(Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 401, a resolution expressing appreciation for Foreign Service and Civil Service professionals who represent the United States around the globe.

S. RES. 435

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 435, a resolution calling for democratic change in Syria, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 439

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 439, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC should eliminate the ''adult entertainment'' section of the classified advertising website Backpage.com.

S. RES. 449

At the request of Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 449, a resolution calling on all governments to assist in the safe return of children abducted from or wrongfully retained outside the country of their habitual residence.

S. RES. 462

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 462, a resolution recognizing National Foster Care Month as an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges faced by children in the foster care system, acknowledging the dedication of foster care parents, advocates, and workers, and encouraging Congress to implement policy to improve the lives of children in the foster care system.

AMENDMENT NO. 2145

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2145 proposed to S. 3187, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs and medical devices, to establish user-fee programs for generic drugs and biosimilars, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2146

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2146 proposed to S. 3187, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs and medical devices, to establish user-fee programs for generic drugs and biosimilars, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 3239. A bill to provide for a uniform national standard for the housing and treatment of egg-laying hens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation, with Senators BLUMENTHAL, BROWN, CANTWELL, MERKLEY, VITTER, and WYDEN, that will codify an agreement reached by the nation's largest egg producer organization, the United Egg Producers, and the largest animal welfare organization, the Humane Society of the United States.

In its most simple terms, the legislation sets a national standard for the treatment of egg-laying hens and the labeling of eggs.

As of today, 6 States, including California, have set their own standards about how egg-laying hens should be raised, and 18 other States allow citizen ballot initiatives could initiate similar laws in the future.

These State standards will make it difficult for egg producers to freely ship across State lines.

Starting in 2015, eggs produced in Iowa, Indiana and other egg-exporting states can no longer be shipped to California because the hens will have been raised in cages that do not meet California's standards.

Different standards in Michigan and Ohio will take effect later, further adding to the patchwork of regulations.

As States with disparate standards continue to protect their own egg producers by banning the sale of eggs from States with lower or no standards, a complicated web of State laws will impair interstate commerce.

I have met with a number of egg producers and their concerns vary.

For some producers, different regulations increase costs because new cages must be designed for each State in which they operate.

Other producers fear that egg prices in states without regulations will plummet as imports flood their market.

Some egg producers selling to national grocery stores will have to produce eggs that meet different standards in different States.

Concerns don't end with producers.

Consumers can expect to see higher prices at grocery stores and restaurants will have to pay more for every egg they prepare.

Millions of individuals, including myself, are concerned about the living conditions of these animals.

That is why I am pleased to introduce this legislation today. The United Egg Producers and the Humane Society of the United States worked for over a year to reach this compromise, and I believe it is one that strikes a very fair balance.

Producers must enlarge cages for egg-laying hens and allow space for the birds to engage in natural behaviors such as nesting and perching.

Producers will have up to 18 years to meet this standard and make the required investments.

The legislation will officially outlaw the practice of starving chickens to increase egg-production, a cruel practice that is rarely used today, and one with consensus to end.

The bill will also lead to improved air quality in hen-houses by prohibiting excessive ammonia levels and it requires humane euthanasia of spent hens. This is also already common practice in the industry.

At its heart, this legislation is about protecting the future of the egg industry.

The egg industry brought this legislation to Congress and has asked us to help them implement the uniform regulations needed to survive and grow.

With this legislation, egg producers will have the market certainty they need and a reasonable timetables to make the required changes.

Producers need these uniform national standards so they can invest in new cages without facing the risk of more stringent state laws rendering their investments moot.

The egg industry is prepared to make these investments, many of which can be accomplished during the normal course of replacing aged equipment.

In addition to promoting industry stability, this bill will save jobs and strengthen the economy.

Furthermore, consumers are already embracing these reforms. Polls indicate broad support for the provisions in this bill and for humane treatment of egg-laying hens in general.

A recent survey found that 64 percent of Americans say that these newer facilities should be required through Federal legislation.

A majority, 58 percent, of American consumers also support a national standard.

The survey found 92 percent of consumers support the industry transitioning to these new enriched cages.

Candidly, it is not often that we see this sort of compromise in Washington.

Two groups that have been in fundamental conflict for years sat down and reached a deal.

The egg industry and the Humane Society are lock-step in their support for this bill. They are joined in endorsing the bill by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Consumer Federation of America.

Even though the egg industry supports this bill, some still target this legislation as anti-agriculture they suggest the legislation will somehow be applied to, or set a precedent for Federal regulation of other industries.

That is simply not the case.

I want to be clear: requirements in the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012 only apply to the production of eggs. The bill will not affect any other agricultural product including beef, pork, poultry and milk.

This legislation is a responsible compromise between those who advocate for more humane treatment for egg-laying hens and those who put breakfast on our tables.

I hope that even in this partisan climate we can enact this commonsense and widely endorsed legislation.

This legislation protects restaurants, bakers, food processors and American consumers from unnecessarily high egg prices. It protects egg producers from having eggs they can't sell.

This legislation is a reasonable, widely-supported solution to a real, costly and growing problem. The bill has the support of the United Egg Producers, which represents nearly 90 percent of the Nation's egg industry, as well as nine state and regional egg producer groups, more than 100 individual egg farms and more than 880 other family farms.

I urge you to join me in supporting this important legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3239

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012''.

SEC. 2. HEN HOUSING AND TREATMENT STANDARDS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 4 of the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1033) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (a) as subsection (c);

(2) by redesignating subsections (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), and (k), respectively;

(3) by redesignating subsections (h) and (i) as subsections (n) and (o), respectively;

(4) by redesignating subsections (j), (k), and (l) as subsections (r), (s), and (t), respectively;

(5) by redesignating subsections (m), (n), (o), (p), (q), (r), (s), (t), (u), (v), (w), (x), (y), and (z) as subsections (v), (w), (x), (y), (z), (aa), (bb), (cc), (dd), (ee), (ff), (gg), (hh), and (ii), respectively;

(6) by inserting before subsection (c), as redesignated by paragraph (1), the following new subsections:

''(a) The term 'adequate environmental enrichments' means adequate perch space, dust bathing or scratching areas, and nest space, as defined by the Secretary of Agriculture, based on the best available science, including the most recent studies available at the time that the Secretary defines the term. The Secretary shall issue regulations defining this term not later than January 1, 2017, and the final regulations shall go into effect on December 31, 2018.

''(b) The term 'adequate housing-related labeling' means a conspicuous, legible marking on the front or top of a package of eggs accurately indicating the type of housing that the egg-laying hens were provided during egg production, in one of the following formats:

''(1) 'Eggs from free-range hens' to indicate that the egg-laying hens from which the eggs or egg products were derived were, during egg production—

''(A) not housed in caging devices; and

''(B) provided with outdoor access.

''(2) 'Eggs from cage-free hens' to indicate that the egg-laying hens from which the eggs or egg products were derived were, during egg production, not housed in caging devices.

''(3) 'Eggs from enriched cages' to indicate that the egg-laying hens from which the eggs or egg products were derived were, during egg production, housed in caging devices that—

''(A) contain adequate environmental enrichments; and

''(B) provide the hens a minimum of 116 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 101 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.

''(4) 'Eggs from caged hens' to indicate that the egg-laying hens from which the eggs or egg products were derived were, during egg production, housed in caging devices that either—

''(A) do not contain adequate environmental enrichments; or

''(B) do not provide the hens a minimum of 116 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 101 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.'';

(7) by inserting after subsection (c), as redesignated by paragraph (1), the following new subsections:

''(d) The term 'brown hen' means a brown egg-laying hen used for commercial egg production.

''(e) The term 'caging device' means any cage, enclosure, or other device used for the housing of egg-laying hens for the production of eggs in commerce, but does not include an open barn or other fixed structure without internal caging devices.'';

(8) by inserting after subsection (k), as redesignated by paragraph (2), the following new subsections:

''(l) The term 'egg-laying hen' means any female domesticated chicken, including white hens and brown hens, used for the commercial production of eggs for human consumption.

''(m) The term 'existing caging device' means any caging device that was continuously in use for the production of eggs in commerce up through and including December 31, 2011.'';

(9) by inserting after subsection (o), as redesignated by paragraph (3), the following new subsections:

''(p) The term 'feed-withdrawal molting' means the practice of preventing food intake for the purpose of inducing egg-laying hens to molt.

''(q) The term 'individual floor space' means the amount of total floor space in a caging device available to each egg-laying hen in the device, which is calculated by measuring the total floor space of the caging device and dividing by the total number of egg-laying hens in the device.'';

(10) by inserting after subsection (t), as redesignated by paragraph (4), the following new subsection:

''(u) The term 'new caging device' means any caging device that was not continuously in use for the production of eggs in commerce on or before December 31, 2011.''; and

(11) by inserting at the end the following new subsections:

''(jj) The term 'water-withdrawal molting' means the practice of preventing water intake for the purpose of inducing egg-laying hens to molt.

''(kk) The term 'white hen' means a white egg-laying hen used for commercial egg production.''.

(b) HOUSING AND TREATMENT OF EGG-LAYING HENS.—The Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1031 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 7 the following new sections:

''§ 7A. Housing and treatment of egg-laying hens

''(a) ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENTS.—

''(1) EXISTING CAGING DEVICES.—All existing caging devices must provide egg-laying hens housed therein, beginning 15 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, adequate environmental enrichments.

''(2) NEW CAGING DEVICES.—All new caging devices must provide egg-laying hens housed therein, beginning nine years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, adequate environmental enrichments.

''(3) CAGING DEVICES IN CALIFORNIA.—All caging devices in California must provide egg-laying hens housed therein, beginning December 31, 2018, adequate environmental enrichments.

''(b) FLOOR SPACE.—

''(1) EXISTING CAGING DEVICES.—All existing cages devices must provide egg-laying hens housed therein—

''(A) beginning four years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012 and until the date that is 15 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, a minimum of 76 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 67 square inches of individual floor space per white hen; and

''(B) beginning 15 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, a minimum of 144 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 124 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.

''(2) NEW CAGING DEVICES.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), all new caging devices must provide egg-laying hens housed therein—

''(A) beginning three years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012 and until the date that is six years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, a minimum of 90 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 78 square inches of individual floor space per white hen;

''(B) beginning six years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012 and until the date that is nine years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, a minimum of 102 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 90 square inches of individual floor space per white hen;

''(C) beginning nine years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012 and until the date that is 12 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, a minimum of 116 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 101 square inches of individual floor space per white hen;

''(D) beginning 12 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012 and until the date that is 15 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, a minimum of 130 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 113 square inches of individual floor space per white hen; and

''(E) beginning 15 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, a minimum of 144 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 124 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.

''(3) CALIFORNIA CAGING DEVICES.—All caging devices in California must provide egg-laying hens housed therein—

''(A) beginning January 1, 2015, and through December 31, 2020, a minimum of 134 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 116 square inches of individual floor space per white hen; and

''(B) beginning January 1, 2021, a minimum of 144 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 124 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.

''(c) AIR QUALITY.—Beginning two years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, an egg handler shall provide all egg-laying hens under his ownership or control with acceptable air quality, which does not exceed more than 25 parts per million of ammonia during normal operations.

''(d) FORCED MOLTING.—Beginning two years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, no egg handler may subject any egg-laying hen under his ownership or control to feed-withdrawal or water-withdrawal molting.

''(e) EUTHANASIA.—Beginning two years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, an egg handler shall provide, when necessary, all egg-laying hens under his ownership or control with euthanasia that is humane and uses a method deemed 'Acceptable' by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

''(f) PROHIBITION ON NEW UNENRICHABLE CAGES.—No person shall build, construct, implement, or place into operation any new caging device for the production of eggs to be sold in commerce unless the device—

''(1) provides the egg-laying hens to be contained therein a minimum of 76 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen or 67 square inches of individual floor space per white hen; and

''(2) is capable of being adapted to accommodate adequate environmental enrichments.

''(g) EXEMPTIONS.—

''(1) RECENTLY-INSTALLED EXISTING CAGING DEVICES.—The requirements contained in subsections (a)(1) and (b)(1)(B) shall not apply to any existing caging device that was first placed into operation between January 1, 2008, and December 31, 2011. This exemption shall expire 18 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, at which time the requirements contained in subsections (a)(1) and (b)(1)(B) shall apply to all existing caging devices.

''(2) HENS ALREADY IN PRODUCTION.—The requirements contained in subsections (a)(1), (a)(2), (b)(1)(B), and (b)(2) shall not apply to any caging device containing egg-laying hens who are already in egg production on the date that such requirement takes effect. This exemption shall expire on the date that such egg-laying hens are removed from egg production.

''(3) SMALL PRODUCERS.—Nothing contained in this section shall apply to an egg handler who buys, sells, handles, or processes eggs or egg products solely from one flock of not more than 3,000 egg-laying hens.

''§ 7B. Phase-in conversion requirements

''(a) FIRST CONVERSION PHASE.—As of six years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, at least 25 percent of the egg-laying hens in commercial egg production shall be housed either in new caging devices or in existing caging devices that provide the hens contained therein with a minimum of 102 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 90 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.

''(b) SECOND CONVERSION PHASE.—As of 12 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, at least 55 percent of the egg-laying hens in commercial egg production shall be housed either in new caging devices or in existing caging devices that provide the hens contained therein with a minimum of 130 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 113 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.

''(c) FINAL CONVERSION PHASE.—As of December 31, 2029, all egg-laying hens confined in caging devices shall be provided adequate environmental enrichments and a minimum of 144 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 124 square inches of individual floor space per white hen.

''(d) COMPLIANCE.—

''(1) At the end of six years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, the Secretary shall determine, after having reviewed and analyzed the results of an independent, national survey of caging devices conducted in 2018, whether the requirements of subsection (a) have been met. If the Secretary finds that the requirements of subsection (a) have not been met, then beginning January 1, 2020, the floor space requirements (irrespective of the date such requirements expire) related to new caging devices contained in subsection (b)(2)(B) of section 7A shall apply to existing caging devices placed into operation prior to January 1, 1995.

''(2) At the end of 12 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, and again after December 31, 2029, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on compliance with subsections (b) and (c).

''(3) Notwithstanding section 12, the remedies provided in this subsection shall be the exclusive remedies for violations of this section.''.

(c) INSPECTIONS.—Section 5 of the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1034) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by inserting ''(other than requirements with respect to housing, treatment, and house-related labeling)'' after ''as he deems appropriate to assure compliance with such requirements''; and

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''and'';

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

''(B) are derived from egg-laying hens housed and treated in compliance with section 7A; and''; and

(iv) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated by clause (ii), by inserting ''adequate housing-related labeling and'' after ''contain'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''In the case of a shell egg packer'' and inserting ''In the cases of an egg handler with a flock of more than 3,000 egg-laying hens and a shell egg packer'';

(C) in paragraph (3), by inserting ''(other than requirements with respect to housing, treatment, and housing-related labeling)'' after ''to ensure compliance with the requirements of paragraph (1)''; and

(D) in paragraph (4), by striking ''with a flock of not more than 3,000 layers.'' and inserting ''who buys, sells, handles, or processes eggs or egg products solely from one flock of not more than 3,000 egg-laying hens.''.

(d) LABELING.—Section 7 of the Egg Products Inspection Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 1036) is amended in subsection (a) by inserting ''adequate housing-related labeling,'' after ''plant where the products were processed,''.

(e) LIMITATION ON EXEMPTIONS BY SECRETARY.—Section 15 of the Egg Products Inspection Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 1044) is amended in subsection (a) by inserting '', not including subsection (c) of section 8,'' after ''exempt from specific provisions''.

(f) IMPORTS.—Section 17 of the Egg Products Inspection Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 1046) is amended in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) by striking ''subdivision thereof and are labeled and packaged'' and inserting ''subdivision thereof; and no eggs or egg products capable of use as human food shall be imported into the United States unless they are produced, labeled, and packaged''.

SEC. 3. ENFORCEMENT OF HEN HOUSING AND TREATMENT STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8 of the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1037) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), (e), and (f) as subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

''(c)(1) No person shall buy, sell, or transport, or offer to buy or sell, or offer or receive for transportation, in any business or commerce any eggs or egg products derived from egg-laying hens housed or treated in violation of any provision of section 7A.

''(2) No person shall buy, sell, or transport, or offer to buy or sell, or offer or receive for transportation, in any business or commerce any eggs or egg products derived from egg-laying hens unless the container or package, including any immediate container, of the eggs or egg products, beginning one year after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, contains adequate housing-related labeling.

''(3) No person shall buy, sell, or transport, or offer to buy or sell, or offer or receive for transportation, in any business or commerce, in California, any eggs or egg products derived from egg-laying hens unless the egg-laying hens are—

''(A) provided—

''(i) beginning January 1, 2015, and through December 31, 2020, a minimum of 134 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 116 square inches of individual floor space per white hen; and

''(ii) beginning January 1, 2021, a minimum of 144 square inches of individual floor space per brown hen and 124 square inches of individual floor space per white hen; and

''(B) provided, beginning December 31, 2018, adequate environmental enrichments.''; and

(3) in subsection (e), as redesignated by paragraph (1), by inserting ''7A,'' after ''section''.

(b) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—Section 13 of the Egg Products Inspection Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 1042) is amended by inserting ''(with respect to violations other than those related to requirements with respect to housing, treatment, and housing-related labeling) the'' after ''Before any violation of this chapter is reported by the Secretary of Agriculture or''.

SEC. 4. STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Section 23 of the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1052) is amended—

(a) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

(b) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

''(c) PROHIBITION AGAINST ADDITIONAL OR DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS THAN FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO MINIMUM SPACE ALLOTMENTS FOR HOUSING EGG-LAYING HENS IN COMMERCIAL EGG PRODUCTION.—Requirements within the scope of this chapter with respect to minimum floor space allotments or enrichments for egg-laying hens housed in commercial egg production which are in addition to or different than those made under this chapter may not be imposed by any State or local jurisdiction. Otherwise the provisions of this chapter shall not invalidate any law or other provisions of any State or other jurisdiction in the absence of a conflict with this chapter.''; and

(c) by inserting after subsection (e), as redesignated by subsection (a), the following new subsection:

''(f) ROLE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE.—With respect to eggs produced, shipped, handled, transported or received in California prior to the date that is 18 years after the date of enactment of the Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments of 2012, the Secretary shall delegate to the California Department of Food and Agriculture the authority to enforce sections 7A(a)(3), 7A(b)(3), 8(c)(3), and 11.''.

SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect upon enactment.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 3245. A bill to permanently reauthorize the EB–5 Regional Center Program, the E-Verify Program, the Special Immigrant Nonminister Religious Worker Program, and the Conrad State 30 J–1 Visa Waiver Program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today I am pleased to be joined by Senator GRASSLEY, in introducing legislation that will permanently authorize four expiring immigration programs. I thank Senator GRASSLEY for working with me on this needed legislation.

The bill we introduce will permanently authorize the EB–5 Regional Center Program, the voluntary E-Verify electronic work authorization program, the State 30 J–1 Visa program that Senator CONRAD champions and the Special Immigrant Nonminister Religious Worker Program that is so important to Senator HATCH. All of these programs have been in temporary status for many years, and the time has come for Congress to make them permanent so that the proponents of these programs can get to work building upon the benefits these programs bring to communities across the country. Permanency for these programs will strengthen our economy, create jobs, and enhance the security of American workers. Permanency will help medically underserved areas obtain talented physicians and religious institutions welcome individuals from around the world to participate in good works. These programs serve diverse and important interests in America, and should become permanent fixtures in our immigration law.

I am particularly pleased that the EB–5 Regional Center Program is a part of this package. With permanency, I believe this program can become an even greater economic driver than it has been in communities across the United States. Making the program permanent will also create a solid foundation for me and others interested in its success to begin in earnest to make improvements and reforms that will make it more business friendly, more predictable and stable for investors, and will provide U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services with the tools it needs to ensure that the program meets the highest standards of quality and integrity. There is little reason that this program should not continue to improve as a deficit-neutral source of capital investment and job creation across America.

I hope our introduction of this legislation today is the beginning of a strong bipartisan effort to make these programs permanent. I look forward to working with Senator GRASSLEY and others to accomplish this goal.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3245

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION OF EB–5 REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAM.

Section 610 of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1993 (8 U.S.C. 1153 note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''pilot'' each place such term appears; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''until September 30, 2012''.

SEC. 2. PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION OF E–VERIFY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 401 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''pilot'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking ''the pilot programs'' and inserting ''the programs required under this subtitle''; and

(B) by striking ''Unless the Congress otherwise provides, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall terminate a pilot program on September 30, 2012.''; and

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (4), (1), (5), (2), (3), (7), and (6), respectively; and

(B) by amending paragraph (4), as redesignated, to read as follows:

''(4) PROGRAM.—The term 'program' means any of the 3 programs provided for under this subtitle.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subtitle A of title IV of division C of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended—

(1) in section 402, by striking ''pilot'' each place such term appears; and

(2) in section 403(a)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by amending clause (i) to read as follows:

''(i) A document referred to in section 274A(b)(1)(B)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324a(b)(1)(B)(ii)) shall be designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security as suitable for the purpose of identification in a program provided for under this subtitle.''; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''pilot''.

SEC. 3. PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION OF SPECIAL IMMIGRANT NONMINISTER RELIGIOUS WORKER PROGRAM.

Section 101(a)(27)(C)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(27)(C)(ii)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (II), by striking ''before September 30, 2012,''; and

(2) in subclause (III), by striking ''before September 30, 2012,''.

SEC. 4. PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION OF CONRAD STATE 30 J–1 VISA WAIVER PROGRAM.

Section 220(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Technical Corrections Act of 1994 (8 U.S.C. 1182 note) is amended by striking ''and before September 30, 2012''.

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. 3246. A bill to improve the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation to strengthen the resources and support that we provide to entrepreneurs, and to strengthen oversight of the SCORE program.

In 1964, the Small Business Administration recognized that retired business executives who volunteered to share their knowledge and expertise could be invaluable to entrepreneurs. From this, SCORE was established and has since grown to over 360 chapters across America. As with any type of growth, there comes an essential need for increased organization and oversight. This bill seeks to assist the SBA and SCORE with just that.

The key to getting our nation on the road to economic recovery lies in the hands of small business, which is why I am always looking for ways to improve the SBA's entrepreneurial assistance programs. By creating a SCORE Advisory Board which functions to monitor and develop initiatives for programs affecting SCORE chapters, we can ensure that entrepreneurs in all areas of our economy are served by high-quality mentoring services. Specifically, this board is compromised of six members coming from the owners and employees of small businesses themselves, in addition to current members of SCORE chapters.

While some may argue that funding for SCORE should be increased, in this budget environment, where Federal revenues and spending are misaligned to the tune of $1.1 trillion this year alone, we must find ways to be more efficient with existing resources. I am hopeful that with administrative reforms and increased transparency, we can make the SCORE program more cost effective, while maintaining its vital assistance to small businesses.

For example, there is currently no oversight for funding allocations to individual SCORE chapters. In the past three fiscal years, only $2.5 million of the $7 million appropriated to SCORE has been distributed to the SCORE districts and chapters. The bulk of their funding, $4.5 million, has been spent on

staffing, administrative expenses, technology, and overhead. As a non-profit organization, SCORE seeks to support small businesses across the country with thousands of volunteers but only very limited resources. It is imperative that there are transparent and fair practices in place for allocation of SBA funding to best provide for these small businesses. Therefore, my bill requires the creation of an Allocation Committee, comprised of Advisory Board members who will ensure that not less than 50 percent of SCORE's total allocation goes to the districts and chapters that directly serve small business clients.

To safeguard funds appropriated to SCORE, my bill also places a limit on the taxpayer funded salary of SCORE's CEO, which according to the latest Internal Revenue Service filing, is 43 percent higher than that of the SBA's Administrator, who oversees the entire agency, including SCORE. This bill establishes in statute that the SCORE CEO follow the salary cap of a Senior Executive Service level Federal employee, ensuring that more money is available for the small businesses driving our economy. Additionally, this bill proposes to limit the Federal share of this salary even further when that CEO serves in a leadership capacity on a foundation affiliated with SCORE.

Through the Advisory Board and its Allocation Committee, we will add much needed improvements to an already successful program. By enhancing integration between SCORE chapters and the SBA, small businesses will have even more support to sustain their contributions to our recovering economy.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3246

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''SCORE Program Improvement Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the terms ''Administration'' and ''Administrator'' mean the Small Business Administration and the Administrator thereof, respectively;

(2) the term ''SCORE'' means the Service Corps of Retired Executives established under section 8(b)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(b)(1));

(3) the term ''SCORE Advisory Board'' means the SCORE Advisory Board established under section 101 of this Act;

(4) the term ''SCORE chapter'' means a chapter of the Service Corps of Retired Executives; and

(5) the term ''small business concern'' has the meaning given that term under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

TITLE I—SCORE ADVISORY BOARD

SEC. 101. ESTABLISHMENT OF ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the SCORE Advisory Board.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) COMPOSITION.—The SCORE Advisory Board shall be composed of 6 members, who shall be appointed from among individuals having outstanding qualifications and known to be familiar with and sympathetic to the needs and problems of small business concerns.

(2) LIMITATIONS.—Of the individuals appointed under paragraph (1)—

(A) not more than 3 may be members of a SCORE chapter; and

(B) 3 shall be owners or employees of small business concerns or members of an association that represents small business concerns.

(3) PROHIBITION.—The members of the SCORE Advisory Board may not be employees of the Federal Government.

(4) DATE.—The appointments of the members of the SCORE Advisory Board shall be made not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) TERMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a member of the SCORE Advisory Board shall be appointed for a term of 3 years.

(2) FIRST MEMBERS.—Of the members first appointed to the SCORE Advisory Board—

(A) 2 shall be appointed for a term of 4 years, of whom 1 shall be a member described in subsection (b)(2)(A) and 1 shall be a member described in subsection (b)(2)(B);

(B) 2 shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, of whom 1 shall be a member described in subsection (b)(2)(A) and 1 shall be a member described in subsection (b)(2)(B); and

(C) 2 shall be appointed for a term of 2 years, of whom 1 shall be a member described in subsection (b)(2)(A) and 1 shall be a member described in subsection (b)(2)(B).

(d) VACANCIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A vacancy on the SCORE Advisory Board shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made and shall be subject to any conditions which applied with respect to the original appointment.

(2) FILLING UNEXPIRED TERM.—An individual chosen to fill a vacancy shall be appointed for the unexpired term of the member replaced.

(e) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which all members of the SCORE Advisory Board have been appointed, the SCORE Advisory Board shall hold its first meeting.

(f) MEETINGS.—The SCORE Advisory Board shall meet—

(1) not less frequently than semiannually; and

(2) at the call of the Chairman.

(g) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the SCORE Advisory Board shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(h) CHAIRMAN.—The SCORE Advisory Board shall select a Chairman from among its members.

SEC. 102. DUTIES OF THE SCORE ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) DUTIES.—The SCORE Advisory Board shall—

(1) review and monitor plans and programs developed in the public and private sector which affect SCORE chapters;

(2) provide advice on improving coordination between plans and programs described in paragraph (1);

(3) advise SCORE chapters on the use of Federal funds allocated to SCORE;

(4) develop and promote initiatives, policies, programs, and plans designed to assist with the mentoring services offered by SCORE chapters throughout the United States; and

(5) advise the Administrator on the development and implementation of an annual comprehensive plan under subsection (b).

(b) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—The Administrator shall develop and implement an annual comprehensive plan for joint efforts by the public and private sectors to facilitate the formation and development of mentoring by SCORE volunteers.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year, the SCORE Advisory Board shall submit to the President, the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate, and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(1) the minutes of each meeting of the SCORE Advisory Board during the fiscal year to which the report relates;

(2) a detailed description of the activities of the SCORE Advisory Board during the fiscal year to which the report relates, including how the SCORE Advisory Board carried out the duties described in subsection (a);

(3) recommendations for promoting SCORE chapters and mentoring services; and

(4) any concurring or dissenting views of the Administrator.

SEC. 103. POWERS OF THE SCORE ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) HEARINGS.—The SCORE Advisory Board may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the SCORE Advisory Board considers advisable to carry out this Act.

(b) TASK GROUPS.—The SCORE Advisory Board may establish a temporary task group to carry out any duty of the SCORE Advisory Board described in section 4.

(c) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The SCORE Advisory Board may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the SCORE Advisory Board considers necessary to carry out this Act. Upon request of the Chairman of the SCORE Advisory Board, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the SCORE Advisory Board.

(d) POSTAL SERVICES.—The SCORE Advisory Board may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(e) GIFTS.—The SCORE Advisory Board may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

SEC. 104. SCORE ADVISORY BOARD PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) COMPENSATION.—Members of the SCORE Advisory Board shall not be compensated for services performed on behalf of the SCORE Advisory Board.

(b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the SCORE Advisory Board shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the SCORE Advisory Board.

(c) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the SCORE Advisory Board without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

SEC. 105. INAPPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT TO THE SCORE ADVISORY BOARD.

Section 14 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply with respect to the SCORE Advisory Board.

SEC. 106. FUNDING.

The expenses of the SCORE Advisory Board, including expenses relating to personnel, as described in section 104, shall be paid by SCORE, from amounts made available to SCORE to carry out section 8(b)(1)(B)

of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(b)(1)(B)).

TITLE II—FINANCIAL REFORMS

SEC. 201. REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 20 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 631 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (f); and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(g) SCORE PROGRAM.—The Administrator may make grants and enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the SCORE program authorized by section 8(b)(1) in a total amount that does not exceed $7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2013, 2014, and 2015.''.

SEC. 202. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF SCORE.

(a) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF SALARY.—The rate of basic pay of the chief executive officer of SCORE may not exceed the maximum rate of basic pay established under section 5382 of title 5, United States Code, for a position in the Senior Executive Service.

(b) FEDERAL SHARE OF SALARY.—For any year during which the chief executive officer of SCORE serves in a leadership capacity on a foundation affiliated with SCORE, the Federal share of the basic pay of the chief executive officer of SCORE may not exceed 80 percent.

SEC. 203. ALLOCATION COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—SCORE shall establish a committee to determine the amount allocated each year to each SCORE chapter.

(b) MEMBERS.—The members of the committee established under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) 1 member of the staff of SCORE who is not the chief executive officer of SCORE; and

(2) not fewer than 4 members of the SCORE Advisory Board.

SEC. 204. ALLOCATION OF AMOUNTS.

SCORE shall establish a method for allocating amounts received by SCORE from the Federal Government, which shall—

(1) ensure that not less than 50 percent of the amounts are allocated to SCORE chapters; and

(2) be subject to the approval of the Administrator and the committee established under section 203.

SEC. 205. GAO STUDY AND REPORT.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the technology activities of SCORE that includes an examination of each expenditure by SCORE for technology activities and the result of each such expenditure.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress and the Administrator a report that contains—

(1) a detailed description of the amounts SCORE has expended for technology activities, including how SCORE expended Federal funds to carry out and sustain technology initiatives during the 4-year period ending on the date of enactment of this Act;

(2) a determination of whether SCORE has expended Federal funds efficiently and effectively to carry out technology activities;

(3) an evaluation of—

(A) how well SCORE has met objectives relating to technology spending; and

(B) the policy that resulted in the establishment of objectives relating to technology spending; and

(4) recommendations for actions by SCORE to achieve objectives relating to technology spending while safeguarding Federal funds.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BENNET, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. MORAN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. JOHANNS, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 3248. A bill to designate the North American bison as the national mammal of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to provide a few comments regarding the introduction of the Bison Legacy Act. Senator TIM JOHNSON of South Dakota and I are introducing this legislation today because of the significant role the North American Bison has played in the history of our Nation. This bill honors that legacy by designating the bison as the national mammal of the United States.

The bison has been integrally linked to the economic and spiritual lives of many Native American tribes over the centuries. Since our frontier days, the bison has become a symbol of American strength and determination. The Department of Interior has depicted the bison on its official seal for 94 years and the buffalo nickel played an important role in modernizing our currency in the early 20th century. At one point in American history, bison were brought in to graze outside the original Smithsonian building here in Washington, DC.

I must also add that my home State of Wyoming is one of three states that recognize the bison as its official state mammal and has honored an image of a bison on the Wyoming state flag since it was first adopted in 1917. Today, thousands of American bison freely roam Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming. The bison is also important to our state's economic well-being with a growing number of ranchers raising bison for consumers all over the world.

This bill is supported by a wide variety of stakeholders. I want to recognize the National Bison Association who represents the interests of the bison ranchers in nearly every single State. Also behind this bill is the Intertribal Bison Council supporting the cultural role the bison has played in Native American history. Finally, there is the Wildlife Conservation Society who wishes to honor the restoration of bison in North America since the 19th century.

I ask my colleagues to help me support and pass this legislation honoring the bison and designating it as our national mammal. The bison has and will continue to be a symbol of America, its people and a way of life.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Ms. SNOWE):

S. 3253. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to enhance the Small Business Investment Company Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, as National Small Business Week is coming to a close, I come to the floor today to make a strong commitment that the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship will not lose momentum on our relentless push to help America's small businesses grow, thrive, and excel. So today, along with the senior senator from Maine, I am introducing the Expanding Access to Capital for Entrepreneurial Leaders Act, or the EXCEL Act. This legislation will enhance the already successful Small Business Investment Company, SBIC, program at the Small Business Administration, SBA, that has helped over 100,000 small businesses. The best part of our bill is that the EXCEL Act should not cost the taxpayer anything.

The SBA runs a venture capital program by guaranteeing money borrowed by qualified investment funds who invest in small businesses. The qualified funds, or Small Business Investment Companies, SBICs, are privately owned and operated, but licensed and regulated by the SBA. Using a combination of private investments and the loans guaranteed by the SBA, typically at a ratio of $2 in guaranteed funds for every $1 of private capital, SBICs make long-term investments in American small businesses. In order to participate in the program, funds pay licensing fees which serve to cover all SBIC program costs. As a result, the core SBIC program, Debenture SBICs, not only boasts a strong success rate, but also incurs no cost to the U.S. government. Since the program's inception, over $50 billion has been invested in over 100,000 small businesses.

The Ranking Member of the Small Business Committee and I conducted a roundtable with 14 participants from the SBA, SBICs, investors in SBICs, and small businesses to elicit suggestions on enhancing the program. Out of that was born the EXCEL Act.

The EXCEL Act is a bipartisan effort encompassing much-needed changes that will allow the SBIC program to meet growing demand and will make improvements so that more small businesses can access capital.

The first thing the EXCEL Act does is raises the SBIC program authorization level from $3 billion to $4 billion and pegs it to inflation. This change is long overdue—the ceiling has been at $3 for some time, despite inflation and the impressive growth in the SBIC program. To illustrate: the program grew 50 percent in FY2011 alone. In order to meet demand, we need to give the program room to grow.

Secondly, the EXCEL Act will encourage successful investors by raising the limit on ''families of funds.'' Family of funds refers to a team of SBIC fund managers who operate several funds. These are currently limited to $225 million of SBA-guaranteed debt. However, SBIC fund managers who manage more than one fund generally see better investment results. The EXCEL Act will encourage that kind of success by giving families of funds a higher limit of $350 million, which will be indexed to inflation.

Next, the EXCEL Act improves transparency and accountability in the program. The legislation requires that

the SBA make public how effective individual SBICs are in their small business investments, guaranteeing that SBA-backed money is being used responsibly.

Finally, the EXCEL Act promotes outreach, thereby ensuring that the maximum possible number of small businesses can benefit from the SBIC program. The legislation encourages outreach to community banks and other lenders, states and municipalities, and asks the SBA to make their SBIC website more user-friendly.

The EXCEL Act contains a number of common sense provisions supported across the aisle, and is sponsored by the Chair and Ranking Member of the Small Business Committee. It enhances a program with proven success in providing capital to small businesses, and does so with the expectation that it will not add a dime to the deficit. Let us get this bill passed. Let us help small businesses excel.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 472—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 7, 2012, AS ''OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM VETERANS DAY''

Mr. ENZI (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. BEGICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 472

Whereas the initial volley of Operation Enduring Freedom took place in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, and October 7, 2012, marks the eleventh anniversary of the war;

Whereas Operation Enduring Freedom, launched in response to the terrorist attacks committed against the United States on September 11, 2001, targeted al-Qaida and the Taliban protectors of al-Qaida in Afghanistan;

Whereas Operation Enduring Freedom is the longest ongoing war in which the United States is involved;

Whereas the wounded warriors who have served in Operation Enduring Freedom carry the scars of war, both seen and unseen;

Whereas nearly 1,800 patriots in the United States Armed Forces have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in Afghanistan;

Whereas the war in Afghanistan should not fade from the hearts and minds of the people of the United States; and

Whereas the ongoing sacrifices made by the men and women of the Armed Forces should be recognized and honored: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 7, 2012, as ''Operation Enduring Freedom Veterans Day'';

(2) honors the brave men and women who gave their lives while serving the United States in Operation Enduring Freedom; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to salute the more than half a million men and women who have served bravely in Afghanistan to preserve our shared security and freedom.

SENATE RESOLUTION 473—COMMENDING ROTARY INTERNATIONAL AND OTHERS FOR THEIR EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND ERADICATE POLIO

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. LUGAR, and Mr. LAUTENBERG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 473

Whereas polio is a highly infectious disease that primarily affects children and for which there is no known cure;

Whereas polio can leave survivors permanently disabled from muscle paralysis of the limbs and occasionally leads to a particularly difficult death through the paralysis of respiratory muscles;

Whereas polio was once one of the most dreaded diseases in the United States, killing thousands annually in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and leaving thousands more with permanent disability, including the 32nd President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt;

Whereas severe polio outbreaks in the 1940s and 1950s caused panic in the United States, as parents kept children indoors, public health officials quarantined infected individuals, and the Federal Government restricted commerce and travel;

Whereas 1952 was the peak of the polio epidemic in the United States, with more than 57,000 people affected, 21,000 of whom were paralyzed and 3,000 of whom died;

Whereas safe and effective polio vaccines, including the Inactivated Polio Vaccine (commonly known as ''IPV''), developed in 1952 by Jonas Salk, and the Oral Polio Vaccine (commonly known as ''OPV''), developed in 1957 by Albert Sabin, rendered polio preventable and contributed to the rapid decline of polio incidence in the United States;

Whereas polio, a preventable disease that the United States has been free from since 1979, still needlessly lays victim to children and adults in several countries where challenges such as active conflict and lack of infrastructure hamper access to vaccines;

Whereas the eradication of polio is the highest priority of Rotary International, a global association that was founded in 1905 in Chicago, Illinois, is currently headquartered in Evanston, Illinois, and has 1,200,000 members in more than 170 countries;

Whereas Rotary International and its members (commonly known as ''Rotarians'') have contributed more than $1,000,000,000 and volunteered countless hours in the global fight against polio;

Whereas the Federal Government is the leading public sector donor to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and provides technical and operational leadership to this global effort through the work of the Centers for Disease Control and the United States Agency for International Development;

Whereas Rotary International, the World Health Organization, the United States Government, the United Nations Children's Fund (commonly known as ''UNICEF''), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have joined together with national governments to successfully reduce cases of polio by more than 99 percent since 1988, from 350,000 reported cases in 1988 to fewer than 700 reported cases in 2011;

Whereas polio was recently eliminated in India and is now endemic only in Nigeria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan; and

Whereas the eradication of polio is imminently achievable and will be a victory shared by all of humanity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends Rotary International and others for their efforts in vaccinating children around the world against polio and for the tremendous strides made toward eradicating the disease once and for all;

(2) encourages the international community of governments and non-governmental organizations to remain committed to the elimination of polio; and

(3) encourages continued commitment and funding by the United States Government to the global effort to rid the world of polio.

SENATE RESOLUTION 474—RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAY 2012 AS ASIAN-PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CELEBRATING THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF ASIAN-AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS TO THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. REID of Nevada, Mr. BEGICH, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 474

Whereas the United States joins together each May to pay tribute to the contributions of generations of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders who have enriched the history of the United States;

Whereas the history of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States is inextricably tied to the story of the United States;

Whereas the Asian-American and Pacific Islander community is an inherently diverse population, comprised of over 45 distinct ethnicities and over 100 language dialects;

Whereas according to the United States Census Bureau, the Asian-American population grew faster than any other racial or ethnic group over the last decade, surging nearly 46 percent between 2000 and 2010, which is a growth rate 4 times faster than the total United States population;

Whereas the 2010 decennial census estimated that there are 17,300,000 United States residents who identify as Asian and 1,200,000 United States residents who identify as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, making up nearly 6 percent of the total United States population;

Whereas the month of May was selected for Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month because the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States on May 7, 1843, and the first transcontinental railroad was completed on May 10, 1869, with substantial contributions from Chinese immigrants;

Whereas the year 2012 marks several important historic milestones for the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, including the—

(1) 20th anniversary of the formal establishment of Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month;

(2) 30th anniversary of the unpunished murder of Vincent Chin;

(3) 70th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of Japanese-Americans;

(4) 100th anniversary of the planting of the first cherry tree in Washington, D.C. from Japan;

(5) 130th anniversary of the enactment of the Act entitled ''An Act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese'', approved May 6, 1882 (22 Stat. 58, chapter 126); and