

Grants, or Cooperative Agreements for Prototype Projects" (RIN0790-AG79) received on June 1, 2000; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-9261. A communication from the Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Transactions Other Than Contracts, Grants, or Cooperative Agreements for Prototype Projects" (RIN0790-AG79) received on June 1, 2000; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-9262. A communication from the Acting Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Waiver of Cost Accounting Standards" (DFARS Case 2000-D012) received on June 5, 2000; to the Committee on Armed Services.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. McCAIN, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2046: A bill to reauthorize the Next Generation Internet Act, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 106-310).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. L. CHAFEE (for himself, Mr. KOHL, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 2747. A bill to expand the Federal tax refund intercept program to cover children who are not minors; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MACK (for himself and Mr. TORRICELLI):

S. 2748. A bill to prohibit the rescheduling or forgiveness of any outstanding bilateral debt owed to the United States by the Government of the Russian Federation until the President certifies to the Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation has ceased all its operations at, removed all personnel from, and permanently closed the intelligence facility at Lourdes, Cuba; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. L. CHAFFEE (for himself, Mr. KOHL, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 2747. A bill to expand the Federal tax refund intercept program to cover children who are not minors; to the Committee on Finance.

CHILD SUPPORT FAIRNESS AND TAX REFUND INTERCEPTION ACT OF 2000

Mr. L. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined today by Senators KOHL, GRAHAM, and LINCOLN in introducing the Child Support Fairness and Tax Refund Interception Act of 2000.

The Child Support Fairness and Tax Refund Interception Act of 2000 closes a

loophole in current federal statute by expanding the eligibility of one of the most effective means of enforcing child support orders—that of intercepting the federal tax refunds of parents who are delinquent in paying their court-ordered financial support for their children.

Under current law, eligibility for the federal tax refund offset program is limited to cases involving minors, parents on public assistance, or adult children who are disabled. Custodial parents of adult, non-disabled children are not assisted under the IRS tax refund intercept program, and in many cases, they must work multiple jobs in order to make ends meet. Some of these parents have gone into debt to put their college-age children through school.

The legislation we are introducing today will address this inequity by expanding the eligibility of the federal tax refund offset program to cover parents of all children, regardless of whether the child is disabled or a minor. This legislation will not create a cause of action for a custodial parent to seek additional child support. It will merely assist the custodial parent in recovering debt that is owed for a level of child support that was determined by a court.

Improving our child support enforcement programs is an issue that should be of concern to us all as it remains a serious problem in the United States. According to the most recent Government statistics, there are approximately twelve million active cases in which a child support order requires a noncustodial parent to contribute to the support of his or her child. Of the \$13.7 billion owed in 1998, only \$6.9 billion has been collected. It is important to note that this data does not include reporting from many states, including California, New York, Florida, and Illinois. In 1998, only 23 percent of children entitled to child support through our public system received some form of payment, despite Federal and State efforts. Similar shortfalls in previous years bring the combined delinquency total to approximately \$47 billion. We can fix this injustice in our Federal tax refund offset program by helping some of our most needy constituents receive the financial assistance they are owed.

While the administration has been somewhat successful in using tax refunds as a tool to collect child support payments, more needs to be done. The IRS tax refund interception program has only collected one-third of tardy child support payments. The Child Support Fairness and Tax Refund Interception Act of 2000 will remove the current barrier to fulfilling an individual's obligation to pay child support, while helping to provide for the future of our Nation's children.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, and I ask unanimous consent that the legislation be printed in the RECORD.

S. 2747

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 "Child Support Fairness and Tax Refund Interception Act of 2000".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Enforcing child support orders remains a serious problem in the United States. There are approximately 12,000,000 active cases in which a child support order requires a noncustodial parent to contribute to the support of his or her child. Of the \$13,700,000,000 owed in calendar year 1998 pursuant to such orders, \$6,900,000,000, or 51 percent, has been collected. However, this data does not include reporting from many States, including California, New York, Florida, and Illinois. Similar shortfalls in past years have brought the combined total of child support owed to \$47,400,000,000 by the end of fiscal year 1997.

(2) It is an injustice for the Federal Government to issue tax refunds to a deadbeat spouse while a custodial parent has to work 2 or 3 jobs to account for the shortfall in providing for their children.

(3) The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) program to intercept the tax refunds of parents who owe child support arrears has been successful in collecting more than 1/3 of such arrears.

(4) The Congress has periodically expanded eligibility for the IRS tax refund intercept program. Initially, the program was limited to intercepting Federal tax refunds owed to parents on public assistance. In 1984, Congress expanded the program to cover refunds owed to parents not on public assistance. Finally, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 made the program permanent and expanded the program to cover refunds owed to parents of adult children who are disabled.

(5) The injustice to the custodial parent is the same regardless of whether the child is disabled, non-disabled, a minor, or an adult, so long as the child support obligation is provided for by a court or administrative order. It is common for parents to help their adult children finance a college education, a wedding, or a first home. Some parents cannot afford to do that because they are recovering from debt they incurred to cover expenses that would have been covered if they had been paid the child support owed to them in a timely manner.

(6) This Act would address this injustice by expanding the program to cover parents of all adult children, regardless of whether the child is disabled.

(7) This Act does not create a cause of action for a custodial parent to seek additional child support. This Act merely helps the custodial parent recover debt they are owed for a level of child support that was set by a court after both sides had the opportunity to present their arguments about the proper amount of child support.

SEC. 3. USE OF TAX REFUND INTERCEPT PROGRAM TO COLLECT PAST-DUE CHILD SUPPORT ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT MINORS.

Section 464 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 664) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)(A), by striking "(as that term is defined for purposes of this paragraph under subsection (c))"; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking "(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), as used in" and inserting "In"; and