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112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 502

Celebrating the 150th anniversary of the signing of the First Morrill Act.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 20, 2012

Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. MORAN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. PRYOR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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RESOLUTION

Celebrating the 150th anniversary of the signing of the First Morrill Act.

Whereas July 2, 2012, marks the sesquicentennial of the signing of the Act of July 2, 1862 (commonly known as the ''First Morrill Act''; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), which granted public lands to States and territories to support colleges in promoting education as a means of economic advancement and intellectual pursuit;

Whereas the genesis of the national focus on public higher education in the United States is attributed to the establishment of the land-grant institutions under the First Morrill Act;

Whereas United States Representative Justin Morrill of Strafford, Vermont, inspired by his own lack of a formal education, authored the legislation that would become the First Morrill Act to provide an ''opportunity in every State for a liberal and larger education to larger numbers, not merely to those destined to sedentary professions, but to those needing higher instruction for the world's business, for the industrial pursuits and professions of life'';

Whereas the 37th Congress sought to energize the vital intellectual resources of the United States by enacting legislation to make higher education accessible to the public and thereby apply those intellectual resources to stimulate the national economy, which at the time was based in agriculture and the mechanical arts;

Whereas, in the midst of the Civil War and domestic strife, President Abraham Lincoln supported, encouraged, and signed into law the First Morrill Act, which encompassed ideals that united the North and the South;

Whereas the First Morrill Act opened the doors of colleges and universities to all people with the ability and will to learn, irrespective of heredity, occupation, or economic status;

Whereas the United States leads the world in the quality of its public universities and has provided extraordinary opportunities for higher education to the people of the United States, thus enriching each State and the country as a whole;

Whereas the land-grant institutions and other public research universities of the United States remain committed to providing accessible higher education and supporting

learning, discovery, and engagement in the interest of the country;

Whereas the land-grant institutions and other public research universities of the United States conduct research and education in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and 6 territories of the United States, and disseminate the results of those efforts throughout the country and the world, seeking solutions to economic, social, and physical challenges and enriching the cultural life of the people of the world;

Whereas the land-grant institutions and other public research universities of the United States educate more than 5,000,000 students and award nearly 1,000,000 degrees annually, serving as the single largest source of trained and educated workers in the United States;

Whereas the land-grant institutions and other public research universities of the United States award 200,000 degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (referred to in this preamble as ''STEM'') annually, including more than half of the advanced degrees in STEM awarded annually in the United States;

Whereas the land-grant institutions and other public research universities of the United States perform more than $37,000,000,000 worth of research annually and impart the discoveries from that research locally, regionally, nationally, and globally for the betterment of their communities, the country, and the world;

Whereas the Smithsonian Institute is marking the sesquicentennial of the signing of the First Morrill Act at the annual Folklife Festival on the National Mall during the

summer of 2012, with displays and presentations by many land-grant institutions; and

Whereas many States are celebrating the sesquicentennial of the signing of the First Morrill Act with resolutions and proclamations, and many land-grant institutions are also commemorating the signing of the historic legislation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) celebrates the 150th anniversary of the signing of the First Morrill Act by President Abraham Lincoln;

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe and celebrate the 150th anniversary of the signing of the First Morrill Act;

(3) affirms the continuing importance and vitality of the land-grant institutions, which are the fruitful product of the extraordinary commitment to higher education in the United States that the First Morrill Act represents; and

(4) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit to the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities an enrolled copy of this resolution for appropriate display.

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