AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 18, 1996, to conduct a hearing on the Oversight on the Monetary Policy Report to Congress Pursuant to the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be allowed to meet during the Thursday, July 18, 1996 session of the Senate for the purpose of conducting a hearing on S. 1043, the Natural Disaster Protection and Insurance Act.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 18, 1996, at 2 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent on behalf of the Governmental Affairs Committee to meet on Thursday, July 18, at 10 a.m. for a hearing on Section 1121 of S. 1745, ''Pilot Programs for Defense Employees Converted to Contractor Employees, due to privatization at closed military installations.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 18, 1996 to conduct a markup and hearing beginning at 9:30 a.m. in Room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building on the following: Committee Markup of S. 1264, the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe Infrastructure Development Trust Fund Act of 1995; S. 1834, the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program Act of 1992, Reauthorization; S. 1869, the Indian Health Care Improvement Technical Corrections Act of 1996; and S. , the Indian Child Welfare Act Amendments of 1996, to be followed immediately by a hearing on H.R. 2464, Utah School and Land Improvement Act, Amendment, and S. 1893, the Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians Claims Settlement Act. The markup/hearing will be held in Room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 18, 1996, at 10 a.m. to hold a hearing on White House Access to FBI Background Summaries.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Labor and Human Resources Subcommittee on Children and Families be authorized to meet for a hearing on Youth Violence during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 18, 1996, at 1:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PARKS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND RECREATION

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 18, 1996, for purposes of conducting a subcommittee hearing which is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. The purpose of this hearing is to consider S. 988, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to transfer administrative jurisdiction over certain land to the Secretary of the Army to facilitate construction of a jetty and sand transfer system; and S. 1805, a bill to provide for the management of Voyageurs National Park.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

GAMBLING STUDY COMMISSION

● Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate approved S. 704, a bill to create a National Gambling Impact Study Commission. I strongly support this bill.

Legalized gambling of all kinds, casino gambling as well as State lotteries has often been touched as a way for States and localities to make money for various good causes. In my own State of North Carolina, support for a State lottery has always been offered as a means of supplementing the State education budget.

The North Carolina General Assembly has so far defeated several attempts to establish a State lottery.

Lotteries in particular, are held up as a means of filling State coffers, a way of financing Government projects, not as a boon to individual citizens. Mr. President, I for one am somewhat skeptical of any project which seeks to grow Government, for whatever purpose. Government—at the State, local, and Federal level—has been growing by leaps and bounds in recent years, reaching into areas of our lives it was never intended for. The ever-increasing burden of taxes and regulation has placed tremendous strain on families and small businesses. It seems to me we need to concentrate on restraining government, not expanding it.

It is becoming increasingly evident that gambling may not be the economic boon it is held out to be. The North Carolina Department of Commerce commissioned a study of the potential economic and social impact of gambling in western North Carolina. The study's conclusions were dramatic: Casino gambling would likely create more problems than it solved for western North Carolina. Among them, congested roads, rising crime rates and the crowding out of traditional tourist business and the families who patronize them.

In addition, the human toll of gambling is just beginning to be assessed adequately. Compulsive gambling can lead to alcoholism, bankruptcy, and can lead to the destruction of individuals and families.

If legalized gambling is the great economic boon its supporters make it out to be, they should not fear the results of this study. If it is not, it deserves a closer look.●

FISCAL YEAR 1997 LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss briefly the fiscal year 1997 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act. This afternoon, the Committee on Appropriations reported the bill unanimously, and I expect it to reach the floor prior to the August recess.

Mr. President, I would like to commend the chairman, Senator MACK, for putting together a solid bill. His leadership on legislative branch issues has been terrific, and I have been excited to work with him on a bipartisan basis to manage the operations of Congress in a responsive—and responsible—way. He was bold last year, and it paid off. We have been able to reduce our spending by over $200 million—about 10 percent—in the past year.

This year, we continue the effort to streamline by reducing our internal budget by nearly $20 million in fiscal year 1997. We have taken testimony from legislative branch agencies affirming that they, under the funding levels in the bill, can maintain a high level of quality services to Members. Senators in turn should be able to provide responsive, high quality service to their constituents.

I would like to highlight one provision in the bill for Members of the Senate. With the enthusiastic support of Chairman MACK, I have included language that will enable the Sergeant at Arms to transfer excess or surplus computer equipment to schools.

In the past, the Senate sold its computers to employees at bargain prices. Fortunately, this practice has been terminated, and I commend the Sergeant at Arms for doing so. For the past couple years, our computers have simply been transferred to GSA for disposal through the normal surplus process.

I think Senators should be aware that the Senate disposes of over 1,500

computers every year. Over the past 3 years, nearly 5,000 computers have been let go. For the most part, these are IBM-compatible, 386, 16-megahertz machines. They are a generation old, but they could be very useful to schools, especially in rural areas, that may not have a big budget to buy fancy new computers.

I am fortunate to represent Washington State, which is very aggressive in trying to put computers in the classroom. Our companies have been generous in donating software and hardware, and people are excited about giving kids skills that will help them get an edge in life.

But not every school district is moving aggressively on computers. Many don't even know how to go about it, and cannot afford it. I am certain that every Senator is aware of how fast technology is evolving in our economy. I really believe that, in the future, a child's ability to compete in the work force will be measured in part by his or her familiarity with computers. In my view, the earlier they start, the better.

The Senate will debate the broad role of Government in education technology, and I look forward to having that debate. For now there is a small, and I think constructive, role for the Senate to play. We can use the bully pulpit. We can lead by example. We can help children by giving our computers to schools that want or need them. By doing this, we can help some kids, and we can show the country we think bringing technology to the classroom is a high priority.

Here is how it will work: the Sergeant at Arms will make sure that any excess or surplus computers are in good working order. Then he will make them available to interested schools at the lowest possible cost to both the Senate and the schools. Most likely, he will transfer these computers to the General Services Administration. GSA, in turn, will provide information to schools through its regional offices about available inventory. The equipment eligible for transfer will include computers, keyboards, monitors, printers, modems, and other peripheral hardware as described in the bill.

I envision schools being able to obtain this equipment on a first-come, first-served basis, for the cost of shipping and handling from GSA regional offices. The language provides the Sergeant at Arms with flexibility to determine the best way to complete the transfers.

Earlier this year, President Clinton issued an executive order stating that the GSA should document surplus computers in Federal agencies. And in May, I offered a sense-of-the-Senate resolution expressing the view that the Senate should also inventory its computers and create a process of getting Government computers into schools and other educational organizations. The language in the bill before us sets out a specific process so the Senate can play a role in this important effort.

Mr. President, I think this is a useful change in policy. I am grateful the committee has acted today in a manner consistent with my amendment as adopted last May. And, I welcome the support of Senator LEAHY, who has taken an active and enthusiastic interest in this issue. He has been a big help. Again, I appreciate the help of Chairman MACK on this, and I look forward to working with him and the Sergeant at Arms to make this work.●

● Mr. LEAHY. I rise in strong support of Senator MURRAY's language in the legislative appropriations bill. This language would require the Senate to streamline the transfer of excess and surplus computer equipment to our Nation's classrooms. It would require the Senate to follow the same guidelines that the Federal agencies must follow in accordance with the President's Federal Executive Order.

President Clinton has set forth an ambitious goal to bring computers to every school in America. Congress should lead the way. Thanks to Senator MURRAY's efforts, the Senate will be participating in this initiative.

Recently, I wrote several letters to the Sergeant at Arms to find out what our official Senate policy is concerning disposal of excess surplus computer equipment. I was surprised to hear that the Senate does not have an official policy. In the past the Senate has sold excess computer equipment or transferred it over to GSA for later sale. Since 1993, the Senate disposed of 4,400 pieces of computer equipment. Of that total 2,600 have been sold, 1,400 have been transferred to GSA, and 400 have been retained for parts. These computers would have been a wonderful resource to our Nation's schools.

I encourage my colleagues to join our efforts in creating a partnership with our nation's schools and bring computers to every classroom in America so that all students may have the benefits of our new educational technology.●

CBO ESTIMATE ON S. 1730, THE OIL SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE IMPROVEMENT ACT

● Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD supplemental budgetary estimates on Calendar Number 466, S. 1730, the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Improvement Act of 1996. Section 403 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Act requires that a statement of the cost of a reported bill be included in the report. When the Committee on Environment and Public Works filed the report to S. 1730 on June 26, 1996, we included only a portion of the estimated impact of the bill. CBO had not completed the estimated impact at the time of filing. I am pleased to report that the cost statements to be included in today's RECORD complete the CBO estimate for S. 1730.

The estimates follow:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 17, 1996.

Hon. JOHN H. CHAFEE,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed mandate cost statements for S. 1730, the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Improvement Act, as reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on June 26, 1996. CBO transmitted its estimate of the impact of S. 1730 on the federal budget on June 26, 1996.

Enactment of S. 1730 would impose both intergovernmental and private-sector mandates as defined by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–4). The costs of the mandates would not exceed the respective $50 million and $100 million annual thresholds.

If you wish further details on these estimates, we will be pleased to provide them.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. BLUM
(For June E. O'Neill).

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATED COST OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL MANDATES, JULY 17, 1996

1. Bill number: S. 1730.

2. Bill title: The Oil Spill Prevention and Response Improvement Act.

3. Bill status: As reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on June 26, 1996.

4. Bill purpose: The bill would amend federal law dealing with oil pollution by: imposing new operational, structural, and safety requirements on tanker and towing vessels; allowing more funds to be spent out of the emergency fund of the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund; and limiting the liability of certain tanker vessels that have double hulls and are responsible for oil spills.

5. Intergovernmental mandates contained in bill:

Vessel Requirements. The bill would require the Secretary of Transportation to incorporate additional measures in three sets of rules being proposed by the Coast Guard. The rules deal with navigational equipment for towing vessels and operational and structural requirements for tanker vessels that have a single hull and weigh more than 5,000 gross tons. These requirements are intergovernmental mandates because a small fraction of these vessels, less than 2 percent, are owned by state, local, and tribal governments.

Under-Keel Clearance. S.1730 would preempt the authority of captains of ports to establish minimum under-keel clearances in their ports by requiring the Secretary of Transportation to establish minimum under-keel clearances for each port. This preemption constitutes an intergovernmental mandate because ports are owned by state and local governments or their subsidiaries. However, this preemption might occur under current law. The Coast Guard is about to issue a final rule regarding structural and operational measures for tanker vessels that have a single hull and weigh more than 5,000 gross tons. The Coast Guard's proposed rule would prohibit vessels with an under-keel clearance of less than 0.5 meters from entering or exiting a port without the approval of the captain of the port.

6. Estimated direct costs of mandates to State, local, and tribal governments:

(a) Is the $50 Million Threshold Exceeded? No.

(b) Total Direct Costs of Mandates: The new requirements on tanker and towing vessels owned by state, local, or tribal governments would have a negligible effect on their