

that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2009, at 9:45 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on the costs and benefits for energy consumers and energy prices associated with the allocation of greenhouse gas emission allowances.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by e-mail to Gina_Weinstock@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Jonathan Black at (202) 224-6722 or Gina Weinstock at (202) 224-5684.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a business meeting has been scheduled before Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The business meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 14, 2009, at 11:30 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the business meeting is to consider pending nominations.

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224-7571 or Amanda Kelly at (202) 224-6836.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO
MEET

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 13, 2009, at 10 a.m., in room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 13, 2009, at 2:30 p.m.

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

NOTICE: REGISTRATION OF MASS
MAILINGS

The filing date for 2009 third quarter Mass Mailings is Monday, October 26, 2009. If your office did no mass mailings during this period, please submit a form that states "none."

Mass mailing registrations, or negative reports, should be submitted to the Senate Office of Public Records, 232 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510-7116.

The Public Records office will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the filing

date to accept these filings. For further information, please contact the Public Records office at (202) 224-0322.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE BUDGET
REFORM AND TRANSPARENCY
ACT OF 2009

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate a message from the House with respect to H.R. 1016.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the House as follows:

H.R. 1016

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1016) entitled "An Act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide advance appropriations authority for certain accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.", with the following amendment:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the amendment of the Senate, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. PRESIDENT'S BUDGET SUBMISSION.

Section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(36) information on estimates of appropriations for the fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the budget is submitted for the following medical care accounts of the Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs account:

"(A) Medical Services.

"(B) Medical Support and Compliance.

"(C) Medical Facilities."

**SEC. 3. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN
MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-
FAIRS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 116 the following new section:

**"§ 117. Advance appropriations for certain
medical care accounts**

"(a) IN GENERAL.—For each fiscal year, beginning with fiscal year 2011, discretionary new budget authority provided in an appropriations Act for the medical care accounts of the Department shall—

"(1) be made available for that fiscal year; and

"(2) include, for each such account, advance discretionary new budget authority that first becomes available for the first fiscal year after the budget year.

"(b) ESTIMATES REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall include in documents submitted to Congress in support of the President's budget submitted pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, detailed estimates of the funds necessary for the medical care accounts of the Department for the fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the budget is submitted.

"(c) MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS.—For purposes of this section, the term 'medical care accounts of the Department' means the following medical care accounts of the Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs account:

"(1) Medical Services.

"(2) Medical Support and Compliance.

"(3) Medical Facilities.

"(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than July 31 of each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress an annual report on the sufficiency of the

Department's resources for the next fiscal year beginning after the date of the submittal of the report for the provision of medical care. Such report shall also include estimates of the workload and demand data for that fiscal year."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 113 the following new line:

"117. Advance appropriations for certain medical care accounts."

**SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF THE
ACCURACY OF VA MEDICAL CARE
BUDGET SUBMISSION IN RELATION
TO BASELINE HEALTH CARE MODEL
PROJECTION.**

(a) REVIEW OF ACCURACY OF MEDICAL CARE BUDGET SUBMISSION.—The Comptroller General shall conduct a review of each budget of the President for a fiscal year that is submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31 in order to assess whether or not the relevant components of the amounts requested in such budget for such fiscal year for the medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs specified in section 117(c) of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 3, are consistent with estimates of the resources required by the Department for the provision of medical care and services in such fiscal year, as forecast using the Enrollee Health Care Projection Model, or other methodologies used by the Department.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of each year in 2011, 2012, and 2013, on which the President submits the budget request for the next fiscal year under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs, Appropriations, and the Budget of the Senate and the Committees on Veterans' Affairs, Appropriations, and the Budget of the House of Representatives and to the Secretary a report on the review conducted under subsection (a).

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report under this paragraph shall include, for the fiscal year beginning in the year in which such report is submitted, the following:

(A) An assessment of the review conducted under subsection (a).

(B) The basis for such assessment.

(C) Such additional information as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

(3) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—Each report submitted under this subsection shall also be made available to the public.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I am very pleased that the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees have worked out an agreement on S. 423 and H.R. 1016, the proposed Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009. With the President's signature, this vital piece of legislation, which I will refer to as the "Compromise Agreement," will authorize, beginning in fiscal year 2011, advance appropriations for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs by providing 2 fiscal year budget authority.

This compromise agreement will provide sufficient, timely, and predictable health care funding to those who have sacrificed a great deal for this Nation. By ensuring advanced appropriations to the medical services, medical support and compliance, and medical facilities accounts, VA will be able to better align its funding cycles and function more effectively.

The VA system has experienced recurrent problems with receiving proper