other parts of our broken immigration system is our best chance to produce legislation that can pass the House, pass the Senate, and earn the President’s signature. This is why the proposal put forward by Senator Grassley and others, which draws on the President’s original framework and which the President has officially endorsed, has my support, because presumably we will actually make a law here.

I have made no effort—none—to tell Democrats what amendments they should offer. Of course, they shouldn’t try to dictate Republican amendments either.

The longer my colleagues across the aisle refuse to come to the table, the longer they are unable to produce any legislation they actually support, the lower the odds that we can arrive at a legislative solution this week.

Yesterday alone, the Senate was open for 9 hours—yesterday alone, 9 hours. Nine hours we could have spent processing amendments and proceeding to votes. Nine hours down the drain because Democrats won’t let us start the debate they have spent months demanding.

Now that we can finally proceed to consider the underlying bill this morning, I hope my colleagues across the aisle will come to the table. The President has made clear what principles must be addressed if we are going to make a law instead of merely making political points.

While our Democratic colleagues can no longer prevent the Senate from starting the debate, they can continue to delay votes on amendments. I hope that won’t happen.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. McConnell. Mr. President, on Monday, President Trump unveiled his proposal to improve America’s infrastructure, the will host committee chairmen and ranking members at the White House for a bipartisan, bicameral meeting on that subject. I am grateful the President is prioritizing this and reaching across the aisle.

Experts agree that America’s aging infrastructure needs a lot of help. Nationwide, 9.1 percent of our bridges are considered structurally deficient, and 13.6 percent are considered functionally obsolete. One recent study suggests that maintenance costs could cost communities $1.6 trillion a year—road congestion.

The answer is not simply to throw money at old problems.

It took American workers less time to build great skyscrapers, start to finish, than it now takes bureaucrats to review—not even build, but review—proposals for new bridges and roadways. We need to streamline regulations, reform the permitting process, and get government out of the way wherever possible. Once projects are proposed, they should be reviewed in a safe but reasonable amount of time and then completed as quickly and cost effectively as possible.

This is a prime opportunity for bipartisan cooperation. Our last three highway bills, our last three WRDA bills, and our last three FAA bills all passed the Senate easily, averaging more than 80 votes. I hope we can renew that consensus when the time comes.

TAX REFORM

Mr. McConnell. Mr. President, on one final matter, for 8 years under President Obama, our economy didn’t perform as well as it should have. America’s wages and salaries hardly grew. Many job creators sat on the sidelines, wary of new tax increases or heavy-handed regulations. Washington had its foot on the brake. Last year, all that changed.

President Trump and this Republican Congress set out to make life easier for workers and for job creators. We cut regulations and passed tax reform to give middle-class families immediate relief and set the stage for more hiring and more wage growth in the years ahead.

I recently heard from a small family-owned inland river shipyard in Ashland, KY, along the Ohio River. They build and repair commercial barges. Here is what their president wrote. He said, "Thanks to the tax change and optimism of our customers, we are at last long able to replace equipment which has been used way past [its] life expectancy and possibly add two more production workers."

Last week a Louisville employer dropped by to tell me how he is using his tax reform savings: $1,000 bonuses for more than 100 Kentucky employees. Small companies and big business alike are thrilled that they finally have a 21st-century tax code. It makes them more competitive with overseas rivals and frees up more money to invest right here at home, and middle-class workers to reaping the rewards.

Major national companies like Pfizer and Home Depot, which together employ more than half a million Americans, have announced hundreds of millions of dollars in employee bonuses—again, thanks to tax reform.

Just this week, MetLife announced a major new investment in 50,000-plus employees. The company is raising its minimum wage, enhancing benefits, boosting retirement, and creating a skills development fund. In short, MetLife is betting big on U.S. workers, and so are the more than 300 other companies that have already announced major investments in their employees and in their facilities—right here in America, right here, thanks to historic tax reform.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McConnell. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the vote be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

BROADER OPTIONS FOR AMERICANS ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 2579, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 302. H.R. 2579, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the premium tax credit with respect to unsubsidized COBRA continuation coverage.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. All post cloture time is expired. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

BROADER OPTIONS FOR AMERICANS ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2579) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the premium tax credit with respect to unsubsidized COBRA continuation coverage.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 1959

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. Grassley. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1959.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa (Mr. Grassley) proposes an amendment numbered 1959.

Mr. Grassley. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today’s RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 1948 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1959

Mr. McConnell. Mr. President, I call up the Toomey amendment No. 1948 to the Grassley amendment No. 1959.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. McConnell) proposes an amendment numbered 1948.

Mr. McConnell. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.
The amendment is as follows:
(Purpose: To ensure that State and local law enforcement may cooperate with Federal officials to protect our communities from violent criminals and suspected terrorists who are illegally present in the United States)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. STOP DANGEROUS SANCTUARY CITIES ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act.”

(b) ENSURING THAT LOCAL AND FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS MAY COOPERATE TO SAFEGUARD OUR COMMUNITIES.—

(1) COOPERATE WITH FEDERAL OFFICIALS.—A State, or a political subdivision of a State, or an officer, employee, or agent of such State or political subdivision that complies with a detainer issued by the Department of Homeland Security under section 236 or 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1357)—

(A) shall be deemed to be acting as an agent of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(B) with regard to actions taken to comply with the detainer, shall have all authority available to officers and employees of the Department of Homeland Security.

(2) LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.—In any legal proceeding brought against a State, a political subdivision of a State, or an officer, employee, or agent of such State or political subdivision, which challenges the legality of the action of a State or political subdivision, the court shall—

(i) grant the State or political subdivision relief; and

(ii) in the case of any legal proceeding, the court shall—

(I) allow the State or political subdivision to be represented by counsel of its choice, except that if the State or political subdivision has failed to obtain counsel, the court shall appoint counsel to represent the State or political subdivision; and

(II) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (5) and inserting before paragraph (5) the following:

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to extend any liability against the United States or any other State to any person who is not a State or political subdivision of a State, or an officer, employee, or agent of a State or political subdivision, and nothing in this section shall be construed to extend any liability against any other State to any person who is not a State or political subdivision of a State, or an officer, employee, or agent of a State or political subdivision.

(c) SANCTUARY JURISDICTION DEFINED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A State or political subdivision of a State shall not be deemed a sanctuary jurisdiction based solely on its having a policy whereby its officials will not cooperate with immigration officials regarding, or comply with a request made by the Department of Homeland Security under section 236 or 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1357) and the immigration official regarding, an individual who comes forward as a victim or a witness to a criminal offense.

(2) EXCEPTION.—A State or political subdivision of a State shall not be deemed a sanctuary jurisdiction based solely on its having a policy whereby its officials will not cooperate with immigration officials regarding, or comply with a request made by the Department of Homeland Security under section 236 or 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1357) and the immigration official regarding, an individual who comes forward as a victim or a witness to a criminal offense.

(d) SANCTUARY JURISDICTION INELIGIBLE FOR CERTAIN FEDERAL FUNDS.—

(1) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION GRANTS.—

(A) GRANTS FOR PUBLIC WORKS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.—Section 201(b) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3141(b)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

(4) the area in which the project is to be carried out is not a sanctuary jurisdiction (as defined in subsection (c) of the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act).”.

(B) GRANTS FOR PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION.—Section 203(a) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3143(a)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (6), by striking “sanctuary jurisdiction” and inserting “sanctuary jurisdictions”;

(ii) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (5) and inserting before paragraph (5) the following:

(G) IN GENERAL.—No funds authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title may be obligated or expended for any State or unit of general local government that is a sanctuary jurisdiction.

(H) RETURNED AMOUNTS.—

(A) STATE.—If a State is a sanctuary jurisdiction during the period for which it receives amounts under this title, the Secretary—

(i) shall direct the State to immediately return to the Secretary the amounts that the State received for that period; and

(ii) shall reallocate amounts returned under clause (i) for grants under this title to other States that are not sanctuary jurisdictions.

(B) UNIT OF GENERAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—If a unit of general local government is a sanctuary jurisdiction during the period for which it receives amounts under this title, any such amounts that the unit of general local government received for that period—

(i) in the case of a unit of general local government that is not in a nonentitlement area, shall be returned to the Secretary for grants under this title to States and other units of general local government that are not sanctuary jurisdictions; and

(ii) in the case of a unit of general local government that is in a nonentitlement area, shall be returned to the Governor of the State for grants under this title to other units of general local government in the State that are not sanctuary jurisdictions.

(C) REALOCATION RULES.—In reallocating amounts under subparagraphs (A) and (B), the Secretary shall—

(i) apply the relevant allocation formula under subsection (b), with all sanctuary jurisdictions excluded; and

(ii) shall not be subject to the rules for reallocation under subsection (c).”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This subsection and the amendments made by this subsection shall take effect on October 1, 2018.

The AMENDMENT NO. 1958

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1958 to the language proposed to be stricken.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 1958

(Purpose: To provide relief from removal in the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1958 to the language proposed to be stricken.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 1958 to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1959.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The (amendment is printed in today’s RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

AMENDMENT NO. 1955 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1958

(Purpose: To provide relief from removal and adjustment of status of certain individuals who are long-term United States residents and who entered the United States before reaching the age of 18, improve border security, foster United States engagement in Central America, and for other purposes.)

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I call up the Coons amendment No. 1955 to the Schumer amendment No. 1958.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:
The Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN], for Mr. COONS, proposes an amendment numbered 1955 to amendment No. 1958.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with. The Acting President is the temporary President of the Senate. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is printed in the Record of Tuesday, February 13, 2018, under “Text of Amendments.”

The Acting President pro tempore.
The President pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, as we enter the second day of the debate on immigration, everyone should be focused on finding a bill to protect the Dreamers and address border security that can get 60 votes. That is the ball game.

The majority leader’s desire to vote on an unrelated, partisan immigration bill—something that is not on the table on Dreamers but is silent on border security as well—is not a productive way to begin debate.

Let’s get to the crux of the issue. Let Republicans offer whatever they want on DACA and border security, and we will do the same. The leader supports the proposal by Senator GRASSLEY, which is, essentially, the President’s plan. Let’s vote on that first. We will have several bipartisan bills to offer. We should not only be focused on finding a bipartisan bill that can pass the Senate to protect the Dreamers. Several moderate Republicans are working toward that as well. The one person who seems most intent on not getting a deal is President Trump.

President Trump’s contribution to this debate has been to put forward a proposal that contains a vast curtailment of legal immigration, far outside the scope of DACA and border security, and has demanded that the Democrats support it. Instead of making a proposal in good faith or working with Democrats on a compromise, President Trump is trying to force his unpopular, hard-line immigration agenda down the throats of the American people by calling it a DACA bill.

The President’s proposal, now the Grassley bill, is so extreme on legal immigration that several Republicans have opposed it, including my friends from South Carolina and Arizona. Yet President Trump somehow thinks that Democrats would be to blame for not getting a deal on DACA because we didn’t go blindly along with his partisan plan—extreme as it is and with no input from Democrats.

That will not happen. Only in a Kafkaesque, 1984 world could the Democrats be blamed for the current predicament on DACA. As much as the President wants to turn the world upside down, as much as he wants everyone to just accept what he is saying, the American people know better. Everyone here knows that President Trump has stood in the way of a bipartisan solution to DACA from the very beginning. Let’s take a quick look at the history.

First, it was President Trump who terminated the DACA Program last August. Then the Democrats and the Republicans here. Unilaterally, we are in this pickle—worse than a pickle—in this bad situation because President Trump chose to end the DACA Program last August. That stands out above anything else.

Then President Trump turned his back on not one but two bipartisan immigration proposals. I went so far as to put the wall—the President’s signature campaign issue—on the table for discussion. That still did not drive him to a deal.

Finally, now that we are working hard in the Senate to come up with a bipartisan proposal, President Trump is just trying to gum up the works. According to reports, President Trump may threaten to veto legislation that doesn’t match his hard-line demands—my way or no way—and with no Democratic input. A statement this morning from the White House said the President would oppose even a short-term extension of the DACA program.

So who is intent on kicking out these people who know no country but America, who work in our factories and offices, who go to our schools, who serve in our military? Who is intent on kicking them out? Is it not the American people, as 90 percent want to support the Dreamers. It is not any Democrat and not a good number of Republicans on that side of the aisle. It is just the President.

On three separate occasions, President Trump has stood in the way of a bipartisan solution to DACA—a problem he created in the first place. Yet the President is in this dream world. He thinks: Oh, I can blame the Democrats for this. They know where Trump stands. They know it. The American people know what is going on. They know that this President not only created the problem but seems to be against every solution that might pass because it is not 100 percent of what he wants.

If, at the end of this week, we are unable to find a bill that can pass—I sincerely hope that is not the case, due to the good efforts of so many people on both sides of the aisle—the responsibility will fall on the President’s shoulders and on those in this body who went along with him.

Bipartisan negotiations are ongoing and are, perhaps, very close to a conclusion. Nothing is ever certain given the nature of this debate, but I am hopeful that Senators can put the President’s hard-line demands to the side and come up with a deal that works for both parties. If we want to go beyond border security and the DACA kids, let’s do comprehensive reform. We did it once. It worked pretty well in the Senate, but the House blocked it. Let’s go back to it. First, the issues at hand must be the DACA kids and border security. That is the only thing that can pass this Chamber—the only thing.

We need to push through to the finish line. There are only 2 days of debate remaining this week. Everyone has to show up for the final effort. It is too late. That doesn’t mean adding new demands or drawing lines in the sand. It means being willing to compromise and take yes for an answer. If we pass something, it might not be everything that either the Democrats want or everything that the Republicans want, but it may get the job done for the Dreamers and the overwhelming majority of Americans who would like to see them stay in the country.

Mr. President, as we enter the second day of the debate on immigration, everyone should be focused on finding a bill to protect the Dreamers and address border security that can get 60 votes. That is the ball game.

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The Republicans made a conscious decision to give corporations and the wealthiest Americans the lion’s share of corporate share buybacks—this stock repurchasing—which benefit, primarily, the people at the top have reached a significant milestone. Since the passage of the Republican tax bill, corporations have been pouring billions of dollars into stock repurchasing programs, not into significant wage increases or other meaningful investments in workers.

These stock buybacks—this stock repurchasing—which benefit, primarily, the people at the top have reached a significant milestone. Since the passage of the Republican tax bill, there have been over $100 billion in stock buybacks. As of last week, corporations had announced twice the number of corporate share buybacks as during a similar period last year. Let me reiterate that. The number of corporate share buybacks has doubled since the Republican tax bill passed.

Why is that so significant? It is that share buybacks don’t help the average worker. They inflate the value of a company’s stock, which primarily benefits shareholders, not workers. It benefits corporate executives, who are compensated with corporate stock, not workers, who are paid by wages and benefits. The money corporations spend on their stock is money that is not being reinvested in worker training, equipment, research, new hires, or higher salaries. According to analysts at Morgan Stanley, companies that were surveyed said they will pass only 13 percent of the Trump tax cut savings on to workers in comparison to 43 percent that they will spend on share buybacks. For manufacturers, it is even worse: 9 percent to go to workers, 47 percent to share buybacks.

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February 14, 2018

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of the tax cuts and promised it would trickle down to everyone else. Unfortunately, trickle-down never works, and it is not what is happening now. Corporate America is doing what is best for corporate America, and working America is getting left behind. It goes to show that the President and the Republicans were working for when they crafted their tax bill. They gave corporations and the wealthiest Americans a huge tax cut and cut out everybody else.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this is immigration week in the U.S. Senate, and we are preparing today's procedural moves to bring bills to the floor for consideration as early as today, perhaps tomorrow at the latest. It is an unusual time when the Senate is focused on such an issue and actual bipartisan amendments and substitutes are being offered.

We are at this point at this moment in time because of a decision by President Trump on September 5 of last year when he announced he was ending the DACA Program. DACA was a program created by President Obama by Executive order, which allowed those who had been brought to the United States as children, infants, and toddlers to be able to stay legally in the United States on temporary visas renewable every 2 years. It was called DACA, and 780,000 young people stepped up and paid the filing fee of almost $500, went through a criminal background check and an interview and received DACA protection. They then went on with their lives, with 90 percent of them going to work or to school, enlisting in the military—unprocessed in America, willing to hold up their hands and take an oath that they would die for America. That is how Americans love this country. Twenty thousand of them went to work in the United States of America. Perhaps they are teaching your children or grandchildren today. They are doing important things in this country. But President Trump announced last September 5 that the program that protects them and allows them to work will end.

Then he challenged us. He said to the Senate and the House: Do something about it. Pass a law. Isn’t that what you are elected for? The President is right. That is our job.

This week we are going to try to pass a law to end this crisis, which is going to reach a head on March 5 of this year when the DACA Program officially ends and 1,000 young people a day lose their protection. We have less than 3 weeks. So we are going to move today, I hope, or tomorrow or this week, at some point to consider some alternatives to solve this problem.

I say some, because I know that there is no plan in the U.S. House of Representatives to even address the problem—none. I don’t understand it. They know that lives hang in the balance, and they know that overwhelmingly the American people want to give DACA and the Dreamers a chance. The numbers come rolling in; 75, 80, 85 percent of Americans agree that these young people should be given a chance to earn their right to legal status and citizenship. Even 60 percent of those who voted for President Trump agree with what I just said. It is a popular political issue on both sides, and it is also the right thing to do.

What the President has proposed as his alternative, from my point of view, is unacceptable. Let me tell you why. Two weeks ago the White House released a one-page framework on immigration reform and border security. The White House claimed that this is a compromise because it includes a path to citizenship for Dreamers—some of them. That, of course, as I mentioned, is supported by a majority of Americans. The Trump plan would put the administration’s entire hard-line immigration agenda on the backs of these young people. The news are young, DACA-protected people are being held as political hostages for President Trump’s hard-line immigration agenda.

For example, the White House wants to dramatically reduce legal immigration by prohibiting American citizens from sponsoring their parents, siblings, and children as immigrants. We are talking about literally millions of relatives of American citizens who entered this system legally and are following our immigration laws. Some have been waiting for as long as 20 years to immigrate to the United States.

The conservative Cato Institute says the following about President Trump’s proposal:

In the most likely scenario, the new plan [from the Trump administration] would cut the number of legal immigrants by up to 44 percent or a half million immigrants annually—the largest policy-driven immigration cut since the passage of the current law. It would exclude nearly 22 million people from the opportunity to immigrate legally to the United States over the next five decades.

You have to go back in history to a time when there was a proposal that passed on the floor of this Chamber that cut as many legal immigrants to the United States. The year was 1924.

The President’s proposal on immigration, in the midst of the worst refugee crisis on record in the world, is now counted for fast-track deportations without due process of women and children fleeing gang and sexual violence. I can’t tell you how many times we have had this conversation with members of the Trump administration. They create a scenario. The scenario is of a 6-year-old child who is swooped up in some Central American country. The parents give thousands of dollars, their life savings, to a smuggler who says: I will get your child to the United States. The child is picked up by the smuggler in a car or truck or bus to the border. The child then comes out of the car, is pointed toward one of our Federal employees with the Border Patrol, and the child walks up and hands a piece of paper to the Border Patrol agent with the name of someone in the United States. That process then unfolds, and the child ultimately, in many cases, ends up with that relative while a decision is made about the status of the child.

Is it an exploitation in this system? You bet there is. Is there abuse in this system? For sure. Is there actual human trafficking taking place? Yes.
Are atrocities committed against these children in the course of this journey? All true. Should we be dedicated to cleaning this up? Sign me up, on a bipartisan basis.

Let me tell you another scenario, another scenario—a different kind of scenario than turning over a child to a smuggler. Let me tell you about cases we know of in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala where, because of the rampant crime, gang activity, and violence that takes place, parents, desperate to save their children—a different kind of parents—have daughters who have been victims of rape by these gangs—send them to the United States in the hope that they can save their lives. They show up at the border, having lived in fear of this violence in their countries, and they are accepted into the United States to determine whether that fear can be established in a hearing.

These are two different cases—a little child being exploited by a smuggler, a young girl, violence and perhaps death because her parents have nowhere to turn to save her life. Should we treat them both the same? I don’t think so. Historically, we have said that when it comes to asylum seekers, we come to this country with a credible fear for their own lives, the United States has given them a chance to be protected. We have said that over and over again. We said it to the Cubans who were escaping Fidel Castro. We have given sanctuary to Jews who wanted to have freedom of religion and came to the United States, believing this was the only chance they had in the world.

The Trump immigration proposal does not make a clear distinction on those two cases. In fact, what it does is end up with fast-track deportations without due process. Accepting the Trump approach will literally return many of these folks who have come to our border to harm and in some cases death.

There are fast-track deportations in the Trump proposal without due process for millions who have overstayed their visas. An estimated 40 percent of the 11 million undocumented fit in this category. So even if they have no criminal record, without considering their legal claims to remain in the United States, they would be deported. It dramatically cuts immigration from sub-Saharan African countries.

We have a diversity visa program. It is far from perfect, but it is a program that was created years ago, so countries that do not have an opportunity to send people to the United States for legal immigration would have a chance. Immigrants who come from these countries are limited in number. They have to go through the background checks, criminal background checks, biometric investigations—all of the investigations and interviews that we ask them to do. In order to make sure we do everything humanly possible to curb out all those who would be any danger to the United States. They face that same scrutiny, and they should. Many of them are rejected. They can’t make the case for their lives and what they have done with them, and they are not given a chance to come. The President wants to eliminate the diversity visa program. For those African countries, huge countries, about 12,000 to 15,000 come to the United States each year through this program. By eliminating this program, the Trump administration sadly is going to deny those immigrants even a chance to apply for this opportunity.

In the past, many Democrats have been willing to support some of the President’s proposals, changes in our immigration system, eliminating the diversity visa lottery, but when we made that offer 5 years ago, it was part of comprehensive immigration reform with give and take and compromise that tried to make sense out of senseless immigration laws.

In 2013, the Democratic-led Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill with a strong bipartisan vote of 68 to 32. The bill was a product of months of negotiations, with committee and floor debate. Unfortunately, the House of Representatives refused to even consider the bill. Now we are being asked to accept the administration’s proposal with no conditions, no compromise, no give and take; rather, take it or leave it.

Democrats have shown they want to comprehensively fix our broken immigration system, but right now we have to fix our focus on the DACA crisis created by President Trump with his announcement of September 5th that has to be our priority.

In the next day or two, we expect the so-called Grassley proposal, which is the Trump immigration plan, to come to the floor. I want to say for the record, Democrats support comprehensive immigration reform, but we will not stand by and allow Dreamers to be held political hostage to the administration’s entire immigration agenda.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come here in kind of great concern for America’s Dreamers, whose futures hinge on the ability of this body to keep its word and get something done. I want to be clear whom we are talking about when we talk about Dreamers. We aren’t talking about criminals. We aren’t talking about bad hombres. We are talking about kids as American apple pie. As I often say, the only country they call home is the United States. The only flag they pledge allegiance to is that of the American flag. The only national anthem they know how to sing is the “Star-Spangled Banner.”

We are talking about 800,000 young people who were brought to this country as children and were able to obtain legal protection under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, known as DACA. These kids put enormous faith in our government. They came out of the shadows, they passed background checks, and they registered with our government—all to get a 2-year renewable work permit and protection from deportation.

Even the Cato Institute, which is a conservative think tank, says that deporting Dreamers—91 percent of whom are gainfully employed—would hurt America’s economy. At the same time, we are also talking about thousands of additional Dreamers eligible for DACA but didn’t apply. Some couldn’t afford the cost and others were still working through the lengthy application process. These are the Dreamers the White House Chief of Staff John Kelly called lazy asses. M. Kelly, you don’t understand: The reason they didn’t apply is not because they were lazy. In fact, in many cases, they didn’t apply because they were afraid—afraid of people like you. They were afraid that if they came out of the shadows and registered with the government, they would end up on a short list for deportation. What is depressing is that this administration’s actions have proven them right. Now DACA recipients and undocumented Dreamers alike fear they have a target on their back, and that is because President Trump put an expiration date on their dreams when he decided to end DACA.

Now, let me be clear. DACA was never perfect, and it is never a replacement for truly comprehensive immigration reform. Make no mistake, we still need comprehensive immigration reform, and I am committed as ever to that cause—a cause I have spent the better part of my congressional career trying to achieve. I was a member of the Gang of 8 in the Senate back in 2013 when a bipartisan supermajority in the Senate passed the most historic reforms to our immigration system since the era of President Ronald Reagan, only to die in the House of Representatives without even a vote, but that debate is for another day. That debate is for what President Trump called phase 2.

This week, we are not here to debate comprehensive immigration reform. We are not here to debate the numerous types of visas that exist under U.S. law. We are not here to debate how mayors run their cities or how police officers do their jobs. We are here to address a crisis that President Trump started last September when he ended DACA. That is what this week’s debate
is all about—it is about protecting hard-working, upstanding Dreamers across America from being deported to countries they haven’t stepped foot in since they were in diapers.

Now, many of my colleagues have met Dreamers in their States in recent years, and they know the lion’s share of these kids can’t even remember coming here—only growing up here. For the Dreamers who do remember arriving here, they certainly didn’t arrive because they wished to create a crisis that Congress needs to solve. They were babies, toddlers, and very young children, and I challenge my colleagues to think of any decision of consequence they made when they were babies, toddlers, and very young children. I bet you didn’t decide what town you lived in, where your parents worked, or what kind of status you had.

When we talk about Dreamers, we are talking about kids who have grown up American in every sense of the word. They have been here since before they were 2300 New Jerseyans like Parthiv Patel, who came to New Jersey from India when he was 5 years old. He gained DACA status in 2012, graduated from Drexel School in 2016, and he became a nuclear engineer admitted to the New Jersey Bar in 2018.

We are also talking about students like Christopher Rios Martine, a constituent of mine who came here from Colombia at the age of 2. Today he is a junior at Drexel University with a 3.74 GPA. He is president of the Management Information Systems Association, and he is interning at Colgate-Palmolive. Christopher said: “I am proud to be a DACA recipient and I plan to contribute as much to this country as I possibly can.”

As another Dreamer from New Jersey, Sara Mora, recently wrote: Without DACA her life has become “one big question mark”—the question of whether Republicans will act. Will we protect Dreamers who have become integral to our communities, many who are teaching in our schools, who are treating our patients, who are serving proudly in the military of the United States, risking their lives on behalf of our country, and yet we talk about deporting them—and many who are starting families of their own?

That is right. Nearly one-quarter of DACA recipients are the parents of U.S.-born children. That is whom we are talking about this week. We are not talking about criminals. We are not talking about terrorists. We are not talking about gangbangers or drug dealers. We are talking about Dreamers. They are not undocumented immigrants, from my perspective; they are undocumented Americans who have proven themselves worthy of the American dream. Yet the administration slapped an arbitrary expiration date on their dream, creating a crisis that Congress needs to solve.

I took President Trump at his word when he said he wanted to treat Dreamers with heart, just as I took Leader McConnell at his word when he said this week would be about protecting them from deportation. But now, as I listen to many of my Republican colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee, they are talking about Dreamers and more and more about spending tens of billions of taxpayer dollars on a wall President Trump promised Mexico would pay for. Considering the Trump administration’s recent decision to stop border crossers from Mexico have dropped to their lowest level in nearly 50 years, you have to question the wisdom of a multibillion-dollar wall—a wall between the United States and a country that serves as our second largest export market in the world for American goods and services, as Mexican consumers and businesses buy American goods and services that support jobs created here at home.

Likewise, I am hearing a whole lot about political terminology like “merit-based immigration” and “chain migration.” These aren’t terms you find in our laws. They are political catchphrases designed to incite fear and push policies that forever change our legal immigration system. It is a term designed to make our immigration system an inanimate object, but this chain is the foundation of our country. Yet it is a term designed to make our immigration system an inanimate object, but this chain is the foundation of our country. Yet even President Donald Trump professes his support for merit-based immigration, he doesn’t have a plan to bring billions of tax dollars to our shores or save American families from being torn apart.

The reality is, most Americans are, in some ways, the beneficiary of family reunification. Without it, our country would be a very different place. End family reunification, and we would never have seen the leadership of individuals like Colin Powell, a general and Secretary of State. That is right. His parents wouldn’t have been able to come here without the legal immigration, and they both would have been kept apart.

Before John Tu was a billion-dollar businessman, he was a self-described mediocre student from China. He would have never come to America if it were not for the sponsorship of his U.S. citizen sister. He wasn’t skilled when he got here, and yet he built a groundbreaking company.

So let’s get real. When President Trump professes his support for merit-based immigration, he doesn’t have a plan for allowing a million engineers and inventors and entrepreneurs from around the world to come to the United States. He is talking about cutting legal immigration by nearly 50 percent. That is a policy with disastrous implications for the future of this country when you consider basic economic facts.

Any credible economist will tell you that without steady immigration, America’s global competitiveness will suffer, and we will fall far behind much larger countries like China, Pakistan, and India. According to a Forbes magazine article, even President Donald Trump is a product of chain migration. That is right. Friedrich Trump, Donald Trump’s grandfather, was able to come to the United States because of chain migration that my colleagues in the majority deny today.

End family reunification and suddenly billion-dollar American technology companies like Kingston Technology would have never existed. Because of chain migration that my colleagues in the majority deny today.

Families are the essence of American values in our society. Families are the glue that builds strong communities— the foundation of our country. Yet some of my Republican colleagues act as if the nuclear family is a concept that has expired. Well, I loved my daughter since the day she was born and the day she turned 21 and the day she turned 30, the same as I do my son. I didn’t love them less with each passing year. I don’t love them any less now that they have gotten married; in fact, I love them more.

So Americans need to know that when Republicans speak of ending chain migration, they are talking about ending the legal right of U.S. citizens to legally sponsor family members in our immigration system. It is not chain migration; it is family reunification. That is what America is all about. This is what immigration policy for the past century has been about—keeping families together, not tearing them apart.

The future of this country is at stake. Our ability to compete in the global economy is at stake. Every day we vote, it is about protecting our families and our communities.

If Republicans were being honest, they would call their term of “chain migration” what it really is. They would call it family reunification, but they don’t want to call it family reunification because they don’t want to own up to their intention, which is to strip U.S. citizens of the right to sponsor their brothers and sisters, mothers...
and fathers, and adult children as immigrants.

I ask my colleagues to please give it a rest. If you want to have a debate about the merits of our immigration system, we can have that debate, but that debate about comprehensive immigration reform is not the debate we should have this week. This debate is about whether we will do right by American Dreamers, about whether we will listen to the voices of the American people who overwhelmingly want us to solve this crisis.

According to the latest polls out this week from Quinnipiac University, 81 percent of Americans support giving Dreamers a path to citizenship. Yet, week after week, month after month, Dreamers have languished in uncertainty. Republicans didn’t let us protect them in September or October or November or December or January. Yet, throughout all this time wasted, I hear my colleagues in the majority say such things as: ‘Dreamers are not talented, they are, how hopeful they are, how important they are.

I say to them today, that it is getting harder and harder to take your commitment to Dreamers seriously when, at every opportunity you hand an opportunity to do something, you do nothing. Instead, it is beginning to look like President Trump—the person responsible for ending DACA—has enablers in Congress who have been intent on deporting Dreamers from day one. If that is not the case, now is the time to prove it because March 5 is just around the corner. Come March, America’s Dreamers will see their dreams extinguished, replaced with deportation orders to nations they have never called home. So far, there are 19,000 already out of status, and after March 5, there will be 1,000 a day.

If my colleagues want to have a debate about comprehensive immigration reform, we can have that debate some other time but not today, not this week, not until we protect Dreamers living in fear of deportation due to President Trump’s reckless decisions—a President who once said about Dreamers that “we’re going to work something out that is going to make people happy and proud.” Well, the polls show deporting Dreamers will not make Americans happy and proud.

The time for talk is over. The time for knowing that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle who may not support a path to citizenship, how hard-line they are, how important they are.

I urge my colleagues in the Senate not to break America’s heart because our hearts are bigger as a country and our future is brighter when Dreamers in this country stay right where they belong.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sullivan). The Senator from North Carolina.

VALENTINE’S DAY

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, in a moment, I am going to talk about the immigration debate we are going to have here.

Before I do that, though, I want to recognize that this is Valentine’s Day. I happen to be several hundred miles away from my sweetheart, but I want to wish my wife a happy Valentine’s Day. I made her a little card. I am sure probably just violated a rule, but I don’t think anybody can fire me. I want my wife to know I love her and wish I was with her.

Now, Mr. President, I want to talk a little about immigration reform. We just had a discussion. I tell you, sometimes I think I teleport from this Chamber to the Kennedy Center because there are more theatrics going on here than you can find down there on any given day.

Let me give you one example of that. The hard-line position that the Member from New Jersey just had on “chain migration” and somehow that mean Republicans came up with this term because we wanted to make a point. Demographers came up with this term decades ago. People on the other side of the aisle even have references to chain migration in billions they proposed. End the theatrics. Solve this problem.

Let’s talk about the President’s framework. I was presiding just before Valentine’s Day. I heard the word “hard-line” used—the hard-line demand of President Trump. I don’t agree with everything President Trump has done. In fact, I said a year and a half ago—and I got criticized for it—that when you sit down and talk homeland security, you are going to find out you don’t need a large, monolithic wall from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico.

After the President was elected and after he got into office, he listened to homeland security and border patrol, and he came up with a plan that isn’t a long, monolithic wall across the southern border. It is a strategic plan that actually lets us improve the security of the homeland along the northern and southern borders. It is a plan that tries to confiscate tons of drugs that are poisoning Americans in the tens of thousands of every year. It is a plan that makes sure gang members are more likely to be incarcerated when they cross the border illegally and less likely to go into the very communities that many of the people who immigrate to this country go into. It is a plan to make those communities safer.

It is a plan to make sure we know the thousands of people that cross the border illegally are not carrying illicit drugs in a truck or car or a wheel well, the way they do it today, because it is using technology to be able to search for vehicles to make sure our homeland is safe.

It is also a plan that shows more compassion than President Obama’s DACA plan. Right now they are saying: Let’s keep DACA going. Well, there are 690,000 people who are in DACA. Their future is uncertain because it is an Executive order. It doesn’t have the force of law. It could be challenged by the court. The President decided on September 15 of last year, Congress do your job. You have been talking about immigration reform for two decades. We have an arguably illegal Executive order by President Obama that President Trump kept in place for about a year, and then he said: I am going to give you all 6 months to do your job and come up with something that has enduring value.

The DACA proposal only provided the literally present persons who came to this country—through the decisions of an adult—some certainty that they wouldn’t be deported. It doesn’t give them any certainty in terms of a path to citizenship. People said the President—Mr. Trump—the person responsible for ending DACA has enablers in Congress who have been intent on deporting Dreamers from day one. If that is not the case, now is the time to prove it because there are more theatrics going on here than you can find down there on any given day.

I yield the floor.
of that is on the northern border. The remainder is on the southern border. Some of that will be spent on wall structures. When all is said and done, less than half of the 2,300 miles will have a wall structure. The rest will be spent on training additional personnel. If you have ever gone to a border crossing, you know the long lines they have there. This is actually creating technology with low-intensity lights so that you could drive a vehicle through. The Border Patrol folks can identify human smugglers, human traffickers, and drug smugglers without ever having the person get out of the car. This has long been a priority plan is focused on as well. There are wall structures where they make sense. They don’t make sense along about half of the border.

Let me tell you about the humanitarian case for this, which I find remarkable no one on the other side of the aisle will bring up. I went to Texas last year. I went along the southern border. I was on the Rio Grande, on the Border Patrol horses and at night I took ATVs around. I heard a lot of stories by a lot of people, including property owners. Over the last 20 years, 10,000 people have died trying to cross our border on U.S. soil. We have no earthly idea how many tens of thousands of people die just trying to get there. So 10,000 people died over the last 20 years because we didn’t know where they were. They were on American soil, but we didn’t know where they were. We had no idea. Many thousands of people die just trying to get there. There is not a case for needing to know who is crossing the border and where they are—even if they may get deported if they don’t have a legitimate claim to asylum but have this threat to their safety—then I don’t know what else is. I don’t see how border security is hard-line when you look at the facts—not the theater but the facts.

I think that second pillar of the President’s proposal is balanced. It is less than what he originally wanted, but it makes sense, and it shows a lot of movement on his part. Again, two and a half times the number of people are actually getting a path to citizenship—more than the DACA Executive order proposed—and it has border security that makes sense and is no longer this idea of a monolithic wall.

We heard somebody say there is a dramatic shift to legal immigration; that the promise we made to everybody who is in line because of a family relationship is going to be broken. That is utter nonsense. There is no proposal like that on the table. The fact is, there is about 1 million people a year who we the backlog who, if the President’s proposal is accepted, will get to this country in half the time it takes today. There are about 3.9 million people waiting to come to this country because of a family relationship who we have proposed—that the President has proposed—should be able to get here sooner.

The diversity lottery is also something. I think, people have been misled or they are trying to mislead you. I will leave it to you to decide. The diversity lottery is not ending. This actually comes up with a reasonable way to use those 50,000 green cards in a way that lets us use the backlog sooner—instead of having somebody wait 17 years or 20 years to get into the country, maybe 8 or 9, but then it is also with a focus on the underrepresented countries. There are many countries in Africa—about 15,000—that we would like to make sure they have an opportunity every year to come to this country. They are from an underrepresented country. We have already made proposals that said we are open to other proposals to make that be a part of how the diversity lottery gets settled. So 50,000 will continue to come. When we say we are ending the diversity lottery, we are not saying we will end the entry of 50,000 people; we are talking about modernizing it.

The last thing on chain migration is, I want to go back and find everybody who voted in the past, and they voted for a bill with legislative language in it that referred to chain migration. I am sick of that kind of garbage on the Senate floor. That is just misleading. Chain migration is just a process that has been used in the past—not only by our country but other countries—to kind of link people together. I am absolutely sympathetic with some of the things the gentleman from New Jersey said that this is some hateful, divisive term is not paying a whole lot of attention to your job. I have only been here 3 years. Many of these people who are here voted for language that had chain migration in it, and now they are saying it is something the hateful folks in our marketing departments created to be divisive. That is just untrue.

Now the last thing. When we are talking about legal immigration in this country we wrote about 1 million to 1.1 million people a year to this country. I don’t have a problem with that number. If I had Members on the other side of the aisle, some of my colleagues, say, “Thom, we want to try to maintain that same amount of immigration over time.” I would say that I am open to it. Some of my colleagues I have worked with on this bill may not be. But the way we go about doing it needs to be modernized.

How many times have I heard that when we were in the national here who graduates with an engineering degree or some degree in STEM, that we should just staple a green card to the back of their diploma—how many times have we heard that?—because we need high-end workers. We need welders. We need carpenters. We need plumbers. We need people to come to this country to fill jobs, or at some point, because our economy is going to be limited by the number of resources we have for those jobs. Our unemployment is going down. The demand for the workers is there. But we have an immigration system where about the last 20 years tries. We have to come to this country comes purely because of a family relationship. I bet that if we dig into it, many of them actually could qualify on the basis of merit, but right now, it is just a random selection that doesn’t really tie to earning as a nation and for our economic growth or for our economic security.

I believe that if we get the immigration policy right, over the next 10 years, we will have more legal immigration here, more than the 1 million or 1.1 million, but if we don’t fix this, we are not going to fix the underlying problem with our immigration system.

Well, I think we’ve heard it all. I just grabbed a couple of these slides so that I could talk about it. But it is very important to me for us to—I don’t like being a part of an organization that talks a lot and doesn’t get anything done, and over the last 17 years, is that all these folks have been doing. They say: Reelct me. I promise you that next year, I will get immigration reform done. Next year, I will file the Dream Act, and we will get it done. Well, guess what? It has never gotten done under a Republican administration. President Bush was sympathetic to this issue. He couldn’t get it done. Congress couldn’t get it done. President Obama had the votes to pass ObamaCare. There was a time in this Chamber when not a single Republican vote was necessary to pass a bill out of here? So if you’re a single Republican vote in Congress, on the House or the Senate side, why didn’t you get it done? Because I don’t think you have taken the time to construct something that makes sense, that is compassionate, that is responsible, and that will have the enduring value of law. So now is the time to get it done, and the only way we are going to get it done is with bipartisan cooperation. We don’t have the elements of the President’s framework and you set a hammer to it, fold your hands, and say: If you will not vote on mine, I will not vote on yours—look at this and tell us how we can improve it. Just tell us what you would like in a vote. Tell us what we can do to moderate this. To call this a hardline bill is absurd. It is theatrical. It is the kind of stuff that has prevented us from getting things done for the last 17 years.

I hope people will have an honest discussion and debate. I hope people will come down here, offer all the amendments they want to, and I hope they
Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. 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. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate is debating the fate of our Nation’s Dreamers this week. Everywhere I go, people recognize the uncontestable truth that underpins our discussion: We are all a nation of immigrants. Unless you are Native American, you come from a line of people who come from somewhere else. More than in any other country on Earth, this simple fact is a defining characteristic of our national identity. Throughout our history, immigrant communities have greatly enriched our Nation; their individual stories have become the American story. Out of many, we have become one.

My maternal grandparents emigrated from Italy, began a business, hired a lot of people, and were pillars of the community. My wife’s parents emigrated from Spanish-speaking Canada and also owned a business. She was born in Vermont. My wife’s uncle, an immigrant from Canada who started off as an $8-a-week clerk at a shoe store. He was buried with honors at the age of 100 yesterday, and people talked about the $20 million or $30 million he has given to philanthropic causes in Vermont—this $8-a-week immigrant clerk at a shoe store.

I think sometimes we forget who we are. In the late 1800s we passed laws excluding Chinese immigrants. During World War II, we turned away Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust—turned them away at the shores of our country—and many went back to die in the gas chambers. We know today that these were tragic mistakes, fueled by our own ill-informed, xenophobic rhetoric. Mistakes were made, but they must never be repeated.

Yet now, in 2018, I am concerned that we are hearing echoes of past mistakes. Anti-immigrant voices, armed with the same shameful fearmongering, are attempting a comeback in our country. In recent months, Dreamers have been regularly disparaged. Some have even suggested that Dreamers pose a risk of terrorism or have links to international drug trafficking. These absurd assertions would be laughable if they weren’t so damaging, especially to those of us who remember one of the biggest terrorist attacks on our country, in Oklahoma City by Timothy McVeigh, who was not an immigrant; he grew up there and was born there. Thankfully, most Americans know better. Dreamers are not threats to our national security; not a single one—not a single one—has been suspected of terrorist activities. Nor do Dreamers present a threat to public safety. Far from it. By definition, Dreamers are law-abiding strivers who seek only to contribute to our country. Brought here as children, Dreamers are now our neighbors, our first responders, our teachers, our medical personnel. Nearly 1,000 have served in our Armed Forces, risking their lives to defend the only country they have ever known as home.

I will never forget one Dreamer who wrote to me last year. Dr. Juan Conde is a DACA recipient. He is a resident of Vermont. He was born in Mexico and brought to the United States as a young child by his mother. In 2007, tragically, his mother died of cancer. Showing remarkable courage and determination for a young man, Dr. Conde was motivated by this personal tragedy to help cancer patients like his mother. He ultimately obtained a Ph.D. in cancer research from the University of Texas.

But as accomplished as he already was, Dr. Conde was not satisfied with just studying cancer. He wanted to treat the people suffering with and battling the disease. Every one of us in this Chamber knows somebody who has suffered from and battled cancer, and many have died. But only after he enrolled in DACA was Dr. Conde able to attend medical school in Vermont. He is truly grateful. That is what we can do this week. But I guarantee you, anybody who sits here and says that the President’s proposal is unfair and insincere and hardline is playing politics. It makes me wonder if some of them would just as soon speak. But this is the week to get it done. This is the Congress to seize the day.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate to do so again and, this time, bring it up. Well, it is time now for the most senior Member of this body, it is my hope that all Senators will focus on a bipartisan solution, not on just divisive distractions.

I respect this institution as much as anybody. For 43 years, I have been here and I have seen—and I hope contributed to—the good that can be accomplished if we have the political will to do it. It is my sincere belief that we can find a path to 60 votes, and I hope the Republican leadership will let us.

The Majority Leader’s decision yesterday to seek to open up the debate with a vote on a poison pill amendment about so-called sanctuary cities—which has nothing to do with either Dreamers or border security—was less than a helpful start. These kinds of attempts to score a political point are stark contrast to the bipartisan search done by leading Republicans and Democrats behind the scenes for a solution. As the most senior Member of this body, it is my hope that all Senators will focus on a bipartisan solution, not on just divisive distractions.

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American dream itself—lies in our hands.

As I left that funeral yesterday in Vermont, I thought of my wife’s uncle and her parents coming from Canada to make a better life, my grandparents coming from Italy, and my great-grandparents coming from Ireland. I will make such a mark on our little State of Vermont, all for the better. As a member of that family, how proud I am to stand here on the floor of the U.S. Senate, but I want to do more than that. I want to vote for a bill to help more people like those who come to our country and to make our country better.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the question be rescinded.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today a group led by Chairman Grassley of the Senate Judiciary Committee formally introduced a bill to address the DACA issue—the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals issue—that we have heard so much about, as well as border security. I think it is a good starting point, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of the legislation, which is called the Secure and Succeed Act.

Perhaps the most important thing about this bill is that it actually has a good chance of becoming law. That is because the President supports it. It encompasses the four pillars the President has laid out for us in any solution to the DACA challenge.

The Secure and Succeed Act provides legal status and a pathway to citizenship for an estimated 1.8 million people who meet the specific criteria of DACA. This act will reduce the number of individuals covered by President Obama’s Executive order.

The fact is, this President has not only said the 690,000 DACA recipients “You are going to have a better, brighter future and a pathway to American citizenship”; this President has also offered all of the young people eligible but who might not have previously signed up that same opportunity. What an extraordinarily generous act.

This bill also provides for a real plan to strengthen border security, utilizing the three things that Border Patrol has always told me are essential: more boots on the ground, better technology, and, yes, some infrastructure in hard-to-control locations, along with enhanced ports of entry.

I know there has been some confusion about that. The President likes to talk about the wall. It is true that back in roughly 2006 or 2007, Congress called for something called the Secure Fence Act, which got the support of then-Senator Obama, then-Senator Hillary Clinton, and, of course, current Senator Chuck Schumer. They supported the Secure Fence Act, as did an overwhelming majority of Senators from both parties.

When the President has talked about the wall, he has made pretty clear that what he is talking about, if he were ever to make it a barrier similar to what was supported on a bipartisan basis. He said that the Border Patrol is going to have to be able to see through it. Indeed, as he has conceded, in many places it doesn’t make sense to have a physical barrier. That is why technology and boots on the ground are so important.

This legislation also reallocates visas from the diversity lottery system in a way that is fair and continues the existing, family-based categories until the current backlog is cleared, which would take, probably, about 10 years. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this commonsense solution. But I know other colleagues have been working hard on their ideas, which I look forward to reviewing as the debate continues.

One group I haven’t heard from much, though, is our Democratic colleagues. What happened when the government forced this debate to occur on their terms and at a time they chose. We are still trying to figure out—OK, you won, in a sense. I think the American people lost when you shut down the government that you made your point. You wanted a time certain and you wanted a fair process by which to present your ideas, and we have been waiting—here it is Wednesday, with the clock ticking, still waiting—for that Democratic proposal. What is their plan? What is their proposal? Do they even have one? And if they do, why are they leaving the rest of us, as well as the Nation, in the dark?

As the majority leader said yesterday, we need to stop trying to score political points and start making law. The way to get this done is to take a proposal like the President’s and get started on some accommodations to that. Whatever gets 60 votes in the Senate passes the Senate, and then it is up to the House to pass it, and then it is up to the President to decide whether to sign it. He has pretty much given us the outline of what he would find acceptable. Again, insofar as it grants a pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million people, that is extraordinary in and of itself.

The majority leader made a commitment to hold this debate and to hold it this week. He has lived up to his promise, and now we can’t let it all go to waste. As each minute and each hour clicks off the clock, it looks as if it is more and more likely to happen—that all of this will occur.

The country is watching. The DACA recipients in my home State—all 124,000 of them—are watching and worrying, understandably anxious about what their status is going to be when this program ends on March 5.

One of those DACA recipients is Julio Ramos, a biology teacher who is getting his master’s degree in biomedical informatics. He is from Brownsville, TX, right along the U.S.-Mexico border, and he is a DACA recipient. After his mother was diagnosed with breast cancer, he decided he wanted to be a doctor. He has even been accepted to medical school, but he isn’t sure whether he would be allowed to attend. He is waiting and watching, worried about his future.

Then there is Miriam Santamaria from Houston, TX, who is responsible for Southern Communities. She paid her way through community college, and she works as a manager at a construction company and owns her own photography business. She sounds like quite an entreprenuer to me. Miriam said: “I am not looking for any kind of recognition or sympathy, [I’m just] looking to make a difference and inspire others.” She is also looking to live in peace in the only country that she has ever known and calls home. She came to the United States when she was 4 years old.

Finally, there is a man whom I will just call by the first name of Daniel. He, too, lives in Texas. He graduated from the University of North Texas with a degree in advertising and contributes productively to society. Daniel came from Mexico at the age of 2, and he said: “All the choices I make, I made as an American, because that’s what I am.”

We need to listen to these stories as we consider this legislation and as people are perhaps tempted into the political grandstanding and gamesmanship that, unfortunately, sometimes overwhelms our best intentions. These are real human lives hanging in the balance. They are important, and they teach us about the real people behind the policy.

But their stories are not the only ones we need to listen to. We need to listen to the stories of the families here in the United States, men and women who have been waiting patiently for years to come here in a legal way through visas and green cards, waiting patiently to join their families here in the United States, doing it the old-fashioned, legal way. They have had to wait, some for years, some for decades.

We should listen to the stories of the border communities, which I am proud to represent in Texas, from men and women, many of whom are of Hispanic origin, who have suffered property damage from illegal immigration.

Illegal immigration is a pretty ugly business when you consider that it is in the hands of a drug cartels and transnational criminal organizations.

Recently, one of the military leaders who is responsible for Southern Command, which is Central America south, said that these transnational criminal organizations or cartels are “commodity agnostic.” That is to say, they don’t care whether it is people, drugs, or other contraband. What they are in it for is the money, and they are willing to do
Sympathy for DACA recipients is right and good because, in America, we do not punish children for the mistakes of their parents, and we are not going to punish these young people who are now adults and have become part of our communities. But Americans who live along the border in my State realize that illegal immigration has caused real, tangible harm in terms of public safety, property damage, and their way of life.

When I talk to people like Manny Padilla, the Border Patrol’s sector chief for the Rio Grande Valley, it is hard not to realize just how much is required, and how many more resources we need to maintain situational awareness and operational control along the border.

I will say this: The Federal Government has failed over the years to live up to its responsibility to maintain the security of our border, so taxpayers in my State have to step up and fill the gap left by the failure of leadership of the Federal Government. But we have an opportunity to fix that in this legislation, following the principles that President Trump has set for us. That is why, during this week’s debate, ensuring additional resources for border security is an essential piece of the puzzle. That includes areas other than between our ports of entry. Mexico is one of our largest trading partners. We have legitimate trade and commerce that flows back and forth across the border with Mexico and supports 5 million American jobs. Unfortunately, the cartels have figured out how to exploit that. So, because of antiquated infrastructure and technology at our ports of entry, many of them are vulnerable through the importation of poison—literally, drugs like methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and the like—that has taken the lives of so many Americans. We need to do more and better when it comes to maintaining those ports of entry—upgrading the infrastructure, improving the technology—so we can interdict more of that.

Again, the border is as varied as anywhere in the world, with areas that are flat and open, areas that have mountains and rolling hills, rivers, obviously. Technology, as we have come to see, has transformed our way of life, and technology can increasingly be the answer to supplement the boots on the ground and the infrastructure that the Border Patrol thinks are necessary.

There is a big difference between detecting illegal immigration in rural areas and urban ones. In urban areas, the Border Patrol tells us that you might have just a few seconds before someone can cross the border and enter into the United States. In large, open areas, there is more of a lag time, so perhaps a fence or some infrastructure is not as important; technology might be more important, along with the Border Patrol agents themselves.

My basic point is that border security is complex. For those who think it is as easy as one, two, three, I encourage you to do as some of my colleagues have done; that is, travel to the border—we will host you—to see firsthand why it is crucial that we strengthen our port access and infrastructure. That has to be one of our priorities, and I am grateful to the President for making this one of his requirements as well.

We have an opportunity to address not only the anxiety and plight of DACA recipients but also to make our country safer and more secure; to reform our legal immigration system in a way that will help us accelerate the reunification of families out of the backlog of people waiting patiently and legally outside of the country to come into the country through legal immigration; and to address the President’s concern about the role of the dice in the diversity lottery that makes it too easy for people with job-based skills, graduate degrees, and other merit-based criteria that would make them valuable to the United States, in addition to winning the lottery.

I hope we will take advantage of this opportunity this week. Time is wasting. It is Wednesday, and we don’t have any time to waste at all. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. Ernst). The clerk will call the roll. The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the call of names be rescinded.

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

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I rise to talk about the topic of the week.

Although some of us have been working on this for some time, many of us in this body have actually been addressing this for over the last 20 years or so. I am new to this body, as I have only been here a few years, but, last year I got involved in this. We need to deal with the immigration issue today, not just the DACA issue.

Our current immigration system is outdated, threatens our national security, and does not meet the needs of our economy. The issue before the Senate this week is not just about DACA, which is but one manifestation of our broken immigration policies. Rather, President Trump, while offering a generous solution for DACA recipients, has provided a comprehensive solution to our legal immigration system that will ensure that we are not back here in just a few short years to deal with this same problem again. Over the past 11 years, Congress has failed to fix our broken immigration system three times, primarily because it has attempted to solve the entire situation, the comprehensive problem, which would be the legal situation, the temporary work visa problems, and then the illegal situation.

The Secure and Succeed Act only deals with our legal immigration policy. From the onset of these negotiations, President Trump has been consistent: what we need is part of any immigration deal that deals with the legal immigration system. Months ago, he gave us a clean framework. He said that any plan that didn’t fit that framework would never become law. The Secure and Succeed Act, which we are dealing with this week, is the only plan that actually fits that framework. It is the only plan the President has said he will sign into law. The framework that has been laid out by President Trump has four parts. It provides for the DACA situation and ends the program. It does so in a compassionate, responsible way that every Senator on the other side of the aisle should support and has supported at various times. President Trump would be more important, along with the Border Patrol agents themselves.

Second, this bill secures our borders with additional border security and a wall where required. It puts $25 billion in a trust fund toward border security and a wall system. This money would be spent over the next few years to provide better national security for our country’s borders. It ends policies like catch and release, which encourage more illegal immigration. It makes critical changes to the immigration system to create a merit-based system, expedite court hearings, and give law enforcement the resources it needs to do its job properly.

Third, this bill fixes the flaws in the current immigration system that spurred this DACA problem in the first place and incentivized illegal immigration. It protects the immediate family of the primary worker. Seventy-two percent of Americans believe immigration should include the primary worker, their spouses, and immediate children, which is exactly what this bill does. In addition, two-thirds of Americans actually believe that the solution here for illegal immigration includes the DACA fix, an end to chain migration, border security, and an end to the diversity lottery—two-thirds. That is from a Harvard poll that was put out several weeks ago, and there are others that actually corroborate that.

But what this bill also expedites the backlog, which is something that was not even discussed before we brought this bill forward. This bill ensures that the primary family of immediate citizens—
some of them are recent green card recipients and new citizens who are trying to get their families in—will be reunified. But there is a backlog. We have that in this bill and have ensured that the backlog will be taken care of and that the work visas will be incentivized, which is what most Americans want.

Fourth, the Secure and Succeed Act ends the archaic visa lottery program. This failed program is dangerous, filled with fraud, and has proven to be an avenue to enter our country. We simply must fix these national security flaws and close the loopholes in our current immigration system that incentivize illegal immigration. If we don’t deal with these problems that got us here in the first place, we will be right back here in just a few short years. This is the President’s objective. If we are going to deal with it, let’s deal with it once and for all on the immigration side and then move on to the temporary work visas and solve that as well.

I don’t think anybody in this body wants to be back here in a few short years. Many on the other side and on our side have been trying to find a common solution to this for decades. I believe we have a historic opportunity right now to do something that people in this body have wanted to do for a long time, and that is to solve our legal immigration system in a very compassionate, fair way that will benefit every American. That is why we have to deal with these issues in a responsible and fair way.

Politicians have talked about this for far too long. I have discovered, now having been in this body, that it is easy for some to just kick this down the road. It is a great pandering opportunity for one side or the other to blame this on them. Unfortunately, the American people deserve better than that. We have a clean opportunity here to do what most people in America want us to do.

Other than politics, there is no reason for the Secure and Succeed Act not to have widespread, bipartisan support this week in this body. Each part of the Secure and Succeed Act has been supported by many Democrats at various times over the last 30 years. As a matter of fact, in 1994, Barbara Jordan presented the result of her bipartisan immigration commission report to then-President Clinton. The recommendations at that time were to change our immigration system from our current country caps and chain migration system to more of a skills-based system like those seen in Canada and Australia.

They knew then the flaws that were included in our immigration law that was written in 1965 that actually incentivized illegal immigration. Unfortunately, it seems that because these ideas have not been put forward by President Donald Trump, the Democrats, all of a sudden, disagree with these principles. President Trump has crafted a deal that is tough but more than generous. Nobody asked him to expand the number or to even talk about certainty in the long term. He has brought that forward because he wants this done. He wants this solved. He wants this ended right now.

The Secure and Succeed Act follows the framework that President Trump has crafted. Compromises have been made on both sides of this issue. It deals with the DACA issue, secures the border, and fixes critical flaws in our immigration system that incentivize illegal immigration. This is to ensure that we are not back here in a few short years to deal with the problem again of a new wave of young people who may be brought here illegally. Again, the President has said repeatedly that the Secure and Succeed Act is the only bill that he will sign into law. Leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives has also been clear that the only plan it will bring up for a vote in its body is one that will be signed into law. The Secure and Succeed Act is that plan.

We don’t have many opportunities in this body for common thought and common positions, but we have one here. I have seen what most people in this body have said about these issues, and it impresses me that there is commonality of thought. At the root, this body wants to solve the DACA issue, but it also wants to solve the problems that caused this issue in the first place. The President called for a compassionate compromise when he met with Democrats and Republicans several weeks ago at the White House, and we all agreed it was time to do that for the American people. Yet the American people want to be assured that the borders will be secure. They want to be assured that the policies that are embedded in our immigration system will not create another wave of illegal immigrants. They also want this archaic diversity lottery to be fixed, which has never worked as originally intended and is nothing but a loophole for terrorists today.

I think there is too much talk about this bill cutting immigration. That is not the intent here. The intent is long term to do what most people in America believe we have an historic opportunity here to do, that is to solve our legal immigration system that incentivized illegal immigration today. This is to ensure that we are not back here in a few short years to deal with the problem again of a new wave of young people who may be brought here illegally.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, let me begin by congratulating Chloe Kim, a first-generation Korean American. We are the story of an immigrant who came to this country at the age of 17 without a nickel in his pocket, a young man who was a high school dropout, who did not know one word of English, and who had no particular trade.

A few years ago, my brother and I and our families went to the small town where he came from, and it just stunned me, the kind of courage he showed and millions of other people show leaving their homeland to come to a very different world, in many cases, without money, without knowledge of the language.

My father immigrated to this country because the town where he lived in Poland was incredibly poor. There was no economic opportunity for him. People there struggled to put food on the table for their families. Hunger was a real issue in that area. My father came to this country to avoid the violence and bloodshed of World War I, which came to his part of the world in a ferocious manner, and he came to this country to escape the religious bigotry that existed there because he was Jewish. My father left his country until his death in 1962. He never made a lot of money. He was a paint salesman.

My father was not a political person, but it turned out that without talking much about it, the kindest American you ever saw, and he was so proud of this country because he was deeply grateful that the United States had welcomed him in and allowed him opportunities that would have been absolutely unthinkable from where he came.

The truth is, immigration is not just my story. It is not just the story of one
young man coming from Poland who managed to see two of his kids go to college and one of his sons become a U.S. Senator. It is not just my family’s story. It is the story of my wife’s family who came from Ireland, and it is the story of tens of millions of American families who came from every single part of this world.

In September of 2017, President Trump precipitated the current crisis we are dealing with by revoking President Obama’s DACA Executive order. If President Trump believed that Executive order was unconstitutional and it needed legislation, he could have come to Congress for a legislatively solution without holding 800,000 young people hostage by revoking their DACA status. President Trump chose not to do that. He chose to provoke the crisis we are experiencing today. That is a crisis we have to deal with in the Senate, and we have to deal with it now.

Let’s talk about the nature of this crisis because some people say: Well, it is really not imminent. It is not something we have to worry about now. Those people are wrong. As a result of Trump’s decision, 122 people every day are now losing their legal status. Without a couple years, hundreds of thousands of these young people will have lost their legal protection and be subject to deportation. The situation we are in right now, as a result of Trump’s action, means, if we do not immediately protect the legal status of some 800,000 Dreamers—young people who were brought to this country at the age of 1 or 3 or 6—young people who have known no other home but the United States of America—let us be clear that if we do not act and act now, these hundreds of thousands of young people could be subject to deportation.

That means they could be arrested outside their home, where they have lived their entire lives and suddenly be placed in a jail. They could be pulled out of a classroom where they are teaching, and there are some 20,000 DACA recipients who are now teaching in schools all over this country. If we do not act and act now, there could be agents going into those schools, pulling those teachers right out and arresting them and subjecting them to deportation. Insane as it may sound, I suppose the 900 DACA recipients who now serve in the military today could find themselves in the position of being arrested and deported from the country they are putting their lives on the line to defend. Some people say: Well, that is far-fetched. Well, I am not so sure. It could happen. How insane is that? That is what we are today, and that is what could happen if we do not do the right thing and this week pass legislation in the Senate to protect the Dreamers.

We have a moral responsibility to stand up for the Dreamers and their families and to prevent what will be an indelible moral stain on our country if we fail to act. I do not want to see what the history books will be saying about this Congress if we allow 800,000 young people to be subjected to deportation, to live in incredible fear and anxiety.

Here is the very good news for the Dreamers. It is actually news that a couple years ago, I would not have believed to be possible. The overwhelming majority of American people—Democrats, Republicans, Independents—absolutely agree we must provide legal protection to the Dreamers and that we should provide them with a path toward citizenship. That is not BERNIE SANDERS talking, that is what the American people are saying in poll after poll.

Just recently, a January 20 CBS News poll found that nearly 9 out of 10 Americans, 87 percent, favor allowing young immigrants who entered the United States illegally as children to remain in the United States—87 percent. In every State in this country. There is strong support for legal status for the Dreamers and a path toward citizenship.

On January 11, a Quinnipiac poll found that 80 percent of American voters, including 76 percent of Republicans, say they want the Dreamers to remain in this country.

On February 5, in a Monmouth poll, when asked about Dreamers’ status, 76 percent of American voters support allowing these young people to automatically become U.S. citizens as long as they don’t have a criminal record. In other words, the votes that are going to be cast hopefully today, maybe tomorrow, are not profiles in courage. They are not Members of the Senate coming up and saying: Against all the odds, I believe I am going to vote for what is right. This is what the overwhelming majority of the American people want.

Maybe, just maybe, it might be appropriate to do what the American people want rather than what a handful of xenophobic extremists want. Maybe we should listen to the American people—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—who understand it would be a morally atrocious thing to allow these young people to be deported. When I think, from a political perspective, about 80, 85, 90 percent of the American people supporting anything in a nation which is as divided as we are today, this is really extraordinary. You can’t get 80 percent of the American people to agree on what their favorite ice cream flavor is, but we have 80 percent of the American people who are saying, do not turn your back on these young people who have lived in this country for virtually their entire lives.

We have to act and act soon in the Senate, and the House. They didn’t pass legislation that would allow us to do that. In the House, the good news is, there is now bipartisan legislation, sponsored by Congressman HHR and Congressman AGUILAR, which will provide protection for Dreamers and a path toward citizenship. My understanding is, bipartisan legislation now has majority support.

I urge, in the strongest terms possible, that Speaker RYAN allow democracy to prevail in the House, allow the vote to take place. If you have a majority of Members of the House, in a bipartisan way, who support legislation, then the legislation should come to the floor. Let the Members vote their will, and if that occurs, I think the Dreamers legislation will prevail.

Madam President, we all understand that there is a need for serious debate and legislation on comprehensive immigration reform. This is a difficult issue, an issue where there are differences of opinion. There are a whole lot of aspects to it. How do we provide a pathway toward citizenship for the 11 million people in this country who are currently undocumented, but who are working hard, who are raising their kids, who are obeying the law? What should the overall immigration policy of our country be? How many should be allowed to come to this country every year? Where should they come from?

All of this is very, very important and needs to be seriously debated, but that is not what we need right now. The 800,000 young people are going to be cast hopefully today, tomorrow, or this week. It is going to need some serious time, some hearings, some committee work before the Congress is prepared to vote on comprehensive immigration reform, and it will not and cannot happen today, tomorrow, or this week.

Our focus now, as a result of Trump’s decision in September, must be on protecting the Dreamers and their families, and on the issue of border security. There will be millions of legislators coming to the floor of the Senate today or maybe tomorrow, and I would hope that we could do the right thing, do the moral thing, and do something that has never been done before, something that would be allowed to build a nation that would make laws for their benefit but laws that would be designed for the entire populace to thrive.

They were descended from immigrants. In our country, unless you are 100 percent Native American, unless you have just arrived as a new immigrant, you are descended from immigrants—you. It is part of the fabric...
of our Nation. It is what makes us a combination of powerful talents and abilities from around the world.

George Washington himself once said: “America is open to receive not only the Opulent and respected Stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted part of mankind, to whatever nation they might belong.”

On another occasion, he wrote to a friend: “I had always hoped that this land might become a safe and agreeable asylum to the virtuous and persecuted part of mankind, to whatever nation they might belong.”

We will make sure that you are legally protected. President Trump has broken that promise. He has broken that deal, that commitment made by our executive branch to these Dreamers. So it puts them in a terrible spot of uncertainty and stress and limbo. Now is the time to set that right thing could be set right by the President in a moment.

Several of the courts have weighed in and said that the President has acted unconstitutionally in attacking our young immigrants, our Dreamers. But let’s not wait for the courts to remedy this. Let’s take care of it ourselves in this Chamber, the Senate Chamber. After months and months of inaction, after broken promises by President Trump, let’s finally protect the men and women who do so much to embody the American spirit.

As we move forward in this debate, we must look again to what our Founding Fathers intended for the Nation they created and ensure that the “golden door” that the poet Emma Lazarus wrote about in her poem remains an open door, open to all those who dream to become an American and to contribute to the United States the Statue of Liberty.

The French gave to the United States the Statue of Liberty. The Statue of Liberty has stood as a beacon of hope, welcoming those from other lands. Inscribed in the pedestal of that statue are these words:

Give me your tired, your poor. Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

Those are the welcoming words for hundreds of thousands arriving here in the United States.

As I speak at this moment, 800,000 young men and women right here in America are yearning to breathe free, to participate in the making of our great Nation, and to do so, each generation brings together a variety of languages and cultures and backgrounds. That is America.

That is why, a century after our Nation’s founding, the French gave to the United States the Statue of Liberty. The Statue of Liberty has stood as a beacon of hope, welcoming those from other lands. Inscribed in the pedestal of that statue are these words:

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your economy and you look at what workforce needs you have that aren't being met and figure out the best way to meet those workforce needs.

In this debate, because we haven't controlled our borders and because we haven't kept track of people who legally crossed our borders and as a result, we have some number of people—usually the estimate is about 11 million people in the country—who are not here legally, what do we do with those people?

My view has always been that if the government met its primary responsibility, which is an immigration system that works, the American people would be very forward-leaning about those other two issues, because nobody really argues that if we don't have people here to do the work that needs to be done, whether it is highly skilled or not highly skilled, we ought to be thinking about what we need to do to get people here who can do that work. Also, we need to do to keep people here who came here to get training to do highly skilled jobs and graduated from colleges and universities or other skill-enhancing things that happened while they were here. If they want to stay, my view is if they didn't do anything that got them in trouble while they were here, we should almost always want them to stay. If we don't have that skill set in our economy, why wouldn't we want to do that?

Those who are not here legally, generally, I think if people thought the problem was solved, if they thought that the government had truly met its responsibility to operationally control the borders and that the government had met its responsibility to keep track of who comes in legally and know if they have left or not—I mean, there is no retail store in America that doesn't have a better sense of its inventory than the government does of whether people who have legally come into the country and checked in with a Customs officer—we don't know if they have left. We couldn't tell you in weeks, perhaps, whether somebody is still here, even if they did everything exactly the way they were supposed to do it.

This debate is largely driven by the most sympathetic of all of those groups: that group of people who came here and were brought here by someone else. And that group is growing increasingly—often by their own parents—but have grown up in America.

My first response, and I think the response of most Americans when they think about that, is that kids who grew up here, kids who went to school here, kids who have no real memory or connection with the country they were brought from—of course we want them to stay; of course we want them to be part of our economy. We have an economy that is more technologically driven than we would be without them, why wouldn't we want that to happen?

In some respects, we have two separate issues here. People who were raised here, who have done everything that anybody else would do to acclimate as an American in all ways, who went to school here, who did everything else here—70 or 80 percent of the American population. Obviously, see a number even higher than that, believe they should be allowed to stay. More and more, as people think about that, they also believe that after they have been here, like any other immigrant who legally came here, they would eventually be able to take the test and go through the process to become a citizen. That is a widely accepted premise that this debate should be built on.

Another widely accepted premise that this debate should be built on is that 70 percent or so of the American people—and it would be a higher percentage if people really knew the facts—believe the government has not met its responsibility to secure our own borders.

Let's assume that number is 70. We have two 70 percent issues. We would assume that a working Congress could take two 70 percent issues and come up with a plan that would be a very good way to the President's desk and solves both of these problems.

We are not going to solve these problems by saying: OK, we are going to solve the problem for people who are already here and we are not going to do anything to make it harder for others to be brought here illegally by someone who has control of them. We are not going to solve that? Of course that is not going to work.

I don't think whether you signed up for DACA should be a determiner, and apparently the President agrees. If you are here and in the category of those who were brought here and grew up here, whether you signed up as a DACA kid, people won't be part of that overall discussion of how to stay, and you still get to stay if we can come up with a solution for you to do that.

But we are not going to solve that problem and say: We will have a study of the other problem to see what is wrong. If by now we largely don't know what is wrong with the other problem, we are never going to figure out what is wrong with the other problem.

In 1986, long before the Presiding Officer and I and maybe even before some of us graduated from high school, we were going to solve this problem. Everybody who was here illegally could stay if they wanted to, and the borders would be made secure. Here we are, over three decades later, still debating the same thing.

We need to solve both of these problems. If we can solve other problems while we are doing it, that is fine, too, but we need to come up with a solution. There are a number of ideas out there to figure out how the Senate should move forward.

On the DACA issue, it is important to remember that President Trump said: I am going to give the Congress 6 more months to solve this problem—until March 5. It is also important to know that the courts have allowed people to continue to sign up, so really the deadline is somewhere beyond March 5. But the President is going to give Congress 6 more months.

President Obama didn't do anything about this for years—not because he didn't want to, I believe, but because he didn't think it was his job to. President Obama repeatedly said: The President cannot solve this problem; Congress has to solve the problem. In spite of 6 or 7 years of saying that he couldn't solve this problem on his own, he ultimately decided to try to do it with an Executive order.

The truth is, that Executive order was never going to do the job. I think President Obama knew that. When President Trump did his own order, he continued to be the same problem. It is the ability to do that any more than President Obama had to do what he did. But both of these Presidents in their own way have tried to drive the Congress toward making a decision that comes up with a plan that works for kids who were brought here with no choice in the matter and a plan for seeing to it that kids can't still be easily brought here with no choice. We need to let young people come here because we need them here as part of our workforce, as part of our country.

Legal immigration is what made America great. The rule of law is also what makes our country what it is. We can't continue to work on immigration be an area where we have decided there are laws that we will not enforce.

The challenge for the Congress right now is to come up with a solution so that this problem is not going to continue to be the same problem. It is today, but as far as the problem today, we are going to solve it. We are going to solve it in a way that lets kids who grew up here become part of the solution.

I continue to be committed to strengthening our borders. I continue to be committed to stemming the tide of illegal immigration. Frankly, I continue to be committed to the idea of legal immigration as part of continually reinforcing and re-enthusing who we are. But I am also committed to finding a permanent solution for young people in that category who were brought here, grew up here, haven't solved the trouble we have every reason to want to be part of the American dream and part of the American people whom they have been part of up until now.

I hope we can find common ground on a bill that is going to do that. I hope we can pass a bill from the Senate that the House will also pass. If Senators think they have done their job by passing a bill that can't possibly pass the House, that is just kicking the can down the road. We need to find a solution that really resolves this problem, and we solve this problem by putting a bill on the President's desk. To do that, we are going to
The website Yahoo Finance crunched the numbers. They found that a typical worker making $60,000 a year will get an extra $112 in their paychecks every month because of the tax law. That is over $1,300 for the year. To me, that is very good news for American workers.

Some people have already gotten pay raises. It was last weekend, traveling around the State, and I am hearing about it in all the different communities I go to. People are saying: This has been better for me and my family personally.

On Thursday, February 15, is the deadline for employers to adjust how much money to withhold from people’s paychecks so that they can get more money in their take-home pay. The IRS has branches. Workers benefit, and the communities benefit too.

For a person with a starting wage of $15 an hour, that is more than crumbs. For a person with a starting wage of $60,000 a year will get an extra $1,000. That is very good news for American workers.

We know what NANCY PELOSI thinks. She went out and first she talked about how the tax law was Armageddon, and then she said it was the end of the world. Most recently, she said all the benefits people are getting under the tax law—in her words, are just "crumbs." It may be different, but for a lot of Americans, a $1,000 bonus—certainly for the people in my home State of Wyoming—is much more than crumbs. An extra $1,300—I talked about the worker earlier—in that paycheck is much more than crumbs. For a person with a starting wage of $15 an hour, that is more than crumbs.

There are just some of the cash benefits workers are getting under the tax law. Republicans predicted, during the debate over this law, there would be other benefits as well. We said business would pay less in taxes, and some of them would be able to add additional cut prices for consumers—let people buy things more cheaply.

Americans are starting to see this prediction come true as well. One of the first places they are seeing it is in their utility bills. Gas, electric, and water utilities are cutting their rates because their taxes are going down under the law. In Vermont, the State’s only natural gas utility company is cutting rates by more than 5 percent because of the tax law. Both of the Senators from Vermont voted against the law, but it is the law Republicans passed that caused these rates to go down. In fact, people living in at least 23 States and the District of Columbia are going to be paying lower utility bills because of the tax relief law. Another 26 States are looking into cutting rates. Rates are going down in California, Maryland, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut—States where every Democratic Senator voted against the tax law.

What do these Democratic Senators have to say now? Are they proud of the fact they voted against the tax cuts that made it possible for people to have lower utility bills in their States? Where people’s monthly bills get cut, it is like a pay raise—more money in their own pockets. They have more money to either save or to spend on other things or to invest.
The owner of a gym in Cincinnati, OH, spoke with his local television station about what tax relief means for him. He said:

When people have that extra money to spend, they spend it.

Some save it.

The beneficiaries eat. They buy gym memberships. And they enjoy themselves.

People have that extra money to spend now, today, because of the tax law Republicans passed. They have the extra money despite every Democrat in this body voting against tax relief. Everyone said no. Everyone voted no. Democrats who voted no to tax relief for American families essentially voted yes to keep the extra money in Washington so they can decide how to spend it.

I have much more faith in people at home in Wyoming deciding how to spend their money than any faith I have in Washington, DC. For so many Americans, every dollar helps, and they are not crumbs. Democrats may not know the difference, but the American families do. People in every State of this country know the difference.

The American people understand what Republicans did with this tax law. They are seeing more money in their paychecks, more take-home pay, more money to decide what to spend and what to invest and what to save. They know Republicans promised to cut people’s taxes. People know Republicans delivered on the promise. They know the benefits they have gotten already, and they are confident the economy will continue to grow stronger day by day.

People across the country also know the fact that every Democrat voted against this law, voted against giving them a tax break, voted against allowing them to keep more of their hard-earned money. The American people know who took their side, who voted for the American public versus who sided with the working Americans who asked us to do a job for them. Republicans are doing the job; Democrats in Washington certainly are not. Republicans are going to keep doing that job for the American people—a job we have promised and a job which we have delivered.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the quorum call is rescinded.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, it is time for the Senate to do its job as a separate branch of government.

This week, we can come together on a bipartisan basis to resolve the crisis Donald Trump created when he canceled DACA. We can provide hundreds of thousands of young people in our country their shot at pursuing the American dream without fear of deportation. Right now, these young people who were brought to this country as children are terrified they will be separated from their families and the lives they have built here, in the only country they know and love.

I have met and spoken with so many Dreamers in the Halls of Congress these past months. Their focus, determination, and commitment in this fight continues to be extraordinary and inspiring. Each Dreamer has a different story to tell, but they all share a profoundly simple aspiration—to live, work, and study in the only country they have ever called home.

When you listen to their stories, it is not difficult to understand why between 80 and 90 percent of Americans support protecting these Dreamers—people like Karen, Malemi, and Beatrice, who can attend the University of Hawaii because of DACA; people like Victor, from Houston, who aspires to become a counselor for LGBTQ youth like him; and people like Getsi, from Oregon, who works three jobs so she can pursue her dream of becoming a nurse practitioner for our seniors. These inspiring young people don’t need to hear any more promises. They need Members of Congress to put their votes where their mouths have been and do the right thing.

Like many of my colleagues, I strongly support passing a clean Dream Act—legislation that already has bipartisan support—but it is critical that we get to the 60 votes we need to pass a bill. There are different provisions, including some funding for border security to help us get there. We can and should have a debate on comprehensive immigration reform but only after we pass legislation this week to protect the Dreamers. We cannot and should not use this debate to provide cover for efforts to dismantle the family-based immigration system or to make massive cuts to legal immigration.

The President and a number of colleagues have made it clear they would like to eliminate family-based immigration in favor of a system that is designed specifically for skilled workers. But restricting immigration to people with highly specialized skills or advanced degrees, you lose out on a lot of human potential that has historically contributed so much to our country. We don’t have to look far back into history to prove why this is true.

Over the past week, the Olympics has captured the excitement and imagination of people across the country—in fact, the world. Many of the people we have been cheering for are either the children of immigrants or are immigrants themselves.

Over the weekend, we saw Mirai Nagasu, whose parents emigrated from Japan, become the first American woman to land a triple axel in the Olympics during her appearance in the team figure skating competition. Yesterday, we saw Maame Biney, who immigrated to the United States from Ghana, take to the ice to compete in the short track speed skating.

Two nights ago, I watched Chloe Kim throw down a near perfect score in the women’s snowboard halfpipe to win the Olympic Gold Medal. After completing her history-making run, the cameras panned to her father Jong, who proudly waved his “Go Chloe” sign in the audience.

Jong arrived in California in 1982 with $800 in his pocket. He worked for years at minimum wage jobs to save for college. While studying at El Camino College, he worked as a heavy machinery operator at night. Jong encouraged Chloe to begin snowboarding when she was 4. They would jump off the lifts together, but because he didn’t know how to snowboard would tumble to the ground. Jong bought Chloe her first snowboard on eBay for $25. When Chloe was 8, Jong quit his job as an engineer to support her snowboarding career. He would often wake up at 2 a.m. in the morning to drive Chloe over 300 miles to her practices.

After watching his daughter win the Olympic Gold, Jong said in Korean, “When I came to the United States, this was my American dream. Now, this is my American dream.”

In reflecting on her father’s sacrifice, Chloe said, “My dad has definitely sacrificed a lot for me, and I don’t know if I could do it if I was in his shoes, leaving your life behind and chasing your dream because your kid is passionate about this sport. I think today I did it for my family, and I am so grateful to them.”

Chloe’s story of winning the Olympic Gold is extraordinary, but her father’s story speaks to a deep and abiding foundation of America and to my personal experience as an immigrant.

My mom also came to this country—poor and without skills to escape an abusive marriage—to give her three children, of which I am one, a chance at a better life. Like Jong and Chloe, one generation after my mom came to this country, I am standing on the floor of the U.S. Senate, fighting for humane immigration policies. I could do it if I was in his shoes, leaving your life behind and chasing your dream because your kid is passionate about this sport. I think today I did it for my family, and I am so grateful to them.”
the spirit of our country—that shining city on a hill. 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.

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

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

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, like my colleagues from whom we are hearing today, I also rise to talk about the importance of protecting the Dreamers, not just in the State of Nevada but across this country.

I want to talk specifically about a term that I constantly hear during this debate on how we need to protect Dreamers and at the same time address this issue of “chain migration.” I call on my colleagues and President Trump to stop using that term and to abandon the offensive and misleading term of “chain migration” because it paints a picture that does not reflect reality.

Immigrants cannot sponsor their entire families to come here. Our system of family-based immigration allows American citizens and green card holders to petition for some of their immediate family members to join them in the United States. There are numerous steps families must take to legally immigrate to the United States. It is a long and arduous process that leaves husbands, wives, parents, brothers, and sisters waiting for decades. This system is so broken and slow that many people die before they ever have the chance to be reunited with their loved ones again.

So I ask my colleagues, when we are talking about the immigration system that serves the homeless. Karl’s whole family is committed to community service. While attending high school, Karl’s brother volunteers at an organization that serves the homeless. Karl’s mother teaches special education in North Las Vegas to low-income children. Karl’s dad is a mechanic and a military veteran, having served this country in multiple branches of the armed services. The image of immigrants coming in endless chains across our borders couldn’t be further from the truth. For instance, the Citizenship and Immigration Services is currently processing visa applications for the siblings of U.S. citizens from 1994. That is 24 years ago. This backlog is painful for many American families, like Fely. Fely is an immigrant from the Philippines who arrived in the United States with her husband and her youngest son back in 1989. Her father was a veteran who served in World War II, earned his citizenship, and petitioned to have Fely join him in the U.S.

In the almost three decades since then, Fely has worked tirelessly to reunite with her other children. Now at 80 years old, she is still waiting and hoping that three of her children will make it through the backlog to join her at home. Her story shows us that sponsoring even your closest family members is a lengthy and difficult process. Tragically, Fely’s struggle is not uncommon. Thousands of Filipino veterans all across this country are in the same situation.

As a daughter and granddaughter of veterans, I know firsthand that when someone answers the call of duty, family members make sacrifices too. I support Senator HIRONO’s Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, a bill that would expedite the visa process for Filipino World War II veterans’ immediate relatives. It should honor the sacrifices that veterans and their families make by passing this bill, not by forcing them to wait in perpetual limbo.

Our immigration system reflects our national commitment to the strength and importance of the family unit. Families are support systems. They pull each other up when someone is in need and pull together their resources. Strong families build strong communities.

Karl is a 20-year-old Filipino-American community organizer born and raised in North Las Vegas. Karl’s whole family is committed to community service. While attending high school, Karl’s brother volunteers at an organization that serves the homeless. Karl’s mother teaches special education in North Las Vegas to low-income children. Karl’s dad is a mechanic and a military veteran, having served this country in multiple branches of the armed services. Would Karl be here if not for our family-based, legal immigration system.

Some of my Republican colleagues claim to be champions of strong, nuclear families and family values. Yet here we are debating a measure that would tear apart families like Karl’s, that would leave parents without children, sisters without brothers, and husbands without wives. Why does the party of family values think that is acceptable?

The problem is that the party of Donald Trump is not the party of family values. Donald Trump doesn’t care about families. He wants to be able to pick and choose which families get to come and which have to stay out. The White House immigration plan we are considering would cut legal immigration by up to 44 percent. That is half a million more immigrants who would be banned each year. This is one of the largest xenophobic-driven cuts to legal immigration since the 1930s. It would affect nearly 22 million people over the next five decades. What is going on here? What are they so afraid of?

I recently sat down with immigrant workers in the Senate and the Pentagon who are about to lose their protections from deportation. One of them told me that she left El Salvador after seeing her husband brutally murdered in front of her and her son. She has been working for the Federal Government for the past two decades, serving the very men and women who are preparing to vote to send her back to the country she fled with her children.

I also spoke with a Dreamer who works right here in the Senate cafeteria. She is the sole provider for her three American-citizen children, and she, too, is afraid that under Donald Trump’s deportation policy, she is going to be ripped apart from her children and sent back to a country that she fled. These are the people Donald Trump wants to throw out of their homes. This is not about not paying for special treatment or handouts or giveaways. They just want to be allowed to stay and work hard and provide for their families. They don’t want to have to go back to a place where they will have to literally start their lives over and for their children’s lives.

This President will tell you that immigrants are taking jobs. That is a myth. It is a lie that has been spread about every immigrant in American history, and it has been repeatedly debunked by economic research. According to the National Academy of Sciences National Research Council, a typical immigrant family will pay an estimated $80,000 more in taxes than they receive in public benefits over their lifetime.

Immigrant families bring long-term economic benefits to our country by starting businesses, purchasing property, and supporting the education and achievement of their children. Research shows that immigrants drive economic growth. They generate new patents at twice the rate of native-born Americans. In 2014, they earned $1.3 trillion and contributed $116 billion in State and local taxes and nearly $224 billion in Federal taxes. Immigrants are 30 percent more likely to start a business in the United States than non-immigrants, and 18 percent of small business owners in the United States are immigrants. They create jobs right here in the United States. Jobs are not the problem here.

The problem is the color of immigrants’ skin. We have a President of the United States who has wondered out loud why we can’t have more Whites come to this country, President Trump denies being a racist. For a non-racist, he has done a shockingly good job of cultivating support among White supremacists.

This is not about the color of people’s skin, but this is about family. This is about strong nuclear families and family values. I am proud of who I am, where I came from, and I am a descendent of immigrants. But I also learned and believe in strong values and strong family values, and we lead with those values. So our immigration system should reflect our national commitment to the strength and the importance of that family unit and those family values.

It makes no sense to me that we are fighting today to protect these kids and then take their parents and rip them out of their homes and send them back to a country that they do not want to go to, that they do not call home, and where their safety is called into question. I don’t understand that as a family value or as an American value.

So I ask my colleagues, when we are talking about the immigration system...
and protecting Dreamers, let’s implement commonsense immigration reform. Let’s make sure that when we are protecting Dreamers, we are also protecting their family unit and those family values. This is not about pitting parents against their kids or having kids decide whether they should stay here or their parents should.

No child should have to go to school concerned that when they come home, their parents may not be there. I don’t know about you, but I went through the public school system in the State of Nevada, and I was always, always comforted with the thought that when I walked through that door, my mother and father would be there. Any other way to treat these children and their families, to me, is inhumane. They are not values that we stand for as Americans, and they are not values that we lead with when we are talking about commonsense reforms to immigration.

So I ask my colleagues: Please, as we go through this debate, remember what we are talking about. There are faces, there are families, there are people behind the very decisions that we make this week.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HENRICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. HENRICH. Mr. President, as the Senate takes to the floor to debate a long-overdue, bipartisan solution for Dreamers—young immigrants who came to our country as children—I would like to tell you a story about one Dreamer in my home State of New Mexico to illustrate what is at stake here this week.

Immigrants have long helped to write the economic, social, and cultural story of my home State of New Mexico and, for that matter, our entire Nation. We are, after all, a nation of immigrants. Over the last centuries, our Nation’s foundation and the enduring American spirit were built by the hard work and the dreams of so many striving young immigrants.

When President Trump made the outrageous decision last fall to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program—DACA—he threw hundreds of thousands of Dreamers deep into fear and uncertainty. Two weeks ago, I was proud to welcome Ivonne Orozco-Acosta, one of the estimated 7,000 Dreamers from New Mexico, as my guest at the State of the Union Address.

Ivonne’s family immigrated to the United States when she was 12 years old. She learned English through middle school and graduated from high school in Estancia, NM. It was during these formative years of learning that Ivonne was encouraged by her teachers to grow and to learn. Ivonne knows the power that educators hold to create positive change in students’ perspective of themselves.

Ivonne attended the University of New Mexico, where she earned her BA in secondary education with a concentration in Spanish. It is estimated that 500 to 1,000 students at the University of New Mexico right now are Dreamers like Ivonne. These are some of our brightest students, and they are our future leaders. Since she graduated from UNM 4 years ago, Ivonne has been teaching at the Spanishaye Performing Arts Charter School in Albuquerque, NM.

Ivonne told me what DACA has meant for her. DACA allowed her to get a work permit, to follow her passion for education. It made it possible for her to buy a home and her first car. It has also given her an opportunity to impact the lives of her students each day and to contribute to our State’s economy as a teacher and as a taxpayers. In her words, “a sliver of hope”—hope that she will finally be able to have a permanent home and a place in the only country that she knows how to call home.

Because of her excellent teaching in the classroom and her incredible passion for her students, Ivonne was just selected as the 2018 New Mexico Teacher of the Year by the New Mexico Public Education Department. That is right, Ivonne has been recognized as the teacher of the year for our entire State.

Ivonne’s commitment to education and to giving back to her community is truly inspiring, and it reminds us just how much is at stake for New Mexico and our country in this debate. Our State already struggles to keep schools filled with teachers and has one of the highest teacher turnover rates in the Nation. Dreamers across the country, like Ivonne, are stepping up to serve our communities, to teach our students.

Nearly 9,000 of the Dreamers who received temporary legal status and work permits through the DACA Program are teachers like Ivonne. Many more are firefighters; they are police officers; they are scientists; they are doctors; they are members of our military. These inspiring young people are Americans in every sense of the word, except for a piece of paper, and they want nothing more than to be productive members of our communities.

But until Congress passes the Dream Act, these young people like Ivonne will continue to worry about whether they will be able to stay in school, keep working, contributing to our economy, or remain even in their homes and their neighborhoods.

I have to ask: Why would we even consider threatening to deport the teacher of the year from my State? I simply cannot accept—let alone live up to—that our Nation stands for.

The Santa Fe New Mexican covered Ivonne’s visit to Washington. The New Mexican’s editorial board said: “It is no exaggeration to state that as the immigration debate goes, so does her future.”

They went on to call the immigration debate we are engaging here in this Nation’s soul. I couldn’t agree more. As the editors put it, “The immigration story that has always made our Nation great. Deporting these young people who grew up in America and want to contribute to their Nation is not what the America that I know and love would do. Dreamers deserve commonsense, compassionate, and responsible policy.”

Two weeks ago, while President Trump was taking cheap shots at immigrants during his State of the Union Address, I stood with thousands of Dreamers like Ivonne at the State of the Union Address, and insinuating that all immigrants and asylum seekers pose an existential danger to our children and our families, I couldn’t help but think of the impacts of his words on Ivonne as she sat in the Gallery. There are hundreds of thousands of Dreamers like her. They are truly bright spots and rising stars in our communities and in our country, and the time has come for us to stop playing politics with their lives. Let’s stop stirring up fear and division when we should be working to find a real path forward.

This week, I believe we have a path forward here in the Senate in this debate, and we must pass a bipartisan immigration bill that includes the Dream Act in the Senate and in the House. I will do everything I can to pass a solution for Dreamers, to create rational border security policies, and to make the investments that our border region and its communities actually need.

I stand with the American people against President Trump’s fear-based and un-American views, frankly, on immigration and his offensive and wasteful border wall that have no place in this debate.

I hope that each of us in this body recognizes our moral responsibility and our obligation to live up to our Nation’s ideals and its values. We must act with a sense of urgency to find a way forward for these Dreamers. Every day that passes without Congress passing the Dream Act is another day of desperation and limbo for young people like Ivonne who only know America as their home. Now is the time to give these young Americans a permanent place and an earned path to citizenship in our Nation. I will do everything I can every step of the way to make that happen.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, as we speak, there is a horrific scene playing...
out in a high school in South Florida. Turn on your television right now, and you will see scenes of children running for their lives—what looks to be the 19th school shooting in this country, and we have not even hit March.

I am coming to the floor to talk about something else, but let me note once again for my colleagues that this happens nowhere else other than the United States of America, this epidemic of mass slaughter, this scourge of school after school shooting, it only happens here, not because of coincidences, not because of bad luck, but as a consequence of our inaction. We are responsible for the level of mass atrocity that happens in this country with zero parallel anywhere else.

As a parent, it scares me to death that this body doesn’t take seriously the safety of my children, and it seems as though a lot of parents in South Florida are going to be asking that same question today.

We pray for the families and for the victims. We hope for the best.

Mr. President, I came to the floor today to talk about immigration. I want to make a specific case to you today, but before I do, I want to talk a little about process.

I heard a lot of my friends on the Republican side of the aisle say on this floor and in the halls of Congress that President Trump has made an immigration proposal and Democrats have been asking for an immigration proposal, so we should just accept his first and only offer. What is the big deal? President Trump does not have you something that says “immigration” on it. Why aren’t you accepting it?

It is a terrible proposal. It is bad for America. To his credit, President Trump does attempt to try to deal with these Dreamer kids, but there are 3 million potentially eligible individuals in this country, and it only allows about 1.8 million of them to get through the process.

But that is really not the worst part.

The worst part is that it cuts legal immigration by 40 percent. It basically abandons this country’s commitment to family-based immigration. I wouldn’t be here if we only had skills-based immigration. Most Members of this body wouldn’t be here if the only way that your parents or grandparents or great-grandparents could have come here is because of a Ph.D. or a degree or a certificate. Most of the people in this country would imagine, are here because their parents or great-grandparents or great-great-grandparents came here because they had friends or family here. Let’s not re-imagine the history of this country.

Democrats are not obliged to accept the first offer from this President if it is not good for America. Negotiation still has to be part of the legislative process, and I am glad there are Members of the Republican and Democratic caucuses who have been trying to do that. We will see where that goes.

The President has put this proposal on the table that dramatically cuts immigration into this country because he sees immigration as a core weakness of this country. He views new entrants to America as an economic drain. That is why he wants to potentially kick out 3 million Dreamer kids next month if we don’t act. That is why he wants to dramatically reduce the number of people who are allowed to legally immigrate to America. He views immigrants as a problem that needs to be dealt with. And he is not alone. Many Americans agree. I, frankly, hear from them regularly in my home state.

Frankly, one could also argue that there is nothing more American than being scared of immigrants. Every single new wave of immigrants to our shores has been met with some degree of fear and derision and prejudice. Like clockwork, every generation or two, American politicians denounce immigrants as a threat to the American-born worker.

In the 1850s, growing numbers of Catholic immigrants from Ireland—as the Murphys came—and from Germany led to an anti-immigrant party arising in this country that elected more than 100 Congressmen, eight Governors, and thousands of local politicians. They claimed that Catholic immigrants could never be Americans because they owed allegiance to the Pope.

Starting in the 1880s, hundreds of thousands of Chinese immigrants began to immigrate to the west coast, causing a outcry among native-born anti-Chinese sentiments that eventually resulted in the passage of something called the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Fearing those who are different from us in skin color or religion or national origin or language is an unmistakable facet of American history, but over and over again, we have overcome these base instincts because our better angels prevail but also because of this bright, straight line that connects America’s liberal immigration policy with our economic growth.

I want to take just a couple of minutes to make for you a compact but irrefutable case for the correlation between economic power and American immigrants.

From 1870 to 1910, it is no coincidence that America’s transformation into a global economic powerhouse occurred during a period of massive influx of human capital. During that time, nearly 15 percent of all Americans were foreign born. That is a share that our country has never reached since then.

This period of unprecedented growth forever dispelled the myth that we still labor under today that the number of American jobs is fixed. Immigrants increase demand, and that increased demand creates jobs.

Organizations from the National Academy of Sciences to the conservative Cato Institute have done their own studies on this question and have come to the same conclusion. Cato recently said this:

Immigrants add jobs, in part by raising consumer demand. So getting rid of immigrants, such as by deporting unauthorized workers, would most likely destroy jobs and raise native unemployment.

That makes sense, right? But if you don’t believe that immigrants create growth, there is another, even simpler explanation as to why we should accept immigration. At present birth rates, we don’t have enough people born here to fill all the jobs that are going to be created in the next 20 years. It is estimated that, accounting for growth, America is going to need 83 million new workers to enter the workforce in the next 20 years. But here is the problem. Only 51 million new workers will be native-born. That leaves us 32 million short. Unless folks start churning out a lot more babies, immigration is the only way to fix that deficit.

Not convinced? Well, think about how the Federal budget works. Most of our budget is social insurance—work-age Americans paying into accounts that pay benefits to many non-working Americans. You need a balance between the two in order to not go bankrupt. Many of our competitor nations around the world are spiraling toward this demographic cataclysm. By 2030, the median age in Japan, with its strict immigration policies, is going to be over 50. It is extraordinary. Do you want to know why Germany is so interested in bringing refugees into their country? Because without them, their median age in 2030 will be 48. Budgets simply can’t work without reasonably new retirees and that few workers. Because of America’s liberal immigration policy, our average age, which today is 38, will increase in 2030 to just 39. During that time, China—an other country that doesn’t really allow immigration—will go from having a median age that is 2 years younger than that of the United States to 3 years older.

In 2010, undocumented immigrants and their employers sent $13 billion to Social Security. Social Security’s trust fund would be out of money today.

You are not there yet? Let’s talk jobs. Just ask your farmers in your State how important lower skilled immigration is to keeping their farms afloat. But let’s talk about high-skilled jobs.

Would it shock you to know that 31 percent of Ph.D. holders in this country are immigrants? It is amazing. And more than one-quarter of all high-quality patents in the United States are being granted to immigrants.

How about a study from 3 years ago that Senator CORTEZ MASTO referred to that found that immigrants are twice as likely as native-born Americans to start a business. That is not good enough for you? Here is a mind blower: 43 percent of Fortune 500 companies in the United States were founded or co-founded by an immigrant or a child of an immigrant. You know who they are. The founder of eBay came to the United States from France where he was born to Iranian parents. Google’s co-founder, Sergey Brin, emigrated with his family from Russia when he was 6.
Elon Musk, who started SpaceX, which has 4,000 employees, came from South Africa. Daniel Aaron, who cofounded Comcast, was a refugee from Nazi Germany. Henry Ford was an Irish immigrant. Estee Lauder's family was Hungarian. Herman Hollerith, one of the founders of IBM, was a German refugee. You don't want Ford or IBM or Google to be part of the American story? Then keep saying immigrants are an economic drain.

Margaret Thatcher once marveled of America: "No other nation has so successfully combined people of different races and nations within a single culture." This combination is our definition as a nation, but it is also the story of our economic greatness, of our sprawling leap in under two short centuries from an idea to the biggest, most dynamic economy on the face of the planet. To deny that history or to misremember it would be perhaps an irreversible error.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, some of what I just heard, I can readily agree to. Certain things, such as that we are a nation of immigrants—no doubt about that. We need immigrants. We take roughly 800,000 to 1 million legal immigrants a year. They are welcomed. We also, though, are a nation of laws, and as a nation of laws, we want people to come here according to our laws and abide by the laws.

We are working with a group of people. If you call them DACA's, it would be about 800,000. If you refer to them as Dreamers, it is maybe 1.6 million. We obviously have sympathy for them because as a baby brought here in diapers by a person or family who crossed our border without papers, hence entering our country illegally—we don't attribute the sin and the unlawfulness of the parent to the baby. A lot of that has happened.

There is a general agreement—maybe not everybody in my political party agrees with this, but I think 80 percent of them do—that we need to deal with people who are here through no fault of their own and give them legal status. That is the compassion we are showing for people who broke our laws by their parents doing it but not the kids doing it.

I also didn't ever think we would be here today debating this because I went through the 2013 debate on immigration. The Senate passed a bill; the House of Representatives didn't take it up. I was in the minority at that time, both in the caucus that was in the minority as well as in the minority that voted against that bill, because I didn't think it did things the way I would do them. Everything died in the House of Representatives. Then, 2 years later, I became chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the House and jurisdiction over immigration legislation. I could have spent 3 months on immigration during 2015 or 2016 and sent a bill to the House of Representatives that probably would have died, but I made up my mind early in my chairmanship that I wanted to do things that we could get passed. So over the period of the last 2 years, my committee voted out 31 bills, all bipartisan, and 18 of them got to a vote in the House. So I said, in 2015 and 2016, I felt, why go through that process if it is going to die in the House of Representatives?

Now, a year later, after the election of a President who does not agree with this at all, we have, I think some members of the Democratic Party didn't think we would be having this debate. I think they probably were shocked 2 or 3 weeks ago when the government shut down and when the majority leader declared, "We are going to make an agreement to bring this issue up. But here we are, debating an immigration bill that, quite frankly, I didn't think we would be debating. Here we are.

Then, of course, we didn't do anything Monday. We didn't do anything on this issue Tuesday. I don't know whether we are going to have any votes today, but here we are debating immigration. We have a chance to do what President Obama did. We have the opportunity to make an agreement to bring this issue up. But here we are, debating an immigration bill that, quite frankly, I didn't think we would be debating. Here we are.

I offer to my 99 colleagues something that the President said he would sign. Maybe you don't like exactly what is in that proposal. Then get it up and amend it, and let's see what sort of compromise we can make. But we are fortunate here because the leader said that we are going to work on this issue. It was something that the minority demanded. We ought to reach a conclusion on it and get something to the President of the United States.

Once we knew that this issue was going to come up—and we knew that on September 5 when the President said that he was not going to continue the illegal approach to the DACA kids that he has promised, we have reason to believe this from court decisions on older people where they ruled that the President didn't have the authority to do what he did with the DACA kids. In fact, at least a dozen times before he made that decision, he was telling the entire country he didn't have the authority to do it, and then he went ahead and did it.

So this President comes in, takes an oath to uphold the Constitution and the laws of this country, and he decides that he has actually committed a considered illegal activity by the previous President. This is a congressional decision that needs to be made, and Congress ought to make it. We were told on September 5 to do something by March 5, and here we are.

I heard from the previous speaker—and maybe a lot of speakers—that this is the President's plan. Yes, this is something that the President says that he is going to support and will sign, but I want to say to you that the work that a group of us Senators have put into this issue over a period of the last 3 months, with about 18 meetings, 4 meetings with the President, the United States to discuss the issue—most of what is in the proposal that is put before you are things that a group of Senators put together. I would say that as our group met, we probably had subgroups of three who had different views, and some of them felt strongly about their positions, but everyone came together in a compromise that you see here before us in my amendment.

In some of those meetings, we discussed these things with the President, and I want to give the President credit. In a January 9 meeting that he had where he called together 23 of us—bipartisan and bicameral—we were able to dial down all the things that we disagreed with. I think we came to a compromise, and we came to the conclusion that there were four main points that we ought to be dealing with. You have heard of these as the four pillars, but let me repeat them.

No individualization of these children who were brought here by their parents; No. 2 was border security; No. 3 was chain migration; and No. 4, diversity visa. We discussed these things with the President, and I suppose the President probably emphasized citizenship to a greater extent than maybe we did in our deliberations, but we have something that has been put together by Members of this body who have compromised, with none of us getting everything we wanted. We are fortunate enough to have the President's backing on this.

So I hope that you see this, not as we have heard from the other side as the President's plan—as if seven of us who introduced this proposal somehow just took something from the White House and put our names on it, and it is here before the U.S. Senate—because that isn't how it worked.

I want to address some of the issues that have been put before us by people on the other side. I want to express—as you probably have seen me expressing already in my remarks so far—my frustration with the current status of the immigration debate here in the U.S. Senate. It amazes me that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle simply aren't ready to have a serious immigration debate. They have been demanding to have this debate for months. They have even shut the government down to get to this point, and now that they have been demanding that we debate for months during this Congress—some on the other side of the aisle for

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years—and now when it is time to put up or shut up, they have come up empty-handed. Despite having weeks to prepare, Senate Democrats are still rushing to put some plan together.

Let that sink in. Think about this just as the Senate Democrats recklessly shut down the Federal Government over immigration, and they did it over plans that they still largely haven’t drafted. That should be very frustrating, not only to this Senator but to most of my colleagues, and it is also what the American people seem to have less faith in this process in Washington, DC. Even more frustrating is that for 2 valuable days, they have refused to allow the Senate to debate immigration measures.

I do understand why the Democrats are afraid to vote on ending sanctuary cities. Those policies of sanctuary cities are massively unpopular with the American people. In other words, the American people feel that when the Constitution says that immigration law is one of the 18 powers of the United States, then no local or State government should be able to interfere with what the Constitution says is the supreme law of the land.

I could understand why, for 2 days, Democrats have refused to allow us a debate on an issue like sanctuary cities. That amendment would help us keep our communities safe from dangerous criminals, besides carrying out the intent of the Constitution that the Federal Government has complete authority over immigration.

Who could be against an approach to send a signal that sanctuary cities aren’t justified when that is how to protect the American people from the criminal elements that some sanctuary cities protect? Apparently, the Democrats are, since they don’t seem to be for outlawing sanctuary cities.

I guess another way to say it is that they don’t seem to want to protect hard-working Americans from the criminal element that is, albeit, a small part of the immigration community we are talking about, but it still creates havoc for people like the Steine family, for example, where Kate was murdered by an alien who was a felon who had returned to our country not once but five times.

In other words, I have to ask my colleagues whether enforcement issues are legitimately a part of the immigration debate, because what the sanctuary-city situation is all about. Isn’t border security more than just throwing money at infrastructure? Shouldn’t we be discussing how to reform our Nation’s laws so that dangerous criminal elements can’t inflict harm on innocent families?

I am pretty sure—I am actually 100 percent confident—the answer to those questions is yes. Those are important issues to the American people. Those issues used to be discussed here.

I have already mentioned the name of Kate Steinle, who was murdered by one of these people. I could add the names of Sarah Root and Jameel Shaw. These people all had dreams, too, but they had their lives ended by felons who had been deported but had come back into this country.

If my colleagues were actually serious about protecting the American people, they would be discussing border enforcement. Sadly, it seems as though the plans that I have seen so far from my colleagues fall short of that goal.

Legalizing Dreamers—yes, who is going to argue with that? A little bit of money for border patrol, there is a lot to argue about there. But not doing something about criminal aliens who are a threat to law enforcement in this country and to the safety of our country—it seems to me that ought to be a part of it.

So we get all the people in this room who say they want to do something about border security by throwing money at it; yet they refuse to actually give our law enforcement the legal tools to do their jobs while they protect Americans. Just a wall or whatever you want to call it—electric surveillance, more border patrol—it is all border security, but it is more than a wall. It takes more than just those things to protect the American people.

I am here to tell you that it is a tragedy that some people in this body just want to legalize some people for 1 year, 2 years, or 3 years and put maybe a little bit of money into border security with no commitment to the future. Then all we have done is kick the can down the road.

Worse still, none of my colleagues’ proposals are being developed in a way that they can actually become law. Maybe for them, simply passing a partisan bill is enough. Leader SCHUMER said that this morning, and I was here listening to him. But that is not enough for this Senator. This Senator actually wants to see something passed into law that will provide real protection for DACA kids.

That is why I have offered an amendment that could actually pass the House of Representatives, and we know the President would sign it. Polls show that the framework a number of us developed, along with the President’s input, is overwhelmingly popular. A Harvard Harris poll showed that 65 percent of the voters agreed with our plan, including 64 percent of Democratic voters. So despite the hyperbole we hear from some colleagues that the President said he would sign is not only popular, but, again, it is the only plan that has any chance of becoming law.

It is time for all of my colleagues to get serious about fixing DACA. It is time to stop posturing, to stop showboating, and to stop simply trying to pass a bill out of the Senate that will not get considered in the other body and will not be signed by the President of the United States.

The focus ought to be on making actual law. If all of us here in the Senate, particularly those who are in the Democratic Caucus, focus on those things, then the choice for them will be very clear. They will vote for the amendment that the seven of us have put before the Senate called the Grassley amendment, they will back the President, and they will provide real security and certainty to the DACA recipients and the American people.

In fact, it is so simple for some on the other side who have been promising DACA certainty for years and some for months but, I think, really strongly over the last three or four months. It is an opportunity for everything you have told those kids, including that you are going to get them legal and even give them a path to citizenship that you can deliver.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the issue that we were dealing with on the floor, and I am grateful for this opportunity.

I wanted to first of all stress the critical urgency that we act to protect America’s Dreamers. The United States is a proud Nation of immigrants. Yet in September the administration insulted our values by announcing a decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, which we know by the acronym DACA.

Dreamers are young people who have lived in our country since they were children. They are law-abiding residents who have learned English. They have paid taxes, and they have secured jobs to support themselves and their families. Our government promised them that they would be protected if they came forward, and now the administration, at least so far, has broken that promise.

Democrats have been fighting for something on the Dream Act since the administration first announced its decision on DACA more than 5 months ago. We have yet to vote on a single piece of bipartisan legislation to protect Dreamers. I do, however, commend the bipartisan work of a number of my colleagues in both parties who have come to the table to draft legislation that protects Dreamers and secures our border.

With hundreds—soon to be thousands—of Dreamers losing protection every day, it is critical that we come together to pass bipartisan legislation that will provide permanent protections for these remarkable young people. Dreamers are deeply integrated into communities across Pennsylvania, as well as in a host of other States and across our country, of course. Dreamers work as nurses, caring for our families. They work as teachers, educating our children, and as servicemen and servicewomen in our military, working to keep us safe.

Take a young Pennsylvania Dreamer whom I met a few months ago—way back, I guess, in September. She was
studying to be a nurse. Talking about her own life, she said:

All I want to do is heal people. All I want to do is be a nurse.

Then she became very upset thinking about whether or not she might have that opportunity because of what had not happened in Washington—no legislation passed to protect her.

Another Dreamer from Lancaster, PA—the Presiding Officer knows that part of our State well—is Audrey Lopez. Audrey was brought to the United States from Peru when she was just 11 years old. Audrey spent most of her childhood in Pennsylvania, and her parents instilled in her the value of hard work and education. Like so many Dreamers, Audrey only learned that she was undocumented when she was applying to college and learned that she did not have a Social Security number. Despite not having access to financial aid, Audrey worked hard, and she graduated from college.

After graduation, she took a job in public service working at Church World Services, assisting refugees with resettlement. This past fall, Audrey accepted a nearly full scholarship to American University, where she will obtain a master’s degree in international development.

Audrey is an American in every way but not on paper. She is continuing to work hard, despite not knowing if she will have a future in the country she calls home. I believe it is both

right thing to do, but it is also good for

future—not only her future, but our

Nation. Instead, some, but not all—not

all—Republicans are threatening her future—not only her future, but our Nation’s future—by making us less safe and, frankly, damaging our economy.

Protecting Dreamers is not only the right thing to do, but it is also good for the American economy, and it is in our national security interests.

DACA aided almost 800,000 young people to grow and thrive in America, including about 5,900 in Pennsylvania. As part of the fabric of our community, these impressive young people, like Audrey, provide an enormous contribution to our society, including paying an estimated $2 billion each year in State and local taxes.

By contrast, repealing DACA would amount to a loss of $460.3 billion from the national GDP over the next decade. So if you want to do it by year, it is roughly $46 billion a year for each of the 10 years.

In Pennsylvania, ending DACA would result in an annual loss of $357.1 million to the State GDP, according to the Center for American Progress.

Currently, about 900 Dreamers are serving in the U.S. military and more than one out of every seven DACA-eligible immigrants has language skills that are currently in short supply in the U.S. military. It makes no sense to remove these Dreamers from a country they call home. I believe it is both wrong and dangerous.

The American people overwhelmingly support allowing Dreamers to stay in the United States. It is about time Congress listened to the nearly 80 percent of Americans who want to pass protections for Dreamers, along with increased border security so we can prevent the future scenario in the future.

So it is time for action. We need a real compromise solution that will get 60 votes in the Senate and, of course, 218 votes in the House, and a signature from the President of the United States.

While I have advocated in the past for a clean vote on the bipartisan Dream Act, which is what I would prefer, compromise will be critical to ensuring we get something done and sent to the President’s desk.

In 2013, I and many others—67 other Senators—voted for a bipartisan immigration bill that would have doubled the number of Border Patrol agents. That bill also would have mandated 24-hour surveillance of the border using advanced technology, like drones, and it would have provided a pathway to citizenship for law-abiding immigrants.

There are a number of bipartisan proposals to pair Dreamer protections with data-driven, sensible border security that focuses on public safety.

I look forward to finally voting on these issues, and I hope my Republican colleagues will continue to work with us to secure our border and ensure that Dreamers like Audrey and Lopez have a future they can count on.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I want to speak about our immigration debate and my amendment in particular, but first let me say we are going to find out just how serious our colleagues are about granting not just legal status to the Dreamers—people who came to this country or were brought here illegally when they were children and couldn’t and shouldn’t be held accountable for their actions. I released this man back onto the streets from which, 3 months later, he murdered Kate Steinle.

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to cooperate. They would have been able to cooperate, but because the crime was committed by an illegal immigrant, the police’s hands were tied. The police were forced to release Kate Steinle’s killer.

It is just unbelievable to me that we have communities across the country that wish to provide this special privilege—this special protection—for even dangerous criminals because they are here illegally. It is unbelievable, but that is the case.

Sadly, the Steinies are not alone. They are not the only family who has been affected this way because, of course, San Francisco is not our Nation’s only sanctuary city. The city of Philadelphia—the fifth largest city in America, the largest city in my home State—has an extreme sanctuary city policy, and it has had appalling consequences already.

Maybe the most heartbreak of these is the case of Ramon Aguirre-Ochoa. Ochoa was a Honduran national in the United States illegally. He was deported in 2009, but he illegally reentered the United States, which is itself a felony. He found his way to Philadelphia, and in 2015 the Philadelphia Police arrested him on charges of aggravated assault and various other crimes. When the background check went through the Department of Homeland Security saw that the Philadelphia Police had this guy. They knew who this guy was. They knew he was here illegally, they knew he had been deported, and they believed him to be the dangerous criminal that he was. They asked the Philadelphia Police: Could you hold this guy for 24, 48 hours, until you can get an agent there to take him into custody and begin deportation proceedings? We know he is a bad guy. We want him out of the country.

Unfortunately, Philadelphia Police had to refuse. Instead, they released him onto the city streets in January 2015. The Philadelphia D.A. didn’t feel like he had enough evidence to prosecute this patrolling the streets, and rather than cooperate with the Department of Homeland Security, they released Ochoa back onto the streets of Philadelphia.

That was January of 2015. In July of 2016, Ochoa was arrested for raping a child under the age of 13. This brutal attack on the child was only possible because Philadelphia is a sanctuary city. It is these appalling cases—like the Steinies case or this case in Philadelphia—that make it so important that we end these sanctuary cities if it is at all possible to do so.

My amendment is a bipartisan amendment. It is identical to a bill I introduced in the Senate that was introduced in 2016. I reintroduced it in 2017. It does two things: It tackles a legal liability for localities that wish to cooperate with the Department of Homeland Security, and, with that liability problem solved, it imposes penalties on communities that choose nevertheless to be sanctuary cities.

We don’t have the authority as a Federal Government to dictate the policy that a local community must follow. There is a constitutional separation that gives them the power to do what they will, but we don’t have to subsidize their behavior when it endangers all of us. What my legislation does after. So let me discuss first the legal liability issue.

There are now at least two court decisions that have put pressure on municipalities to cooperate with the Department of Homeland Security. One is a case in Oregon. They have found that if the Department of Homeland Security makes a mistake and that community will be liable for the consequences that request, under these court decisions, the local municipality can be held liable for the ensuing litigation on the part of the person who is wrongly detained.

My bill addresses this problem by simply saying that when a local law enforcement officer complies with an immigration detainer request from DHS that is a duly issued and bona fide request, the officer has the same authority as a DHS official. In a way, the officer would be considered an agent of the Department of Homeland Security for this purpose, and the entity the person would then sue in the event that a person is wrongly detained and their civil rights are violated would be the Federal Government. The responsibility should be on the Federal Government, since it was, after all, a request that initiated with the Federal Government.

My legislation does not in any way curb an individual’s ability to file a suit if their civil or constitutional rights are violated, whether it is intentional or accidental. There is no curb on an individual’s ability to redress that if they were wrongfully detained. It simply transfers the liability from the municipality to the origination of the detainer request, which is the Department of Homeland Security.

So the second point I want to stress is that the legal liability problem has some municipalities across America—certainly in my State of Pennsylvania—choosing to be sanctuary cities, even though they would rather not be. Now, having said that, if our legislation is adopted, and we have thereby solved this legal liability problem, if a community nevertheless decides it is going to endanger all the rest of us by conferring this special protection on somebody just because they are undocumented, then the fact that they may well be a dangerous criminal—in that case, under my amendment, that community will be deemed a sanctuary city, and under my amendment several types of Federal funding would be withheld from it. Specifically, we would withhold from the sanctuary cities community development block grants and certain grants from the Economic Development Administration.

I think this is eminently reasonable. Sanctuary cities impose costs on all of us. They raise the cost to the Federal Government of enforcing immigration laws by far outweighing the cost to the American people of more crime and the unbelievable, staggering cost to families like Jim Steinle and his family, who lost their daughter. I think it is extremely reasonable to have as a policy that if a community chooses to impose those costs on the rest of us, the Federal Government will not be subsidizing it.

Let me debunk some of the misinformation that is occasionally disseminated about my amendment. One is that it would be something that would just cause law enforcement folks comply with that request, under these court decisions, the local municipality can be held liable for the ensuing litigation on the part of the person who is wrongly detained.

My amendment in this underlying law explicitly states that a locality will lose any Federal funds, if it has a policy stating that if a person comes forward, they will not report them to the Department of Homeland Security. My amendment in this underlying law explicitly states that a locality will lose any Federal funds, if it has a policy stating that if a person comes forward, they will not report them to the Department of Homeland Security.

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The second point I want to stress is that this amendment does not discourage or punish illegal immigrants for coming forward to report a crime. This is important because folks who want to keep sanctuary cities sometimes charge that if my legislation were passed, victims and witnesses to crimes, if they are here illegally, would come forward not so.

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I think this is eminently reasonable. Sanctuary cities impose costs on all of us. They raise the cost to the Federal Government of enforcing immigration laws by far outweighing the cost to the American people of more crime and the unbelievable, staggering cost to families like Jim Steinle and his family, who lost their daughter. I think it is extremely reasonable to have as a policy that if a community chooses to impose those costs on the rest of us, the Federal Government will not be subsidizing it.

Let me debunk some of the misinformation that is occasionally disseminated about my amendment. One is that it would be something that would just cause law enforcement folks comply with that request, under these court decisions, the local municipality can be held liable for the ensuing litigation on the part of the person who is wrongly detained.

My amendment in this underlying law explicitly states that a locality will lose any Federal funds, if it has a policy stating that if a person comes forward, they will not report them to the Department of Homeland Security. My amendment in this underlying law explicitly states that a locality will lose any Federal funds, if it has a policy stating that if a person comes forward, they will not report them to the Department of Homeland Security.
makes sense because we do want to encourage victims and witnesses of crimes to come forward. We get it. We don’t want to create a worry that there would be deportation consequences for them.

A third point which some have alleged and which I want to be very clear about is that the penalties my amendment has for a community that chooses to be a sanctuary city do not include the loss of any funds whatsoever related to law enforcement or security. That is simply not the case. The list of categories that we include in lost funding is economic development in its nature. It is not at all law enforcement.

Another point that some on the other side have made is that somehow this legislation, my amendment, would impose an unmanageable burden on law enforcement. One simple fact to consider is, if that is the case, then why has it been endorsed by law enforcement? The National Association of Police Organizations has endorsed my amendment. The International Union of Police Associations, a division of AFL-CIO, has endorsed my amendment. The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association has endorsed my amendment. And these groups endorse a bill that imposed an unworkable burden on their own members? I rather doubt it. I think they understand that this amendment encourages local law enforcement to share information with the Department of Homeland Security and in some cases to temporarily and briefly hold people in custody until the Department of Homeland Security can get there.

This is a bipartisan amendment. In 2016, when the Senate voted on this very same amendment in the form of a freestanding bill, it received a majority, and it had bipartisan support. Unfortunately, a minority filibustered it and blocked it. But the fact is, it is a bipartisan piece of legislation with majority support. I don’t think it should even be controversial.

I think we will have a vote on this relatively soon, in the coming days. I hope it will have very broad support. This is common sense. It stands for the principle that the safety of the American people matters, that the lives of Kate Steinle and other victims of violent crime matter, and that all of our communities should be as safe as they can be.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

PARKLAND, FLORIDA, SCHOOL SHOOTING

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, watching the pictures today as I came to the floor was deeply moving. Even though there is much that we don’t know and a lot of information that we lack about what is happening at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, the images of emergency vehicles and emergency responders and of your children and students evacuating a school after another tragic incident of gun violence brings back memories that are searing and harrowing. Once again, we feel that churning in our stomach, that sense of gut-punch, and a wrenching of hearts that reminds us of how we felt the day of violence in Newtown. Yet another school is victimized by gun violence.

We are unaware of the details, but certainly our hearts and prayers go to the victims and their loved ones. Our gratitude goes to the courageous first responders who are on the scene now apprehending the shooter and administering to the victims and their families, and praying. Our thoughts are with those students, emergency responders, parents, loved ones, and the community of Parkland.

Again, gun violence respects no boundaries. It spares no communities. It victimizes all of us, wherever it happens and whenever, including the gun violence that kills people every day individually, often unpublicized and invisible.

My heart breaks to hear that one more school is facing this unthinkable horror, that again this harrowing scene plays before the people of America, literally unfolding in real-time. I know that I and all of the Members of this Chamber share the grief and sympathy and heartfelt horror that community is experiencing today.

Mr. President, I want to talk about the Connecticut Dreamers and share their stories and call for this Chamber to take narrow and focused action to prevent their draconian mass deportations and protect them from that kind of very unfortunate outcome.

The Dreamers who would be covered under legislation, which I hope will pass in the next 24 hours, came here as children. They grew up as Americans. This country is the only one they know. English is the only language many of them speak. They go to our schools. They serve in our military. They support our economy. They belong to all of us. I believe in the American dream, but so do they. They work hard and give back. Deporting the Dreamers would be cruel, irrational, and inhumane—unworthy of a great country. It would break our promise to the Dreamers who came forward when they were told they would be given protected status and would be a violation not only of the American dream but of the promise made by a great nation.

Gabriela Valdiglesias came to the United States in 2001 from Lima, Peru. She has lived in Connecticut for 17 years. She works for Connecticut Students for a Dream, advocating for her fellow Dreamers. For those workers, she has been working on securing their right to higher education, to healthcare, and to live in a country without fear and discrimination.

She shared with me some of the difficulties her family had while she was growing up. She and her five siblings were supported by their parents, who work in minimum-wage jobs. She hopes that if the Dream Act passes, she will be able to take on some of the economic burden her parents now carry. She hopes she will be able to make enough money to support herself and her family.

She is currently in her first year of college, at a community college, where she has faced multiple challenges. Not being able to get a job at 18 years old is frustrating and sometimes devastating. If the Dream Act is passed, she could finish her 2 years at community college and transfer to a 4-year institution, and she could pursue the dream of working as a lawyer or in the field of law.

There are countless other stories of Connecticut Dreamers, some wanting to keep their identities confidential. There is a young man in Bridgeport who was brought to Connecticut at the age of 5. He was educated in the Bridgeport public schools. He majored in chemistry and now attends Fairfield University. He has excelled there. He finished his first degree and was accepted at the University of California, Berkeley’s physical chemistry program. He had to live under the threat of deportation because he had no way to apply for permanent lawful status. While he was continuing his studies here, he lived with the threat of deportation.

There is a New Britain woman who was born in Mexico and brought to America when she was 6 years old. The journey was terrifying. She could barely speak English. She had no idea at 6 years old that she was entering America in a way that would affect her for the rest of her life. It was not her choice to come here or to come here in that way, but it has affected her. In fact, despite her attending school and then going to college out of State at Bay Path University and earning a great many leadership positions there, she remains in the limbo of uncertainty and anguish and anxiety created by the threat of deportation. She dreams about helping people, making sure that families with low incomes can have access to occupational therapy. She is pursuing a master’s degree in occupational therapy.

Finally, there is a woman I know who came here from Venezuela. She was brought here when she was 11 years old. She remembers her mother telling her that she was going to America to learn English. When they settled in New Milford, CT, her mom told her that she could be successful if she were bilingual. She began to go to school right away. Life was difficult at the beginning, and there was a lot to learn. By the time she was a junior in high school, she stopped trying to get perfect grades because she feared colleges would not accept her, and even if they accepted her, she could not be eligible for financial assistance because she was undocumented.

But she persevered, and she attended community college. She went on to Western Connecticut State University, and she overcame obstacles that for many Americans born here would be
The promissory note of this American dream can be made a reality by this Chamber today and tomorrow. I understand that some of my colleagues may want to change the immigration system. It is a broken system in need of comprehensive reform. That task is for another day. Today, we must make sure that we provide these Dreamers with legal status and a path to citizenship. That is our moral obligation. That is our job. Let’s get it done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INhofe. Mr. President, the Senate is probably interested in the status of the debate on immigration. This debate started in September in the history of the world. They have a dream that is American, which is that they will have the opportunity to pursue their full potential as human beings to give back, to educate themselves, and to better their lives. That is the American dream.

In Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, he said:

When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note... a promise that all men—

And he might have added women—

...would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The time has long since come for us to help the Dreamers. The time is today for us to protect them against mass draconian deportation, a violation of a promise that would be unworthy of America.

The promissory note of this American dream can be made a reality by this Chamber today and tomorrow. I understand that some of my colleagues may want to change the immigration system. It is a broken system in need of comprehensive reform. That task is for another day. Today, we must make sure that we provide these Dreamers with legal status and a path to citizenship. That is our moral obligation. That is our job. Let’s get it done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INhofe. Mr. President, the Senate is probably interested in the status of the debate on immigration. This debate started in September in hallways, committee rooms, and in our offices—opportunities for us to talk about these issues now for months.

Several weeks ago, there was a government shutdown demanding that we actually have a vote on immigration right now or that we don’t reopen the government. After 3 days of government shutdown, the government was reopened, demanding that we move the immigration debate earlier to make sure we would get this done earlier. Now it is Wednesday of the week that it was supposed to occur, and the proposal is on the table. It has been a frustrating journey.

I can’t even begin to count the number of hours I have spent in bipartisan conversations trying to circle around a simple set of issues. How do we resolve a small group of issues related to immigration?

I thought this was resolved in some ways. Back in early January, there was a large bipartisan meeting with the Senate and House to discuss what was widely televised as the scope for immigration and the key issues we were going to address. It came down to four issues, and there was agreement among the leaders, among the White House, that these were the only four issues we are going to deal with: DACA and those DACA-eligible and how we move them toward citizenship, border security and all the things around border security, diversification, and unification. All of those have been dealt with in legislation before—in fact, for decades, in one version or another—for the issue of DACA. That one is new. That is the only one that hasn’t been done with legislation before. The others all have.

The Gang of 8 bill in 2013 had border security and all kinds of different issues related to both construction of walls, technology, and legal loopholes. It had diversity lottery. It had chain migration. It had two back to back to an immigration study during the Clinton administration, in 1995, there was a proposal put out by Barbara Jordan, the Democratic House Member from Texas, who led that particular study and the administration dealing with chain migration, dealing with how we transition to merit-based immigration.

This has been dealt with literally in hearings for decades, but what I have heard from leaders and members is that there is no time to do any of those things. The only time that we have is to deal with DACA. We can’t even discuss anything else. Meeting after meeting after meeting since early November, I have heard the same thing: There is no time. There is no time. There is no time.

Now we are getting down to the day, and there is still a conversation about how we deal with these four simple issues that will, for months, that the House and Senate have debated for decades, and on which we have had an untold number of hearings for decades to try to actually land them, to get legislation ready, and to get this resolved.

Let me just focus on a few things, because a few of us have put out a proposal that covers those four areas that was a middle-ground proposal. It is certainly not everything that I would like to have, but it is certainly not everything that Democrats would like to have, but it is a middle ground between all of those. It is the one the White House has already announced that they will certainly sign. It has 1.8 million people moving into naturalization, or citizenship. These are the individuals whose parents brought them illegally, but they were children at the time. Those individuals came into the country. They have now lived here for years. They know no other country. They have those individuals are offered an opportunity to become citizens of the United States 10 years from now.

Why 10 years from now? That gives a time period of 10 years, which is commonly agreed that it will take to be able to secure the border. In that 10-year period, the border security could be put in place to make sure we have a secure border. It is not an unreasonable thing. In the same 10-year time period, about 2 million people are going to move, actually, into citizenship.

How does that affect the rest of our people? Well, let me just focus on how it affects it. Right now we have a 20-year backlog to be able to come into the United States legally—20 years to be able to come through that process. Once we add another 2 million people in that process and all the family that will be connected to them, in all likelihood, that backlog moves from 20 years to 25 years. It is ridiculous at 20 years, and it is even worse at 25.

We all know that this issue of family migration and the broad allowance of a country, and the ability for what skills they have but based on being someone’s brother-in-law, is not the best way to do immigration, and we are the only country that does it like this. Seventy percent of the people who come to our country come through a family connection—being someone’s brother, being someone’s sister, being a relative in some way that they are able to come into the country. Canada, just to our north, is exactly the same. Sixty-three percent of the people who come into Canada legally through their immigration system come because they are bringing a work skill. Now, I don’t want to oppose anyone coming from anywhere in the world. There is a uniqueness to the United States and how we handle immigration, and we allow people from all over the world, from every country, to come. That should remain the same, but we should have one simple requirement: that they be able to come because they are bringing something to the Nation. I don’t think that is too hard of a hill to climb.

It is not a matter of who you are related to. You certainly should be able to bring in your spouse and your children, but brothers and sisters and other adults and such that would be in your family, maybe, should come based on their own merit, as well, for them to be able to come and be a part of our great culture, as well, or they are able to come because they have the right to the family, or they have a hard of a hill to climb. It is not a matter of who you are related to. You certainly should be able to bring in your spouse and your children, but brothers and sisters and other adults and such that would be in your family, maybe, should come based on their own merit, as well, for them to be able to come and be a part of our great culture, as well, or they are able to come because they have the right to the family, or they have a

The diversity lottery hasn’t been the challenging issue. Quite frankly, that has been an issue that was in the 2013 Gang of 8 bill, saying: Why do we have 50,000 visas for individuals from anywhere, from around the world, who can come who don’t necessarily bring a skill at all? Why don’t we just add a simple language requirement? We could say that you are welcome to come from anywhere, but at least we should know that those who
are coming from anywhere and everywhere bring something to the American economy. Again, that hasn’t been controversial nor partisan in the past, and now, suddenly, it has become that.

The border security part of it has been confusing part of the debate for me on this thing. Months ago, some of my Democratic colleagues over and over said: The wall will do nothing. There is no benefit in the wall. If you put up a 20-foot wall, there will be a 21-foot ladder. It will do absolutely nothing.

Now, the conversation is this: Well, we will give citizenship to DACA, and we will give you some money to build a wall, and we will call it even. That has never been the request, and everyone knows it.

The request has been border security, not just a wall. I am very aware that the President has talked about a big beautiful wall a lot. I get that. But it has always been about border security, not just putting up a wall in certain places. There has never been an emphasis to build 2,000 miles of wall. There isn’t a need for a wall in certain urban areas, but what is really needed is border security and everyone knows it.

So we have said: OK, that will be a future bill dealing with interior enforcement, but we do feel like border security is very important.

So they have said: OK, we will give you some money to build a wall in sections.

Can I say what they are trying to exclude? Border security, when you lay it out, is also the legal loopholes. So here are just a few of the things that we have laid out, which I don’t think should be that controversial, that we have included in our language and said: If we are going to do border security, let’s be serious about it. For instance, we have asked for additional penalties for people who do human smuggling. Right now on the border, if you do human smuggling into the country, so coyotes and others are able to do human smuggling into the country in transit.

There are also people who are individuals in our country watching out for Border Patrol agents, radioing other people saying: Hey, Border Patrol is here. Go a different direction. They are actually helping to divert people away. We think we should increase the penalties. Our Democratic colleagues have pushed to do that. That said, it doesn’t seem unreasonable to increase the penalties for human smuggling and the same for drug smuggling. To increase the penalties for those who are spying out and redirecting people who are doing drug smuggling doesn’t seem too hard to be able to accomplish.

We would like to allow an individual and their National Guard to be able to go to help the individual. Now the National Guard is not law enforcement. What does the National Guard bring, though? They bring helicopters that have infrared technology. They are able to fly over sections of the border to be able to see the area below them to help direct Border Patrol to it. To participate with the National Guard and allow them to bring some of those resources those States already haven’t be that difficult. That is just a part of border security, but our Democratic colleagues are pushing back on that.

We would like to do an initiative to be able to work with Mexico and provide Mexico some additional funding and support and consultation on their own border with Guatemala and Mexico, the southern border of Mexico—what is literally kind of our first border. It is their southern border. We have been pushed back, though, to say that is not border security. It is slowing down people crossing through Central America into Mexico. We think that is part of it.

How about this one? All along the Rio Grande in Texas, there is Carrizo cane that are there—this large cane that grows in the river in that area. In that area, you are able to hide people, drugs—whatever it may be— in this tall cane because you just disappear in it. It is on both sides of the border. We think we should do an eradication of that cane so that you can actually see through it. It hasn’t been controversial in the past, but suddenly it is controversial: No, we don’t want to eradicate the cane.

That cane is only there because it is hiding human smuggling and contraband. We think we should be able to do that.

We think we should be able to add an electromagnetic spectrum at our border ports of entry so you can look through it. It is on both sides of the border. We think we should do an eradication of that cane so that you can actually see through it. It hasn’t been controversial in the past, but suddenly it is controversial. No, we don’t want to eradicate the cane.

There is getting secure communications that our individuals and the Border Patrol can talk to each other and can interact with other law enforcement to make sure no one from a transnational criminal organization is listening in.

We should have license plate readers at the port of entry to be able to help track that and speed it up.

Doing biometrics at the entry and exit is something that has been required since the 9/11 Commission. So we can accelerate that process that as opposed to doing the court hearing. I think that we know when they come in legally, but we also know when they depart legally.

There is dealing with what is sometimes called catch and release. Individuals who come into the country and cross illegally into the country are held in detention for a short period of time until they get due process, and make claims for asylum. This is not trying to remove due process from anyone. But as they cross into the country illegally, we are able to pick them up, detain them, and make sure they have due process. Some of them making claims for asylum or make claims of credible fear or other things. Instead of doing a hearing on that, we actually give them a piece of paper that is called a notice to appear and release them into the country and say: We will see you in about 2 years for your hearing date—instead of actually doing the hearing right then. Nothing has changed. No facts have changed. Nothing has changed during that time of delay. We just release them because we don’t have enough courts or judges or enough attorneys or enough advocates to be able to accomplish that. So they are released for years in the country. You may be surprised to know that most of the individuals never show up for the hearing. They are just released into the country.

There is also a statement saying: Well, what about unaccompanied minors? Again, you might be interested to know that three-fourths of the unaccompanied minors who cross into the country are actually 14 years old or up. These are not 6-year-olds who are crossing in and 5-year-olds who are crossing in. Most of them are older teenagers. Two-thirds of the people who are coming in as unaccompanied minors are actually teenage boys, and most of them come in to be able to work. So the question is this: How do we handle that?

I think we do fair detention. I think we go through the due process and make a decision right then. Again, you will be interested to know that for individuals who actually do show up for their court hearing, which is a small group, about 30 percent of those who go to the court hearing do get asylum once they finally get to the court hearing. But we are not getting to the court hearing for most of those individuals. That shouldn’t be that controversial. We should be able to handle how we go through that process in an equitable and fair way.

I would like us to be able to deal with the cost, quite frankly, of detention. We have asked for a simple part of this process on border security, to honor the taxpayer, to say that we will not spend more than $500 a night on housing individuals whom we have in detention. Now, I think most Americans—certainly most Oklahomans—would like to stay in a hotel that costs $500 a night. Putting a cap on how much we spend on housing people, I think, is a reasonable thing to be able to put into it, but we have had pushback.
We have asked for emergency immigration judges. Right now there are almost 700,000 people in a backlog in our immigration courts—almost 700,000. We don’t think it is unreasonable to ask for emergency judges to come in to help us with the backlog. We are not talking about judges who are in the Federal system who are knowledgeable of these issues and to do a surge of judges to help us get caught up.

We should be able to do all of these things. The biggest issue of these issues should be controversial. This is what it means when you start talking about real border security, not just adding a wall in some places, not just adding a couple of additional agents but actually putting the things around them that they need to actually be able to enforce the law.

I think people lose track of the fact that ICE folks and Customs and Border Patrol are not enemies of our State. They are American law enforcement. They are serving this country to keep us safe and to enforce the laws of our Nation. I am appalled at the way they are spoken of on this floor and treated in conversations. They are American law enforcement enforcing American laws.

If those problems with what we are enforcing, this body should vote on it and fix the law, not beat up on the people who are enforcing the law and doing what we have asked them to do as a Congress.

I hope in the days ahead we can actually get this passed. I hope we can actually move toward citizenship for 1.8 million people, which the President has asked for, and I think it is a reasonable thing to be able to do for those individuals who came into our country as children. But I also hope that this time we don’t say that we are going to do citizenship and not do border security. I hope we don’t just throw some money and pretend we are doing it. I hope we, as a body, can have a serious conversation about actually doing border security and help us as a nation to establish a secure border. I hope we actually deal with some of the biggest issues on immigration and can walk through this debate in a reasonable way without the emotion and heat, but thinking this through because this affects the future of our country for a very long time.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Lee). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I come to the floor to talk about an issue that has occupied this floor, this body, this Congress for some time now: the challenge of how to fix our broken immigration system. As many of us have debated and talked and tried to find common ground and a bipartisan path forward, I wanted to speak about why I have optimism that we can find a bipartisan solution to this challenge.

I have an underlying optimism about this. One of my dear, dear friends in the Senate, someone I respect and admire deeply, someone who knows more about sacrifice and patriotism than anyone I have ever met, believes the same thing. This friend of mine is not just any Senator. It is Mr. JOHN MCCAIN, the senior Senator from Arizona, who also happens to be an American hero and someone who has demonstrated the courage and its values throughout his entire life. He is someone whom our mutual friend, former Vice President Joe Biden, calls a “man of . . . deep conviction, and unmatched character.”

JOHN is exactly the person the Senate and this country needs in times like this, when the way forward is unclear, when our disagreements seem too wide, when our instincts are to argue rather than listen. This Chamber and this country need someone who is able to show us a way forward and lead us out of our stubborn, sometimes too partisan fights—someone like Senator MCCAIN.

As this debate has progressed in recent days, I have been reminded of something I heard Senator McCain say late last year when he accepted the Liberty Medal from the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. When speaking about our country and when speaking about the opportunity he has had here, he said:

What a privilege it is to serve this big, boisterous, brawling, intertemperate, striving, daring, beautiful, bountiful, brave, magnificent country. With all our flaws, all our mistakes, with all the frailties of human nature as much on display as our virtues, with all the rancor and anger of our politics, we are blessed. We are living in the land of the free, the land where anything is possible. The land of the immigrants’ dream, the land with the storied past forgotten in the rush to an imagined future.

What a country, indeed. Beautiful, brave, and magnificent, as John said, but also challenged by occasional frailty, rancor, and anger that we have seen too much of in this sustained debate over immigration.

The point Senator MCCAIN made that night in Philadelphia—and the point he has made every day serving our Nation for more than six decades—is that working through our disagreements, our divisions is worth it, not just as Senators, but as citizens.

The whole point is, we may be boisterous and intertemperate, which John has certainly also been accused of being a time or two, but we don’t stop striving for our ideals, believing in our future, trusting in the other. That is often difficult—especially here in politics—but it is the challenge that comes with the blessings of living and serving this great country.

So I was honored when Senator McCain spoke to me a week ago to say: Let’s work together to introduce in the Senate legislation that could help solve our most pressing immigration issues and keep our country moving forward.

And now, the bipartisan bill we have introduced—the McCain-Coons bill—in the Senate doesn’t solve every immigration issue we face, and it doesn’t try to. What our bill does is focus on two issues right in front of us that I believe we can address and resolve. It is an attempt to break through what have been messy and divisive political debates and to address, through a compromise, legitimate, substantive issues in an even-handed way.

Our bill would do two things: secure our border and finally give Dreamers the pathway to citizenship they have long awaited for, and they deserve.

First, to address border security, our bill would ensure we gain operational control of the border by 2020 with new technology, new resources for Federal, State, and local law enforcement, and new infrastructure.

It would reduce the existing immigration case backlogs by funding new judges and new attorneys, while also addressing one of the root causes of migration into our country from Central America.

Our legislation would give certainty to 1.8 million Dreamers brought here as children through no fault of their own, who are American in every way but the paperwork. Dreamers who continue to play by the rules by going to school, serving in the military, or being employed are entitled to full, permanent residents and, at least 5 years later, U.S. citizens.

Senator McCain and I aren’t the only ones who think this bipartisan solution makes sense. In fact, the reason we filed it here was because of the strength of its development in the other Chamber, the people’s House, the House of Representatives. This bill was crafted by Republican Congressman WILL HURD of El Paso, TX, whose district has more than 900 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border—more than any district in our country with a U.S.- Mexico border—and his partner, Democratic Congressman PETE AGUILAR, who is from Southern California. The two them put that bill together after a lot of consultation and meetings with their colleagues in the House. Today, it enjoys 27 Republican cosponsors and 27 Democratic cosponsors. I often hear we shouldn’t take up and consider anything that can’t pass the House, but a bill that has 54 bipartisan cosponsors in the House is certainly on the right track.

Now, I am clear-eyed about the fact that this McCain-Coons bill is not perfect. I understand my colleagues may want to make changes to it. Some of my Republican friends I have met with and heard from and talked to in recent days have suggested it needs more investments in border security to win their support, and that is fine because our bill is more than just a set of policies. It is a way to provide a framework for us to agree and not let our disagreements prevent us from moving forward.

Our message is simple about this bill: We may not be able to fix our entire immigration system this week—in fact, I am certain we can’t—but we can, over the next few days, perhaps
even over the next few hours, take important, even historic steps forward. We can lay the groundwork for securing our border with new investments, new technology, and new manpower. We can help Dreamers succeed in American schools, serve in our American military, and enrich American communities without living in constant fear of imminent deportation.

These are tough issues, but the solution can be fairly simple. I think our legislation offers a real solution for right now. There have been developments in recent days. I have been proud to participate in a large bipartisan effort by the Common Sense Coalition, and as it has, as a group, tried to hammer out a bipartisan deal. I have been honored to have started this discussion, this debate, with Senator MCCAIN by filing our bill that we brought over from the House. It is a bipartisan bill that I believe is the most bipartisan bill currently before Congress on this issue. If we can make more progress, if we can attract more bipartisan support through some amendments or revisions, I welcome that.

I believe this week, this day, this opening on our Senate floor is not only a challenge but an incredible opportunity to do the right thing. We don't have to agree on everything. We just have to agree on some things, and we can find a way forward together. It is an enormous honor to have the opportunity to partner with Senator MCCAIN in this legislative effort. While he is not with us today, I know he is with us in spirit and watching our deliberations, and he is someone who has shown not just courage on the battlefield but courage in American politics—a determined willingness to compromise and to work tirelessly to advance the interests of the American people. I can only hope my colleagues, when they have the chance to vote on this bill—which I hope we will vote today—will join me in supporting it in recognition of his lifetime of service to our Nation and his commitment to bipartisanship.

It is my hope that as this day and tomorrow unfolds, we will have the open and fair process that has been promised, and that all of us, together, can do what we were sent to do: listen to each other, trust each other, work together, and find a path through compromise that can solve these two important and pressing issues in the field of immigration.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

(The Acting President pro tempore assumed the Chair.)

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PARKLAND, FLORIDA, SCHOOL SHOOTING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, every day in America we face the devastating reminder of the toll of gun violence. Today, we are watching the horrific scenes at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, where yet another school shooting has taken place. It is gut-wrenching. We know that so many families have just said goodbye to their loved ones forever by senseless gun violence. Ironically, this is the 10th anniversary of a similar shooting at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, IL. Our prayers go out to the victims, to the families, to the first responders, and, of course, to the Parkland community.

HONORING COMMANDER PAUL BAUER

Yesterday, Mr. President, in the city of Chicago, which I am honored to represent, we lost one of our finest, Commander Paul Bauer of the Chicago Police Department. He was shot and killed by a gunman in the Chicago Loop.

Commander Bauer was a 31-year veteran of the CPD and the commander of the North Side. He was a pillar of that community. He was well-known in his district. He had been commended by the city council last year for a charity holiday party he hosted to help for underpriviledged kids.

He was a husband to his wife Erin and a father to a 13-year-old daughter named Grace. Commander Bauer was at a training session yesterday in the Loop, but he didn’t hesitate to help out his fellow officers when they were pursuing a fleeing gunman. Commander Bauer was shot several times by the suspect, and he died from his wounds.

Chicago police superintendent Eddie Johnson said this was an extremely difficult day for the Chicago police family. Commander Bauer was a hero in life. He made the ultimate sacrifice to help protect the city he served and the city he loved. His loss is a tragedy.

Our prayers go out to the commander’s family, his loved ones, and, of course, his family and daughter.

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SHOOTING

As I mentioned, Mr. President, today marks the 10th anniversary of one of the most devastating shootings ever to occur on a college campus in America. On February 14, 2008, a gunman with a history of mental instability walked into a lecture hall at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb and opened fire. His bullets killed five students and wounded 17 more. It was a horrific mass murder, and it shocked the entire Nation.

The five young Illinoisans we lost that day all had bright futures ahead of them: Gayle Dubowski, 20 years old, from Carol Stream, who worked as a camp counselor and was a talented singer in her church choir; Catalina Garcia, of Cicero, 20 years old, a smiling, outgoing young woman who planned to attend DePaul University; Juliana Gehant, of Mendota, 32 years old, who served our country in the U.S. Army and Army Reserve and who went to NIU to study to be a teacher; Ryanne Mace, of Carpentersville, a 19-year-old, who was funny and fun to be with and who aspired to work as a counselor; and Daniel Parmenter, 20 years old, from Westchester, a rugby player, who lost his life because he shielded his girlfriend from the shooter.

It is heartbreaking to think what these five young people could have accomplished in the 10 years since that horrible day. We mourn their loss and, again, our hearts go out to their families.

We remember and honor the wounded who still bear the scars of that terrible day. We renew our thanks over and over to the law enforcement officers and first responders who headed toward the sound of gunfire that day and who treated the victims as they were wounded.

We commend the many members of the community who stepped up in the days that followed, working to persevere through this tragedy, with heavy hearts but unbroken spirits and moving “forward, together forward,” in the words of that Northern Illinois University Huskie for Florida.

It is devastating to think that in this great country, students and educators could be gunned down in our schools. But it happens so often that I am afraid a numbness is setting in.

Just in the last few months, we have had fatal shootings of students at Aztec High School in Aztec, NM; Wake Forest University in North Carolina; Marshall County High School in Benton, KY; and then, today, in Florida.

Other tragedies have been narrowly averted because of well-trained staff. At Mattoon High School in Illinois, a heroic teacher named Angela McQueen stopped a student gunman from causing a massacre there last September.

The threat of shootings in our schools is ever present. According to a tally kept by the group Everytown, there have been at least 18 incidents so far this year when students have been fired on a school or college campus.

Schools and colleges are doing the best they can to prepare and protect their students. I salute the educators and administrators who are working hard, but is Congress doing all that it can to keep our Nation’s students safe from gun violence? Not even close.

Of course, there is no single reform that could stop every shooting in America, but we know there are big gaps in our laws designed for criminals, abusers, and mentally unstable people to get their hands on guns that hurt innocent people. Congress has done nothing—nothing—in recent years to close those gaps and make America safer.

Congress hasn’t even closed the gun show loophole that the 1999 Columbine, CO, killers used to buy their weapons, and we did nothing in response to the murder of 20 first graders and 6 educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut.

In fact, the only vote taken by the Senate on gun laws in this current
Congress was to weaken gun law safety provisions on the books. That was a vote that Senate Republicans brought up last year that prevented the Social Security Administration from alerting the FBI's gun background check system about people with mental illness.

It is before this year is over, the Republican majority will call up more bills to weaken gun safety laws. That is the wrong response to the epidemic of gun violence in America.

I am not going to give up on trying to close loopholes in our gun laws. I am going to keep fighting for universal background checks, tougher straw purchasing laws, and better laws to prevent gun theft. I am not going to give up because of people like Patrick Korrill, who was shot in the head 10 years ago at the tragedy at Northern Illinois University. Luckily, Patrick survived, and since that day, he has been a leader in Illinois, fighting for commonsense gun reform. I have come to know and admire him for his efforts.

No one should have to go through what Patrick went through and so many others went through on that day in DeKalb, IL, 10 years ago. We owe it to Patrick, to the other NIU victims and family members, and to the hundreds of thousands more across America who have been killed and wounded by guns this past decade to keep trying to reduce the toll of gun violence.

Maybe we can’t stop every shooting, but if we do our best to keep guns out of dangerous hands, we will save lives. I intend to keep doing my best to achieve that goal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 1958, AS MODIFIED

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I modify my amendment No. 1958 with the text at the top.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be stricken, insert the following:

SEC. 2. CANCELLATION OF REMOVAL AND ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS FOR CERTAIN LONG-TERM RESIDENTS WHO EN- TERED THE UNITED STATES AS CHILDREN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 2 of title II of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1221 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

``SEC. 244A. CANCELLATION OF REMOVAL FOR CERTAIN LONG-TERM RESIDENTS WHO ENTERED THE UNITED STATES AS CHILDREN.

``(a) Definitions.—In this section:

``(1) APPLICABLE FEDERAL TAX LIABILITY.—The term 'applicable Federal tax liability' means liability for Federal taxes imposed under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, including any penalties and interest on Federal taxes imposed under that Code.

``(2) ARMED FORCES.—The term 'Armed Forces' has the meaning given the term 'armed forces' in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.

``(3) DACA.—The term 'DACA' means the deferred action for childhood arrivals policy described in the memorandum issued by the Secretary dated June 15, 2012 (rescinded on September 5, 2017).

``(4) DACA RECIPIENT.—The term 'DACA recipient' means an alien who was granted and remained in deferred action status under DACA.

``(5) DISABILITY.—The term 'disability' has the meaning given the term in section 3(1) of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102(11)).

``(6) EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM.—The term 'early childhood education program' has the meaning given the term in section 103 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

``(7) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.—The term 'elementary school' means the meaning given in the term in section 801 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7802).

``(8) FELONY.—

``(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'felony' means a Federal, State, or local criminal offense punishable by imprisonment for a term that exceeds 1 year.

``(B) EXCLUSION.—The term 'felony' does not include a State or local criminal offense for which an essential element is the immigration status of an alien.

``(9) HIGH SCHOOL.—The term 'high school' has the meaning given the term in section 801 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

``(10) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—

``(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term 'institute of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

``(B) EXCLUSION.—The term 'institute of higher education' does not include an institution of higher education outside the United States.

``(11) MISDEMEANOR.—

``(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'misdemeanor' means a Federal, State, or local criminal offense punishable by imprisonment for a term that exceeds 1 year.

``(B) EXCLUSION.—The term 'misdemeanor' does not include a State or local offense for which an essential element is the immigration status of an alien.

``(C) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTIONS (a) AND (b), THE TERM 'MISDEMEANOR' INCLUDES—

``(i) the immigration status of the alien;

``(ii) for which—

``(I) the alien was sentenced to time in custody of more than 90 days.

``(iii) that resulted in a sentence of time in custody of more than 90 days.

``(ii) has not ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; and

``(ii) has not ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; and

``(iii) has not been convicted of—

``(i) a felony;

``(ii) a significant misdemeanor; or

``(iii) 3 or more misdemeanors—

``(aa) not occurring on the same date; and

``(bb) not arising out of the same act, omission, or scheme of misconduct;

``(D) the alien—

``(i) has been admitted to an institution of higher education;

``(ii) has earned a high school diploma or a commensurate alternative award from a public or private high school; or

``(ii) has obtained—

``(aa) a general education development certificate recognized under State law; or

``(bb) a high school equivalency diploma in the United States;

``(ii) has completed—

``(a) obtaining—

``(AA) a regular high school diploma; or

``(BB) the recognized equivalent of a regular high school diploma; or

``(BB) a high school diploma equivalent to the completion of 12th grade.

``(ii) education program assisting student in—

``(a) obtaining—

``(AA) a regular high school diploma; or

``(BB) the recognized equivalent of a regular high school diploma; or

``(BB) a high school diploma equivalent to the completion of 12th grade.

``(ii) a commensurate alternative award from a public or private high school; or

``(ii) has obtained—

``(aa) a general education development certificate recognized under State law; or

``(bb) a high school equivalency diploma in the United States;
"(BB) a high school equivalence diploma examination; or
"(CC) any other similar State-authorized exam; or
"(D) if the alien has served, is serving, or has en- listed in the Armed Forces; or
"(II) the case of an alien who has been disch arged from the Armed Forces, has re- ceived an honorable discharge;
"(E)(i) the alien has paid any applicable Federal tax liability incurred by the alien during the entire period for which the alien was authorized to work in the United States; or
"(F) the alien was under the age of 38 years on June 15, 2012.

"(c) Waiver.—
"(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to any benefit under this section, the Secretary may, on a case-by-case basis, waive a ground of inadmissibility under subparagraph (A), (B), (C), (D), (E)(G), or (10)(D) of section 212(a)—
"(A) for humanitarian purposes; or
"(B) if the alien otherwise in the public interest.

"(2) Quarterly Report.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, and quarterly thereafter, the Sec- retary shall submit to Congress a report that identifies, for the preceding quarter—
"(A) the number of waivers requested by aliens under paragraph (1);
"(B) the number of waiver requests granted by the Secretary under that paragraph; and
"(C) the number of waiver requests denied by the Secretary under that paragraph.

"(d) Treatment of Expunged ConvictionS.—

"(2) Case-By-Case Evaluation.—The Sec- retary shall evaluate an expunged conviction on a case-by-case basis according to the na- ture and severity of the offense underlying the expunged conviction, based on the record of conviction, to determine whether, under the pertinent circumstances, the alien is el- igible for cancellation of removal, adjust- ment to permanent resident status on a condi- tional basis, or an adjustment of status.

"(e) DACA Recipients.—With respect to a DACA recipient, the Secretary shall cancel the removal of the DACA recipient and ad- just the status of the DACA recipient to the status of an alien lawfully admitted for per- manent residence on a conditional basis un- less, since the date on which the DACA re- cipient was granted deferred action status under DACA, the DACA recipient has en- gaged in conduct that would render the alien ineligible for deferred action status under DACA.

"(f) Application Fee.—
"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may re- quire an alien applying for permanent resi- dent status on a conditional basis to pay a reasonable fee that is commensurate with the cost of processing the application.

"(2) Application Fee Exemption.—An alien applicant may be ex- empted from paying the fee required under paragraph (1) only if the alien—
"(A)(i) is younger than 18 years of age;
"(B)(i) is younger than 18 years of age and is homeless;
"(C)(i) cannot care for himself or herself because of a serious, chronic disability, and (ii) received total income, during the 1-year period immediately preceding the date on which the alien files an application under this section, that is less than 150 percent of the poverty line; or
"(E) the alien is in foster care or otherwise lacking any parental or other familial support;

"(g) Submission of Biometric and Bio- graphic Data.—
"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not grant an alien permanent resident status on a conditional basis under this section unless the alien submits biometric and biographic data, in accordance with procedures established by the Secretary.

"(2) Alternative Procedure.—The Sec- retary shall provide an alternative procedure for any alien who is unable to provide the bi- metric or biographic data referred to in paragraph (1) due to a physical impair- ment.

"(h) Background Checks.—
"(1) REQUIREMENT FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—The Secretary shall use biometric, biographic, and other data that the Sec- retary determines appropriate—
"(A) to conduct security and law enforce- ment background checks of an alien seeking permanent resident status on a conditional basis; and
"(B) to determine whether there is any criminal, national security, or other factor that would render the alien ineligible for permanent resident status on a conditional basis.

"(2) COMPLETION OF BACKGROUND CHECKS.—The Secretary shall require an alien required under paragraph (1) to complete all background checks for an alien required under paragraph (1) shall be completed, to the satis- faction of the Secretary, before the date on which the Secretary grants the alien perma- nent resident status on a conditional basis.

"(i) Criminal Record Requests.—With re- spect to an alien seeking permanent resident status on a conditional basis, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary of State, shall seek to obtain from INTERPOL, EUROPE, or any other international or na- tional law enforcement agency of the coun- try of nationality, country of citizenship, or country of last habitual residence of the alien information about any criminal activ- ity—
"(A) in which the alien engaged in the country of nationality, country of citizen- ship, or country of last habitual residence of the alien; or
"(B) for which the alien was convicted in the country of nationality, country of citi- zenship, or country of last habitual resi- dence of the alien.

"(j) Medical Examination.—
"(1) REQUIREMENT.—An alien applying for permanent resident status on a conditional basis shall undergo a medical exami- nation.

"(2) Policies and Procedures.—The Sec- retary, with the concurrence of the Sec- retary of Health and Human Services, shall prescribe policies and procedures for the na- ture and timing of the examination required under paragraph (1).

"(k) Military Selective Service.—An alien applying for permanent resident status on a conditional basis under this section shall establish that the alien has registered under the Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.), if the alien is subject to registration under that Act.

"(l) Determination of Continuous Pres- ence.—
"(1) TERMINATION OF CONTINUOUS PERIOD.—Any period of continuous physical presence in the United States by an alien who applies for permanent resident status on a condi- tional basis under this section shall not be- come a period of continuous physical presence in the United States if the alien has departed from the United States for any period greater than 90 days or for any periods, in the aggregate, greater than 180 days.

"(m) Extensions for Extinguishing Cir- cumstances.—The Secretary may extend the time periods described in subparagraph (A) for an alien who demonstrates that the fail- ure to timely return to the United States was due to extenuating circumstances be- yond the control of the alien, including the serious illness of the alien, or death or seri- ous illness of a parent, grandparent, sibling, or child of the alien.

"(n) Travel Authorized by the Sec- retary.—Any period of travel outside of the United States by an alien that was author- ized by the Secretary may not be counted to- ward any period of departure from the United States under subparagraph (A).

"(o) Limitation on Removal of Certain Aliens.—
"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary or the At- torney General may not remove an alien who appears prima facie eligible for relief under this section.

"(2) Aliens Subject to Removal.—With re- spect to an alien who is in removal pro- ceedings, the subject of a final removal order, or the subject of a voluntary depar- ture order, the Attorney General shall pro- vide the alien with a reasonable opportunity to apply for relief under this heading. The Attorney General may not lift the stay granted pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) unless the Attorney General determines that the alien is inadmissible for removal.

"(1) STAY OF REMOVAL.—The Attorney Gen- eral may stay the removal proceedings of an alien who—
"(A) meets all the requirements described in subparagraph (A) through (C) of subsection (b)(2), subject to subsections (c) and (d);
"(B) is at least 5 years of age; and
"(C) is enrolled in an elementary school, a secondary school, or an early childhood educa- tion program.

"(2) Commencement of Removal Pro- ceedings.—The Secretary may not commence removal proceedings for an alien de- scribed in paragraph (1).

"(3) Employment.—An alien whose re- moval is stayed pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) may not be placed in removal pro- ceedings pursuant to paragraph (2) shall, on application to the Secretary, be granted an employment authorization document.

"(4) Lift of Stay.—The Secretary or At- torney General may not lift the stay granted to an alien under paragraph (1) unless the alien caeses to meet the requirements under the paragraph.

"(n) Exemption From Numerical Limi- tations.—Nothing in this section or in any other law applies a numerical limitation on the number of aliens who may be granted permanent resident status on a conditional basis.
“(o) TERMS OF PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS ON A CONDITIONAL BASIS.—

“(1) PERIOD OF STATUS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Permanently resident status on a conditional basis is—

“(i) subject to subparagraph (B), valid for a period of 7 years; and

“(ii) subject to termination under paragraphs (C) and (D).

“(B) EXTENSION AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may extend the period described in subparagraph (A)(i).”

“(2) NOTICE OF REQUIREMENTS.—At the time an alien obtains permanent resident status on a conditional basis, the Secretary shall provide the alien regarding the provisions of this section and the requirements to have the conditional basis of that status removed.

“(3) TERMINATION OF STATUS.—The Secretary may terminate the permanent resident status on a conditional basis of an alien only if the Secretary—

“(A) subject to subsections (c) and (d), determines that the alien—

“(i) is inadmissible under paragraph (2), (3), (6)(E), (6)(G), (8), (10)(A), (10)(C), or (10)(D) of section 212(a);

“(ii) has ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; or

“(iii) has been convicted of—

“(I) a felony;

“(II) a significant misdemeanor; or

“(III) 3 or more misdemeanors—

“(aa) not occurring on the same date; and

“(bb) not arising out of the same act, omission, or scheme of misconduct; and

“(B) prior to the termination, provides the alien—

“(i) notice of the proposed termination; and

“(ii) the opportunity for a hearing to provide evidence that the alien meets the requirements or otherwise contest the termination.

“(4) RETURN TO PREVIOUS IMMIGRATION STATUS.—The immigration status of an alien whose permanent resident status on a conditional basis expires under paragraph (1)(A)(i) or is terminated under paragraph (3) or whose application for permanent resident status on a conditional basis is denied shall return to the immigration status of the alien on the day before the date on which the alien received permanent resident status on a conditional basis, except that any period during which the alien was in conditional resident status on a conditional basis, as appropriate.

“(p) REMOVAL OF CONDITIONAL BASIS OF PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS.—

“(1) ELIGIBILITY FOR REMOVAL OF CONDITIONAL BASIS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall remove the conditional basis of the permanent resident status of an alien granted under this section and grant the alien status as an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence if the alien—

“(i) subject to subsections (c) and (d)—

“(I) is not inadmissible under paragraph (2), (3), (6)(E), (6)(G), (8), (10)(A), (10)(C), or (10)(D) of section 212(a);

“(II) has not ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; and

“(III) has not been convicted of—

“(aa) a felony;

“(bb) a significant misdemeanor; or

“(cc) 3 or more misdemeanors—

“(aa) not occurring on the same date; and

“(bb) not arising out of the same act, omission, or scheme of misconduct;

“(ii) has not abandoned the residence of the alien in the United States;

“(iii)(I) has accumulated $10,000 or more in debt as a result of unreimbursed medical expenses for the alien accumulated $10,000 or more in debt as a result of unreimbursed medical expenses as a result of physical impairment.

“(B) SUBMISSION OF BIOMETRIC AND BIOGRAPHIC DATA.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not remove the conditional basis of the permanent resident status of an alien unless the alien submits biometric and biographic data in accordance with procedures established by the Secretary.

“(ii) ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE.—The Secretary shall provide an alternative procedure for any applicant who is unable to provide the biometric or biographic data referred to in paragraph (I) due to physical impairment.

“(E) BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

“(1) REQUIREMENT FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—The Secretary shall use biometric, biographical, and background check information. The Secretary determines to be appropriate.

“(i) to conduct security and law enforcement background checks of an alien applying for removal of the conditional basis of the permanent resident status of the alien; and

“(ii) to determine whether there is any criminal, national security, or other factor that would render the alien ineligible for removal of the conditional basis of the permanent resident status of the alien.

“(2) COMPLETION OF BACKGROUND CHECKS.—The security and law enforcement background checks of an alien required under clause (i) shall be completed, to the satisfaction of the Secretary, before the date on which the Secretary removes the conditional basis of the permanent resident status of the alien.

“(G) NATURALIZATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of title III, an alien granted permanent resident status on a conditional basis shall be considered to have been admitted to the United States, and to be present in the United States, as an alien lawfully admitted for permanent resident status.

“(B) LIMITATIONS ON APPLICATION FOR NATURALIZATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An alien shall not be naturalized—

“(i) on any date on which the alien is in permanent resident status on a conditional basis; or

“(ii) subject to clause (iii), before the date that is 12 years after the date on which the alien was granted permanent resident status on a conditional basis.

“(B) ADVANCED FILING DATE.—Subject to clause (iii), with respect to an alien granted permanent resident status on a conditional basis, the alien may file an application for naturalization not more than 90 days before the date that is 12 years after the date on which the alien was granted permanent resident status on a conditional basis.

“(C) REDUCTION IN PERIOD.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), the 12-year period referred to in clause (i) and clause (ii) may be reduced by the number of days on which the alien was a DACA recipient, if applicable.

“(2) LIMITATION ON CERTAIN PARENTS.—An alien shall not be eligible to adjust status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent resident status based on a petition filed by a child, son or daughter of the alien if—

“(A) the child or son or daughter was granted permanent resident status on a conditional basis; and

“(B) the alien knowingly assisted the child or son or daughter to enter the United States unlawfully.

“(D) DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS.—An alien’s application for permanent resident status on a conditional basis may include, as proof of identity—

“(1) A DOCUMENTS ESTABLISHING IDENTITY.—An alien’s application for permanent resident status on a conditional basis may include, as proof of identity—

“(1) a passport or national identity document from the alien’s country of origin that includes the alien’s name and the alien’s photograph or fingerprint;

“(2) the alien’s birth certificate and an identity card that includes the alien’s name and photograph;
\"(C) a school identification card that includes the alien's name and photograph, and school records showing the alien's name and that the alien is or was enrolled at the school;\"

\"(D) A Uniformed Services identification card issued by the Department of Defense;\"

\"(E) any immigration or other document issued by the United States Government bearing the alien's name and photograph; or\"

\"(F) A State-issued identification card bearing the alien's name and photograph.\"

\"(2) and who have direct knowledge of the alien's relationship between the affiant and the alien.\"

\"(i) the name, address, and telephone number of the affiant; and\"

\"(ii) the nature and duration of the relationship between the affiant and the alien.\"

\"(3) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING INITIAL ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES.—To establish that an alien has been continuously present in the United States, as required under subsection (b)(2)(A), or to establish that an alien has not abandoned residence in the United States, as required under subsection (p)(1)(A)(i), the alien may submit documents to the Secretary, including—\"

\"(A) employment records that include the employer's name and contact information;\"

\"(B) records from any educational institution the alien has attended in the United States;\"

\"(C) records of service from the Uniformed Services;\"

\"(D) official records from a religious entity confirming the alien's participation in a religious documents that have been accepted by the Secretary;\"

\"(E) passport entries;\"

\"(F) a birth certificate for a child of the alien who was born in the United States;\"

\"(G) a school identification card that includes the alien's name and photograph, and the date of the treatment or hospitalization the alien has attended in the United States;\"

\"(H) deeds, mortgages, or rental agreement contracts;\"

\"(I) tax receipts;\"

\"(J) insurance policies;\"

\"(K) remittance records;\"

\"(L) copies of utility bills bearing the alien's name or the name of an immediate family member of the alien, and the alien's address;\"

\"(M) copies of money order receipts for money sent in or out of the United States;\"

\"(N) dated bank transactions; or\"

\"(O) 2 or more sworn affidavits from individuals who are not related to the alien who have direct knowledge of the alien's continuous physical presence in the United States, that contain—\"

\"(i) the name, address, and telephone number of the affiant; and\"

\"(ii) the nature and duration of the relationship between the affiant and the alien.\"

\"(3) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING INITIAL ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES.—To establish that an alien was younger than 18 years of age on the date on which the alien initially entered the United States, an alien may submit documents to the Secretary, including—\"

\"(A) an admission stamp on the alien’s passport;\"

\"(B) records from any educational institution the alien has attended in the United States;\"

\"(C) any document from the Department of Justice or the Department of Homeland Security stating the alien’s date of entry into the United States;\"

\"(D) hospital or medical records showing medical treatment or hospitalization, the name of the medical facility or physician, and the date of the treatment or hospitalization;\"

\"(E) rent receipts or utility bills bearing the alien's name or the name of an immediate family member of the alien, and the alien's address;\"

\"(F) employment records that include the employer's name and contact information;\"

\"(G) receipts from a religious entity confirming the alien's participation in a religious ceremony;\"

\"(H) a birth certificate for a child of the alien who was born in the United States;\"

\"(I) automobile license receipts or registration;\"

\"(J) deeds, mortgages, or rental agreement contracts;\"

\"(K) tax receipts;\"

\"(L) travel records;\"

\"(M) copies of money order receipts sent in or out of the country;\"

\"(N) dated bank transactions;\"

\"(O) remittance records; or\"

\"(P) other evidence.\"

\"(4) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING ADMISSION TO AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—To establish that an alien has been admitted to an institution of higher education, the alien shall submit to the Secretary a diploma; or other documentation from a medical provider that—\"

\"(i) the name, address, and telephone number of the affiant; and\"

\"(ii) the nature and duration of the relationship between the affiant and the alien.\"

\"(5) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING RECEIPT OF A DEGREE FROM AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—To establish that an alien has acquired a degree from an institution of higher education in the United States, the alien shall submit to the Secretary a diploma; or other documentation from a medical provider that—\"

\"(i) the name, address, and telephone number of the affiant; and\"

\"(ii) the nature and duration of the relationship between the affiant and the alien.\"

\"(6) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING RECEIPT OF A DEGREE FROM AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—To establish that an alien has acquired a degree from a recognized degree-granting institution in the United States, the alien shall submit to the Secretary—\"

\"(A) a high school diploma, certificate of completion, or other alternate award;\"

\"(B) a high school equivalency diploma or certificate recognized under State law; or\"

\"(C) evidence that the alien passed a State-authorized exam, including the general educational development exam, in the United States.\"

\"(7) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING ENROLLMENT IN AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—To establish that an alien is enrolled in any school or education program described in subsection (b)(2)(A)(i)(III), the alien shall submit school records from the United States school that the alien is currently attending that include—\"

\"(A) the name of the school; and\"

\"(B) records of attendance, and current grade or educational level.\"

\"(8) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING EXEMPTION FROM APPLICATION FEES.—To establish that an alien is exempt from an application fee under subsection (f)(2) or (p)(1)(C)(ii), the alien shall submit to the Secretary the following relevant documents:\"

\"(A) a Department of Defense form DD-214;\"

\"(B) a record of medical treatment or hospitalization with a provider that—\"

\"(i) bear the provider's name and address; or\"

\"(ii) provide evidence of employment, including—\"

\"(i) bank records;\"

\"(ii) business records;\"

\"(iii) employer records;\"

\"(iv) records of a labor union, day labor center, or organization that assists workers in employment; or\"

\"(v) sworn affidavits from individuals who are not related to the alien and who have direct knowledge of the alien's work, that contain—\"

\"(i) the name, address, and telephone number of the affiant; and\"

\"(ii) the nature and duration of the relationship between the affiant and the alien.\"

\"(9) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING SERVICE IN THE UNIFORMED SERVICES.—To establish that an alien has served in the Uniformed Services for at least 2 years and, if discharged, received an honorable discharge, the alien shall submit to the Secretary—\"

\"(A) a Department of Defense form DD-214;\"

\"(B) a National Guard Report of Separation and Record of Service form 22;\"

\"(C) personnel records for such service from the appropriate Uniformed Service; or\"

\"(D) health records from the appropriate Uniformed Service.\"

\"(10) D OCUMENTS ESTABLISHING EMPLOYMENT.—\"

\"(A) In general.—An alien may satisfy the employment requirement under section (p)(1)(A)(i)(III) by submitting records that—\"

\"(i) establish compliance with such employment requirement; and\"

\"(ii) have been maintained by the Social Security Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, or any other Federal, State, or local government agency.\"

\"(B) APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION.—An alien who is unable to submit the records described in subparagraph (A) may satisfy the employment requirement by submitting at least 2 years of reliable documentation to provide evidence of employment, including—\"

\"(i) bank records;\"

\"(ii) business records;\"

\"(iii) employer records;\"

\"(iv) records of a labor union, day labor center, or organization that assists workers in employment; or\"

\"(v) sworn affidavits from individuals who are not related to the alien and who have direct knowledge of the alien’s work, that contain—\"

\"(i) the name, address, and telephone number of the affiant; and\"

\"(ii) remittance records.\"

\"(II) AUTHORITY TO PROHIBIT USE OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS.—If the Secretary determines after publication of the Federal Register and an opportunity for public comment, that any document or class of documents
SEC. 3. REDUCTION OF FAMILY-SUPPORTED IMMIGRANT VISAS.

(a) PROHIBITION AGAINST THE SPONSOR OF UNMARKED OLDER THAN 21 YEARS OF AGE BY LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS.—
Section 203(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(a)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

"(2) SPONSORS AND CHILDREN OF ALIENS FULLY ADMITTED FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE.—
(A) IN GENERAL.—Qualified immigrants who are the spouse or child of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence shall be allocated visas in a number not to exceed the sum of—
(i) 114,200;
(ii) the number (if any) by which such worldwide level exceeds 226,000; and
(iii) the number of visas not required for the class described in paragraph (1)."

(b) AFFIRMATIVE APPLICATION.—The regulations published under subparagraph (A) shall allow any eligible individual to immediately and relatively affirmatively for the relief available under subsection (b) without being placed in removal proceedings.

(c) INTERIM REGULATIONS.—Notwithstanding section 553 of title 5, United States Code, the regulations published pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) shall be effective, on an interim basis, immediately on publication in the Federal Register, but may be subject to change and revision after public notice and opportunity for a period of public comment.

(d) FINAL REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which interim regulations are published under this subsection, the Secretary shall publish final regulations implementing this section.

(2) AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The requirements under chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, (commonly known as the 'Paperwork Reduction Act') shall not apply to any action to implement this subsection.

(3) CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION.—
(A) In general.—The Secretary may not disclose or use for the purpose of immigration enforcement any information provided in—
"(i) an application filed under this section; or
"(ii) a request for deferred action status under DACA.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) is amended—


(3) in section 202—
"(A) in subsection (a)(8 U.S.C. 1152(a)—
"(i) in paragraph (2), by striking "(3), (4), and (6)" and inserting "(3) and (4)";

"(ii) by striking paragraph (4); and

"(iii) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (4); and

"(B) in subsection (e), by striking "as of the number of visas that may be issued under section 203(a)(2)(A) pursuant to subsection (a)(4)(A)";

(4) in section 203—
"(A) in paragraph (3), by striking "subsections (a)(2)(A) and (d)" and inserting "subsection (d)"; and

"(B) by striking paragraph (2) each place such term appears and inserting "(a)(2)";

(5) in section 204—
"(A) in subsection (a)(1)(B)—
"(i) in clause (i), by striking "if such a child has not been classified under clause (ii) of subsection (a)(2)(A) and its subsections"; and

"(ii) in subclause (I)(i), by striking "section 203(a)(2)(A)" and inserting "section 203(a)(2)(A)"; and

"(ii) by striking "(a)(2)" each place such term appears and inserting "(a)(2)".

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date on which—

(1) the Secretary of Homeland Security has adjudicated each petition that is filed under section 203(a)(2)(B) (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act) before January 1, 2019; and

(2) the Secretary of Homeland Security has allocated to each eligible alien a visa based on a petition described in paragraph (1).

SECT. 4. BORDER SECURITY.

SEC. 401. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.—In this section, the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(b) APPROPRIATIONS FOR BORDER SECURITY.—The following sum is appropriated: out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, namely $2,500,000,000 for—

(1) the construction of physical barriers; (2) border security technologies; (3) tactical infrastructure; (4) marine vessels; (5) aircraft; (6) unmanned aerial systems; (7) facilities; and (8) equipment.

(c) AVAILABILITY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018.—Of the amount appropriated by subsection (b), amounts shall be available for fiscal year 2018 as follows:

(1) For impediment and denial, $1,571,000,000.

(2) For domain awareness, $658,000,000.

(3) For access and mobility, $143,000,000.

(4) For the retention, recruitment, and re-locating of officers, $99,000,000 for U.S. Customs Officers, and Air and Marine personnel, $138,000,000, including for not fewer than 615 officers of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

(5) To hire 615 U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officers for deployment to ports of entry, $75,000,000.

(d) AVAILABILITY FOR FISCAL YEARS 2019 THROUGH 2027.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (f), of the amount available by subsection (b), amounts available for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2027 shall be $2,500,000,000.

(2) LIMITATION.—Amounts appropriated under subsection (b) for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 shall only be available for operationally effective designs deployed as of the date of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115–31), as such currently deployed steel bollard designs, that prioritize agent safety.

(e) REPORT ON PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT OF BORDER SECURITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives and the Committees of jurisdiction of the Senate and the House of Representatives a risk-based plan
for improving security along the borders of the United States, including the use of personnel, fencing, other forms of tactical infrastructure and technology.

(2) The report required by this subsection shall include the following:

(A) A statement of goals, objectives, activities, and milestones for the plan.

(B) An implementation schedule for the plan with estimates for the planned obligation of funds for fiscal years 2019 through 2027 that are linked to the milestone-based delivery of:

(i) capabilities and services;

(ii) mission benefits and outcomes;

(iii) management and management capabilities; and

(iv) lifecycle cost estimates.

(C) A description of the manner in which specific projects under the plan will enhance border security goals and objectives and address the highest priority border security needs.

(D) An identification of the planned locations, quantities, and types of resources, such as fencing, other physical barriers, or other tactical infrastructure and technology, under the plan.

(E) A description of the methodology and analyses used to select specific resources for deployment to particular locations under the plan that included:

(i) alternatives, including comparative costs and benefits;

(ii) an assessment of effects on communities and property owners near areas of infrastructure deployment; and

(iii) a description of other factors critical to the decision-making process.

(F) An identification of staffing requirements under the plan, including full-time equivalents, contractors, and detailed personnel, by activity.

(G) A description of performance metrics for the plan for assessing and reporting on the contributions of border security capabilities realized from current and future investments.

(H) A description of the status of the actions of the Department of Homeland Security to address open recommendations by the Office of Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office relating to border security, including plans, schedules, and associated milestones for fully addressing such recommendations.

(I) A comprehensive plan to consult State and local elected officials on the eminence domain and construction process relating to physical barriers.

(J) A comprehensive analysis, following consultation with the Secretary of Interior and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, of the environmental impacts of the construction and placement of physical barriers planned along the Southwest border, including barriers in the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge.

(K) Certifications by the Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Management, including all documents, memoranda, and a description of the review and information technology management oversight and processes supporting such certifications, that:

(i) the plan has been reviewed and approved in accordance with an acquisition review management process that complies with capital planning and investment control and review requirements established by the Office of Management and Budget, including as provided in Circular A-11, part 7; and

(ii) the plan complies with Federal acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and practices.

(f) LIMITATION ON AVAILABILITY FOR FISCAL YEARS 2019 THROUGH 2027—

(i) LIMITATION.—The amount specified in subsection (d) for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2027 shall not be available for such fiscal year unless—

(A) the Secretary submits to Congress, not later than 60 days before the beginning of such fiscal year, a report setting forth—

(i) a description of every planned expenditure in such fiscal year under the plan required by subsection (e) in an amount in excess of $50,000; and

(ii) a description of the total number of miles of security fencing or barriers that will be constructed in such fiscal year under the plan;

(B) an identification of the individual or entity responsible for the construction, installation, and maintenance of the border security capabilities included in such fiscal year; and

(C) an individual or entity who is responsible for the construction, installation, and maintenance of the border security capabilities included in such fiscal year.

(ii) PAYGO SCORECARDS.—

(A) PAYGO SCORECARD.—If amounts described in subsection (d) are available for such fiscal year, the amount specified in such fiscal year shall be included in the PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code; and

(B) PAYGO SCORECARD MAINTAINED.—If amounts described in subsection (d) are available for such fiscal year, the amount specified in such fiscal year shall be included in any subsequent PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code.
Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I send a cloture amendment to the desk for amendment No. 1958, as modified.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk reads 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 Senate amendment No. 1958 to H.R. 2579, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the premium tax credit with respect to unsubsidized COBRA continuation coverage.


CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I send a cloture amendment to the desk for amendment No. 1958, as modified.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk reads 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 Senate amendment No. 1948 to H.R. 2579, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the premium tax credit with respect to unsubsidized COBRA continuation coverage.


CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I send a cloture amendment to the desk for amendment No. 1948.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk reads 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 Senate amendment No. 1948 to H.R. 2579, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the premium tax credit with respect to unsubsidized COBRA continuation coverage.


CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination:

Executive Calendar No. 586. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk reads the nomination of Margaret Weichert, of Georgia, to be Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCConnell. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Weichert nomination? The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED

Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from and the Senate proceed to the consideration of PN374-2; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the nominations be immediately notified of the Senate’s action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE COAST GUARD

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Coast Guard to the grade indicated under title 14, U.S.C., section 271(d):

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Steven J. Andersen
Rear Adm. (lh) Keith M. Smith

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business,