

# Daily Digest

## Senate

### Chamber Action

The Senate met at 11:30:01 a.m. in pro forma session, and adjourned at 11:30:32 a.m., until 10 a.m., on Monday, March 20, 2017.

### Committee Meetings

No committee meetings were held.

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## House of Representatives

### Chamber Action

**Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced:** 37 public bills, H.R. 1556–1592; and 7 resolutions, H.J. Res. 90; and H. Res. 200–205 were introduced.

**Pages H2147–49**

**Additional Cosponsors:**

**Pages H2150–51**

**Reports Filed:** Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 1302, to require an exercise related to terrorist and foreign fighter travel, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–40);

H.R. 1297, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make technical corrections to the requirement that the Secretary of Homeland Security submit quadrennial homeland security reviews, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–41); and

H.R. 1238, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Health Affairs responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security related to food, agriculture, and veterinary defense against terrorism, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–42, Part 1). **Page H2147**

**Recess:** The House recessed at 10:47 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2090**

**Guest Chaplain:** The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Dr. Andrew Chaney, First and Calvary Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Missouri.

**Page H2090**

**Journal:** The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a yea-and-nay vote of 243 yeas to 165 nays with 1 answering "present", Roll No. 164.

**Page H2090, H2102**

**Recess:** The House recessed at 1:30 p.m. and reconvened at 1:35 p.m. **Page H2100**

**VA Accountability First Act of 2017:** The House passed H.R. 1259, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, by a recorded vote of 237 yeas to 178 noes, Roll No. 168. **Pages H2114–35**

Rejected the Kihuen motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with amendments, by a recorded vote of 189 yeas to 229 noes, Roll No. 167. **Pages H2133–35**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–7 shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule. **Page H2122**

Agreed to:

Roe (TN) amendment (No. 1 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–39) that inserts "to or" after the word "paid" on page 20, line 15; **Page H2125**

Kuster amendment (No. 4 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–39) that includes as prohibited personnel practices as described in the whistleblower protection subsection of section 3 with those defined in 38 USC 733(c); **Pages H2127–28**

Taylor amendment (No. 6 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–39) that requires the Veterans Administration to provide a semi-annual report to the House and Senate Committees on Veterans Affairs outlining all instances of Senior Executives who are detailed to a new position within the agency; the report will

contain details on the purpose of the reassignment as well as the costs associated with the reassignment;

**Page H2128**

Tenney amendment (No. 7 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–39) that requires that bonuses awarded to senior-level executives within the Department of Veterans Affairs be reported to Congress on an annual basis; and

**Pages H2128–29**

Kuster amendment (No. 8 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–39) that requires VA supervisors to develop performance plans for employees, to include steps taken to address poor performance; it would also improve training for supervisors. **Pages H2129–30**

Rejected:

Walz amendment (No. 2 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–39) that sought to grant the VA Secretary improved authorities to hold VA senior executives and employees accountable, protects employees' constitutionally guaranteed due process rights, and protects employees' collective bargaining rights under federal law (by a recorded vote of 194 ayes to 223 noes, Roll No. 165); and **Pages H2125–27, H2132**

Takano substitute amendment (No. 9 printed in part A of H. Rept. 115–39) that sought to provide for the suspension and removal of VA employees for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health and safety in place of the proposed removal process (by a recorded vote of 183 ayes to 232 noes, Roll No. 166). **Pages H2130–32, H2132–33**

H. Res. 198, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1259), (H.R. 1367), and (H.R. 1181) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 229 ayes to 187 noes, Roll No. 163, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 185 nays, Roll No. 162.

**Pages H2094–H2100, H2100–02**

**Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act:** The House passed H.R. 1181, to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the conditions under which certain persons may be treated as adjudicated mentally incompetent for certain purposes, by a yea-and-nay vote of 240 yeas to 175 nays, Roll No. 169.

**Pages H2102–14, H2135–36**

H. Res. 198, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1259), (H.R. 1367), and (H.R. 1181) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 229 ayes to 187 noes, Roll No. 163, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 185 nays, Roll No. 162.

**Pages H2094–H2100, H2100–02**

**Improving the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire and retain physicians and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs:** The House considered H.R. 1367, to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Af-

fairs to hire and retain physicians and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, March 17th.

**Pages H2136–39**

H. Res. 198, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1259), (H.R. 1367), and (H.R. 1181) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 229 ayes to 187 noes, Roll No. 163, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 185 nays, Roll No. 162.

**Pages H2094–H2100, H2100–02**

**Quorum Calls—Votes:** Three yea-and-nay votes and five recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2100–01, H2101–02, H2102, H2132, H2132–33, H2134–35, H2135 and H2135–36. There were no quorum calls.

**Adjournment:** The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

## Committee Meetings

### THE NEXT FARM BILL: AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

*Committee on Agriculture:* Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research held a hearing entitled “The Next Farm Bill: Agricultural Research”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### THE NEXT FARM BILL: FORESTRY INITIATIVES

*Committee on Agriculture:* Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry held a hearing entitled “The Next Farm Bill: Forestry Initiatives”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### INVESTING IN THE FUTURE—EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Committee on Appropriations:* Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies held a hearing entitled “Investing in the Future—Early Childhood Education Programs at the Department of Health and Human Services”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### MEMBERS' DAY

*Committee on Appropriations:* Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held a hearing entitled “Members' Day”. Testimony was heard from Representatives Babin, Blumenauer, Cartwright, Donovan, Engel, Espaillat, Foster, Griffith, Kennedy, McGovern, Schiff, and Yoho.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

*Committee on Appropriations:* Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held an oversight hearing on the Department of Transportation and Department of Housing and Urban Development. Testimony was heard from David A. Montoya, Inspector General, Department of Housing and Urban Development; and Calvin L. Scovel III, Inspector General, Department of Transportation.

### THE CURRENT STATE OF THE U.S. NAVY

*Committee on Armed Services:* Subcommittee on Readiness held a hearing entitled “The Current State of the U.S. Navy”. Testimony was heard from the following U.S. Navy officials: Vice Admiral Philip H. Cullom, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics; Vice Admiral Luke M. McCollum, Chief of Naval Reserve, Navy Reserve Force; and Vice Admiral Joseph P. Mulloy, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Integration of Capabilities and Resources.

### OVERSIGHT REVIEW OF INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS AND PROJECTS READY FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION IN THE NUCLEAR SECURITY ENTERPRISE

*Committee on Armed Services:* Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Oversight Review of Infrastructure Needs and Projects Ready for Immediate Implementation in the Nuclear Security Enterprise”. Testimony was heard from Frank Klotz, Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration; James McConnell, Associate Administrator for Safety, Infrastructure, and Operations, National Nuclear Security Administration; Charlie McMillan, Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory; and Sean Sullivan, Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

### THE EFFECT OF SEQUESTRATION AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS ON ARMY MODERNIZATION AND READINESS

*Committee on Armed Services:* Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a hearing entitled “The Effect of Sequestration and Continuing Resolutions on Army Modernization and Readiness”. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General Joseph Anderson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G-3/5/7; and Lieutenant General John M. Murray, Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G-8.

### MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

*Committee on the Budget:* Full Committee held a markup on reconciliation submissions. The reconciliation

submissions were ordered reported, without amendment.

### HONORING OUR COMMITMENT TO RECOVER AND PROTECT MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN

*Committee on Education and the Workforce:* Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Honoring Our Commitment to Recover and Protect Missing and Exploited Children”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### DISRUPTER SERIES: SMART COMMUNITIES

*Committee on Energy and Commerce:* Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection held a hearing entitled “Disrupter Series: Smart Communities”. Testimony was heard from Brenna Berman, Commissioner and Chief Information Officer, Chicago Department of Innovation and Technology; Kyle Chisek, Director of Bureau Relations, City of Portland, Oregon, Office of Mayor Ted Wheeler; Jennifer Gallagher, Director, Department of Public Service, City of Columbus, Ohio; Alexander Pazuchanics, Policy Advisor, Office of the Mayor, City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and public witnesses.

### REINVESTMENT AND REHABILITATION OF OUR NATION'S SAFE DRINKING WATER DELIVERY SYSTEMS

*Committee on Energy and Commerce:* Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing entitled “Reinvestment and Rehabilitation of Our Nation's Safe Drinking Water Delivery Systems”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### SOUND MONETARY POLICY

*Committee on Financial Services:* Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade held a hearing entitled “Sound Monetary Policy”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM: A COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

*Committee on Financial Services:* Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled “Flood Insurance Reform: A Community Perspective”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### IMMIGRATION BENEFITS VETTING: EXAMINING CRITICAL WEAKNESSES IN USCIS SYSTEMS

*Committee on Homeland Security:* Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency held a hearing entitled “Immigration Benefits Vetting: Examining Critical Weaknesses in USCIS Systems”. Testimony was heard from Lori Scialabba, Acting Director, U.S.

Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security; Carol Harris, Director, Information Technology Acquisition Management Issues, Government Accountability Office; and John Roth, Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security.

#### MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

*Committee on the Judiciary:* Full Committee held a markup on S. 305, the “Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017”. S. 305 was ordered reported, without amendment.

#### BRINGING JUSTICE CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE: EXAMINING IDEAS FOR RESTRUCTURING THE 9TH CIRCUIT

*Committee on the Judiciary:* Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet held a hearing entitled “Bringing Justice Closer to the People: Examining Ideas for Restructuring the 9th Circuit”. Testimony was heard from the following officials from the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Sidney Thomas, Chief Circuit Judge; Carlos Bea, Circuit Judge; Alex Kozinski, Circuit Judge; and public witnesses.

#### COMBATING CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN: ASSESSING THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE

*Committee on the Judiciary:* Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Combating Crimes Against Children: Assessing the Legal Landscape”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

#### IDENTIFYING INNOVATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE IDEAS FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND FOREST SERVICE

*Committee on Natural Resources:* Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing entitled “Identifying Innovative Infrastructure Ideas for the National Park Service and Forest Service”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

#### MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

*Committee on Oversight and Government Reform:* Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 756, the “Postal Service Reform Act of 2017”; and H.R. 760, the “Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2017”. H.R. 756 and H.R. 760 were ordered reported, as amended.

#### CAFETERIA PLANS: A MENU OF NON-OPTIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

*Committee on Small Business:* Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access held a hearing entitled “Cafeteria Plans: A Menu of Non-Options for Small Business Owners”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

#### BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM

*Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:* Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management held a hearing entitled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System”. Testimony was heard from Tom Roberts, Assistant Sheriff, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and public witnesses.

#### Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

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#### COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2017

*(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)*

#### Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

#### House

No hearings are scheduled.

*Next Meeting of the SENATE*

10 a.m., Monday, March 20

*Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*

9 a.m., Friday, March 17

## Senate Chamber

**Program for Monday:** Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

## House Chamber

**Program for Friday:** Complete consideration of H.R. 1367—To improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire and retain physicians and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

## Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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