

By Mr. DASCHLE (for Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mr. KERRY, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. ROTH, and Mr. L. CHAFEE)):

S. 3209. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a resource study of the approximately 600-mile route through the States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Virginia, used by George Washington and General Rochambeau during the Revolutionary War; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SESSIONS:

S. 3210. A bill to amend chapter 1 of title 9, United States Code, to provide for greater fairness in the arbitration process for consumers and employees; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HARKIN:

S. 3211. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to provide grants to develop technologies to eliminate functional barriers to full independence for individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. Res. 377. A resolution authorizing the taking of photographs in the Chamber of the United States Senate; considered and agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. JEFFORDS (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. DODD):

S. 3208. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to enhance consumer protection in the purchase of prescription drugs from interstate Internet sellers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

INTERNET PRESCRIPTION DRUG CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2000

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I am here today to join with my colleagues in the Senate and House in a bipartisan effort to address the relatively new development of Internet pharmacies. The ever-increasing cost of prescription drugs has led a growing number of Americans to turn to Internet pharmacies to try to find savings. Our goal with the Internet Prescription Drug Consumer Protection Act is to allow American consumers to place the same confidence and trust in Internet pharmacies as they do in traditional brick-and-mortar pharmacies. The bill we are introducing today is a starting point in addressing this issue. If there is not enough time to pass this bill in the remaining days of the session, then I hope to return to this issue early in the next Congress and finish what we have started.

We are well aware that the explosion of Internet commerce has put all manner of goods and services literally at our fingertips. In this respect, health care products and prescription drugs are no different from books, compact disks, or the many other products sold online. But there is a potential for very serious dangers when purchasing prescription drugs online. On March 21 of this year, I chaired a hearing of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee to examine this issue.

In the search for lower-priced prescription drugs, American consumers can, unwittingly, order prescription drugs from rogue web sites that appear to be American-based companies, but are actually overseas sites offering low-priced prescription drugs that are unapproved, counterfeit, contaminated, expired, mislabeled, manufactured in unapproved facilities, or not stored or handled in a proper manner.

I believe legitimate Internet pharmacies that operate legally and ethically can offer valuable services to many Americans and have an important role in E-commerce. But there must be an appropriate regulatory system that protects American consumers from illegal and unethical behavior which can endanger lives, and which combats any rogue Internet operators.

Our legislation contains several provisions to protect consumers. But the most important is clearly the one that allows states to obtain nationwide injunctive relief against unlawful Internet sellers, as requested by the National Association of Attorneys General. Currently, in their efforts to combat illegal actions by a few Internet pharmacies, several states' Attorneys General have filed suit against the same companies and the same doctors. To simply prevent those bad actors from doing business in their state, each Attorney General has to file an action in his or her state court. This duplication of effort drains resources that could be utilized against other offenders. Since the states' primary goal is to prevent rogue sites from harming citizens, nationwide injunctive relief would allow each state to help protect all the citizens of this nation. This power would be directly analogous to the national injunctive relief contained in the federal telemarketing statute.

A number of witnesses at our hearing testified that the most prominent danger presented to consumers is the rogue pharmacies operating in countries other than the United States. In this case, the federal government is clearly the most appropriate entity to deal with international rogue pharmacists, and this legislation provides remedies. Our bill also provides for better coordination between federal and state authorities.

Mr. President, this legislation represents a great deal of work by Senator KENNEDY and myself. Representatives

BLILEY, KLINK, and UPTON have worked on this issue as well, and I understand that they are introducing companion legislation in the House. I am pleased that we have been able to work in a bipartisan and bicameral fashion on such a complicated issue. Any time Congress attempts to respond to emerging technologies, similar challenges are faced.

I recognize that we are introducing this bill late in the session and that several members have expressed concern with certain aspects of our proposal. I want to assure my colleagues that this legislation is a starting point. This will provide my colleagues with the opportunity to make comments and suggestions on the different policy areas. We have written this bill with bipartisan cooperation, and I look forward to continuing in that spirit as we work to ensure the safety of Internet pharmacies.●

• Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, the Internet is transforming all aspects of our society, including health care. Web-based businesses, such as Internet pharmacies, can offer convenience and an opportunity for privacy for large numbers of consumers buying online. The Internet also creates opportunities, however, for scam artists and unprincipled suppliers to market contaminated, expired, ineffective, or counterfeit medications to unsuspecting patients. Today, these bad actors can easily prey on patients who turn to the Internet for easy access or low-priced medications.

Clearly, effective oversight is needed to protect consumers using the Internet and root out illegal operators without interfering with legitimate Internet commerce. Americans are entitled to the same protections on the Internet that they enjoy in other commercial settings.

So far, existing Federal and State laws have had only limited success in protecting consumers from unlawful Internet sellers of prescription medications.

Today, some physicians issue prescriptions for patients they have never seen, let alone seriously examined. Patients can purchase prescription drugs on the Internet without adequate safeguards that the drugs are appropriate and of high quality. Because web sites can be easily created and designed, patients may think they have purchased their medications from a U.S.-licensed pharmacy when, in fact, they have not. The prescription drugs they receive may be sold out of someone's garage or from a country with few, if any, standards for manufacturing, storing or shipping these products.

Several states and Federal agencies have taken enforcement actions against unlawful Internet sellers, but with limited results. While the number of legitimate Internet pharmacies remains small, the number of illegal sellers continues to grow. We must do