Whereas General Dynamics Electric Boat, its talented workforce, and its Connecticut-based and nationwide network of suppliers have delivered more than 200 submarines from its current location in Groton, Connecticut, including the first nuclear-powered submarine, the USS NAUTILUS (SSN 571), and nearly half of the nuclear submarines ever built by the United States;

Whereas the Submarine Force Library and Museum, located adjacent to Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Connecticut, is the only submarine museum operated by the United States Navy and today serves as the primary repository for artifacts, documents, and photographs relating to the bold and courageous history of the Submarine Force and highlights as its core exhibit the Historic Ship NAUTILUS (SSN 571) following her retirement from service;

Whereas reflecting the close ties between Connecticut and the Navy that began with the gift of land that established the base, the State of Connecticut has set aside $40,000,000 in funding for critical infrastructure investments to support the mission of the base, including construction of a new dive locker building, expansion of the Submarine Learning Center, and modernization of energy infrastructure;

Whereas, on September 29, 2015, Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy designated October 2015 through October 2016 as Connecticut's Submarine Century, a year-long observance that celebrates 100 years of submarine activity in Connecticut, including the Town of Groton's distinction as the Submarine Capital of the World, to coincide with the centennial anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London and the Naval Submarine School;

Whereas Naval Submarine Base New London still proudly proclaims its motto of ''The First and Finest''; and

Whereas Congressman Higgins' statement before Congress in 1912 that ''Connecticut stands ready, as she always has, to bear her part of the burdens of the national defense'' remains true today: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the longstanding dedication and contribution to the Navy and submarine force by the people of Connecticut, both through the initial deed of gift that established what would become Naval Submarine Base New London and through their ongoing commitment to support the mission of the base and the Navy personnel assigned to it;

(2) honors the submariners who have trained and served at Naval Submarine Base New London throughout its history in support of the Nation's security and undersea superiority;

(3) recognizes the contribution of the industry and workforce of Connecticut in designing, building, and sustaining the Navy's submarine fleet; and

(4) encourages the recognition of Connecticut's Submarine Century by Congress, the Navy, and the American people by honoring the contribution of the people of Connecticut to the defense of the United States and the important role of the submarine force in safeguarding the security of the United States for more than a century.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, February 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator MARKEY.

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

The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I am here to speak in opposition to the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to be the head of the Food and Drug Administration.

I understand that Leader MCCONNELL has asked that cloture be filed on Dr. Califf's nomination. I understand that. I appreciate it. But we need to have a debate in this country on opioids. While I am disappointed that the majority leader is taking this step, I am committed to continuing to work on this issue, and using Dr. Robert Califf's nomination is the means by which we can have a debate here on the floor of the Senate on these issues.

(Mr. MCCONNELL assumed the Chair.)

I am here to speak about a public health epidemic that every year kills more people in the United States than gun violence or motor vehicle accidents. What does this epidemic look like? Well, it looks like this: Last year 30,000 Americans died of an opioid overdose. More than 1,300 of those were from my home State of Massachusetts. In the city of Brockton, MA, last month, in January, in the span of 48 hours, 40 people overdosed on opioids. I will say that again. In Brockton, in 48 hours, 40 people overdosed on opioids.

Between 2000 and 2013, the rate of death from heroin overdoses nearly quadrupled. The United States is less than 5 percent of the world's population, but we consume 80 percent of the world's opioid pain killers. Drug overdoses are increasing the death rates of young adults in the United States to levels not experienced since the AIDS epidemic more than 20 years ago. These skyrocketing death rates make these young adults the first generation since the time of the Vietnam war to experience higher death rates in early adulthood than the generation that preceded it.

Let's compare what we did as a nation when we confronted other deadly epidemics. A bipartisan majority in Congress funded more than $5 billion to respond to Ebola. We dispatched the medical community and public health experts. We built entire facilities to ensure we stopped the spread of the deadly virus. Today, the Obama administration is asking Congress for $1.8 billion in emergency funding to fight the Zika virus. Imagine if we applied the same commitment, the same urgency, the same level of resources to the prescription drug and heroin epidemic.

Yet, despite this raging epidemic, one would think the Food and Drug Administration—the agency responsible for the safety of all prescription drugs in the United States—would welcome every bit of expert advice it can get from doctors and other public health professionals. In fact, the FDA's own rules call for it to establish an independent advisory committee of experts to assist the agency when it considers a question that is controversial or of great public interest, such as whether to allow a new addictive prescription painkiller to be marketed in the United States. Instead, the FDA has put a sign in its window: No Help Wanted. That is what this nomination of Dr. Robert Califf is all about.

The FDA began turning its back on advisory committees in 2013 when an advisory panel to review the powerful opioid painkiller Zohydro voted 11 to 2 against recommending its approval. But the agency approved the drug anyway, overruling the concerns voiced by experienced physicians on the panel. Those experts criticized the agency for ignoring the growing epidemic fueled by OxyContin—the heavily abused prescription painkiller the FDA first approved back in 1995. They warned about the growing dangers of addiction, of abuse and dependence associated with this entire class of opioid painkillers. Justifiably, the FDA was lambasted for its decision to approve Zohydro by public health experts, doctors, Governors, and Members of Congress. But despite those warnings of the real-world dangers of abuse and dependence on these new, supercharged opioid painkillers, the FDA willfully blinded itself to the warning signs.

In 2014, in the wake of the Zohydro decision, the FDA twice skipped the advisory committee process altogether when it approved the new prescription opioids Targiniq and Hysingla.

Then, in August of 2015, the FDA did it again, this time by bypassing an advisory committee on the question of a new use for OxyContin for children aged 11 to 16. This time the FDA even ignored its own rules that specifically call for advisory committee advice when a question of ''pediatric dosing'' is involved.

At this point, it became clear that the FDA was intentionally choosing to forgo an advisory committee in order to avoid another overwhelming vote recommending against approval of a prescription opioid. And why did they do it? Well, because the FDA would then have had to ignore yet another group of experts in order to continue