

federal employees will result in high quality hearing care and reduce the cost of services."

We are not talking about mandating additional benefits. In addition, I believe it would be advisable to add provider non-discrimination assurances to FEHBP plans.

Of course, these matters involve a number of complicated issues, and to this point, the Governmental Affairs Committee has been unable to hold hearings to consider those issues. I would appreciate hearing Senator COCHRAN's and Senator THOMPSON's sense of what can be done, in this Congress or the next, to ensure that those issues are fully considered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, as noted by the Senator from Iowa, I supported legislation in the last Congress to address this problem, and I remain committed to ensuring that FEHBP beneficiaries receive quality, cost-effective, hearing care coverage.

As he also noted, there are a number of medical, insurance and public policy issues involved. All these issues need to be considered, as well as the concerns of all members of the hearing health care team, including the Audiologists, the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery and the International Hearing Society.

Whether in this Congress, or the next, I am committed to doing what is necessary to enable this body to understand these issues, and to determine the best way to address them, for the benefit of children and others, who need hearing health services.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I appreciate Senator COCHRAN's comments. I am confident my colleagues will agree that any changes to the FEHBP need to be considered carefully through the legislative process in order to ensure the integrity of the program, preservation of choice for enrollees, and competition among plans. Toward that end, I look forward to Senator DASCHLE and Senator HARKIN joining Senator COCHRAN and me in supporting passage of H.R. 1836.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleagues for this colloquy.

Mr. SHELBY. I ask unanimous consent that the committee amendment be agreed to, the bill be considered read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statement relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The committee amendment was agreed to.

The bill (H.R. 1836), as amended, was considered read the third time and passed.

RICHARD C. LEE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House of Representatives

on the bill (S. 1355) to designate the United States courthouse located at 141 Church Street in New Haven, Connecticut, as the "Richard C. Lee United States Courthouse."

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1355) entitled "An Act to designate the United States courthouse located in New Haven, Connecticut, as the "Richard C. Lee United States Courthouse", do pass with the following amendments:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The United States courthouse located at 141 Church Street in New Haven, Connecticut, shall be known and designated as the "Richard C. Lee United States Courthouse".

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Richard C. Lee United States Courthouse".

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate concur in the amendments to the House.

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

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 1998

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 593, S. 2273.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2273) to increase, effective as of December 1, 1998, the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities, and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment; as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted are shown in italic.)

S. 2273

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 1998".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN COMPENSATION RATES AND LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, as provided in paragraph (2), increase, effective December 1, 1998, the rates of and limitations on Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation.

(2) The Secretary shall increase each of the rates and limitations in sections 1114, 1115(1),

1162, 1311, 1313, and 1314 of title 38, United States Code, that were increased by the amendments made by the Veterans' Compensation Rate Amendments of 1997 (Public Law 105-98; 111 Stat. 2155). This increase shall be made in such rates and limitations as in effect on November 30, 1998, and shall be by the same percentage that benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 1998, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(3) In the computation of increased dollar amounts pursuant to paragraph (2), any amount which as so computed is not an even multiple of \$1 shall be rounded to the next lower whole dollar amount.

(b) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons within the purview of section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who are not in receipt of compensation payable pursuant to chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT.—At the same time as the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year [1998] 1999, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register the rates and limitations referred to in subsection (a)(2) as increased under this section.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee amendment be agreed to, the bill be considered read a third time, and the Veterans' Affairs Committee then be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4110, and that the Senate then proceed to its consideration. I further ask unanimous consent that all after the enacting clause be stricken and the text of S. 2273, as amended, be inserted in lieu thereof, the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statement relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

I finally ask that S. 2273 be placed back on the calendar.

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

The bill (H.R. 4110), as amended, was read for a third time and passed.

YEAR 2000 READINESS AND SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS RESTRUCTURING AND REFORM ACT OF 1998

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 645, H.R. 3412.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3412) to amend and make technical corrections in title III of the Small Business Investment Act.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Small Business, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following: