

local governments, to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act of 1978, and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) to establish a fund to meet the outdoor conservation and recreation needs of the American people, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 106-413).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. MILLER, Mr. DODD, Mr. FRIST, Mr. HATCH, Mr. LOTT, Mr. L. CHAFEE, Mr. MACK, Mr. HELMS, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. KYL, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. GRAMS, and Mr. BUNNING):

S. 3045. A bill to improve the quality, timeliness, and credibility of forensic science services for criminal justice purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. KYL, and Mr. ASHCROFT):

S. 3046. A bill to amend title II of the United States Code, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. BIDEN:

S. 3047. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the Lifetime Learning credit and provide an optional deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. WELLSTONE, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 3048. A bill to institute a moratorium on the imposition of the death penalty at the Federal level until a Commission on the Federal Death Penalty studies its use and policies ensuring justice, fairness, and due process are implemented; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FITZGERALD (for himself, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. ASHCROFT, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 3049. A bill to increase the maximum amount of marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments that an agricultural producer may receive during the 2000 crop year; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. DOMENICI):

S. 3050. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make improvements to the prospective payment system for skilled nursing facility services; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 3051. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide greater access to affordable pharmaceuticals; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SMITH of Oregon (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3052. A bill to designate wilderness areas and a cooperative management and protec-

tion area in the vicinity of Steens Mountain in Harney County, Oregon, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. THOMAS:

S. 3053. A bill to prohibit commercial air tour operations over national parks within the geographical area of the greater Yellowstone ecosystem; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. KERREY, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 3054. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to reauthorize the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out pilot projects to increase the number of children participating in the summer food service program for children; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mr. HUTCHINSON):

S. 3055. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to revise the payments for certain physician pathology services under the medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. MILLER, Mr. DODD, Mr. FRIST, Mr. HATCH, Mr. LOTT, Mr. L. CHAFEE, Mr. MACK, Mr. HELMS, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. KYL, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. BUNNING, and Mr. GRAMS):

S. 3045. A bill to improve the quality, timeliness, and credibility of forensic science services for criminal justice purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PAUL COVERDELL NATIONAL FORENSIC SCIENCES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2000

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, on June 9, 1999, the late Senator Paul Coverdell introduced legislation aimed at addressing one of the most pressing problems facing law enforcement today: the critical backlogs in our state crime labs. Senator Coverdell's National Forensic Sciences Improvement Act of 1999 (S. 1196) attracted broad bipartisan support in Congress, as well as the enforcement of national law enforcement groups. Unfortunately, before Senator Coverdell's bill could move through Congress, he passed away.

As a fitting, substantive tribute to Senator Coverdell, I am today introducing the Paul Coverdell National Forensic Sciences Improvement Act of 2000 to eliminate the crisis in forensics labs across the country. This was an issue he cared a great deal about, and I am honored to have the opportunity to carry on his efforts to address this problem.

The crisis in our forensics labs is acute. According to a report issued in

February by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, as of December 1997, 69 percent of state crime labs reported DNA backlogs in 6,800 cases and 287,000 convicted offender samples. The backlogs are having a crippling effect on the fair and speedy administration of justice.

For example, the Seattle Times reported on April 23 of this year that police are being forced to pay private labs to do critical forensics work so that their active investigations do not have to wait for tests to be completed. "As Spokane authorities closed in on a suspected serial killer, they were eager to nail enough evidence to make their case stick. So they skipped over the backlogged Washington State Patrol crime lab and shipped some evidence to a private laboratory, paying a premium for quicker results. [A] chronic backlog at the State Patrol's seven crime labs, which analyze criminal evidence from police throughout Washington state, has grown so acute that Spokane investigators feared their manhunt would be stalled."

As a former prosecutor, I know how dependent the criminal justice system is on fast, accurate, dependable forensics testing. With backlogs in the labs, district attorneys are forced to wait months and years to pursue cases. This is not simply a matter of expediting convictions of the guilty. Suspects are held in jail for months before trial, waiting for the forensic evidence to be completed. Thus, potentially innocent persons stay in jail, potentially guilty persons stay out of jail, and victims of crime do not receive closure.

As an Alabama newspaper, the Decatur Daily, reported on November 28, 1999, "[The] backlog of cases is so bad that final autopsy results and other forensic testing sometimes take up to a year to complete. It's a frustrating wait for police, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges and even suspects. It means delayed justice for the families of crime victims." Justice delayed is justice denied for prosecutors, defendants, judges, police, and, most importantly, for victims. This is unacceptable.

Given the tremendous amount of work to be done by crime labs, scientists and technicians must sacrifice accuracy, reliability, or time in order to complete their work. Sacrificing accuracy or reliability would destroy the justice system, so it is time that is sacrificed. But with the tremendous pressures to complete lab work, it is perhaps inevitable that there will be problems other than delays. Everyone from police to detectives to evidence technicians to lab technicians to forensic scientists to prosecutors must be well-trained in the preservation, collection, and preparation of forensic evidence.

The JonBenet Ramsey case is perhaps the most well-known example of a case where forensics work is critical to convicting the perpetrator of a crime. As the Rocky Mountain News reported on February 2, 1997, "To solve the slaying of JonBenet Ramsey, Boulder police must rely to a great extent on the