Whereas proposals to privatize Social Security would jeopardize the retirement security of millions of Americans by relying on the ups-and-downs of the volatile stock market to provide benefits;

Whereas Social Security benefits have already been cut by 13 percent, as the Normal Retirement Age was raised in 1983 from 65 years of age to 67 years of age by 2022;

Whereas the physical demands of a job differ from industry to industry and, on average, the longevity of the lives of individuals differ significantly according to their level of income, education, and access to health care;

Whereas 45 percent of workers who are 58 years of age or older are in jobs that are physically demanding or have difficult working conditions;

Whereas raising the retirement age is especially burdensome to African-American, Latino, and older low-income workers;

Whereas according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in April 2010, the job market for Americans 55 years of age and older was one of the worst on record;

Whereas Social Security benefits for retirees currently average a modest $14,000 a year, with the average for women receiving benefits being less than $12,000 per year; and

Whereas according to the Social Security Administration, raising the retirement age for future retirees would reduce benefits by 6 percent to 7 percent for each year that the Normal Retirement Age is raised under Social Security: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate to reaffirm our commitment to the Social Security program, one of the greatest legislative accomplishments in the history of our Nation, without privatizing Social Security, raising the Normal Retirement Age, or other similar cuts to benefits under title II of the Social Security Act.

SENATE RESOLUTION 665—TO REQUIRE A WITNESS BEFORE A COMMITTEE HEARING TO FILE A DISCLOSURE FORM IDENTIFYING SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL INTERESTS OR COMPENSATION FROM AN ORGANIZATION OR COMPANY DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE SUBJECT OF A HEARING

Mr. GRASSLEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 665

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This resolution may be cited as the ''Witness Sunshine Resolution''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE STANDING RULES.

Paragraph 4(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended by—

(1) inserting ''(1)'' after ''(b)''; and

(2) inserting at the end the following:

''(2)(A) Each committee (including the Committee on Appropriations) shall require each witness who is to appear before the committee in any hearing to file with the clerk of the committee, at least 1 day before the date of the appearance of that witness, a disclosure form identifying any arrangement, affiliation, relationship, or substantial financial interest the witness has with any organization, company, private, or government entity directly related to the subject of the hearing as well as the nature of the relationship disclosed, unless the committee chairman and the ranking minority member determine that there is good cause for noncompliance.

''(B) For any witness who at the time of the hearing is employed by the Federal Government, submission of his or her Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report may fulfill the requirements of this clause at the discretion of the Chairman and the Ranking Member so long as the completed form is up to date and discloses all relevant arrangements, affiliations, relationships, and substantial financial interests.

''(C) If so requested by the committee, the staff of the committee shall prepare for the use of the members of the committee before each day of hearing before the committee a digest of the disclosure forms which have been filed under this clause by witnesses who are to appear before the committee on that day. In addition, the disclosure forms shall be made part of the committee record.''.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, so far during the 111th Congress, the Finance Committee, of which I serve as the ranking Republican member, has held over 50 hearings. At those hearings, around 200 witnesses offered their testimony and answered members' questions. The witnesses who testify at our hearings are considered to be some of the most qualified experts in their field and their participation is critical to the legislative process. Because of their influence on legislation, it is important that Congress knows to what extent the witness' testimony is objective and if the witness has any significant interest in the outcome of potential legislation.

Three of the hearings held by the Finance Committee this Congress were roundtable discussions on health care reform. These discussions brought 41 witnesses, including industry stakeholders and academic leaders, before the committee to share their expert knowledge on policy options for health reform.

At one of these roundtables, Dr. Jonathan Gruber, a health care economist and professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, testified before the committee on health care reform. I thought he was an unbiased expert, but was later disappointed to hear that he had been paid over $400,000 by the administration to help advance the president's health care proposals. At the very least, he should have been straightforward with the committee and disclosed this financial interest.

In addition to his testimony before the Finance Committee, Dr. Gruber testified in front of the HELP Committee and was also a high-profile supporter of the administration's health care reform effort in the media. In only a handful of his many articles on health care reform did he disclose his financial conflict of interest.

While the propriety of Dr. Gruber advocating for administration positions in the media and other venues while failing to disclose his financial ties to the administration has been called into question, I am especially concerned about his advocacy before the U.S. Congress. When an academic leader comes before Congress to advocate a position, Congress should have confidence that the witness is both independent and objective and not being paid to assist the administration, or any other organization, in its efforts.

Equally troubling is the Department of Health and Human Services, which has been unresponsive to efforts by Senator ENZI and myself to learn more about their practice of hiring consultants to advance the President's agenda.

The fact that this expert was paid by the administration—and hid that fact from Congress—really taints everything this particular advocate told the committees. If Congress had been aware of his arrangement with HHS prior to his testimony, we would have had the opportunity to clarify that relationship with Dr. Gruber before considering his opinions and ideas. Unfortunately, when we learn about it after the fact, it completely discredits the information he presented.

To follow up on this alarming news, Senator ENZI and I sent a letter to Dr. Gruber on January 26, 2010, asking him for details of any other government contracts he might have or might have had over the last 5 years and for details on whether he disclosed his government ties during media interviews, speaking engagements and written works on health care reform.

Dr. Gruber's response failed to answer any of the questions posed in the letter. Instead, the response barely exceeded one page in length, was dismissive of any concern about the lack of disclosure and attempted to excuse his failure to disclose and to explain away the need for any detailed response. Furthermore, Dr. Gruber did not even commit to providing any such disclosure of the financial relationship with the Administration in the future.

Unfortunately, Dr. Gruber's failure to answer our questions came as no surprise. In my 30 years serving in the United States Congress, I have found that chasing answers on the back end is much more difficult than requiring clarity and transparency from the start. And many of my colleagues might be surprised to find out that although many witnesses voluntarily disclose their affiliations or relationships so that they can explain them, no Senate committee currently requires witnesses to disclose potential conflicts of interest.

Dr. Gruber even highlighted this point when he said in his February 23 letter that, ''to the best of my recollection, during the course of my health care reform work with Congress, no Member or staffer ever asked me whether I held any government contracts.''

In retrospect, if we were to have asked Dr. Gruber to disclose his agreements with the administration up front, we would have had the ability to ask him questions in-person, and he would have been given a chance to explain the relationship before testifying, so that his testimony could be given its proper weight. Our failure as an institution to ask for transparency in testimony is a problem that has a simple

solution, a solution that most other institutions that rely on the work of academic experts have already implemented. The solution is to simply ask witnesses who come before the Senate to disclose any potential conflicts of interest up front.

Our colleagues in the House of Representatives are already requiring witnesses to do this and there is no reason why we shouldn't require the same level of transparency from witnesses who come before the Senate.

That is why today I am submitting the Witness Sunshine resolution. This resolution will make the Senate committee hearings more transparent and thus more credible and valuable to the legislative process. It achieves this goal by requiring each witness that appears before any Senate committee to submit a form disclosing outside affiliations and financial interests in any organizations, including government entities, that are directly related to the topic of the committee hearing.

In August, I was happy to learn that the administration is supportive of this idea. In an August 4 letter, Secretary Sebelius wrote me saying, ''Should the Senate Finance Committee or any other Congressional Committee choose to [require witnesses to submit financial disclosure forms in advance of an appearance before the Committee], I would certainly encourage HHS contractors to fully comply with [that requirement].''

So adopting this rule should be an easy decision for the Senate. Our colleagues in the House of Representatives have been requiring this level of transparency for over a decade and now we know that the administration supports the idea as well. The House tells me that their witnesses are not overburdened or discouraged to offer testimony because of this requirement. I have carefully drafted this resolution so that the requirement for transparency similarly does not burden Senate witnesses.

It is time for this body to meet the standards for transparency set by the House and followed in so many other institutions across the country. Supporting my resolution will help ensure that future testimony can be given its proper weight, and end the uncertainty of unknown interests influencing testimony. I urge my colleagues to support my resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 666—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 15, 2010, AS ''NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLE DAY''

Mr. ROCKEFELLER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 666

Whereas the United States should reduce the dependence of the United States on foreign oil and enhance the energy security of the United States by creating a transportation sector that is less dependent on oil;

Whereas the United States should improve the air quality of the United States by reducing emissions from the millions of motor vehicles that operate in the United States;

Whereas the United States should foster national expertise and technological advancement in cleaner, more energy-efficient alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles;

Whereas a robust domestic industry for alternative fuels and alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles will create jobs and increase the competitiveness of the United States in the international community;

Whereas the people of the United States need more options for clean and energy-efficient transportation;

Whereas the mainstream adoption of alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles will produce benefits at the local, national, and international levels;

Whereas consumers and businesses require a better understanding of the benefits of alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles;

Whereas first responders require proper and comprehensive training to become fully prepared for any precautionary measures that the first responders may need to take during incidents and extrications that involve alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles;

Whereas the Federal Government can lead the way toward a cleaner and more efficient transportation sector by choosing alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles for the fleets of the Federal Government; and

Whereas Federal support for the adoption of alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles can accelerate greater energy independence for the United States, improve the environmental security of the United States, and address global climate change: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 15, 2010, as ''National Alternative Fuel Vehicle Day'';

(2) supports National Alternative Fuel Vehicle Day as a day to promote programs and activities that will lead to the greater use of cleaner, more efficient transportation that uses new sources of energy; and

(3) urges the people of the United States—

(A) to increase the personal and commercial use of clean, energy-efficient alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles;

(B) to promote public sector adoption of clean, energy-efficient alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles; and

(C) to encourage the adoption of Federal policies to reduce the dependence of the United States on foreign oil through the advancement and adoption of alternative, advanced, and emerging vehicle and fuel technologies.

SENATE RESOLUTION 667—RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COASTAL STATES ORGANIZATION

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. GREGG, and Ms. SNOWE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 667

Whereas, in 2010, the Coastal States Organization (referred to in this preamble as the ''CSO'') is celebrating its 40th anniversary of representing the Governors of the 35 coastal States, commonwealths, and territories of the United States on issues relating to the sound management of coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes resources;

Whereas the CSO was created in 1969 by a resolution, which was endorsed unanimously, of the National Governors Association;

Whereas, in January 1970, the first meeting of the CSO was held in Savannah, Georgia;

Whereas, in October 2010, the CSO will celebrate its 40th anniversary in Monterey, California;

Whereas the CSO has been empowered to contribute to the development and operation of the national coastal zone management program, which was established by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.);

Whereas the CSO is a nonpartisan organization comprised of economically, environmentally, geographically, and socially diverse States, territories, and commonwealths;

Whereas the CSO serves as a means for the Governors of the member States, territories, and commonwealths to communicate with Congress and the executive branch on coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes policies, programs, and affairs; and

Whereas the member States, territories, and commonwealths of the CSO have a responsibility to work with the Federal Government to manage and conserve the public trust in coastal and ocean ecosystems as well as the quality of life in coastal communities for the benefit of current and future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 40th anniversary of the Coastal States Organization; and

(2) supports the role of States, territories, and commonwealths in the stewardship of coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes resources.

SENATE RESOLUTION 668—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 20, 2010, AS THE ''NATIONAL DAY ON WRITING''

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. BROWN of Ohio) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to.

S. RES. 668

Whereas people in the 21st century are writing more than ever before for personal, professional, and civic purposes;

Whereas the social nature of writing invites people of every age, profession, and walk of life to create meaning through composing;

Whereas more and more people in every occupation deem writing as essential and influential in their work;

Whereas writers continue to learn how to write for different purposes, audiences, and occasions throughout their lifetimes;

Whereas developing digital technologies expand the possibilities for composing in multiple media at a faster pace than ever before;

Whereas young people are leading the way in developing new forms of composing by using different forms of digital media;

Whereas effective communication contributes to building a global economy and a global community;

Whereas the National Council of Teachers of English, in conjunction with its many national and local partners, honors and celebrates the importance of writing through the National Day on Writing;

Whereas the National Day on Writing celebrates the foundational place of writing in the personal, professional, and civic lives of the people of the United States;

Whereas the National Day on Writing provides an opportunity for individuals across