

Mr. SCHUMER. I call up substitute amendment No. 1381.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER], for Mrs. MURRAY, proposes an amendment numbered 1381.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask that further reading the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of January 16, 2024, under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, there is good news. We have just agreed to lock in an agreement and pass a bill tomorrow that will fund the government and avoid an unnecessary government shutdown. This CR will give Congress time to continue working on the appropriations process to fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year. We hope that the House will take up this bill before the Friday deadline with bipartisan support. I appreciate the work of all the leaders to move forward with this CR.

And, in conclusion, I hope—truly hope—we will see the same bipartisanship we have seen tonight in the Senate continue as we tackle the very important supplemental and appropriations bills before us.

#### CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN WOLVERINES FOOTBALL TEAM

#### EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 2023 AS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

#### REPEALING STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO FLOWERS IN THE SENATE CHAMBER

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Science, Commerce, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 520 and that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following resolutions: S. Res. 520, S. Res. 525, and S. Res. 526.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles, where applicable, be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table all en bloc.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 520) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of January 11, 2024, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

The resolution (S. Res. 525) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

The resolution (S. Res. 526) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### MORNING BUSINESS

#### THE PROTECTING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC ACCESS TO CODES (PRO CODES) ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, ensuring Americans' right to access, read, and understand the law is critical to the functioning of our democracy. Whether text with the force of law is found in statute or regulation or whether it has been incorporated by reference, it is essential that all members of the public have fair and equitable access to the legal standards by which they must abide.

Unfortunately, I have concerns that the Protecting and Enhancing Public Access to Codes (Pro Codes) Act would hinder, rather than enhance, the public's access to technical or voluntary consensus standards that have been incorporated into law by reference. This bill explicitly allows standards-setting organizations to require that a member of the public create an account or agree to terms of service as a condition of access. Requiring that an interested party surrender personal information to, or enter into a binding contract with, a private entity in order to read the law raises concerns of privacy and fairness.

I am also troubled that the bill lacks robust standards for public accessibility. It does not require standards to be made available in print or in person, and it does not require standards to be searchable, machine-readable, or accessible to persons with disabilities. In this way, the Pro Codes Act risks creating barriers to access for many Americans, including researchers and reporters, those without reliable internet service, and individuals with visual impairments.

For these reasons, I will object to any unanimous consent agreement regarding the Pro Codes Act.

#### GUATEMALA

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, the inauguration of Bernardo Arevalo as President of Guatemala shortly after midnight on January 15 was a triumph for the people of Guatemala. Despite corrupt forces in the outgoing government, the Congress, and the Office of the Attorney General—who abused their authority in a flagrant attempt to subvert the result of a free and fair election that President Arevalo won overwhelmingly—in the end, Guatemala's democracy was preserved.

I want to congratulate the Guatemalan people for their courage and perseverance, especially the indigenous Mayan population who have suffered deprivation and indignity under successive governments whose officials cared far more about enriching themselves than improving the lives of the country's most vulnerable. It is long past time for Guatemala's indigenous leaders to have a central role in the national government.

I also want to commend the Biden administration, in particular U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Samantha Power, Assistant Secretary of State Brian Nichols, Charge d'Affaires Patrick Ventrell, and the other U.S. Embassy staff, who in the months leading up to the election and late into the chaotic night of January 14 until Arevalo was finally sworn in, used a combination of diplomacy, sanctions, and advocacy to support a peaceful democratic transition of power. Without their sustained diplomatic engagement and the strong support of the international community, it is likely that the so-called Pact of the Corrupt would have prevailed in destroying Guatemala's fragile democracy.

President Arevalo faces immense challenges. Late last year, in an attempt to ensure that if he came to power he would be unable to govern effectively, the Congress slashed the national budget for the social programs and economic reforms necessary to carry out his anti-corruption, anti-poverty, pro-justice, and accountability vision for the country. The Guatemalan people expect him to deliver on his campaign promises, but the very forces that sought to prevent him from taking office have made clear that they will do every possible to prevent him from governing.

Despite these formidable obstacles, Bernardo Arevalo's remarkable ascendancy to the Presidency offers Guatemala and the United States an opportunity that has not existed for generations. Hundreds of thousands of impoverished Guatemalans have fled their country, risking their lives in search of safety and a better life in the United States. In President Arevalo, we finally have a partner of integrity with whom we can focus on addressing the root causes of migration.

For generations, Guatemala's elites, including business and political leaders, have profited from a corrupt system at the expense of the best interests of the country. Tax revenues are a fraction of what they should be. Large areas of the country lack basic public services. Millions of Guatemalan children are malnourished and have no access to higher education. The justice system has been used to perpetuate the unjust and inequitable status quo.

If the Pact of the Corrupt had succeeded, Guatemala's business community would have also paid dearly. The choices were, and remain, stark. They can either help create the conditions

for new investment and economic growth or share responsibility for putting the country on a course leading to the scale of criminality and economic decline that have engulfed Nicaragua and Venezuela. With American companies relocating from China back to this hemisphere and with a Guatemalan President who believes in transparent and accountable governance, there is an opportunity for new investment and business partnerships in Guatemala unlike any time in recent memory. It is time for Guatemala's business leaders to embrace President Arevalo's vision for the country and to become real partners in the Guatemala's development.

I had the privilege of traveling to Guatemala in December as part of a bicameral congressional delegation led by Senator TIM KAINE. Our purpose was to show our support for Guatemala's democracy and for a peaceful transfer of power. We left Guatemala convinced that, while the outcome was far from certain, the people of that country would defend their democracy to the end. That is what they have done, and while the daunting challenges of governing lie ahead, they and President Arevalo deserve our congratulations and our strong support.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO CHRIS GEORGE

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I rise today to recognize my friend and fellow Connecticut resident, Chris George, on the occasion of his retirement from Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services—IRIS—after 18 years of remarkable leadership in resettling individuals and families seeking to build a new life in our country.

In 2005, Chris joined the organization that would later be known as IRIS, which operated out of a small office in New Haven with an eight-person staff. Over the following 18 years, Chris guided an enormous expansion of the organization, with 150 employees now helping to resettle 1,000 people per year across Connecticut. During Chris' tenure, IRIS has been at the center of Connecticut's response to refugees and other immigrants fleeing from persecution and violence, working with those displaced from Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, and many other places worldwide. Chris and IRIS performed lifesaving work to accommodate refugees, especially through the expansion of their community cosponsorship program.

The success of IRIS under Chris' leadership has made New Haven and Connecticut national leaders in refugee resettlement. In January 2023, the organization was selected by the U.S. Department of State as one of five agencies to lead a consortium of nonprofit organizations as a part of the launch of the Welcome Corps program. In this

role, IRIS is responsible for coordinating and managing the newly created Welcome Corps program infrastructure, which includes vetting, certifying, and training private sponsors, as well as monitoring and evaluating the overall success of the program.

I have been deeply honored to work with Chris over the years and witness his incredible accomplishments firsthand. I will always remember collaborating with him closely during the evacuation of Americans and allies from Afghanistan in 2021. From the outset of the crisis, Chris worked tirelessly, oftentimes communicating with those trapped in Afghanistan directly in order to secure their safe evacuation. Chris was quick to recognize the complexities that the evacuation from Afghanistan presented and was able to secure humanitarian parole for hundreds of refugees resettling across Connecticut. Chris has also been a key contributor and spokesperson for the Afghan Adjustment Act, aiming to affirm the legal status of the refugees who have been able to make it to the United States. Chris and IRIS were critical in not only advocating for and assisting in the safe escape of these individuals from the Taliban, but also in helping them to find housing, connect with healthcare, enroll in school, find jobs, and learn English.

Chris has been a fierce advocate on behalf of all fleeing oppression across the world, and his remarkable career is a testament to his diligence, leadership, and compassion. Although he is stepping down from IRIS, he plans to continue advocating for humanitarian causes, including working at the newly created Welcome Corps. I applaud Mr. Chris George for his incredible work and hope my colleagues will join me in expressing our gratitude and admiration. •

##### TRIBUTE TO NILS BURINGRUD

• Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, I want to honor a very special North Dakota resident who turned 100 years old on January 11. Nils Martin Buringrud celebrated this landmark birthday in Fargo at a party with a small group of friends and later a dinner with his family.

Nils was born January 11, 1924, to Nils and Marthe Buringrud in Thief River Falls, MN. His father was a farmer, and the family moved near the Red River Valley community of Kelso, ND, in 1930. They moved 3 years later to a place a few miles away southwest of the community of Hillsboro. In 1943, they moved to a new home southeast of Hillsboro, where Nils lived until he graduated from high school in 1942.

That fall he moved to Spokane, WA, and then to McClellan Air Force Base near Sacramento, CA, where he worked in shipping airplane engines overseas to military bases in the Pacific. Nils returned home and helped farm for awhile before enlisting in the Marines in 1944 at the age of 22. During World

War II, he served aboard an aircraft carrier that sailed through the Panama Canal and on to all the islands in the Pacific, along with Japan, China, India, and near the coast of Africa. He was an expert rifleman when the war ended.

After being discharged from the Marines, he farmed with his brother-in-law and sister and later delivered fuel to area farms. He married Elaine Ponto in 1947, and the newlyweds lived in a home on the Argusville farm of his brother-in-law and sister until 1949, when they bought a farmstead 3-and-a-half miles east of Gardner. There, they continued to farm and raised six children. Nils was active in the American Legion, and he and Elaine attended regular reunions with friends from his Marine unit. They lived there until 1993 when they sold their farm and moved to Fargo.

Elaine died in 2006 and Nils continues to reside in Fargo in the home they purchased in 1998. His daughter Marcia now lives with him, and his life is filled with the activities of his four children who are still living and 11 grandchildren. He continues to drive and walks about an hour daily, weather permitting. While not the oldest living veteran in North Dakota, his family believes he may be the oldest to still have a valid drivers license.

North Dakota is home to more than 200 centenarians, and we consider them among our most treasured residents. Nils Buringrud embodies the very best of the Greatest Generation, growing up on a farm, moving out of State for awhile, enlisting to serve in World War II, and then returning home to raise a family and contribute to his community and State. He has remained a proud and active veteran, and his pioneer spirit, dignity, and hard work have brought him through many challenges and personal achievements. He is an inspiration to all of us.

On behalf of all North Dakotans, I thank Nils for his service to our country and wish him a happy 100th birthday. I hope you enjoy continued good health and vitality for years to come. •

##### RECOGNIZING WELTER STORAGE EQUIPMENT CO., INC.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize Welter Storage Equipment Co., Inc., of Monticello, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Welter Storage Equipment was founded by Lloyd and Joyce Welter in 1982 on their family farm in Monticello during the farm crisis of the 1980s. The farm crisis affected thousands of farmers and farming communities in Iowa, and many farmers had to find alternate forms of income to support themselves. Before launching Welter Storage