and cost of home heating oil in the Northeast; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, the recent severe weather in the Northeast part of the country has caused a large increase in the use of home heating oil; and

Whereas, such increase has created a burden on the homeowners, tenants and business people who rely on such oil by adversely affecting their budgets; and

Whereas, such increased costs have been exacerbated by the large increase in the cost of such oil; and

Whereas, such increases have raised the specter of petroleum companies acting in combination to increase profits, fix prices and create artificial shortages: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Massachusetts Senate hereby urges the Congress of the United States and the Governor of the Commonwealth to conduct an investigation and study of the current shortage of home heating oil in the Northeast part of the country and its attendant cost to determine whether such shortage and cost are real and the result of ordinary market forces or whether they are the result of price fixing and artificial manipulation; and urges the Congress to request the Justice Department of the United States to participate in such investigation and study; and also urges the Governor of the Commonwealth to direct the Department of Energy Resources to participate in such investigation and study in order to develop policies to prevent such shortages and cost increases in the future in the Commonwealth; and be it further

Resolved, That in the event that such investigation and study shows that such increase in cost is due to a legitimate shortage of oil in the marketplace, thereafter the Congress shall take action to release into the marketplace an amount of oil from the national reserves that is sufficient to ameliorate the current cost; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted forthwith by the Clerk of the Senate to the Governor of the Commonwealth, to the Presiding Officer of each branch of Congress and to the Members thereof from the Commonwealth.

POM–408. A concurrent resolution adopted by the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts relative to the shortage and cost of home heating oil in the Northeast; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, the recent severe weather in the Northeast part of the country has caused a large increase in the use of home heating oil; and

Whereas, such increase has created a burden on the homeowners, tenants and business people who rely on such oil by adversely affecting their budgets; and

Whereas, such increased costs have been exacerbated by the large increase in the cost of such oil; and

Whereas, such increases have raised the specter of petroleum companies acting in combination to increase profits, fix prices and create artificial shortages; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Massachusetts General Court hereby urges the Congress of the United States to commence an investigation and study of the current shortage of home heating oil in the Northeast part of the country and its attendant cost to determine whether such shortage and cost are real and the result of ordinary market forces or whether they are the result of price fixing and artificial manipulation; and also urges the Congress to request the Justice Department of the United States to participate in such investigation and study; and be it further

Resolved, That in the event that such investigation and study shows that such increase in cost is due to a legitimate shortage of oil in the marketplace, thereafter the Congress shall take action to release into the marketplace an amount of oil from the national reserves that is sufficient to ameliorate the current cost; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded by the Clerk of the House of Representatives to the Presiding Officer of each branch of Congress and to Members thereof from the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ASHCROFT (for himself, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 2074. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the social security earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROBB (for himself, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2075. A bill to expand Federal employee commuting options and to reduce the traffic congestion resulting from current Federal employee commuting patterns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. STEVENS):

S. 2076. A bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, in recognition of his accomplishments as a priest, a chaplain, and a humanitarian; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. COVERDELL):

S. 2077. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow nonitemizers a deduction for a portion of their charitable contributions; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BUNNING (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. 2078. A bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Muhammad Ali in recognition of his outstanding athletic accomplishments and enduring contributions to humanity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BURNS:

S. 2079. A bill to facilitate the timely resolution of back-logged civil rights discrimination cases of the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2080. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to require that food that contains a genetically engineered material, or that is produced with a genetically engineered material, must be labeled accordingly, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 2081. A bill entitled ''Religious Liberty Protection Act of 2000''; read the first time.

By Mr. DEWINE (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. ROBB):

S. 2082. A bill to establish a program to award grants to improve and maintain sites honoring Presidents of the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROBB (for himself, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. L. CHAFEE, Mr. DODD, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2083. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a uniform dollar limitation for all types of transportation fringe benefits excludable from gross income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 2084. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the amount of the charitable deduction allowable for contributions of food inventory, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. GREGG, and Mr. BREAUX):

S. 2085. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for older Americans to remain in the workforce beyond the age of eligibility for full social security benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

S. 2086. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for older Americans to remain in the workforce beyond the age of eligibility for full social security benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ASHCROFT (for himself, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 2074. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the social security earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age; to the Committee on Finance.

SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS TEST ELIMINATION ACT OF 2000

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today in favor of repealing the Social Security earnings test, the onerous tax burden the United States government places on seniors who wish to continue working. In order to ease this unfair burden, I am hereby introducing the Social Security Earnings Test Elimination Act of 2000.

The earnings test limits the amount a person older than 65 and younger than 70 can earn without having his or her Social Security benefits reduced. Currently, benefits are reduced by $1 for each $3 of earnings over $17,000. This test provides a disincentive for seniors to work by reducing seniors' Social Security benefits according to the amount of income they earn.

It is time to repeal that limit. Right now, Social Security is scheduled to go bankrupt in 2034. One of the reasons for the looming bankruptcy of Social Security is the declining ratio of workers