

and Pensions be authorized to meet in Executive Session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 19, 2003. The following agenda will be considered:

S. ____, Mammography Quality Standards Reauthorization Act of 2003

S. ____, Medical Device Technical Corrections Act of 2003

S. 741, Minor Use and Minor Species Animal Health Act of 2003 and Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2003 (manager's amendment to be filed)

S. 573, Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act

Presidential Nominations

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on Wednesday, November 19, 2003, at 2:30 a.m., on "Judicial Nominations," in the Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 226.

Witness List:

Panel I: Senators.

Panel II: Williams James Haynes II to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit; Louis Guirola, Jr. to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi; Virginia E. Hopkins to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama; and Kenneth M. Karas to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2003 at 2 p.m. to hold closed Conference on the Fiscal Year 04 Intelligence Authorization.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent a legislative fellow in my office, Kevin Vranes, be granted the privilege of the floor during the duration of consideration of the conference report on the Energy bill.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Dr. Jonathan Epstein, a legislative fellow in Senator BINGAMAN's office, be given floor privileges during the pendency of H.R. 6, the Energy Policy Act of 2003 conference report and any votes thereupon.

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

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a fellow in my office, Ms. Barbara Peichel, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the consideration of the Energy bill.

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

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent Matthew Griles be granted the privilege of the floor during the pendency of this debate.

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

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the privilege of the floor be granted to the following fellows in my staff: Robyn Golden and William Rom.

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

PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM TO POPE JOHN PAUL II

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 313, which is at the desk.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 313) to urge the President, on behalf of the United States, to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, in recognition of his significant, enduring, and historic contributions to the causes of freedom, human dignity, and peace and to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of His Holiness' inauguration of his ministry as Bishop of Rome and Supreme Pastor of the Catholic Church.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the concurrent resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 313) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

TEMPORARY EXTENSIONS OF THE PROGRAMS UNDER THE SMALL BUSINESS ACT AND THE SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT ACT OF 1958

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. 1895, introduced earlier today by Senator SNOWE.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will state the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1895) a bill to temporarily extend the programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through March 15, 2004, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to support passage of the Small Business Administration Continuation Act of 2003. This bill provides a short-term extension of the Small Business Administration and all of its programs. In particular, it ensures the continuation of the SBA's 504 loan program, Small Business Investment Company program, and other activities currently conducted by the SBA, which must be extended before Congress adjourns this year. I am pleased to be joined by Senator KERRY, the ranking member of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, in supporting this bill.

On September 26, 2003, the Senate unanimously approved the Small Business Administration 50th Anniversary Reauthorization Act of 2003, S. 1375, which I introduced as the chair of the Committee on Small Business. That bill provides for the 3-year reauthorization of the SBA and its small business programs, including the 504 loan program and the SBIC program.

The reauthorization bill will continue the SBA's role in assisting American small business to thrive and grow, through the agency's lending, entrepreneurial development, and government contracting programs and services. Most importantly, it will enable the agency to help small businesses continue creating new jobs for our economy. According to the SBA, for the years covered by the reauthorization bill, an estimated 3.34 million jobs will be created or retained as a result of the reauthorization programs.

While the Small Business Administration 50th Anniversary Reauthorization Act provides for the continuation of these programs, the other body has been delayed in its consideration of legislation to reauthorize the agency. The SBA's programs that rely on appropriations will be continued once the Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2004 is enacted. However, several of the SBA's programs and activities, like the 504 loan and SBIC programs, do not rely on appropriations. As a result, they are in jeopardy of shutting down without the bill before us today, and that's a result America's small businesses simply cannot afford.

I am confident that we can enact legislation to reauthorize the SBA once the other body has completed work on its version of the bill. In the interim, we must ensure that the SBA can continue to offer the entire range of its programs to our nation's small businesses, which are the driving force behind our current economic recovery. With small businesses comprising 99.7 percent of all businesses in the United States, employing 57 percent of the total private-sector workforce, and accounting for approximately 40 percent of the Gross Domestic Product, they deserve nothing less!

The 504 loan program, one of the agency's flagship lending programs, allows small businesses to obtain long-term, fixed-rate financing to purchase

land, buildings, or equipment. In the past four fiscal years, the SBA has provided guarantees for more than 20,000 loans through the 504 Loan Program, for a total of approximately \$8.6 billion, and these loans have allowed small businesses to create or retain more than 445,000 jobs.

The SBIC Program utilizes private venture capital, with matching Federal funds, to provide financing to small businesses, many of which have found it difficult to obtain financing from traditional venture capital firms, both because of the businesses' small size and because of difficult economic trends. Since the start of Fiscal Year 1999, small business investment companies supported by the SBA have made more than 15,800 investments in small businesses, with a total value of \$16.9 billion. This critical long-term or "patient" capital for small businesses has led to the creation and retention of approximately 481,000 jobs during this period.

Both of these programs are critical to our efforts to provide necessary capital to small businesses so that those businesses can provide the jobs and the growth to improve the Nation's economy. In addition, both of these programs rely on fees charged to the program participants, rather than on Federal appropriations, to fund their operation. Because neither program requires any Federal funds, the SBA needs legislative authorization to collect the fees that operate the programs and ensure that they function at a zero subsidy rate. Currently, the authorization for these fees has been temporarily extended under the present continuing resolution.

With the close of the First Session of the 108th Congress rapidly approaching, we must act now to ensure that the SBA and its programs are continued. The bill before us achieves that goal by extending the authorization for the agency and its programs through March 15, 2004. That will provide ample time for the other body to pass its legislation, for us to reconcile the differences, and for the president to sign a long-term reauthorization bill for the SBA.

This legislation is absolutely necessary for America's small businesses. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and thereby ensure that the SBA, and in particular the 504 loan and SBIC programs, will continue to serve small businesses and enable small businesses to obtain the financing they need, as they contribute so greatly to the revitalization of our national economy.

In summary, the Small Business Administration Continuation Act of 2003 is a straight extension of the authorization for the Small Business Administration, SBA, and its programs at their FY 2003 levels through March 15, 2003. Currently, the SBA and its programs are operating under the provisions of the Continuing Resolution. The bill also increases the fee authorization for the Small Business Invest-

ment Company, SBIC, program so that it can continue operating at a zero subsidy rate for 2004. The SBIC fee level was increased in the last Continuing Resolution and that increase is merely continued in this bill to avoid statutory interpretation problems.

While the Senate has passed a 3-year reauthorization of the SBA, S. 1375, the House has not completed work on its reauthorization bill. In order to provide time for the House to act and the bills to be reconciled, this bill extends the SBA's authorization on a short-term basis so the agency can continue providing its critical lending, entrepreneurial development, and government contracting programs to the Nation's small businesses.

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today, as the ranking Democrat of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I join the committee's chair, Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE, in introducing a bill to extend for 4 months—through March 15, 2004—the authority to operate the Small Business Administration's programs. It is our hope that it can be expeditiously considered by the Senate.

Enacting this bill before Congress adjourns for the holidays is critical in order to continue making accessible to small businesses the many needed resources, from long-term loans to technical and contracting assistance, of the SBA. Among those that would be in jeopardy of closing are the agency's loans for growing businesses through what's more commonly referred to as the 504 loan program, certain established Women's Business Centers, the contracting program to assist minority-owned small businesses, the program to provide surety bonds to small contractors through so-called "preferred sureties" and one of the agency's venture capital programs.

The agency's 504 program is more important than ever to our small businesses and the economy. The need could not be clearer, with demand for loans up 25 percent in both the number of loans made and the total dollar amount in loans made. As the year came to a close, these loans pumped more than \$3 billion into our local economies through thousands of small businesses. Remarkably, making these loans available to small businesses costs the taxpayers nothing because the borrowers, lenders and certified development companies cover costs of the program through fees. While it requires no appropriations to guarantee these loans, continuation of the program depends upon the ability of the lenders to charge fees, which must be specifically permitted by Congress. This program is extremely successful and should absolutely continue. I believe I speak for many when I say that the Congress wants the lending community to continue devoting resources to 504 loans, keeping this affordable fi-

nancing available to small businesses. We fully intend to provide authorization for 3 years when the SBA's comprehensive reauthorization bill is enacted in early 2004.

I feel just as strongly about the importance of continuing the SBA's venture capital programs. Specifically, we need to make clear that the amount of fees that can be charged to participating securities venture capital firms is increased from 1.38 percent to 1.46 percent. Venture capital has been very scarce over the past few years, and this program has been responsible for more than 50 percent of the number of deals made in this country. In spite of the industry's rough times, the committee is supportive of the Small Business Investment Company programs and wants to see more successes like Staples and Callaway golf lead the way in their industries and create jobs.

Extending the Women's Business Center Sustainability pilot program—which is made permanent in both the House and Senate SBA reauthorization bills—is tremendously important to the 86,000 women business owners across the Nation who use the entrepreneurial development assistance each year. Without the continuation of the agency's authority to operate pilot programs, it is possible that the Small Business Administration could misinterpret Congress's strong support for this pilot and discontinue funding 55 centers in over 40 states, closing over half of the most experienced and active women's business centers. In 1999, when I authored the Women's Business Center Sustainability pilot program, it was my intention to continue the most productive and well-equipped women's business centers, knowing that demand for such services was rapidly growing. Today, with women-owned businesses opening at one-and-a-half times the rate of all privately held firms, the need for women's business centers is even greater. Until Congress makes permanent the Women's Business Center Sustainability Pilot program, as intended in already passed legislation, an extension of authority is vital—not only to the centers themselves, but to the women's business community and to the 18 million workers employed by women-owned businesses around the country.

We also need to ensure the continuation of the agency's contracting assistance. One type of assistance in particular is the Small and Disadvantaged Businesses, SDB, Certification program. It was created to assist small businesses through government contracting, access to capital, management and technical assistance, and export assistance. The program was originally implemented to help Federal agencies reach a 5 percent goal of utilization of these essential businesses incurred to address discrimination and under-utilization of certain firms in Federal contracting.

The positive implications of this program have grown beyond the expectations of even the authors of the original legislation. By supporting these socially and economically disadvantaged businesses, the Federal Government has helped these entrepreneurs revitalize neighborhoods, create jobs, and encourages real, measurable economic growth. The program has shown to be a resounding success, however, a great deal of work still needs to be done. Moreover, the Federal Government has failed to meet the 23 percent government-wide goal for small business utilization in Federal procurement. Agencies have continually failed to meet the goals for socially and economically disadvantaged, women owned businesses, service disabled veteran owned, and HUBZone firms, all of which contribute to the overall 23 percent goal. Part of the problem faced by small businesses participating in these programs and by those attempting to enforce small business utilization goals is the perception that these goals are intended to be a maximum set-aside for small firms. They are not. They are minimum thresholds. The continuation of the SDB program throughout the government will help Federal agencies continue to utilize these small businesses and continue to foster business development and in much needed sectors of the economy.

I would like to make clear that this bill is not intended to interfere with any program, pilot program or authority that has a longer authorization, like the Small Business Innovation and Small Business Technology Transfer programs. If there are any doubts about our intentions, the bill is structured to keep all programs, pilots and initiatives operating that could have expired between September 30, 2003, and March 15, 2003, and to keep them operating as on September 30.

I commend our committee, and the leadership of our chair, Senator SNOWE, for deliberating and passing our comprehensive reauthorization bill in July and look forward to working with our colleagues in the House to pass a final bill in early 2004.●

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The bill (S. 1895) was read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 1895

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF PROGRAM AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any program, authority, or provision, including any pilot program, authorized under the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 631 et seq.) or the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) as of September 30, 2003, that is scheduled to expire on or after September 30, 2003 and before March 15, 2004, shall remain authorized

through March 15, 2004, under the same terms and conditions in effect on September 30, 2003.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), section 303(g)(2) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 683(g)(2)) is amended by striking "1.38 percent" and inserting "1.46 percent".

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 379, S. Res. 256.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 256) observing the 50th anniversary of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea, affirming the deep cooperation and friendship between the people of the United States and the people of the Republic of Korea, and thanking the Republic of Korea for its contributions to the global war on terrorism and to the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, all with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 256) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 256

Whereas October 1, 2003, marked the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, signed at Washington October 1, 1953, and entered into force November 17, 1954 (hereinafter referred to as the "Mutual Defense Treaty");

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea have formed a bond through the common struggle against communist aggression;

Whereas more than 34,000 Americans lost their lives fighting in the Korean War, and approximately 37,000 men and women of the United States Armed Forces are still deployed on the Korean peninsula, enduring separation from their families and other hardships in the defense of freedom;

Whereas the Mutual Defense Treaty has been instrumental in securing peace on the Korean peninsula and providing an environment in which the Republic of Korea has become an economically vibrant, free, democratic society;

Whereas the foundation of the Mutual Defense Treaty rests not only on a common adversary, but more importantly on a shared interest in, and commitment to, peace, democracy, and freedom on the Korean peninsula, in Asia, and throughout the world;

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea are working closely together to find a diplomatic solution to the threat posed by North Korea's pursuit of nuclear

weapons and the export by North Korea of ballistic missiles;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is making valuable contributions to the global war on terrorism, including the contribution of logistics support for international forces operating in Afghanistan;

Whereas the Republic of Korea has pledged \$260,000,000 and has already sent 700 military engineers and medical personnel to assist in the United States-led effort to stabilize and reconstruct Iraq; and

Whereas South Korea President Roh Moo-hyun pledged on October 18, 2003, to dispatch additional troops to work alongside United States and coalition forces in Iraq; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) observes the 50th anniversary of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, signed at Washington October 1, 1953, and entered into force November 17, 1954;

(2) reaffirms the deep cooperation and friendship between the people of the United States and the people of the Republic of Korea; and

(3) thanks the Republic of Korea for its contributions to the global war on terrorism and to the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar No. 321.

NOMINATION DISCHARGED

Further, I ask consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following nomination and the Senate proceed en bloc to its consideration: PN1019-2, Robert Goldberg.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Bruce E. Burda, 0432

FOREIGN SERVICE

Robert Goldberg

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now return to legislative session.