

denying the request, a determination was made that the event did not comply with a requirement that all events be relevant to the mission of the Smithsonian and further that the Boy Scouts violated standards of non-discrimination with regards to religion. I have reviewed this determination and reversed it. Scouting is an important American institution that helps in educating young men and women about the outdoors with special emphasis on protection of the environment, a mission relevant to and shared by the National Zoo.

Further, as I mentioned in our meeting, I believe that our Special Events Policy clearly allows the sponsorship of events by all groups, including religious groups, that are consistent with the mission and tradition of the Smithsonian. This event certainly complied with that standard and its denial on that ground was in error.

The Smithsonian and the Scouts have over the years jointly sponsored many events too numerous to mention here. I apologize for this unfortunate mistake and look forward to continuing our long standing and mutually productive relationship with the Boy and Girl Scouts of America.

Sincerely,

I. MICHAEL HEYMAN,  
*Secretary.*

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. McCathran, one of his secretaries.

##### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on September 19, 1997 he had presented to the President of the United States, the following enrolled bill:

S. 910. An act to authorize appropriations for carrying out the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act 1997 for fiscal years 1998 and 1999, and for other purposes.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. HOLLINGS, and Mr. ROBB):

S. 1199. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding income protection allowances for certain students; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

By Mr. CAMPBELL:

S. 1200. A bill to provide that countries receiving foreign assistance be conducive to United States business; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MURKOWSKI:

S. Con. Res. 53. A concurrent resolution commending Dr. Jason C. Hu, Representative of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. HOLLINGS, and Mr. ROBB):

S. 1199. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding income protection allowances for certain students; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

##### THE WORKING STUDENTS' INCOME PROTECTION ACT

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today, I am introducing the Working Students' Income Protection Act, a bill to increase the number of working students who are eligible for Federal Pell grants. I am pleased to have Senator SNOWE, Senator HOLLINGS, and Senator ROBB as cosponsors.

This bill will correct a problem created by the 1992 amendments to the Higher Education Act that unfairly denies aid to hundreds of thousands of deserving students. Let me explain the problem.

The formula used to determine the eligibility for Federal financial aid includes an income protection allowance, known as an IPA, which enables working students to retain a portion of their earnings to pay their basic living expenses. This allowance is not counted in determining eligibility for student aid. A portion of earnings above the IPA is used to calculate the contributions students can make to their education expenses. As students' incomes rise above the IPA, their eligibility for Federal student aid, especially for Pell grants, declines.

The 1992 amendments to the Higher Education Act dramatically and drastically lowered the income protection allowances. For single students, financially independent of their families, the IPA was reduced from \$6,400 to \$3,000. The IPA for working dependent students was lowered from \$4,250 to \$1,750. As a result, the amount a typical independent student can receive under the Pell Grant Program begins to decline when his or her income exceeds \$3,000, and the student becomes completely ineligible at an income level of \$10,000.

Because of this decrease in IPA's, the number of independent students receiving Pell grants declined from over a million in 1992 to about 750,000 in 1993—a loss of over a quarter of a million grants to independent working students.

This change has three unfortunate consequences:

First, many nontraditional students are not able to pursue post-secondary education. Typically these are older individuals with jobs who are attempting to improve their skills. Because the IPA is not enough to meet living expenses, independent students find themselves unable to pay tuition and meet their basic living expenses. They are forced to defer or even forgo higher education.

Second, the current law creates a disincentive to work. If a student knows that earning more than \$3,000 will reduce the size of his or her Pell grant award, the student can easily conclude that there is no reason to try to earn more than \$3,000 a year.

Third, it penalizes students who are trying to pay for their education through work rather than by borrowing. This is particularly unfair to the almost 75 percent of dependent undergraduates who are working while studying to pay college expenses. When earnings result in lower grants, these students must turn to larger loans to finance their education.

The Working Students' Income Protection Act will make great strides toward correcting these problems. It will allow single independent students to retain \$6,000 of their earnings for basic living expenses, married working independent students to retain \$9,000, and working dependent students to retain \$4,200 before they begin to lose their Pell grants. This will not only make higher education more affordable for these students, it will also encourage and reward work, a worthwhile objective.

Moreover, these changes will correct an injustice by providing benefits to a segment of the student population that has been largely overlooked by the changes in student aid recently passed or currently under consideration. Increasing Pell grants by \$300, for example, a move that I strongly support, which was included in the budget agreement, will not help the working students who are ineligible for these grants because of the inadequate level of the current IPA. Similarly, the tuition tax credit will not help them because they are not earning enough to pay taxes. By increasing the IPA, these students will be able to share in the government assistance available to those seeking to pursue a higher education.

I would like to give you some examples from the University of Southern Maine, a State-supported institution serving 10,000 students. These students have an average age of just under 30 years. They are largely independent students and they are balancing jobs, school, and often family responsibilities. When these students have incomes above the IPA, which they must have to survive, they are not eligible for Pell grants under the current law. Let me describe two of these students to you.

Both are single students. The first is a 25-year-old junior recreation therapy