

EC-5646. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Passaic River, NJ" (Docket 01-97-020) received on June 18, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5647. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, FL" (Docket 07-98-025) received on June 18, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5648. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Merger of the Uniform States Waterway Marking System with the United States Aids to Navigation" (Docket 97-018) received on June 18, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5649. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, FL" (Docket 07-98-029) received on June 18, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5650. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Local Regulations: EZ Challenge Speed Boat Race, Ohio River, Beech Bottom, West Virginia" (Docket 08-98-037) received on June 18, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5651. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone: Great Catskills Triathlon, Hudson River, Kingston, New York" (Docket 01-98-040) received on June 18, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5652. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Track Safety Standards" (Docket RST-90-1) received on June 18, 1998; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HELMS, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments:

S. 1758. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to facilitate protection of tropical forests through debt reduction with developing countries with tropical forests (Rept. No. 105-219).

#### 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 Mr. TORRICELLI:

S. 2199. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to establish a Marine Mammal Rescue Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. D'AMATO:

S. 2200. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make the exclusion for

amounts received under group legal services plans permanent; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TORRICELLI (for himself, Mr. GORTON, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. MACK, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. THURMOND, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. KOHL, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, and Mr. SHELBY):

S. 2201. A bill to delay the effective date of the final rule promulgated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. TORRICELLI:

S. 2199. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to establish a Marine Mammal Rescue Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

THE MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE FUND OF 1998

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleague from New Jersey, Senator Lautenberg, to introduce the "Marine Mammal Rescue Fund of 1998." This legislation will amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 by establishing a grant program that Marine Mammal Stranding Centers and Networks can use to support the important work they do in responding to marine mammal strandings and mortality events.

Since the enactment of the Marine Mammal Protection Act in 1972, 47 facilities nationally have been authorized to handle the rehabilitation of stranded marine mammals and over 400 individuals and facilities across the country are part of an authorized National Stranding Network that responds to strandings and deaths.

Mr. President, these facilities and individuals provide our country with a variety of critical services, including rescue, housing, care, rehabilitation, transport, and tracking of marine mammals and sea turtles, as well as assistance in investigating mortality events, tissue sampling, and removal of carcasses. They also work very closely with the National Marine Fisheries Service, a variety of environmental groups, and with state and local officials in rescuing, tracking and protecting marine mammals and sea turtles on the Endangered Species List. Yet they rely primarily on private donations, fundraisers, and foundation grants for their operating budgets. They receive no federal assistance, and a very few of them get some financial assistance from their states.

As an example, Mr. President, the Marine Mammal Stranding Center located in Brigantine in my home state of New Jersey was formed in 1978. To date, it has responded to over 1,500 calls for stranded whales, dolphins, seals and sea turtles that have washed ashore on New Jersey's beaches. It has also been called on to assist in

strandings as far away as Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Yet, their operating budget for the past year was just under \$300,000, with less than 6 percent (\$17,000) coming from the state. Although the Stranding Center in Brigantine has never turned down a request for assistance with a stranding, trying to maintain that level of responsiveness and service becomes increasingly more difficult each year.

Virtually all the money raised by the Center, Mr. President, goes to pay for the feeding, care, and transportation of rescued marine mammals, rehabilitation (including medical care), insurance, day-to-day operation of the Center, and staff payroll. Too many times the staff are called upon to pay out-of-pocket expenses in travel, subsistence, and quarters while responding to strandings or mortality events.

Mr. President, this should not happen. These people are performing a great service to Americans across the country, and they are being asked to pay their own way as well. And when responding to mortality events, Mr. President, they are performing work that protects public health and helps assess the potential danger to human life and to other marine mammals.

I feel very strongly that we should be providing some support to the people who are doing this work. To that end, Mr. President, the legislation I am introducing would create the Marine Mammal Rescue Fund under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. It would authorize funding at \$5,000,000.00, annually, over the next five years, for grants to Marine Mammal Stranding Centers and Stranding Network Members authorized by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Grants would not exceed \$100,000.00 per year, and would require a 25 percent non-federal funding matching requirement.

I am proud to offer this legislation on behalf of the Stranding Centers across the country, and look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure its passage. I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2199

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1371 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 408 and 409 as sections 409 and 410, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 407 the following:

#### "SEC. 408. MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE GRANT PROGRAM.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"(2) CHIEF.—The term 'Chief' means the Chief of the Office.