

I wish to especially compliment the chairman of the House committee that worked on this, Chairman FRED UPTON, as well as Congressman PALLONE and Congresswoman DEGETTE, Democratic Members of the House of Representatives. They have worked with Senator MURRAY, the ranking Democrat on the Senate's HELP Committee, and with me for the last 2 years on a very complex but very important bill.

Part of the bill has to do with money, and one part of that is \$1 billion of funding for State grants for opioids. Now, I suspect one reason there was such a large vote in the House of Representatives yesterday—only 26 Members voted no and 392 voted yes—was because of this \$1 billion for opioids. At least in Tennessee—and I am sure it is true in most States of the country—there is no more urgent epidemic than opioid misuse. It is filling up the courts. It is filling up the jails. It is filling up the hospitals. It is causing tragedies in families all across America.

The Senate passed important legislation earlier this year on programs authorizing new money, but this is the money for State grants to Iowa, to Tennessee, to California, and to every State to help deal with the opioid epidemic abuse. So I suspect that one reason so many Members of the House voted yes yesterday and so few voted no would be that it would be pretty hard to explain a “no” vote against \$1 billion of State grants for opioid abuse.

There is also \$4.8 billion of funding for the National Institutes of Health, which Francis Collins, the distinguished Director, calls the “national institutes of hope.” and there is \$1.8 billion for the Cancer Moonshot led by Vice President BIDEN. There is \$1.4 for the Precision Medicine Initiative, or personalized medicine initiative, a special project of President Obama, and \$1.6 billion is for the BRAIN Initiative. There are remarkable advances being made in the ability to identify Alzheimer's before symptoms are evident and then to slow its progression. It is hard to imagine how much grief that would end and the billions it would save if we could do that. So those are other reasons why there are only 26 Members of the House of Representatives who voted no yesterday and 392 who voted yes.

The Mayo Clinic has sent a letter to me:

On behalf of the Mayo Clinic, I write in enthusiastic support of the 21st Century Cures Act and salute your strong, bipartisan leadership on this essential legislation.

We are pleased to see the inclusion of dedicated streaming funds for the Food and Drug Administration and National Institutes of Health. . . .

I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

So next Monday the Senate will have a chance to see whether we can do as well as the House of Representatives. I ask my colleagues to think long and

hard about a big vote. We need a big vote. Let me give my colleagues one reason especially why. This \$6.3 billion that is in the 21st Century Cures bill is designated for opioids, for precision medicine, for cancer, for brain, and for FDA, and it has to be approved every year by a vote. That is the way our appropriations process works. I would say to my Democratic friends as well as to my Republican friends that if you are concerned about whether the \$6.3 billion will be available next year and the next year, the best way to ensure that it is will be to cast a big vote on Monday for it this year, because it will be very hard to explain, if you vote for \$6.3 billion this year spread over the next few years, why you did not vote to support it next year and the following year.

The big vote in the House should give assurance to Democrats as well as Republicans in the Senate that these are real dollars, that they are provided in a fundamentally responsible way. To Republicans who look at the \$6.3 billion and say: I like the idea of funding opioids; I like the idea of improving funding for the National Institutes of Health, let me say that this is done in a responsible way.

Speaker RYAN, who everybody knows is a conservative budget hawk, created the mechanism for this funding. It was approved by TOM PRICE, the House Budget Committee chairman. It goes like this: \$6.3 billion over the next several years for these dedicated purposes. It can only be spent for those purposes. It has to be approved every year. It does not increase the overall spending of the budget by one penny because it is offset by reductions in mandatory spending on the other side. So \$6.3 billion up here and \$6.3 billion down there over the next 10 years.

So this is a compromise, but it is a magnificent compromise. It is, as Senator MCCONNELL has said, the most important piece of legislation we will deal with this year. The House passed it with a huge bipartisan vote: 392 to 26. I hope that we in the Senate do just as well next Monday because the real winners will be the American people as they look forward to treatments for Alzheimer's, for cancer, a vaccine for Zika, a non-addictive pain medicine that will help deal with the opioid misuse epidemic, and regenerative medicine, which may help restore hearts and perhaps even eyesight in miraculous ways.

This is truly an exciting time, and this is truly an effective piece of legislation that deserves our support by coming to the floor on Monday and then by passing it on Tuesday or Wednesday.

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

MAYO CLINIC,

Rochester, MN, November 30, 2016.

Sen. LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR ALEXANDER: On behalf of Mayo Clinic, I write in enthusiastic support

of the 21st Century Cures Act and salute your strong, bipartisan leadership on this essential legislation.

Efforts to advance biomedical innovation and accelerate the development and delivery of cures are of great importance to Mayo Clinic and our patients. We are pleased to see the inclusion of dedicated funding streams for the Food and Drug Administration and National Institutes of Health—including funds for research efforts such as the President's Precision Medicine initiative, the Vice President's Cancer Moonshot, and the BRAIN initiative to speed diagnosis and treatment of conditions such as Alzheimer's disease.

In addition, provisions to promote administrative streamlining, telehealth efforts and mental health reform are also of critical importance in allowing Mayo Clinic physicians and researchers to provide the best possible care to patients.

Mayo Clinic is grateful for your leadership, wholeheartedly supports this comprehensive legislation and looks forward to this innovative effort being signed into law, and we pledge to be a committed partner in its implementation. Thank you.

With best regards,

JOHN H. NOSEWORTHY, M.D.,

President & CEO.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Madam President, today marks the 54th version of “Waste of the Week”—54 times I have been down here in the Senate to highlight documented examples of waste, fraud, and abuse. When I first started this endeavor, I told my staff: I hope we can reach \$100 billion or so—some target. Do you think there is that much waste, fraud, and abuse floating around through the Federal Government?

Well, we hit that \$100 billion a long time ago—I think about the 20th week—and we now have moved to a pretty staggering number, which is more than one-third of a trillion dollars of waste that has been documented by independent agencies of the government that are supporting us with information as to why this money should not have been spent or how it was wasted or lost through fraud or abuse.

I have had a number of serious issues here that run into the billions of dollars that could easily be fixed. Some of them we started by pointing this out with legislation to try to fix these things, but it just keeps piling on here. So every once in a while, I throw in something so ridiculous, people will understand the fact that there may have been some benefit to that program—we don't understand what the benefit was—but surely these ridiculous examples of money spent, hard-

earned tax money spent, are not used for this purpose. Tell me it is not true. Unfortunately, it is true. So today I am adding two more examples of something where people say: How can this be possible? The total ends up at about another \$1.5 million.

One of the studies funded by grants from the National Science Foundation totaled \$1.3 million. The researcher's application stated they would use the grant funds to examine a variety of factors, one of which was, how does humidity affect the heat that we feel? So, you know, if you go to Florida and it is 90 degrees, you have to shower three times a day. You are sweating, and it feels like it is 110, but the temperature says 90. If you go to Arizona and it is 90 degrees, you don't have to take a shower at all because you can go out and take a run, and it is so dry, you don't feel that heat you would feel in Florida.

I have the same situation in Indiana. Northern Indiana is up near the Great Lakes. It is much cooler and has lower humidity than Southern Indiana, which lies down along the Ohio River. So it can be the same temperature down in southern Indiana as northern Indiana, but people really feel that it is different.

I think we all know this. We have all experienced this through summers, through dry days and through humid days. But, no, the National Science Foundation said: We need a study. Let's give a grant for someone who has made an application—\$1.3 million—to see if we can prove that humidity makes it feel as though it is a lot hotter.

So that is what they did. Folks, I can't make this up. This is true. In their initial study, they took beer cans and koozies. Do you know what koozies are? Koozies are those things that you wrap around a cold bottle of Coca Cola or a cold bottle of beer or a can of this or that in order to keep it cold. They put these beer cans in koozies to see if that would be successful in moderating the humidity or what it would do to it.

The researcher's initial round of testing was done in a basement bathroom, where researchers adjusted the temperature and humidity by turning on a hot-water shower and a space heater.

Now, you think, OK, NSF gave us \$1.3 million to try to put a study together. You would think they would go to some kind of lab and get sophisticated equipment and so forth. Instead, they went down into the basement bathroom, shut the door, and turned on the shower, hot water. That wasn't enough, so they put a space heater in there to heat it up. Guess what. The koozies worked.

Well, when you go buy a product this winter at Christmastime, everybody is going to go out and buy stuff. Companies will test something that they want to sell, that they think is going to be bought by the American people. They are successful. Do we have to provide a government grant to help deter-

mine whether this works? Can't we just go to the company and say: Hey, you developed this. What were your studies? What did you learn?

Anyway, that was \$1.3 million. I think we have a photo. Here it is. Here, essentially, is what \$1.3 million bought. They got a little something to measure with, and they put a can over this—looks like Gatorade or some kind of Powerade or whatever. I suppose the money went to buy some of this equipment here to test that. But does the taxpayer have to do this? Is \$1.38 million of money taken from taxpayers' paychecks—is that what it is used for? Well, I guess this is great news for beverage drinkers, but it is mind-boggling that we spend that kind of money.

The second thing I would highlight here is another study, this one by DARPA. DARPA is the Federal Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. For over 50 years—and I admire this Agency—it has done a lot of good things. This little-known Agency states that it is held to a singular and enduring mission that is on their literature: to make pivotal investments in breakthrough technologies for national security purposes. That is a needed, essential use of Federal dollars, to make sure that our warfighters have the kind of equipment and have the kind of research backing up what they are doing. So that is a legitimate expenditure. But why did DARPA decide that understanding why coffee sometimes spills when you are walking is a matter of national security? Now, maybe if the coffee is hot and it gets on the soldier's hands or whatever—the Presiding Officer has had military experience. I am not sure that, as someone in command, you would authorize a study to see that if you were moving when you had a cup of coffee in your hand, you were more likely to spill the coffee than if you were standing still. Trust me, folks—that is what this study was all about. Here was the conclusion of the study: To prevent a spill, you need to pay attention to your coffee while you are walking because the movement might result in a spill.

Now, a confession here. On my way to work—I drive in from Virginia. I have to go by a bakery shop on Lee Highway. I slip in there every morning—it has now become a habit; I have gotten to know the people—for a donut and a cup of coffee. But I don't want to waste time trying to get to work, so I jump into the car and eat the donut and drink the coffee while I am trying to deal with traffic in Washington and get over the bridges and get to work. I have noticed over time that if I have to put the brakes on a little hard or start a little fast or make a quick turn, my coffee spills out of the cup. So all they would have had to do was to buy my coffee, and I could have proved to them that movement would require liquid to move also, and if they are worried about coffee spilling out of the cup, I could have proved that, and all they had to do was buy me a donut and a cup of coffee.

Where does all of this come down? Where this all comes down is the fact that we are nearly \$20 trillion in debt. We cannot balance our budget. We spend more every year than we take in. We have to go out and borrow that money, on which we then have to pay interest. By the way, interest rates are going up. When we are in this kind of a fiscal situation, can we not at least, as a body, stop this waste, fraud, and abuse and these stupid expenditures and ridiculous expenditures of taxpayer money?

This here is just a drop in the bucket. We have much bigger things to do to save taxpayers' dollars. But at the very least, could we not address the waste, abuse, and fraud that is taking place? I have offered legislation on a number of ways to do that.

I know the majority leader is moving to the floor here and I need to wrap up, so I will. At the end of 54 times down here on the Senate floor, we have a total of \$351,587,239,536 of documented, certified waste, fraud, and abuse. We wonder why the American people are fed up with the status quo of what is happening here in Washington.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

TSUNAMI WARNING, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH ACT OF 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask the Chair to lay before the body the message to accompany H.R. 34.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 34) entitled "An Act to authorize and strengthen the tsunami detection, forecast, warning, research, and mitigation program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes", with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 34.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to concur.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 34, an act to authorize and strengthen the tsunami detection, forecast, warning, research, and mitigation program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Bob Corker, Richard Burr, Pat Roberts,