

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate is needed for the promotion of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Committee on Indian Affairs and the Committee on Rules and Administration are authorized to provide to the U.S. Department of Justice the specific documents that have been requested by the Department of Justice to date for use in legal and investigatory proceedings, and to provide related testimony from their staffs, if necessary, except where a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent employees of the Committee on Indian Affairs and the Committee on Rules and Administration in connection with the document production and testimony authorized in section one of this resolution.

THE SAFE AND TIMELY INTERSTATE PLACEMENT OF FOSTER CHILDREN ACT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 5403, the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5403) to improve protections for children and to hold States accountable for the safe and timely placement of children across State lines, and for other purposes.

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

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I rise to speak on passage of the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act. This legislation seeks to expedite the interstate placement of foster children into the safe and nurturing families they so desperately need and deserve. In doing so, it encourages and provides incentives to States to help expedite the completion of home studies, which are all too often the cause or delays in interstate placement cases.

Nationwide, there are currently over 500,000 children in foster care, and more than 2,500 in my home State of Arkansas. On trips back home and in meetings with my constituents, I have listened to the many heartbreaking tales of children who continue to suffer needlessly because of barriers to their timely placement. While a recent increase in the number of adoptions has allowed many of these children to spend less time in foster care homes, an unacceptably large number still encounter barriers that delay their timely placement. This is particularly the situation for children placed across State lines. In fact, recent reports indicate that interstate placements take an average of one year longer than placements within a State.

The situation is unacceptable, and I am grateful that we are addressing this issue by taking a step forward. Al-

though we are taking that step here today, we must also recognize that we are improving a process, not fixing it. In cooperation with our State child welfare agencies and State court systems, we need to continue working to finish the task before us by carefully evaluating improvements that result from passage of this legislation and looking at other ways Federal and State agencies can work together in the future to make interstate placements work even better.

We must work together to provide both better guidelines for the process of gaining approval for sending children across State lines while allowing States the much-needed flexibility to cater them to their specific circumstances. We must work together to find a way to set deadlines that expedite the processing of home studies yet does not set unrealistic timelines on our States. We must work together to find better ways to ensure more efficiency in the process while also taking each State's circumstances under consideration.

In short, we must continue working together to ensure that no more of our children are unnecessarily stuck in foster homes because of bureaucratic inefficiencies, unnecessary delays, and red tape. We can do better by these children. The opportunity to grow up in a nurturing, loving, and stable family is something that none of us should take for granted. It is our duty in this Congress to ensure that these children are not denied this opportunity, but given timely placement with the home and the family that each and every one of them deserve.

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 any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 5403) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this bill, H.R. 5403, the adoption bill, is a bill that is aimed at improving protection for children. It holds States accountable for the safe and timely placement of children across State lines.

I am gratified we have passed this bill today to help our children who are in foster care. Finding permanent and loving homes for foster care children is the first order of a compassionate society. Far too often, these children bounce from one temporary situation to another and then to another, never finding a permanent loving family.

The bill we passed just a few moments ago speeds their placement by making interstate placements easier, particularly with extended family. I, in particular, commend the former majority leader of the House, Tom DeLay, for his passionate crusade for at-risk children. A foster parent himself, Tom has worked tirelessly on adoption and

foster care issues during his long service in the House of Representatives.

It is a fitting tribute to Tom DeLay's service that the House passed this bill on his last day in office. And I am gratified we just passed it a few moments ago.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 5638

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5638) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the unified credit against the estate tax to an exclusion equivalent of \$5,000,000 and to repeal the sunset provision for the estate and generation-skipping taxes, and for other purposes.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

PALESTINIAN ANTI-TERRORISM ACT OF 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 2370, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2370) to promote the development of democratic institutions in areas under the administrative control of the Palestinian Authority, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I would like to applaud my colleagues for passing S. 2370, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006.

My friend, the senior Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN, and I cosponsored this legislation. We were joined in our efforts by Senators FRIST, REID of Nevada, DEMINT, MIKULSKI, MARTINEZ, NELSON of Florida, HAGEL, NELSON of Nebraska, DEWINE, TALENT, ALLEN, BURNS, BOXER, BUNNING, KERRY, SALAZAR, LIEBERMAN and THUNE; all of whom are original cosponsors of this bill.

I particularly thank my colleague, the senior Senator from Indiana, Mr. LUGAR, for his leadership on this issue. He has been instrumental in fashioning language on the important question of how the United States addresses the challenges posed by the new Hamas-dominated government in the West Bank and Gaza.