darkness—why me?—to be angry, to turn inward, to wish the world would go away, but these families, with amazing fortitude, persistence, and courage, are lighting a candle. They are trying to make the world a better place, even though it will never bring their loved ones back, so it will never happen again. I so respect that, among many other things, about them.

Let me address the foreign policy concerns some may have about the bill from which the veto arises. Senator CORNYN and I have discussed in depth many times on the floor how we have narrowed the bill to strike the proper balance between our interests abroad and the right of our citizens to obtain redress when they are victims of terrorism on U.S. soil. In fact, we penned a joint op-ed on that question in USA TODAY.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From USA TODAY, Sept. 27, 2016]

GIVE 9/11 FAMILIES A LEGAL AVENUE:
OPPOSING VIEW

(By Chuck Schumer and John Cornyn)

The Senate will vote Wednesday on whether to override the president's veto of our bill, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA). As the authors of this legislation and firm believers in its purpose, we believe the Senate should confidently vote to override the veto. JASTA was written for one main purpose: to clarify under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FSIA) and the Anti-terrorism Act that every entity, including foreign states, must be held accountable if they are found to be sponsors of heinous acts of terrorism on U.S. soil.

If the veto is overridden, this legislation would provide a legal avenue for the families of the victims of the 9/11 attacks to seek justice in a court of law for the terrorist attacks that took the lives of their loved ones. And it would deter foreign entities from sponsoring terrorism in the future.

The concerns we've heard about the legislation don't hold up to scrutiny. JASTA's opponents claim that the bill will subject U.S. diplomats and other government officials to a raft of potential lawsuits in foreign courts.

Not true; JASTA simply builds on well-established principles under FSIA.

It returns the law to the way it was before a 2008 court case that granted sovereign immunity even in terrorism cases where citizens are murdered on U.S. soil. In the decades before this, there was no flood of lawsuits against U.S. interests.

Consistent with FSIA, as designed by Congress, victims can sue a foreign government if one of its employees causes damage arising from drunken driving, assault or breach of contract. If U.S. victims can sue a foreign government for these reasons, they should be able to sue a foreign government that harms their loved ones by financing a terror attack on our homeland.

There is always an excuse not to do something, but the chief argument used by JASTA's detractors is flimsy. When weighed against the moral imperative to do right by the families of the 9/11 victims—who continue to strongly advocate for this bill—the choice is clear: Senators should vote to override.

Mr. SCHUMER. I wish to read a section of the op-ed that addresses the chief concern of JASTA's opponents:

JASTA's opponents claim that the bill will subject U.S. diplomats and other government officials to a raft of potential lawsuits in foreign courts. Not true; JASTA simply builds on well-established principles under [the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act].

It returns the law to the way it was before a 2008 court case that granted sovereign immunity even in terrorism cases where citizens are murdered on U.S. soil. In the decades before this, there was no flood of lawsuits against U.S. interests.

Consistent with FSIA, as designed by Congress, victims can sue a foreign government if one of its employees causes damage arising from drunken driving, assault or breach of contract. If U.S. victims can sue a foreign government for these reasons, they should be able to sue a foreign government that harms their loved ones by financing a terror attack on our homeland.

Senator CORNYN and I have worked very hard over the course of 6 years and several iterations of the bill to strike the right balance. It has been a long work in progress, and I believe the measure of our success is reflected by the unanimous support the bill received in both Houses of Congress. In this body, not a single person objected when it was brought to the floor to be voted on.

Democrats and Republicans don't agree on much these days, but we agree on JASTA. Both parties agree the families of the 9/11 victims deserve justice. That, more than anything else, should weigh most heavily on our minds today.

It has been 15 years since that awful day—a day that changed every New Yorker, every American. We will never forget the shock, the fear, the holes in our hearts, the friends and neighbors and loved ones we lost, the first responders and union workers and firefighters and policemen who bravely rushed to the towers searching for signs of life in that smoldering rubble. I was there the day after. The smell of death was in the air. As a nation, we came together. We rebuilt. As New Yorkers, we did the same thing, but we will never ever forget. In this debate,

we cannot forget what this legislation means to the families of victims.

It has been 15 years since Ms. Terry Estrada lost her husband Tom, who worked in the North Tower. Terry didn't just lose a husband, she lost a father to a young son 7, daughter of 4, and a newborn baby boy. She lost a loving father and her best friend. Terry and her children have championed this bill for over a decade. I thank them and all the other families—especially Monica Gabrielle, Mindy Kleinberg, Lorie Van Auken, Kristin Breitweiser, Patty Casazza—for their tireless advocacy and patience. Of course, no compensation could ever repair the broken hearts of a family who lost a loved one to such mindless hate, but as Jane Bartels, a mother from Staten Island who lost her husband Carlton on that sunny morning 15 years ago put it recently, “We just want our day in court.” “We just want our day in court.”

The victims of 9/11 and other terrorist acts have suffered such pain and heartache, but they should not be denied their day in court. They should not be denied their pursuit of justice.

There is always an excuse not to do something, but as Senator CORNYN and I have explained, the chief argument used by JASTA's detractors is not strong. In fact, it is flimsy. When weighed against the moral imperative, we have to do right by the families of the 9/11 victims. The choice is clear. I urge my colleagues to override.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The question is, Shall the bill (S. 2040) pass, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding?

The yeas and nays are required under the Constitution.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) would vote yea.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 97, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 148 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Casey	Feinstein
Ayotte	Cassidy	Fischer
Baldwin	Coats	Flake
Barrasso	Cochran	Franken
Bennet	Collins	Gardner
Blumenthal	Cooms	Gillibrand
Blunt	Corker	Graham
Booker	Cornyn	Grassley
Boozman	Cotton	Hatch
Boxer	Crapo	Heinrich
Brown	Cruz	Heitkamp
Burr	Daines	Heller
Cantwell	Donnelly	Hirono
Capito	Durbin	Hoeben
Cardin	Enzi	Inhofe
Carper	Ernst	Isakson

Johnson	Murphy	Shaheen
King	Murray	Shelby
Kirk	Nelson	Stabenow
Klobuchar	Paul	Sullivan
Lankford	Perdue	Tester
Leahy	Peters	Thune
Lee	Portman	Tillis
Manchin	Reed	Toomey
Markey	Risch	Udall
McCain	Roberts	Vitter
McCaskill	Rounds	Warner
McConnell	Rubio	Warren
Menendez	Sasse	Whitehouse
Merkley	Schatz	Wicker
Mikulski	Schumer	Wyden
Moran	Scott	
Murkowski	Sessions	

NAYS—1

Reid

NOT VOTING—2

Kaine

Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 97, the nays are 1.

Two-thirds of the Senators voting, a quorum being present, having voted in the affirmative, the bill, on reconsideration, is passed, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

FUNDING FOR FLINT, MICHIGAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier this month, the Senate voted to help families affected by lead poisoning in Flint as part of the Water Resources Development Act, or WRDA. We are glad to see that progress is being made in the House as well to pass a WRDA bill that also includes help for Flint families. I have worked closely with Speaker RYAN and Leader PELOSI to encourage that progress, and I made it clear to them that I was extremely serious, and I just mentioned that again to Senator STABENOW—very serious about defending the Senate position in conference and ensuring that Flint funding remains in the final bill.

We have a path forward to getting our work done, and if we keep working together, we will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader and I have had a number of conversations. I yield to the senior Senator from Michigan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I wish to thank the majority leader for his comments and for the conversations we have had—publicly and privately—and our Senate Democratic leader, as well, for being such a stalwart, as well as all of our colleagues.

We in the Senate have done the right thing and moved forward on a WRDA bill that has an important package for Flint and other communities that have lead-in-water issues.

At the beginning of this week, there was a House bill that did not include anything for Flint or anything around that contamination. We now have a

commitment. There is going to be something in the House WRDA bill and a commitment that the final bill will include the work that we did in the Senate.

So I wish to thank again Senator INHOFE, Senator BOXER, and all of our colleagues. This is a very positive step forward.

I will just remind people that folks in Flint are literally bathing with bottled water every single day, and the sense of urgency only grows. So I am anxious to work with our leadership to get this done.

Thank you.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we expect to start voting on the CR around 2 o'clock, and with a little cooperation, we should be able to get that over to the House this afternoon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to yield 1 minute to our ranking member on the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator BOXER. I wish to yield to her for 1 minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to thank my leader very much. Yesterday, Senator INHOFE and I were on the floor and I stated that if I felt there was an ironclad commitment to take care of the Flint, MI, problem and the lead in water across this Nation, I would support the CR. I interpret the strong language from my leader, HARRY REID, and the Republican majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, as an ironclad commitment. They spoke to the powers that be in the House.

I know that Senator INHOFE and I are bound and determined to fix this, and believe me, I want to send a message to the people of Flint and to their Senators, who have worked their hearts out: This will happen. If it doesn't happen, I have some ideas of how I am going to protest it, but it will happen. I take it as an ironclad commitment.

I yield the floor back to my colleague, Senator REID.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2912

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to ask my colleagues to honor the life of Trickett Wendler, pictured here, who was a young mother of three who fought and lost her battle with ALS disease, and the lives of so many others who want the right to try to save their lives by passing the Trickett Wendler Right to Try Act of 2016.

Now, like so many of my colleagues, we are often visited by our constituents, people who are battling their own diseases, whether it is ALS or Duchenne muscular dystrophy, or different forms of cancer.

This is a very simple bill. What it is trying to do is very simple. It is trying to restore freedom. It is trying to give patients and their families hope—the freedom and hope that is being denied them right now by our Federal bureaucracy.