

GRAHAM, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. KERREY, Mr. ROBB, and Mr. BRYAN):

S. 3152. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives for distressed areas, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. DOMENICI:

S. 3153. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Air Force to convey certain excess personal property of the Air Force to Roosevelt General Hospital, Portales, New Mexico; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MOYNIHAN (for himself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 3154. A bill to establish the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor in the State of New York, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LAUTENBERG:

S. 3155. A bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Oskar Schindler and Varian Fry in recognition of their contributions to the Nation and humanity; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. DODD, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KERRY, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. REID):

S. 3156. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to ensure the recovery of the declining biological diversity of the United States, to reaffirm and strengthen the commitment of the United States to protect wildlife, to safeguard the economic and ecological future of children of the United States, and to provide certainty to local governments, communities, and individuals in their planning and economic development efforts; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. STEVENS, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. KERRY, Mr. HELMS, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. L. CHAFEE, Mr. BRYAN, Mr. KERREY, Mr. LOTT, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. ABRAHAM, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. THOMAS):

S. Res. 364. A resolution commending Sydney, New South Wales, Australia for its successful conduct of the 2000 Summer Olympic Games and congratulating the United States Olympic Team for its outstanding accomplishments at those Olympic Games; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. VOINOVICH (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. Res. 365. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding recent elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. Con. Res. 141. A concurrent resolution to authorize the printing of copies of the publication entitled "The United States Capitol" as a Senate document; considered and agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MURKOWSKI:

S. 3150. A bill to convey certain real property located in Tongass National Forest to Daniel J. Gross, Sr., and Douglas K. Gross, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

THE HERITAGE LAND TRANSFER ACT OF 2000

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Heritage Land Transfer Act of 2000. This legislation, while inconsequential when compared to many of the issues we deal with in the U.S. Congress, is extremely important to two of my oldest constituents, Douglas and Daniel Gross. These two brothers along with the other members of the Gross family are amongst Alaska's earliest pioneers. These two brothers have spent over 80 years drawing their existence out of the harsh Southeastern Alaskan environment. Through all these years, they managed to raise their families and contributed to building the great State that I have the privilege of representing. I would also point out that Douglas and Daniel Gross served our Nation during World War II at its time of greatest need—now these two veterans need our help to right a wrong that has been vested upon them through no fault of their own.

"The Heritage Land Transfer Act of 2000" directs the Forest Service to convey 160 acres to Daniel and Douglas Gross. This granting of clear title would fix a problem that has plagued the family for the past 20 years. The need for this action arises from the fact that no records remain to substantiate the family's claim that they homesteaded on Greens Point in the 1930's. Family homesteading records were destroyed when the Gross home burned to the ground in 1935-1936 and to make matters worse, the Forest Service is unable to locate any documentation to substantiate the Gross family claim. With neither title nor documentation, Doug and Dan Gross are unable to produce any legal record of ownership to the land their parents homesteaded. The paper records, however, are the only things missing. The Forest Service willingly acknowledges that a large body of evidence exists that clearly establishes the fact that the family built a home on Greens Point in the 1930's, that they grew and sold vegetables from this farmstead, and that they were good neighbors to many people caught out in our famous Alaskan storms. While the family and the Forest Service have searched in vain for written records, there is one piece of physical evidence to substantiate the family claim. On September 11, 1989, Alaska State Senator Robin Taylor traveled to the Gross property on the Stikine River for the purpose of locating a witness tree which would provide objective proof to the Gross family claim of homestead. In a letter Senator Taylor sent to Richard Kohrt, Wrangell

District Ranger, Tongass National Forest he wrote "I was present when Mr. Bungy, United States Forest Service specialist, sawed and chopped open the large spruce tree which the Gross Brothers had identified from memory as being a witness tree. Mr. Bungy verified that the large blaze uncovered was of the exact age that coincided with the Gross claim. By counting the annual growth rings it coincided with the many affidavits and statements of witness about the Gross claim of homestead."

There is no question that the family settled on the Green Point property on the Stikine River in the 1930's. They raised all of their children on their property and were good friends to all who lived and worked throughout the region. I have in my possession many affidavits, each one testifying to the settlement of the Gross family along the Stikine River. I offer the following quotations typical of these testaments: "In the early 1930's I spent a lot of time up the Stikine River at the Gross Ranch. They had a large two story home and a huge garden . . ." "I stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Bill Gross in the middle thirties. Bessie Gross took care of my brother Gilbert and I while my mother and father were out fishing, they had a house and garden on the river which everyone knows as the Gross place even to this day . . ." "I stayed with Bessie Gross and Family during the late 1930's in their place up the river . . ." And another from Mr. Harry Sundberg, a gillnet fisherman, used to fish in "what was known locally as the Gross homestead." Mr. Sundberg goes on to say "While most people during that period did not file on the land they occupied, I distinctly recall that our conversations included the fact that they had applied for their application to own property similar to Captain Lee, who owned the property directly south of them on the mainland."

The Homestead Act requires residency for a minimum of 3 years. These affidavits, and many others, verify the Gross families life on this property since the early 1930's. In a letter from the Department of Agriculture to Senator STEVENS they write "Even though it's clear the Gross family homesteaded on the property, there is no evidence or record that they completed the process to obtain title." Another letter from the Department of Agriculture states "the Forest Service does not and has not refuted your claim that you and/or your family resided at Greens Point in the 1930's." An Alaska Magazine article written in 1984 references the "Gross place" along the Stikine River.

The Homestead Act authorized the transfer of 160 acre parcels of federal land to private owners. The Gross Homestead is 160.8 acres. A tree, both Daniel and Douglas Gross remember being used as a survey marker when they were boys, was examined in 1989 and found to have a flat face blazed into the wood approximately 50 years