

I hope will become less frequent as a result of the action we are taking in S. 1501. This bill has the opportunity to improve safety for drivers and truckers.

S. 1501 would make the Office of Motor Carrier a separate office within the Department of Transportation (DOT), as opposed to being within the Federal Highway Administration as it is now. This action will allow Congress to statutorily mandate safety as the main focus of the office. Additionally, it promotes enforcement as a main goal and provides some teeth to this new agency's punitive actions.

However, there are some areas within the legislation that I believe need attention as we work to form a final bill. For example, I believe that a conflict of interest provision should be included. Without such a provision, the new agency could continue to award contracts to the very industry that operates under the federal motor carrier safety regulations the new agency will administer. An unbiased, multifaceted panel would be a better option to conduct sensitive research with federal money.

In fact, the DOT's Inspector General (IG) released a report to Congress that cites the too close relationship between the industry and the regulators who oversee it:

[A collaborative, educational, partnership with industry] is a good approach for motor carriers that have safety as a top priority, but it has gone too far. It does not work effectively with firms that persist in violating safety rules and do not promptly take sustained corrective action.

I believe this finding supports the inclusion of conflict of interest standards in the final bill.

S. 1501 does a great deal to improve motor carrier safety in this country, but we can do more. I hope that the conferees on this bill will give strong consideration to including a conflict of interest provision in the final bill.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business Monday, November 15, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,686,436,332,009.22 (Five trillion, six hundred eighty-six billion, four hundred thirty-six million, three hundred thirty-two thousand, nine dollars and twenty-two cents).

Five years ago, November 15, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,747,133,000,000 (Four trillion, seven hundred forty-seven billion, one hundred thirty-three million).

Ten years ago, November 15, 1989, the federal debt stood at \$2,916,316,000,000 (Two trillion, nine hundred sixteen billion, three hundred sixteen million).

Fifteen years ago, November 15, 1984, the federal debt stood at \$1,626,849,000,000 (One trillion, six hundred twenty-six billion, eight hundred forty-nine million).

Twenty-five years ago, November 15, 1974, the federal debt stood at \$481,430,000,000 (Four hundred eighty-one billion, four hundred thirty million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,205,006,332,009.22 (Five trillion, two hundred five billion, six million, three hundred thirty-two thousand, nine dollars and twenty-two cents) during the past 25 years.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, 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.)

#### PERIODIC REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO IRAN AND IRANIAN ASSETS BLOCKING—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 74

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, November 16, 1999.

#### 20TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 75

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with section 701 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-454; 5 U.S.C. 7104(e)), I have the pleasure of transmitting to you the twentieth Annual Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for Fiscal Year 1998.

The report includes information on the cases heard and decisions rendered by the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the General Counsel of the Authority, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, November 16, 1999.

#### 1999 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 76

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the Railroad Retirement Board for Fiscal Year 1998, pursuant to the provisions of section 7(b)(6) of the Railroad Retirement Act and section 12(1) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, November 16, 1999.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:05 a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2724) to make technical corrections to the Water Resources Development Act of 1999.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2454) to assure the long-term conservation of mid-continent light geese and the biological diversity of the ecosystem upon which many North American migratory birds depend, by directing the Secretary of the Interior to implement rules to reduce the overabundant population of mid-continent light geese.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bill, with amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 376. An act to amend the Communications Satellite Act of 1962 to promote competition and privatization in satellite communications, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1869. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to expand the prohibition on stalking, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2442. An act to provide for the preparation of a Government report detailing injustices suffered by Italian Americans during World War II, and a formal acknowledgment of such injustices by the President.

H.R. 3073. An act to amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act to provide for