

health care system. It would also require the VA to provide assistance to veterans who wish to file absentee ballots. In addition, the bill would require facilities to allow access for non-partisan voter assistance organizations, subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions. To ensure accountability and transparency, the bill also provides certain reporting requirements on the Department of Veteran Affairs. This legislation has the support of voting rights and veterans groups, including the Brennan Center for Justice and Veterans for Common Sense.

I believe it is essential for the Nation to do everything possible to honor our veterans. Ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as interventions across the globe, means more and more men and women are coming home as veterans. These brave men and women must know that the country will honor their sacrifice when they return. Recognizing their service not only means paying continual tribute through services on such holidays as Memorial Day and Veterans Day. It also means ensuring that our veterans in Vermont and across the country have the ability to fully participate in the democratic process. This is not a Republican or Democrat issue it is an American issue. We should all be able to agree that Americans who have ventured into harm's way to defend our values and spread democracy abroad must also have full enjoyment of those freedoms here at home.

The disabled veterans of the Nation have given extraordinary service to our country and have advanced democracy around the globe. Enactment of the Veterans Voting Support Act is the very least we owe our citizen soldiers for their many sacrifices on our behalf. I urge all Senators to support the Veterans Voting Support Act and help us to enact this critical measure into law before next November's midterm elections.

COMMENDING SENATOR COLEMAN

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to my distinguished colleague from Minnesota, Senator Norm Coleman.

I worked with Senator Coleman since 2002 when he was elected U.S. Senator of Minnesota. Norm is a man of integrity and patriotism. He has dedicated most of his adult life to serve the people of Minnesota. While he served in the Minnesota Attorney General's Office for a large portion of his career and eventually became solicitor general, he is highly praised in the city of St. Paul for his successes as mayor. His vision and execution to revitalize the city of St. Paul became a benchmark for success in local governing. Because of his accomplishments as mayor, he gained higher approval ratings in Minnesota than most politicians in Washington ever receive in their entire careers.

During his tenure as U.S. Senator, Norm was a leader in strengthening our homeland security and national defense. He consistently supported and sponsored measures that provide our troops with the important tools they need to defend our freedoms overseas and fought to make sure they receive the proper care and services as they return home. Additionally, Norm remained a strong voice for alternative fuels and energy independence. The Commonwealth of Kentucky and I are thankful for his diligence in promoting clean energy.

He always fought for what he believes is best for Minnesotans and for America. While we are sad to see him go here in the Senate, we are grateful for his contributions. I am honored to know him and to have worked with him. I wish his wife Laurie, his children, Jake and Sarah, and him the best in all of their future endeavors.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, 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 sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:41 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 129. An act to authorize the conveyance of certain National Forest System lands in the Los Padres National Forest in California.

H.R. 409. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain Bureau of Land Management land in the State of Nevada to the Las Vegas Motor Speedway, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1018. An act to amend the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act to improve the management and long-term health of wild free-roaming horses and burros, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1442. An act to provide for the sale of the Federal Government's reversionary interest in approximately 60 acres of land in Salt Lake City, Utah, originally conveyed to the Mount Olivet Cemetery Association under the Act of January 23, 1909.

H.R. 2188. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to conduct a Joint Venture Program to protect, restore, enhance, and manage migratory bird populations, their habitats, and the ecosystems they rely on, through voluntary actions on public and private lands, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3170. An act making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3183. An act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 156. Concurrent resolution condemning the attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 129. An act to authorize the conveyance of certain National Forest System lands in the Los Padres National Forest in California; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 409. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain Bureau of Land Management land in the State of Nevada to the Las Vegas Motor Speedway, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1018. An act to amend the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act to improve the management and long-term health of wild free-roaming horses and burros, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1442. An act to provide for the sale of the Federal Government's reversionary interest in approximately 60 acres of land in Salt Lake City, Utah, originally conveyed to the Mount Olivet Cemetery Association under the Act of January 23, 1909; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2188. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to conduct a Joint Venture Program to protect, restore, enhance, and manage migratory bird populations, their habitats, and the ecosystems they rely on, through voluntary actions on public and private lands, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 156. Concurrent resolution condemning the attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3170. An act making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3183. An act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 529. A bill to assist in the conservation of rare felid and rare canids by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of countries within the range of rare felid and rare canid populations and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of rare felid and rare canid populations (Rept. No. 111-52).

H.R. 80. A bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to treat nonhuman primates as prohibited wildlife species under that Act, to make corrections in the provisions relating to captive wildlife offenses under that Act, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 111-53).

H.R. 388. A bill to assist in the conservation of cranes by supporting and providing, through projects of persons and organizations with expertise in crane conservation, financial resources for the conservation programs of countries the activities of which directly or indirectly affect cranes and the ecosystems of cranes (Rept. No. 111-54).

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. TESTER:

S. 1470. A bill to sustain the economic development and recreational use of National Forest System land and other public land in the State of Montana, to add certain land to the National Wilderness Preservation System, to release certain wilderness study areas, to designate new areas for recreation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 1471. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to carry out certain water control projects at Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. COBURN):

S. 1472. A bill to establish a section within the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice to enforce human rights laws, to make technical and conforming amendments to criminal and immigration laws pertaining to human rights violations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. HAGAN (for herself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 1473. A bill to catalyze change in the care and treatment of diabetes in the United States; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 1474. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the provision prohibiting the crediting of interest to the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 1475. A bill to prohibit the heads of executive agencies from entering into or renewing procurement contracts with persons that export certain computer or telecommunications technologies to Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. KERRY:

S. Res. 217. A resolution commending Captain Wei Jiafu and the China Ocean Shipping Company for increasing business relations between the United States and China; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 21

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. BURRIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 21, a bill to reduce unintended pregnancy, reduce abortions, and improve access to women's health care.

S. 144

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 144, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove cell phones from listed property under section 280F.

S. 307

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 307, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide flexibility in the manner in which beds are counted for purposes of determining whether a hospital may be designated as a critical access hospital under the Medicare program and to exempt from the critical access hospital inpatient bed limitation the number of beds provided for certain veterans.

S. 316

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 316, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the reduction in the rate of tax on qualified timber gain of corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 343

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 343, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage services of qualified respiratory therapists performed under the general supervision of a physician.

S. 557

At the request of Mr. MARTINEZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 557, a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Silver Alert plans throughout the United States, to authorize grants for the assistance of organizations to find missing adults, and for other purposes.

S. 604

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr.

HARKIN), the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 604, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to reform the manner in which the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System is audited by the Comptroller General of the United States and the manner in which such audits are reported, and for other purposes.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to provide 100,000,000 people with first-time access to safe drinking water and sanitation on a sustainable basis by 2015 by improving the capacity of the United States Government to fully implement the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005.

S. 647

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 647, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve the transparency of information on skilled nursing facilities and nursing facilities and to clarify and improve the targeting of the enforcement of requirements with respect to such facilities.

S. 662

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 662, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for reimbursement of certified midwife services and to provide for more equitable reimbursement rates for certified nurse-midwife services.

S. 664

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 664, a bill to create a systemic risk monitor for the financial system of the United States, to oversee financial regulatory activities of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

S. 781

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 781, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for collegiate housing and infrastructure grants.

S. 801

At the request of Mr. THUNE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 801, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to waive charges for humanitarian care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to family members accompanying veterans severely injured after September 11, 2001, as they receive medical care from the Department and to provide assistance to family caregivers, and for other purposes.