

each made great strides in consolidating their new democracies. They have reformed their defense establishments, worked to root out corruption, modernized their economies, and contributed to NATO security missions in the Balkans and Afghanistan. Responding to these efforts with NATO membership at the upcoming summit would add to the alliance military capabilities while contributing to stability in the Balkans, a region still suffering from the ethnic tensions left behind by the bloodshed of the 1990s.

Ukraine and Georgia have also been developing their ties with NATO. Their leaders have declared their readiness to advance a NATO Membership Action Plan, MAP, to prepare for the rights and obligations of membership. They are working to consolidate democratic reforms and to undertake new responsibilities in their relationship with the Alliance. I welcome the desire and actions of these countries to seek closer ties with NATO and hope that NATO responds favorably to their request, consistent with its criteria for membership. Whether Ukraine and Georgia ultimately join NATO will be a decision for the members of the alliance and the citizens of those countries, after a period of open and democratic debate. But they should receive our help and encouragement as they continue to develop ties to Atlantic and European institutions.

NATO enlargement is not directed against Russia. Russia has an important role to play in European and global affairs and should see NATO as a partner, not as a threat. But we should oppose any efforts by the Russian government to intimidate its neighbors or control their foreign policies. Russia cannot have a veto over which countries join the alliance. Since the end of the Cold War, Republican and Democratic administrations have supported the independence and sovereignty of all the states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and we must continue to do so. President Putin recent threat to point missiles at Ukraine is simply not the way to promote the peaceful 21st century Europe we seek.

NATO stands as an example of how the United States can advance American national security—and the security of the world—through a strong alliance rooted in shared responsibility and shared values. NATO remains a vital asset in America's efforts to anchor democracy and stability in Europe and to defend our interests and values all over the world. The Bucharest summit provides an opportunity to advance these goals and to reinforce a vital alliance. NATO's leaders must seize that opportunity. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 2:27 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 2272. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service known as the Southpark Station in Alexandria, Louisiana, as the John "Marty" Thiels Southpark Station, in honor and memory of Thiels, a Louisiana postal worker who was killed in the line of duty on October 4, 2007.

S. 2478. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 59 Colby Corner in East Hampstead, New Hampshire, as the "Captain Jonathan D. Grassbaugh Post Office".

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 12. A bill to promote home ownership, manufacturing, and economic growth.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communication was laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and was referred as indicated:

EC-5298. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revenue Procedure: Safe Harbors for Sections 143 and 25" (Rev. Proc. 2008-17) received on February 25, 2008; to the Committee on Finance.

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-286. A resolution adopted by the Council of the County of Hawaii supporting the National Health Insurance Act; to the Committee on Finance.

POM-287. A collection of petitions from citizens across the country relative to establishing a more equitable method of computing cost of living adjustments for Social Security benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

POM-288. A petition from citizens of the State of New York relative to the role of federal courts in prison reform; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

POM-289. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Hawaii urging the creation of an agreement that results in an economy-wide reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 24

Whereas, the White House is convening a Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change with seventeen invited countries at the Center for Cultural and Technical Interchange Between East and West, Inc. (East-West Center) on the campus of the University of Hawaii at Manoa on January 30 and 31, 2008, to discuss potential international agreements on global climate change; and

Whereas, for more than half a century, researchers have used atmospheric samples taken at the Mauna Loa Observatory on the island of Hawaii to track a steady annual increase in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and have concluded that concentrations are now higher than they have been in the past eight hundred thousand years; and

Whereas, scientific consensus links the anthropogenic increase in greenhouse gases to global climate change; and

Whereas, the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that global emissions of greenhouse gases need to peak in the next ten to fifteen years and be reduced to levels well below half those in 2000 by the middle of this century in order to stabilize greenhouse gases concentrations in the atmosphere at the lowest levels assessed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change to date in its scenarios; and

Whereas, achieving the lowest levels assessed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to date and its corresponding potential damage limitation would require developed countries as a group to reduce emissions in a range of twenty-five to forty per cent below 1990 levels by 2020; and

Whereas, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the signatory nations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change have recognized the special dangers of climate change to island states, territories, and nations; and

Whereas, global climate change is causing rapid melting of ice at both the north and south polar regions, which, in conjunction with thermal expansion due to warmer water temperatures, is leading to a rapid rise in sea level; and

Whereas, University of Hawaii experts have demonstrated that a one meter rise in sea level would inundate much of Hawaii's coastline, including the world renowned Waikiki resort area, the Honolulu International Airport's reef runway, the majority of Hawaii's wastewater treatment facilities, many historic sites, and many populated areas, including lands up to a mile away from the existing shoreline in parts of Honolulu; and

Whereas, global climate change also threatens Hawaii with stronger hurricanes, prolonged drought, shifting weather patterns, warmer temperatures, shifting microclimates, increased spread of invasive species, and saltwater intrusion into its aquifers; and

Whereas, increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations foster greater carbon dioxide uptake by the world's oceans, leading to ocean acidification and the resultant decreases in reef health and decreases in survival of ocean life that rely on calcium carbonate shells; and

Whereas, Hawaii is doing its part to reduce its contribution to global climate change by

adopting progressive energy policies that promote the use of clean energy technologies such as wind, solar, wave, and biomass energy; and

Whereas, Act 234, Session Laws of Hawaii 2007, placed a binding statewide cap on Hawaii's greenhouse gas emissions by requiring Hawaii to reduce its non-aviation greenhouse gas emissions to their 1990 levels before 2020: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2008, That in recognition of Hawaii's overwhelming vulnerability to global climate change, the President of the United States is urged to use the January 30 and 31, 2008, Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change, which is being hosted in Hawaii, to commit to an economy-wide reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the United States; and be it further

Resolved, That the President of the United States is urged to consent to binding and quantified commitments for the United States under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that would result in the rapid stabilization and decrease in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations; and be it further

Resolved, That certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, members of Hawaii's congressional delegation, and the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

POM-290. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan urging the Congress to establish stricter standards for the drug approval process; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 134

Whereas, Americans are justifiably concerned about the safety and efficacy of the drugs and medications they take. In recent years, the FDA has received consumer reports of safety concerns and harmful side effects after the use of drugs approved by the FDA. In some cases, the FDA or manufacturer response to these reports has not been timely and consumers continue to risk harm; and

Whereas, The FDA is responsible for protecting public health by assuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, medical devices, our nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation. Accountability rests with the FDA to require stringent testing and trials before a drug can be approved for marketing; and

Whereas, Incidents of harmful side effects raised concerns that the FDA post-marketing monitoring needs strengthening. Although American drugs are arguably the safest in the world, allegations of detrimental consequences from FDA-approved drugs show that there is room for improvement. Stricter standards for the FDA's investigation and response to consumer reports of harmful side effects should be established to enhance the safety of drugs approved by the FDA and on the market. The FDA must immediately investigate consumer reports of harmful side effects and act quickly to protect the public. In this way, Michigan's tort law and strict FDA standards will ensure that Michigan residents can have confidence in the drugs and medications they take; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we memorialize the United States Congress and United States Food and Drug Administration to establish stricter standards for the drug approval process; 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 Commissioner of the United States Food and Drug Administration.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. INOUE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 602. A bill to develop the next generation of parental control technology (Rept. No. 110-268).

S. 1578. A bill to amend the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 to establish vessel ballast water management requirements, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-269).

S. 1889. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to improve railroad safety by reducing accidents and to prevent railroad fatalities, injuries, and hazardous materials releases, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-270).

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. AKAKA:

S. 2683. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify certain authorities relating to educational assistance benefits for veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. REED, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2684. A bill to reform the housing choice voucher program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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

S. 2685. A bill to prohibit cigarette manufacturers from making claims or representations based on data derived from the cigarette testing method established by the Federal Trade Commission; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. CARPER):

S. 2686. A bill to ensure that all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users as well as children, older individuals, and individuals with disabilities, are able to travel safely and conveniently on streets and highways; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER):

S. 2687. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to enhance beneficiary protections under parts C and D of the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. STEVENS):

S. Res. 468. A resolution designating April 2008 as "National 9-1-1 Education Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 22

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 22, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a program of educational assistance for members of the Armed Forces who serve in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, and for other purposes.

S. 315

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to establish a digital and wireless network technology program, and for other purposes.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to improve and expand geographic literacy among kindergarten through grade 12 students in the United States by improving professional development programs for kindergarten through grade 12 teachers offered through institutions of higher education.

S. 1070

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1070, a bill to amend the Social Security Act to enhance the social security of the Nation by ensuring adequate public-private infrastructure and to resolve to prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and for other purposes.

S. 1430

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1430, a bill to authorize State and local governments to direct divestiture from, and prevent investment in, companies with investments of \$20,000,000 or more in Iran's energy sector, and for other purposes.

S. 1459

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1459, a bill to strengthen the Nation's research efforts to identify the causes and cure of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, expand psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis data collection, study access to and quality of care for people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, and for other purposes.

S. 1494

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1494, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the special diabetes programs for