

Textron Canada (BHTC) Model 206L-4 Helicopters; Request for Comments; Docket No. 98-SW-66 (6-17/6-17)" (RIN2120-AA64) (1999-0247), received June 17, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3820. A communication from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives: Eurocopter France Model AS 32C, L, L1, and L2 Helicopters; Request for Comments; Docket No. 99-SW-17 (6-17/6-17)" (RIN2120-AA64) (1999-0248), received June 17, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3821. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Closure of the Gulf of Alaska to Directed Fishing for Pollock in Statistical Area 610," received June 16, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3822. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Closure of Statistical Area 620, Gulf of Alaska, to Directed Fishing for Pollock," received June 16, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3823. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Closure to Directed Fishing for Pacific Cod by Vessels Catching Pacific Cod for Processing by the Offshore Component in the Western Regulatory Area in the Gulf of Alaska," received June 16, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3824. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands," received June 16, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3825. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulations Regarding the Taking of Marine Mammals Incidental to Power Plant Operations" (RIN0648-AK00), received June 16, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3826. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States-Final Rule to Implement Framework Adjustment 29 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan and Framework Adjustment 11 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan" (RIN0648-AM24), received June 16, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. BURNS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. INOUE):

S. 1242. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make permanent the visa waiver program for certain visitors to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FRIST:

S. 1243. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the prostate cancer preventive health program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THOMPSON (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. KERREY, and Mr. BREAU):

S. 1244. A bill to establish a 3-year pilot project for the General Accounting Office to report to Congress on economically significant rules of Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. GREGG, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. MACK, Mr. DODD, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. ROBB, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. GORTON, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. THURMOND:

S. Res. 125. A resolution encouraging and promoting greater involvement of fathers in their children's lives and designating June 20, 1999, as "National Father's Return Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. Con. Res. 41. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the treatment of religious minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and particularly the recent arrests of members of that country's Jewish community; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. BURNS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. INOUE):

S. 1242. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make permanent the visa waiver program for certain visitors to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make permanent the visa waiver program for certain visitors to the United States.

The visa waiver program has been an unprecedented success in reducing barriers to travel and tourism to and from the United States. The program allows a citizen of a participating country to forego visa application at a U.S. consulate abroad, and allows them to travel to the U.S. for business or pleasure

and make application for entry directly to the INS at a port of entry. To use this privilege, an applicant agrees to waive rights to challenge the decision of the INS inspector, and agrees to depart the U.S. within 90 days. More than 10 million visitors used the visa waiver program in fiscal year 1995. This represents 76 percent of the total number of non-immigrant entries by citizens of visa waiver countries. Visitors entering under the visa waiver program accounted for just under 50 percent of all temporary business and tourist entries.

In the ten years since the implementation of the visa waiver program, international visitors have become accustomed to the program's requirements, and use it routinely. The program has effectively served the purpose for which it was designed, to facilitate the efficient flow of low-risk foreign tourists and business travelers. Simultaneously, the program has afforded Department of State consular officers more time to focus efforts on individuals who visit the U.S. for other purposes, such as employment or study, or those who intend to remain in the U.S. for extended periods. Further, it has allowed the Department of State to drastically reduce its consular staff at low-risk locations, and strengthen efforts in high risk locations. Yet, all this pales in comparison to the real benefit of the visa waiver program, that of expanded foreign travel and tourism to the U.S. Put simply, the U.S. needs this program to remain competitive with the many other nations around the globe who are competing for the finite pool of business travelers and tourists.

In 1996, the World Tourism Organization reported that the United States was the second most popular international tourist destination and the number one location for tourism expenditures. Of the 44.8 million arrivals that year, 12.4 million entered under the visa waiver program. International tourism in the U.S. is a \$65 billion enterprise which boosts the economies of many local communities.

In my home state of Hawaii, tourism is an \$11 billion industry which generates about one-quarter of the state's tax revenue and one-third of its jobs. It is estimated that 80 percent of all international visitors arriving at Honolulu International Airport arrive under the visa waiver program. We know that the visa waiver program has been very successful because it provides a big boost for Japanese visitors to travel to Hawaii. Our long-term goal for a permanent visa waiver program would be to expand participation of the program in the Asia-Pacific region. Currently, most of the 26 eligible countries are in Europe. Only four of these countries are in the Asia-Pacific region—Australia, Japan, Brunei, and New Zealand. We hope that South Korea and China will be future participants in an expanded program.

While the pilot program has been extended periodically since its inception,