

Whereas the 28th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) is preparing for deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, now deployed in Iraq, predates the United States Army, traces its lineage to 1747, when Benjamin Franklin organized the "Associated Regiment of Foot" (currently 1-11th Infantry) in Philadelphia, and is the only unit in the National Guard to field the Stryker vehicle;

Whereas the Pennsylvania National Guard has deployed to more than 30 locations worldwide since September 11, 2001;

Whereas Pennsylvania's Army Aviation Flight Facility at Fort Indiantown Gap is the first and only National Guard facility in the Nation to achieve the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Program "STAR Award" for exhibiting exceptional safety management principles and accident-free flying hours, and effectively demonstrating the implementation of these principles during years-long intensive OSHA inspections;

Whereas in 2008, the Pennsylvania Air National Guard's (PaANG) 171st Air Refueling Wing flew more than 5,800 flying hours with more than 1,600 sorties flown, representing an 85 percent mission effectiveness rate;

Whereas the PaANG's 193rd Special Operations Wing flew more than 3,000 hours with more than 1,000 sorties in 2008 and is the only unit in the entire Armed Forces with an airborne psychological operations broadcasting platform;

Whereas the PaANG's 111th Fighter Wing flew more than 675 close-air support missions and provided more than 2,000 hours of on-station time to coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas soldiers and airmen from Pennsylvania's Counterdrug Program supported 575 cases that resulted in the seizure of more than \$27,000,000 in illegal narcotics, money, weapons, property, and vehicles directly related to illegal drug sales in 2008: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the Pennsylvania National Guard for its meritorious service to Pennsylvania and the Nation;

(2) honors the men and women who serve, or have served, in the Pennsylvania National Guard; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to thank the Pennsylvania National Guard for its continued service.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President. I have sought recognition to recognize the contributions of the Pennsylvania National Guard in service to Pennsylvania and the Nation. Pennsylvania units have taken part in every conflict America has faced since the Revolutionary War, and contributions made by the men and women of the Pennsylvania National Guard to our Nation's security continue to be nothing short of outstanding. The citizen soldiers and airmen who serve in the Guard have answered the call to serve their Nation both at home and abroad time and time again. I am honored to stand before you to recount some of the Pennsylvania National Guard's recent accomplishments.

With approximately 20,000 soldiers and airman in its ranks, the Pennsylvania National Guard is one of the largest National Guards in the Nation. It has the largest Army National Guard and the fourth largest Air National Guard. I commend the Adjutant Gen-

eral of Pennsylvania, Major General Jessica Wright, and Deputy Adjutant Generals, Major General Stephen Sischo and Brigadier General Joseph De Paul, for ably leading this force that has armories or airbases in 90 communities throughout the Commonwealth.

Since September 11, 2001, over 17,000 Pennsylvania National Guard soldiers and airmen have deployed to over 30 worldwide locations, and the Guard is currently supporting the largest deployment of Pennsylvania Guardsmen since World War II.

I regret that I do not have time to list all of the Pennsylvania National Guard's accomplishments and accolades. I will briefly highlight accomplishments of individual units within the Pennsylvania National Guard that attest to the impressive quality of the whole.

Currently, the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, an element of the 28th Infantry Division, is deployed in Iraq. The unit, which is the only unit in the National Guard to field the Stryker vehicle, traces its lineage to 1747, when Benjamin Franklin organized the "Associated Regiment of Foot", currently 1-11th Infantry, in Philadelphia.

Pennsylvania's Army Aviation Flight Facility at Fort Indiantown Gap is the first and only Army National Guard facility in the Nation to achieve the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Voluntary Protection Program "STAR Award" for exhibiting exceptional safety management principles and accident-free flying hours, and effectively demonstrating the implementation of these principles during years-long intensive inspections.

The Pennsylvania Air National Guard's 171st Air Refueling Wing, based in Coraopolis and commanded by Brigadier General Roy E. Uptegraff III, flew over 5,800 flying hours with more than 1,600 sorties flown in 2008, representing an 85 percent mission effectiveness rate.

The Pennsylvania Air National Guard's 193rd Special Operations Wing, based in Harrisburg and commanded by Brigadier General Eric G. Weller, flew over 3,000 hours and over 1,000 sorties in 2008 and is the only unit in the entire Armed Forces with an airborne psychological operations broadcasting platform.

The Pennsylvania Air National Guard's 111th Fighter Wing, based in Willow Grove and commanded by Colonel Paul Comtois, flew over 675 close-air support missions and provided more than 2,000 hours of on-station time to coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The soldiers and airmen from Pennsylvania's Counterdrug Program supported 575 cases that resulted in the seizure of over \$27 million in illegal narcotics, money, weapons, property and vehicles directly related to illegal drug sales in 2008.

The accomplishments I have enumerated are but a few of the many that the

Pennsylvania National Guard can claim to its credit. Whether through deployments overseas, the deployment of 2,500 Pennsylvania Army and Air National Guard members to support hurricane disaster relief efforts along the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina, or service within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the men and women of the Pennsylvania National Guard have repeatedly answered the call to duty. Their performance has been in keeping with the finest traditions of the military and has reflected great credit upon themselves, the Pennsylvania National Guard, and the United States Military.

I will continue to do all that I can in the United States Senate to ensure that the Pennsylvania National Guard has the necessary equipment, training and facilities to accomplish the missions it is called on to perform both for the Commonwealth and the Nation.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 673. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1105, making omnibus appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 673. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1105, making omnibus appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 366, line 24, strike "rule." and insert the following: "rule, provided that an attorney general of a State may not enter into a contingency fee agreement for legal or expert witness services relating to a civil action under this section. For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'contingency fee agreement' means a contract or other agreement to provide services under which the amount or the payment of the fee for the services is contingent in whole or in part on the outcome of the matter for which the services were obtained."

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 542

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I understand that S. 542, introduced earlier today by Senator REID, is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 542) to repeal the provision of law that provides automatic pay adjustments for Members of Congress.

Mr. WARNER. I now ask for its second reading and 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.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 9,
2009

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m., Monday, March 9; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus appropriations bill.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, Senators should expect a series of rollcall votes in relation to amendments to the appropriations bill beginning at 5:30 p.m. Monday.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WARNER. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator BOND.

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

ORDER FOR RECORD TO REMAIN
OPEN

Mr. WARNER. I ask unanimous consent that the RECORD remain open until 1 p.m. for the purpose of submitting statements and cosponsors.

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

Mr. WARNER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING
APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2009

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, H.J. Res. 38, having arrived from the House, is considered read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Congratulations, Mr. President. You have witnessed democracy in action, and that is the most painless way to pass a measure I have seen.

CREDIT CRISIS

Mr. BOND. On a much more somber note, Americans got more bad news today.

For February, our Nation's unemployment rate is now a staggering 8.1 percent. This is the highest unemployment rate in more than 20 years. More than 650,000 jobs were lost in February. These job cuts come on the heels of 655,000 jobs lost in January and another 681,000 jobs lost in December.

This job loss means that what we are doing to solve the economic crisis is not working. This job loss is much more than a bad number for millions of Americans. These layoffs may mean missing a mortgage payment and facing foreclosure. These layoffs may mean not being able to take a sick child to the doctor. These job layoffs may mean not getting enough money to put food on the table.

Right now, in every community across the Nation, workers are losing their jobs. These families are suffering as bills pile up and savings evaporate and businesses are struggling to meet payroll.

After the new administration heralded the passage of their trillion-dollar spending bill as the answer to this economic crisis, some Americans began hoping their economic futures may be turning around. Unfortunately, this crisis is one where we cannot spend our way out.

Until we fix the real root of the crisis, our credit crisis, the hemorrhaging of jobs will not stop. I spoke about this earlier this week, and I will keep speaking about it until policymakers decide to act responsibly.

The President, in his message in the State of the Union, said nothing is going to work until we fix the credit crisis. This latest jobs report is another sad reminder that right now our financial system is not working. Our financial system has become clogged with toxic assets, and until they are removed, fear and uncertainty will continue to dominate the markets and our economy.

Our banking and financial system affects every American's standard of living, our ability to create and maintain jobs, and our ability to compete globally. It is central to all financial and household activities for Main Street America.

Nothing the Government has done, to date, is working. Instead, the previous and the current administrations have been throwing billions in good taxpayer dollars into bad, failing banks. Why hasn't pouring more money into the system worked? Because policymakers are only treating the symptoms rather than the cause.

The good news is, though, we do not have to go back to the drawing board. Under my American Credit Cleanup Plan, the Government can put to work the statutory authorities already in existence and long used by the FDIC, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, for failed banks. This plan is to take advantage of the lessons we have learned. We saw what works in our Nation's experience during the savings and loan crisis. We also saw what won't work.

During the 1990s, Japan lacked the will to clean up its sick banking system by taking out the toxic assets, and the end result was a "lost decade" during which Japan was stuck in a recession. I, for one, refuse to repeat Japan's mistakes, dooming the Nation's families and workers to a recession any longer and deeper than it takes to clean up the mess.

The first step toward recovery is to identify troubled banks and then remove the banks' toxic assets in a transparent, market-friendly manner that is free from political interference and micromanagement. The toxic assets of the troubled banks would be removed through a temporary conservatorship. Under conservatorship, the first order of business there is to protect the banks' depositors up to the current FDIC guaranteed loan levels. It is essential that we continue to protect American families' investments.

Also, many Americans are understandably angry as policymakers debate lowering pay caps for some executives who got us into this mess. Well, capping pay or taking away corporate jets isn't enough. Instead, we need to fire the failed executives and the boards of directors that took their businesses and their banks down the tubes.

Next, the Government needs to separate the bad assets from the good and hold the bad assets until the market conditions improve when the value of these assets—a good part of the value of these assets—can be realized. Unlike the current ad hoc approach, my plan also provides an exit strategy. Once you get the bad assets out, you cleanse the toxic assets, then you have the restructured institution which won't continue to call on the taxpayer for more dollars to survive.

I share the bailout fatigue all Americans are feeling, but we cannot afford to ignore the crisis. Failing to act could lead to families being unable to get loans to refinance homes, farmers unable to get credit to buy seed, students unable to get loans to go to school, and businesses unable to get credit to meet payrolls, keep workers, or expand. Our economic recovery depends directly on unlocking the credit system. It is time for policymakers to act.

This action must be a bold, coherent, and smart approach like my American Credit Cleanup Plan. It has to tackle the root cause of the problem—the toxic assets—get them out of the system, and lead us out of this economic crisis and help Americans get back to work. I, for one, say no more throwing good taxpayer money down a rat hole, no more "ad hoc" where we look at the crisis of the day and throw money at some institution that has already depreciated significantly in value in hopes of keeping it afloat. We need to take those institutions, cleanse the assets necessary, get new management, new executives, and put them back in the marketplace to function without Government interference.