

Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-15" (FAC 2005-15) received on January 11, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-340. A communication from the Federal Co-Chair, Denali Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-341. A communication from the Special Counsel, U.S. Office of Special Counsel, transmitting, a proposed bill to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Office for fiscal years 2008 through 2012; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-342. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's progress and status of compliance with certain privatization requirements; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-343. A communication from the Staff Director, United States Commission on Civil Rights, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the appointment of members to the Arizona Advisory Committee; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-344. A communication from the Clerk, Circuit and County Courts, transmitting, responses to the Minority Appointment Reporting Form for 2005; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-345. A communication from the Director of Regulations Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of the Presumptive Period for Compensation for Gulf War Veterans" (RIN2900-AM47) received on January 11, 2007; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-346. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Poultry Improvement Plan and Auxiliary Provisions" (Docket No. APHIS-2006-0008) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-347. A communication from the Administrator, Housing and Community Facilities Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Direct Single Family Housing Loans and Grants" (RIN0575-AC54) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-348. A communication from the Chief of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone Regulations (including 5 regulations beginning with CGD13-06-052)" (RIN1625-AA00) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-349. A communication from the Chief of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Security Zone (including 5 regulations beginning with COTP Honolulu 06-008)" (RIN1625-AA87) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-350. A communication from the Chief of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Local Regulation; Annual Gasparilla Marine Parade, Hillsborough Bay, Tampa, FL" (RIN1625-

AA08) (CGD07-05-156)) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-351. A communication from the Chief of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Anchorage Regulations (including 2 regulations beginning with CGD08-06-026)" (RIN1625-AA01) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-352. A communication from the Chief of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Drawbridge Operations (including 4 regulations beginning with CGD08-06-005)" (RIN1625-AA09) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-353. A communication from the Chief of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulated Navigation Area; East Rockaway Inlet to Atlantic Beach Bridge, Nassau County, Long Island, New York" ((RIN1625-AA11) (CGD01-06-142)) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-354. A communication from the Assistant Secretary (Fish, Wildlife and Parks), Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Laguna Mountains Skipper (*Pyrgus ruralis lagunae*)" (RIN1018-AU50) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-355. A communication from the Assistant Secretary (Fish, Wildlife and Parks), Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Astragalus ampullarioides* (*Shiwvits Milk vetch*) and *Astragalus holmgreniorum* (*Holmgren Milk vetch*)" (RIN1018-AU45) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-356. A communication from the Assistant Secretary (Fish, Wildlife and Parks), Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Monardella linoides* ssp. *viminea* (*Willow Monardella*)" (RIN1018-AT92) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-357. A communication from the Assistant Secretary (Fish, Wildlife and Parks), Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for Canada Lynx" (RIN1018-AU52) received on January 12, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-6. A resolution adopted by the Aurora Township Board of Trustees approving the election canvass results from a recent ref-

erendum; to the Committee on Armed Services.

POM-7. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Michigan relative to increasing funding to dredge Michigan's deep-draft Great Lakes ports and waterways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 288

Whereas, Michigan is home to 40 deep-draft commercial ports on the Great Lakes, more than the other seven Great Lakes states combined; and

Whereas, in a typical year, these ports will handle in excess of 90 million tons of cargo, representing more than 50 percent of all the cargo moving on the Lakes, and the equivalent of 10 tons for each Michigan resident. The ports of Calcite, Cedarville, Drummond Island, Port Inland, and Presque Isle typically ship nearly 70 percent of the limestone moving on the Great Lakes. The ports of Marquette and Escanaba account for more than 20 percent of the Lakes' iron ore trade. The ports of Alpena and Charlevoix are the primary source of cement carried on the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, this waterborne commerce generates tens of thousands of family-sustaining jobs in Michigan and supports the state economy. For example, Michigan's steel and construction industries depend on Great Lakes shipping to deliver efficiently millions of tons of raw materials they need each year; and

Whereas, the U.S. Department of Transportation is promoting Short Sea Shipping—commercial waterborne transportation along the inland and coastal waterways—as a means of easing congestion on the nation's crowded highways and railbeds; and

Whereas, compared to other transportation modes, waterborne commerce provides environmental benefits, including fuel savings and fewer emissions. In addition, the efficiencies of waterborne commerce enable Michigan utilities to use cleaner-burning low-sulfur coal loaded in Wisconsin and shipped on the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, Michigan's deep-draft Great Lakes ports and waterways are long overdue for needed dredging to deepen them. For example, while currently under way, it had been 23 years since the Saginaw River turning basin was last dredged; and

Whereas, Michigan's economy is not reaping the full benefits of Great Lakes shipping due to the lack of necessary dredging. Ships cannot carry full loads and offer customers the best freight rates. The largest vessels delivering low-sulfur coal to Michigan are leaving behind as much as 4,500 tons each trip. Shortfalls in deliveries of iron ore, limestone, cement, and other cargos hamper Michigan employers' ability to compete; and

Whereas, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' budget for dredging Great Lakes ports and waterways has been inadequate for decades. This is true even though cargo is assessed a federal tax to fund dredging and the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund has a surplus of nearly \$2 billion; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize Congress to increase federal funding for dredging Michigan's Great Lakes deep-draft ports and waterways, using surplus monies from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge Congress to direct the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to clear the backlog of dredging projects at Michigan's ports and waterways and to then maintain those harbors and channels to project depth in the future; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United

States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

POM-8. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Michigan relative to federal funding for the barriers designed to protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 313

Whereas, Two species of Asian carp are on the verge of invading the Great Lakes. Silver carp and bighead carp have advanced up the Mississippi River since they escaped from Arkansas fish farms in the early 1980s, and now have been identified as close as 50 miles to Lake Michigan in the Illinois River near Chicago; and

Whereas, Asian carp pose a significant risk to the ecology and economy of the Great Lakes region. Asian carp can grow as large as 100 pounds and are voracious feeders. They would compete with native fish and could become a dominant species in the Great Lakes, threatening the Great Lakes' \$4 billion commercial and recreational fishery. In addition, silver carp can jump up to 10 feet out of the water when disturbed, posing a risk to recreational boaters. In several states, leaping carp have injured boaters; and

Whereas, Asian carp are the latest in a long line of exotic species to threaten the Great Lakes. Past invasions of the Great Lakes by exotic species like zebra and quagga mussels and sea lampreys have severely affected the Great Lakes. It is estimated that over \$40 million per year is spent to control these two exotic species. Scientists project that Asian carp could have a similar impact on the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, The United States Army Corps of Engineers operates a temporary demonstration barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to prevent the movement of Asian carp into the Great Lakes. In addition, the Army Corps and the state of Illinois are constructing a permanent electrical barrier to replace the temporary barrier; and

Whereas, Over \$12 million has been spent to date on construction and operation of the electrical barriers. To help match federal funding, the state of Michigan has contributed nearly \$70,000 toward the completion of the permanent electrical barrier; and

Whereas, Current funding is insufficient to complete construction of the permanent barrier and only covers operation of the temporary barrier through the first half of fiscal year 2007. In addition, there is no funding to renovate the temporary barrier as a permanent backup to the new barrier; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to approve full federal funding to complete construction and ensure permanent operation and maintenance of both electrical barriers in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan Congressional delegation.

Adopted by the House of Representatives, December 12, 2006.

POM-9. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana relative to refraining from taxing rebuilding grants from the state's Road Home program; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

Whereas, Louisiana taxpayers have spent countless hours coping with paperwork and

bureaucracy that has inconvenienced them since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated southern Louisiana last year; and

Whereas, the grants themselves are not taxable, but the Internal Revenue Service says grant recipients who claimed a storm-related casualty loss would have to consider all or part of the grant as income; and

Whereas, the average Road Home grant is sixty-five thousand dollars; therefore, some recipients would find themselves bumped up to higher tax brackets and would likely have a higher federal income tax liability; and

Whereas, the Louisiana Department of Revenue has determined that grants would not constitute income for state purposes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress and the Internal Revenue Service to take such actions as are necessary to refrain from taxing rebuilding grants from the state's Road Home program; and be it further

Resolved that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America, to the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-10. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Michigan relative to enacting legislation to amend the definition of "physician" in the Medicaid Program to include podiatric physicians; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 248

Whereas, The Medicare system has long recognized doctors of podiatric medicine as physicians in federal law. However, the provisions of Title XIX that establish the country's Medicaid program do not include podiatric physicians in the definition of "physician"; and

Whereas, There is legislation pending in the Congress, H.R. 699 and S. 440, to require that podiatry services are covered by Medicaid. Enactment of this measure would guarantee access to quality foot and ankle care for Medicaid patients; and

Whereas, Podiatric physicians play an important role in the recognition of systemic diseases, such as diabetes, as well as recognition and treatment of peripheral neuropathy, a frequent cause of diabetic foot wounds that can lead to amputations if left untreated; and

Whereas, Under the current provisions, Medicaid patients may be prevented from seeking care from a podiatric physician because these services are not covered as "physician services." This policy puts many people at risk, especially diabetic patients; and

Whereas, Quality foot care increases mobility, prevents amputations, improves quality of life, and avoids numerous unnecessary costs. Clearly, including podiatric services under the Medicaid program is a prudent step to take; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to amend the definition of "physician" in the Medicaid program to include podiatric physicians; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-11. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Michigan relative to enacting the

Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 266

Whereas, hearing is clearly one of our most essential senses. It is often taken for granted, unfortunately, until the time one begins to experience hearing loss. At this point it is too late to reverse the damage. Hearing aids are the ready solution to the problems associated with hearing loss, but the costs associated with good quality equipment is expensive, is not always covered by one's insurance or Medicaid, and is too often foregone for more immediate needs. A federal tax credit would provide immediate and necessary relief for tens of thousands; and

Whereas, indeed, it has been estimated that hearing aids would help ninety-five percent of those suffering from hearing loss. Only twenty-two percent of the population, however, currently uses a hearing device, because the average out-of-pocket costs associated with hearing aids is over \$2,800. Thousands upon thousands of individuals and family members are impacted by these soaring costs. It is estimated that close to 2 million people are affected by untreated hearing loss; and

Whereas, in Michigan, legislation was enacted in 1978 to exempt hearing aids from the state sales tax. This initiative was a clear recognition of the importance of cost savings to those in need of hearing aids. The Congress should follow this stellar example and enact similar tax incentives in the U.S. Tax Code; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we hereby memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact the Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-12. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana relative to the adoption of the Constitution Restoration Act of 2005; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 33

Whereas, on Monday, June 27, 2005, the United States Supreme Court in two razor-thin majorities of 5-4 in *Van Orden v. Perry* (Texas) and *ACLU v. McCreary County* (Kentucky), concluded that it is consistent with the First Amendment to display the Ten Commandments in an outdoor public square in Texas, but not on the courthouse walls of two counties in Kentucky; and

Whereas, American citizens are concerned that the court has produced two opposite results involving the same Ten Commandments, leading to the conclusion that, based on the Kentucky decision, the Ten Commandments may be displayed in a county courthouse provided it is not backed by a belief in God; and

Whereas, Supreme Justice Scalia emphasized the importance of the Ten Commandments when he stated in the Kentucky case, "The three most popular religions in the United States, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, which combined account for 97.7% of all believers, are monotheistic. All of them, moreover, believe that the Ten Commandments were given by God to Moses and are divine prescriptions for a virtuous life"; and

Whereas, Chief Justice Rehnquist in the Texas case referred to the duplicity of the United States Supreme Court in telling local governments in America that they may not display the Ten Commandments in public buildings in their communities while at the same time allowing these same Ten Commandments to be presented on these specific

places on the building housing the United States Supreme Court stating, "Since 1935, Moses has stood holding two tablets that reveal portions of the Ten Commandments written in Hebrew, among other lawgivers in the south frieze. Representations of the Ten Commandments adorn the metal gates lining the north and south sides of the courtroom as well as the doors leading into the courtroom. Moses also sits on the exterior east facade of the building holding the Ten Commandments tablets"; and

Whereas, a recent poll by the First Amendment Center revealed that seventy percent of Americans would have no objection to posting the Ten Commandments in government buildings, and eighty-five percent would approve if the Ten Commandments were included as one document among many historical documents when displayed in public buildings; and

Whereas, the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which provides in part that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion", is a specific and unequivocal instruction to only the United States Congress, and the United States Constitution makes no restriction on the ability of states to acknowledge God, the Supreme Ruler of the Universe; and

Whereas, the United States District Court Southern District of Indiana on November 30, 2005, entered a final judgment and permanent injunction ordering the speaker of the Indiana House of Representatives not to permit sectarian prayers as part of the official proceedings of the House; and

Whereas, the federal judiciary has violated one of the most sacred provisions of the United States Constitution providing for three branches of government and the separation of powers of those branches by overstepping its authority and dictating the activities of the inner workings of the legislative branch of government; and

Whereas, the federal judiciary has overstepped its constitutional boundaries and ruled against the acknowledgment of God as the sovereign source of law, liberty, and government by local and state officers and other state institutions, including state schools; and

Whereas, there is concern that recent decisions of the court will be used by litigants in an effort to remove God from the public square in America, including public buildings and public parks; and

Whereas, there is concern that the federal judiciary will continue to attempt to micromanage the internal workings of the legislative as well as executive branches of government; and

Whereas, there is pending before the 1st Session of the 109th Congress the Constitution Restoration Act of 2005, which will limit the jurisdiction of the federal courts and preserve the right to acknowledge God to the states and to the people and resolve the issue of improper judicial intervention in matters relating to the acknowledgment of God: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to adopt S520 and HR 1070, the Constitution Restoration Act of 2005 and, in doing so, protecting the ability of the people of Louisiana to display the Ten Commandments in public places, to express their faith in public, to retain God in the Pledge of Allegiance, and to retain "In God We Trust" as our national motto, and to use Article III, Section 2.2 of the United States Constitution to except these areas from the jurisdiction of the United States Supreme Court; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the administrator of the General Services, Washington, D.C., to

the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress and presiding officer of each house of each state legislature in the United States.

POM-13. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana relative to certain Committees continuing their investigation and oversight efforts regarding the Federal Emergency Management Agency; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 11

Whereas, in House Concurrent Resolution No. 72 of the 2005 First Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the legislature expressed serious concerns regarding the \$3.7 billion that Louisiana was expected to pay to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the state's share of hurricane recovery costs; and

Whereas, these concerns stemmed from initial reports of inefficiencies and accounting errors on the part of FEMA, which had resulted in an artificially high spending for disaster recovery; and

Whereas, in light of its concerns, the Legislature of Louisiana memorialized the United States Congress to task the Government Accountability Office (GAO) with a complete audit of FEMA's expenditures, and the appropriateness and reasonableness thereof, on Katrina and Rita recovery efforts in Louisiana; and

Whereas, to date the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the GAO has delivered four reports to the United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs regarding its investigation of fraud, waste, and abuse in FEMA's response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and

Whereas, the titles of these reports alone indicate that the Louisiana Legislature was right to be suspicious of and to request inquiry into the amount FEMA was claiming it spent on recovery: Expedited Assistance for Victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: FEMA's Control Weaknesses Exposed the Government to Significant Fraud and Abuse; Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Disaster Relief: Improper and Potentially Fraudulent Individual Assistance Payments Estimated to be Between \$600 Million and \$1.4 Billion, and Purchase Cards: Control Weaknesses Leave DHS Highly Vulnerable to Fraudulent, Improper, and Abusive Activity; and

Whereas, on December 6, 2006, the GAO delivered its most recent report to a meeting of the senate committee; and

Whereas, this last report, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Disaster Relief: Continued Findings of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse, includes the following findings: nearly \$17 million in potentially improper or fraudulent rental assistance payments to individuals while they were living in trailers also paid for by FEMA; FEMA provided potentially improper or fraudulent rental assistance payments to individuals living in FEMA-paid apartments; nearly \$20 million in potentially improper or fraudulent payments went to individuals who registered for both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita assistance using the same property; and millions of dollars of improper and potentially fraudulent payments went to nonqualified aliens, including foreign students and temporary workers; and

Whereas, it is reasonable to expect at this time that additional inquiry by the GAO will continue to reveal further problems with the FEMA expenditures; and

Whereas, in her opening statement to the committee when this report was delivered,

committee chairman, Senator Susan M. Collins, said: "No flaw has been more persistent and more damaging to effective relief for disaster victims and to public confidence in their government than the rampant fraud, waste, and abuse that have plagued federal relief and recovery programs"; and

Whereas, in his statement to the committee at that meeting, ranking minority member Senator Joe Lieberman said "GAO's investigations over the past year as well as FEMA's own data on overpayments show that the agency squandered hundreds of millions of dollars in gross improper payments to individuals and households that the government may never recover"; and

Whereas, the United States Congress has already responded to some of the GAO findings by including a FEMA reform package as part of the 2007 Appropriations Act for the Department of Homeland Security; and

Whereas, though it has now been approximately fifteen months since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck Louisiana, the GAO investigations and FEMA's own admissions confirm suspicions of waste, the \$3.7 billion that FEMA originally billed to Louisiana is now expected to be closer to \$500 million, and the congress has taken actions to prevent some of the abuse from occurring in the future, the Legislature of Louisiana is hopeful that the United States Senate Committee and the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the GAO will not forget about this issue; and

Whereas, Louisiana is prepared to pay its share of reasonable costs of recovery, but a definitive appraisal of reasonable costs has not yet been determined; and

Whereas, incoming United States Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has announced tentative committee assignments for the 110th United States Congress, which include Senator Joe Lieberman assuming the position of committee chairman and Senator Mary Landrieu being made a member of the committee; and

Whereas, with Senator Lieberman in a position to continue the important work of the committee and Senator Landrieu in a position to represent the interests of her state in this work, and with the excellent work of the GAO in evidence, the Legislature of Louisiana is hopeful that an accurate appraisal of the state's obligation in the area of recovery costs will be determined soon: Now, Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express its gratitude to the United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and to the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the GAO for the work they have already done in identifying fraud and waste in FEMA's hurricane recovery spending in Louisiana; and be it further

Resolved, That the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the committee and the GAO to continue their investigation and oversight efforts and to provide guidance to FEMA and to the state of Louisiana as to what the state's share of legitimate recovery expenses is; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president and the secretary of the United States Senate, the Louisiana congressional delegation, Senator Susan Collins, Senator Joe Lieberman, the managing director of the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the Government Accountability Office, the Louisiana commissioner of administration, and the Louisiana legislative auditor.

POM-14. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana relative to certain Committees continuing

their investigation and oversight efforts regarding the Federal Emergency Management Agency; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 27

Whereas, in House Concurrent Resolution No. 72 of the 2005 First Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the legislature expressed serious concerns regarding the \$3.7 billion that Louisiana was expected to pay to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the state's share of hurricane recovery costs; and

Whereas, these concerns stemmed from initial reports of inefficiencies and accounting errors on the part of FEMA, which had resulted in an artificially high spending for disaster recovery; and

Whereas, in light of its concerns, the Legislature of Louisiana memorialized the United States Congress to task the Government Accountability Office (GAO) with a complete audit of FEMA's expenditures, and the appropriateness and reasonableness thereof, on Katrina and Rita recovery efforts in Louisiana; and

Whereas, to date the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the GAO has delivered four reports to the United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs regarding its investigation of fraud, waste, and abuse in FEMA's response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and

Whereas, the titles of these reports alone indicate that the Louisiana Legislature was right to be suspicious of and to request inquiry into the amount FEMA was claiming it spent on recovery: Expedited Assistance for Victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: FEMA's Control Weaknesses Exposed the Government to Significant Fraud and Abuse; Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Disaster Relief: Improper and Potentially Fraudulent Individual Assistance Payments Estimated to be Between \$600 Million and \$1.4 Billion, and Purchase Cards: Control Weaknesses Leave DHS Highly Vulnerable to Fraudulent, Improper, and Abusive Activity; and

Whereas, on December 6, 2006, the GAO delivered its most recent report to a meeting of the Senate Committee; and

Whereas, this last report, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Disaster Relief Continued Findings of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse, includes the following findings: nearly \$17 million in potentially improper or fraudulent rental assistance payments to individuals while they were living in trailers also paid for by FEMA; FEMA provided potentially improper or fraudulent rental assistance payments to individuals living in FEMA-paid apartments; nearly \$20 million in potentially improper or fraudulent payments went to individuals who registered for both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita assistance using the same property; and millions of dollars of improper and potentially fraudulent payments went to nonqualified aliens, including foreign students and temporary workers; and

Whereas, it is reasonable to expect at this time that additional inquiry by the GAO will continue to reveal further problems with the FEMA expenditures; and

Whereas, in her opening statement to the committee when this report was delivered, Committee Chairman Senator Susan M. Collins said: "No flaw has been more persistent and more damaging to effective relief for disaster victims and to public confidence in their government than the rampant fraud, waste, and abuse that have plagued federal relief and recovery programs"; and

Whereas, in his statement to the committee at that meeting, ranking minority member Senator Joe Lieberman said "GAO's investigations over the past year as well as

FEMA's own data on overpayments show that the agency squandered hundreds of millions of dollars in gross improper payments to individuals and households that the government may never recover"; and

Whereas, the United States Congress has already responded to some of the GAO findings by including a FEMA reform package as part of the 2007 Appropriations Act for the Department of Homeland Security; and

Whereas, though it has now been approximately fifteen months since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck Louisiana, the GAO investigations and FEMA's own admissions confirm suspicions of waste, the \$3.7 billion that FEMA originally billed to Louisiana is now expected to be closer to \$500 million, and Congress has taken actions to prevent some of the abuse from occurring in the future, the Legislature of Louisiana is hopeful that the United States Senate Committee and the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the GAO will not forget about this issue; and

Whereas, Louisiana is prepared to pay its share of reasonable costs of recovery, but a definitive appraisal of reasonable costs has not yet been determined; and

Whereas, incoming United States Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has announced tentative committee assignments for the 110th Congress, which include Senator Joe Lieberman assuming the position of committee chairman and Senator Mary Landrieu being made a member of the committee; and

Whereas, with Senator Lieberman in a position to continue the important work of the committee and Senator Landrieu in a position to represent the interests of her state in this work, and with the excellent work of the GAO in evidence, the Legislature of Louisiana is hopeful that an accurate appraisal of the state's obligation in the area of recovery costs will be determined soon: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express its gratitude to the United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and to the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the GAO for the work they have already done in identifying fraud and waste in FEMA's hurricane recovery spending in Louisiana; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the committee and the GAO to continue their investigation and oversight efforts and to provide guidance to FEMA and to the state of Louisiana as to what the state's share of legitimate recovery expenses is; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the President and the Secretary of the United States Senate, the Louisiana congressional delegation, Senator Susan Collins, Senator Joe Lieberman, the managing director of the Forensic Audits and Special Investigations Unit of the Government Accountability Office, the Louisiana commissioner of administration, and the Louisiana legislative auditor.

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. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mr. LOTT, Mr. INOUE, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. BURR, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr.

SCHUMER, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 294. A bill to reauthorize Amtrak, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 295. A bill to establish a servitude and emancipation archival research clearinghouse in the National Archives; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BOND (for himself and Ms. SNOWE):

S. 296. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the availability of the cash method of accounting for small businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SALAZAR:

S. 297. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide 15-year straight-line cost recovery for certain improvements to retail space and for qualified new restaurant improvements and to expand the eligibility for the work opportunity tax credit to all disabled veterans; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. STEVENS):

S. 298. A bill to provide incentives for renewable energy production, to increase fuel economy standards for automobiles, and to provide tax incentives for renewable energy production; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COLEMAN:

S. 299. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing for small businesses; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KYL (for himself, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. REID, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 300. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Bureau of Reclamation to carry out the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program in the States of Arizona, California, and Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 301. A bill to provide higher education assistance for nontraditional students, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 302. A bill to establish a procedure to safeguard the Social Security Trust Funds; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 303. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 324 Main Street in Grambling, Louisiana, shall be known and designated as the "Coach Eddie Robinson Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. VOINOVICH:

S. 304. A bill to establish a commission to develop legislation designed to reform tax policy and entitlement benefit programs and to ensure a sound fiscal future for the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 305. A bill to amend the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, to make it unlawful for a packer to own, feed, or control livestock intended for slaughter; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 306. A bill to provide certain requirements for hydroelectric projects on the Mohawk River in the State of New York, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.