(Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2666, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage investment in affordable housing, and for other purposes.

S. 2719

At the request of Mrs. DOLE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2719, a bill to provide that Executive Order 13166 shall have no force or effect, and to prohibit the use of funds for certain purposes.

S. 2860

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2860, a bill to diminish predatory lending by enhancing appraisal quality and standards, to improve appraisal oversight, to ensure mortgage appraiser independence, to provide for enhanced remedies and enforcement, and for other purposes.

S. 2899

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2899, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study on suicides among veterans.

S. 2912

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2912, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit certain interstate conduct relating to exotic animals.

S. 2921

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2921, a bill to require pilot programs on training and certification for family caregiver personal care attendants for veterans and members of the Armed Forces with traumatic brain injury, to require a pilot program on provision of respite care to such veterans and members, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 520

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 520, a resolution designating May 16, 2008, as ''Endangered Species Day''.

S. RES. 559

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 559, a resolution designating May 15, 2008, as ''National MPS Awareness Day''.

AMENDMENT NO. 4737

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4737 proposed to S. 2284, an original bill to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, to restore the financial solvency of the flood insurance fund, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4737 proposed to S. 2284, supra.

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 4737 proposed to S. 2284, supra.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DOMENICI:

S. 3010. A bill to reauthorize the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce legislation to continue the restoration and preservation of the unique cultural resources along the famous Route 66. Passage of the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Reauthorization Act would carry on the wonderful work of the Park Service's Route 66 program over the past decade. As in the past, I am joined in this effort by my colleague from New Mexico, Senator BINGAMAN.

In 1990, I introduced the Route 66 Study Act, which directed the National Park Service to determine the best ways to preserve, commemorate and interpret Route 66. As a result of that study, I later introduced legislation authorizing the National Park Service to join with Federal, State and private efforts to preserve various aspects of historic Route 66, the Nation's most important thoroughfare for east-west migration during the 20th century.

The Route 66 program is a collective effort by private property owners; nonprofit organizations; and local, State, Federal, and tribal governments to identify and address preservation needs along the historic route. The program offers grants for the restoration of significant properties dating all the way back to the mid 1920s.

The bill authorizes funding over 10 years and supports grassroots efforts to preserve aspects of this historic highway. Designated in 1926, the 2,200-mile stretch from Chicago to Santa Monica, California, the Mother Road, as it was called, rolled through eight American states, and in New Mexico, it passed through the communities of Tucumcari, Santa Rosa, Albuquerque, Grants and Gallup. New Mexico added to the aura of Route 66, giving new generations of Americans their first experience of our colorful culture and rich heritage. Route 66 allowed travelers to see firsthand previously remote areas and experience the traditions and natural beauty of the Southwest and West.

The bill authorizes the National Park Service to support State, local and private efforts to preserve the Route 66 corridor by providing technical assistance, participating in cost-sharing programs, and making grants. Since 1990, the Park Service has acted as a clearinghouse for communication among Federal, State, local, private and American Indian entities interested in the preservation of America's Main Street. Congresswoman HEATHER WILSON of Albuquerque, New Mexico, has introduced a similar bill in the House of Representatives, and I hope Congress will act promptly in passing this important legislation.

I thank my colleagues for considering the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Reauthorization Act.

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

S. 3010

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

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 ''Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program Reauthorization Act''.

SEC. 2. ROUTE 66 CORRIDOR PRESERVATION PROGRAM.

Section 4 of Public Law 106–45 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; 113 Stat. 226) is amended by striking ''2009'' and inserting ''2019''.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. SPECTER, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. OBAMA):

S. 3012. A bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am proud to introduce a bill today to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act for 3 years, through 2012. This legislation has enjoyed strong bipartisan support in Congress since it was enacted in 1998, and I thank Senators SPECTER, MIKULSKI, SHELBY and HATCH for joining me in today's introduction. I am also glad to be joined by Congressmen VISCLOSKY who will introduce this bill in the House of Representatives today as well.

Since 1999, the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the Department of Justice has distributed $234 million to State and local jurisdictions. Those grants have resulted in the purchase of an estimated 818,000 vests. Since its enactment, over 11,900 State and local jurisdictions have participated in this program. Congress can be proud of the fact that this legislation has directly provided life-saving equipment to so many law enforcement officers. I know that when State and local jurisdictions receive the matching grants through this program, their budgets can go farther in fighting crime in their communities.

Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the importance of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program. We heard from a law enforcement officer who was shot in the

chest at pointblank range during an auto theft investigation. He lived to tell the committee and others his story, thanks to the bulletproof vest he was wearing. In my home state of Vermont, the program has allowed the Vermont police to purchase over 350 sets of armor in the last 10 years. The program has had a tremendous impact on the ability of States and localities to give our law enforcement officers the protection they deserve while serving the needs of our communities.

As a Nation, we ask much of our law enforcement officers. Men and women who serve face constant and unknown risks, and too often make the ultimate sacrifice. During this week in Washington, law enforcement officers from around the country will remember those officers who died in the line of duty while protecting their fellow citizens. Unfortunately, an ongoing trend of rising violent crime in the U.S. underscores the continuing need of this program that has had such a positive impact on the safety of law enforcement officers. Reauthorizing and funding this program is the right thing to do, and it is something I hope all Senators will support. Every additional officer who is able to put on a vest today as a result of this grant program means that one more officer may survive a violent attack. Protecting the men and women who protect all Americans should be a priority for Congress and we have a chance to advance that priority with the continuation of this important program.

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. 3012

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 ''Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 1001(a)(23) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3793(a)(23)) is amended by striking ''2009'' and inserting ''2012''.

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. INOUYE, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 3013. A bill to provide for retirement equity for Federal employees in nonforeign areas outside the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I join with my good friends Senators TED STEVENS, DANIEL INOUYE, and LISA MURKOWSKI to introduce legislation to ensure retirement equity for Federal workers in Hawaii, Alaska, and the U.S. territories. For years, Federal employees in my home state of Hawaii and in other non-foreign areas have been disadvantaged when it comes to their retirement due to a lack of locality pay. Federal workers in those areas may receive a nonforeign cost of living allowance, COLA, based on the differences in the cost of living between those areas and the District off Columbia, but this amount does not count for retirement purposes. Furthermore, while locality rates generally increase, nonforeign COLAs have been gradually declining. This lack of retirement equity has resulted, in several lawsuits against the Federal Government and hinders efforts to recruit and retain Federal workers in those areas.

On August 17, 2000, the U.S. District Court of the Virgin Islands approved the settlement of Caraballo v. United States, which was a class-action lawsuit in which employees in the nonforeign areas contested the methodology used by the Office of Personnel Management to determine COLA rates. However, on January 30, 2008, Judge Phillip M. Pro in the U.S. District Court in Honolulu ruled against the Federal employees in Matsuo v. the Office of Personnel Management, which held that excluding Alaska and Hawaii from locality pay did not violate the equal protection clause and substantive due process under the Fifth Amendment. Judge Pro acknowledged the disparity in his ruling saying that Congress ''discharged its legislative responsibilities imperfectly'' and recommended that Congress ''correct the incongruity made so evident by this case.''

While this issue has been discussed for years, a solution seemed out of reach given the lack of support for various proposed solutions. Last year, the Administration announced a legislative proposal to phase-out non-foreign COLA and phase-in locality pay. In May 2007 the Administration's draft bill was submitted. The draft bill would freeze nonforeign COLA rates at their current rates at their current rates and OPM would no longer conduct COLA surveys. Over the 7 years following the enactment of the proposal, locality pay would be phased in for General Schedule, GS, employees while nonforeign COLA is phased out. According to OPM, preliminary data indicates that the locality pay rate for Hawaii would be 20 percent. At the end of the 7 year period, if the locality pay rate is less than the amount of nonforeign COLA for a particular area, employees would continue to receive the difference in nonforeign COLA and locality pay until the locality rate reaches the COLA amount. Only at that time would employees no longer receive non-foreign COLA. However, the proposal did not address the impact such a change would have on postal employees, employees who receive special rates, members of the Senior Executive Service, and others who are in agency specific personnel systems or those who do not receive locality pay, such as employees under the National Security Personnel System at the Department of Defense.

Knowing of the growing interest in this proposal, I sent staff from my Federal Workforce Subcommittee to Hawaii last July to meet with employees and hear their questions and concerns about the Administration's proposal. Based on the questions and comments I have received, I submitted questions to OPM and other Federal agencies to obtain additional information. I also posted information on the Administration's proposal on my website, a link to a calculator created by OPM for Federal employees to determine exactly how their pay and retirement will be impacted by the proposal, and the agencies' response to my questions. Since then, I have received numerous letters and phone calls from constituents and Federal employees in the nonforeign areas about this issue. While there are still divergent views on this proposal, the vast majority of employees who I have heard from are supportive of a change to locality pay.

The legislation I introduce today is a collective effort of Senators STEVENS, INOUYE, MURKOWSKI, and myself to find an equitable solution to a difficult and divided issue. The Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act is not to be seen as the last word, only the latest step forward toward determining the best way to ensure retirement equity for Federal workers in the nonforeign areas. Our bill seeks to provide answers to the questions raised by the administration's proposal and to cover all employees. Most importantly, our bill seeks to protect employee's take home pay. During this current economic climate, we must be careful to do no harm.

Over the Memorial Day recess my subcommittee plans to hold a series of meetings in Hawaii on the Administration's proposal and this bill to hear remaining questions and concerns. I also plan to hold a hearing on these proposals in Honolulu on May 29, 2008. I continue to encourage employees in Alaska, Hawaii, and in the territories to write us with their questions and concerns on these proposals. My ultimate goal remains to ensure that Federal workers in the nonforeign areas are not disadvantaged when it comes to their pay and retirement.

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. 3013

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 ''Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act of 2008 or the Non-Foreign AREA Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF LOCALITY PAY.

(a) LOCALITY-BASED COMPARABILITY PAYMENTS.—Section 5304(f)(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(A) each General Schedule position in the United States, as defined under section

5921(4), and its territories and possessions, including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands shall be included within a pay locality; and''.

(b) ALLOWANCES BASED ON LIVING COSTS AND CONDITIONS OF ENVIRONMENT.—Section 5941 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding after the last sentence ''Notwithstanding any preceding provision of this subsection, the cost-of-living allowance rate based on paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be the cost-of-living allowance rate in effect on December 31, 2008, except as adjusted under subsection (c).'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (d); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) This section shall apply only to areas that are designated as cost-of-living allowance areas as in effect on December 31, 2008.

''(c)(1) The cost-of-living allowance rate payable under this section shall be adjusted on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after—

''(A) January 1, 2009; and

''(B) on January 1 of each calendar year in which a locality-based comparability adjustment takes effect under section 4(2) and (3) of the Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act of 2008.

''(2)(A) In this paragraph, the term 'applicable locality-based comparability pay percentage' means, with respect to calendar year 2009 and each calendar year thereafter, the applicable percentage under section 4(1), (2), or (3) of Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act of 2008.

''(B) Each adjusted cost-of-living allowance rate under paragraph (1) shall be computed by—

''(i) subtracting 65 percent of the applicable locality-based comparability pay percentage from the cost-of-living allowance percentage rate in effect on December 31, 2008; and

''(ii) dividing the resulting percentage determined under clause (i) by the sum of—

''(I) one; and

''(II) the applicable locality-based comparability payment percentage expressed as a numeral.

''(3) No allowance rate computed under paragraph (2) may be less than zero.

''(4) Each allowance rate computed under paragraph (2) shall be paid as a percentage of basic pay (including any applicable locality-based comparability payment under section 5304 or similar provision of law and any applicable special rate of pay under section 5305 or similar provision of law).''.

SEC. 3. ADJUSTMENT OF SPECIAL RATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each special rate of pay established under section 5305 of title 5, United States Code, and payable in an area designated as a cost-of-living allowance area under section 5941(a) of that title, shall be adjusted, on the dates prescribed by section 4 of this Act, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under section 9 of this Act.

(b) DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Each special rate of pay established under section 7455 of title 38, United States Code, and payable in a location designated as a cost-of-living allowance area under section 5941(a)(1) of title 5, United States Code, shall be adjusted in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that are consistent with the regulations issued by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under subsection (a).

(c) TEMPORARY ADJUSTMENT.—Regulations issued under subsection (a) or (b) may provide that statutory limitations on the amount of such special rates may be temporarily raised to a higher level during the transition period described in section 4 ending on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2011, at which time any special rate of pay in excess of the applicable limitation shall be converted to a retained rate under section 5363 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 4. TRANSITION SCHEDULE FOR LOCALITY-BASED COMPARABILITY PAYMENTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act or section 5304 or 5304a of title 5, United States Code, in implementing the amendments made by this Act, for each nonforeign area determined under section 5941(b) of that title, the applicable rate for the locality-based comparability adjustment that is used in the computation required under section 5941(c) of that title shall be adjusted effective on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after January 1—

(1) in calendar year 2009, by using ⅓ of the locality pay percentage for the rest of United States locality pay area;

(2) in calendar year 2010, by using ⅔ of the otherwise applicable comparability payment approved by the President for each nonforeign area; and

(3) in calendar year 2011 and each subsequent year, by using the full amount of the applicable comparability payment approved by the President for each nonforeign area.

SEC. 5. SAVINGS PROVISION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The application of this Act to any employee may not result in the amount of the decrease in the amount of pay attributable to special rate pay and the cost-of-living allowance as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act exceeding the amount of the increase in the locality-based comparability payments paid to that employee.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the application of this Act to any employee should not result in a decrease in the take home pay of that employee.

SEC. 6. APPLICATION TO OTHER ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ''covered employee'' means—

(A) any employee who—

(i) on—

(I) the day before the date of enactment of this Act—

(aa) was eligible to be paid a cost-of-living allowance under 5941 of title 5, United States Code; and

(bb) was not eligible to be paid locality-based comparability payments under 5304 or 5304a of that title; or

(II) or after the date of enactment of this Act becomes eligible to be paid a cost-of-living allowance under 5941 of title 5, United States Code; and

(ii) except as provided under paragraph (2), is not covered under—

(I) section 5941 of title 5, United States Code, (as amended by section 2 of this Act); and

(II) section 4 of this Act; or

(B) any employee who—

(i) on the day before the date of enactment of this Act—

(I) was eligible to be paid an allowance under section 1603(b) of title 10, United States Code;

(II) was eligible to be paid an allowance under section 1005(b) of title 39, United States Code; or

(III) was employed by the Transportation Security Administration of the Department of Homeland Security and was eligible to be paid an allowance based on section 5941 of title 5, United States Code; or

(ii) on or after the date of enactment of this Act—

(I) becomes eligible to be paid an allowance under section 1603(b) of title 10, United States Code;

(II) becomes eligible to be paid an allowance under section 1005(b) of title 39, United States Code; or

(III) is employed by the Transportation Security Administration of the Department of Homeland Security and becomes eligible to be paid an allowance based on section 5941 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) APPLICATION TO COVERED EMPLOYEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of title 5, United States Code, for purposes of this Act (including the amendments made by this Act) any covered employee shall be treated as an employee to whom section 5941 of title 5, United States Code, (as amended by section 2 of this Act) and section 4 of this Act apply.

(B) PAY FIXED BY STATUTE.—Pay to covered employees under section 5304 or 5304a of title 5, United States Code, as a result of the application of this Act shall be considered to be fixed by statute.

(C) PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM.—With respect to a covered employee who is subject to a performance appraisal system no part of pay attributable to locality-based comparability payments as a result of the application of this Act including section 5941 of title 5, United States Code, (as amended by section 2 of this Act) may be reduced on the basis of the performance of that employee.

(b) POSTAL SERVICE EMPLOYEES IN NONFOREIGN AREAS.—Section 1005(b) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''and the Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act of 2008'' after ''Section 5941 of title 5''.

SEC. 7. ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL BASIC PAY FOR ANNUITY COMPUTATION BY EMPLOYEES.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section the term ''covered employee'' means any employee—

(1) to whom section 4 applies;

(2) who is separated from service by reason of retirement under chapter 83 or 84 of title 5, United States Code, during the period of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2011; and

(3) who files and election with the Office of Personnel Management under subsection (b).

(b) ELECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An employee described under subsection (a)(1) and (2) may file an election with the Office of Personnel Management to be covered under this section.

(2) DEADLINE.—An election under this subsection may be filed not later than December 31, 2011.

(c) COMPUTATION OF ANNUITY.—For purposes of the computation of an annuity of a covered employee any cost-of-living allowance under section 5941 of title 5, United States Code, paid to that employee during the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2009 through the first applicable pay period ending on or after December 31, 2011, shall be considered basic pay as defined under section 8331(3) or 8401(4) of that title.

(d) CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY RETIREMENT FUND.—

(1) EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS.—A covered employee shall pay into the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Retirement Fund—

(A) an amount equal to the difference between—

(i) employee contributions that would have been deducted and withheld from pay under section 8334 or 8422 of title 5, United States Code, during the period described under subsection (c) of this section if that subsection had been in effect during that period; and

(ii) employee contributions that were actually deducted and withheld from pay under

section 8334 or 8422 of title 5, United States Code, during that period; and

(B) interest as prescribed under section 8334(e) of title 5, United States Code, based on the amount determined under subparagraph (A).

(2) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The employing agency of a covered employee shall pay into the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Retirement Fund an amount for applicable agency contributions based on payments made under paragraph (1).

(B) SOURCE.—Amounts paid under this paragraph shall be contributed from the appropriation or fund used to pay the employee.

(3) REGULATIONS.—The Office of Personnel Management may prescribe regulations to carry out this section.

SEC. 8. ELECTION OF COVERAGE BY EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, an employee may make an irrevocable election in accordance with this section, if—

(1) that employee is paid an allowance under section 5491 of title 5, United States Code, during a pay period in which the date of the enactment of this Act occurs; or

(2) that employee—

(A) is a covered employee as defined under section 6(a)(1); and

(B) during a pay period in which the date of the enactment of this Act occurs is paid an allowance—

(i) under section 1603(b) of title 10, United States Code;

(ii) under section 1005(b) of title 39, United States Code; or

(iii) based on section 5941 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) FILING ELECTION.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, an employee described under subsection (a) may file an election with the Office of Personnel Management to be treated for all purposes—

(1) in accordance with the provisions of this Act (including the amendments made by this Act); or

(2) as if the provisions of this Act (including the amendments made by this Act) had not been enacted, except that the cost-of-living allowance rate paid to that employee shall be the cost-of-living allowance rate in effect on December 31, 2008 for that employee without any adjustment after that date.

(c) FAILURE TO FILE.—Failure to make a timely election under this section shall be treated in the same manner as an election made under subsection (b)(1) on the last day authorized under that subsection.

(d) NOTICE.—To the greatest extent practicable, the Office of Personnel Management shall provide timely notice of the election which may be filed under this section to employees described under subsection (a).

SEC. 9. REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations to carry out this Act, including—

(1) rules for special rate employees described under section 3;

(2) rules for adjusting rates of basic pay for employees in pay systems administered by the Office of Personnel Management when such employees are not entitled to locality-based comparability payments under section 5304 of title 5, United States Code, without regard to otherwise applicable statutory pay limitations during the transition period described in section 4 ending on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2011; and

(3) rules governing establishment and adjustment of saved or retained rates for any employee whose rate of pay exceeds applicable pay limitations on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2011.

(b) OTHER PAY SYSTEMS.—With the concurrence of the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the administrator of a pay system not administered by the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations to carry out this Act with respect to employees in such pay system, consistent with the regulations issued by the Office under subsection (a).

SEC. 10. EFFECTIVE DATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by subsection (b), this Act (including the amendments made by this Act) shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) LOCALITY PAY AND SCHEDULE.—The amendments made by section 2 and the provisions of section 4 shall take effect on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2009.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I join my friend from Hawaii in introducing the Non-foreign Area Retirement Equity Act. I thank Senator AKAKA for his hard work on this important legislation that finally brings retirement equity to the thousands of Federal employees in Alaska and Hawaii.

Alaska and Hawaii are the only States in which Federal employees do not receive locality pay. Instead, they receive what is called a nonforeign cost of living allowance, or COLA. COLA was put in place in 1949, before Alaska and Hawaii were States. It is based on the cost of living in an area compared to the cost of living in Washington, DC. COLA was not available to employees in the lower 48 States.

When locality pay was established to benefit Federal employees in the lower 48, Alaska and Hawaii were not included because they were already under the COLA system. Locality pay brings Federal salaries closer to private industry salaries in an area.

The key difference between these two systems is how it affects a Federal employee's retirement. As you know, a Federal employee's retirement is based on their ''high 3'' years of service, usually the final 3 years of their base pay salary.

COLA is nontaxable income that cannot exceed 25 percent of the base pay. It is currently being reduced in Alaska and Hawaii by 1 percent each year. Because COLA is not taxed, it is not considered as part of an employee's base pay for retirement purposes. This means an employee in Alaska retires with a much lower ''high 3'' than an equivalent position in the lower 48.

Locality pay is taxable income, but is also considered part of an employee's base pay for retirement purposes. This makes a big difference in the amount of retirement benefits an employee receives.

Alaska has one of the highest costs of living in the Nation. Our Federal employees need to know they can continue to afford living in the State they call home on the money they receive in their retirement benefits. Many Alaskan Federal employees nearing retirement relocate to the lower 48 in order to receive locality pay for their ''high 3.'' This puts my State at a disadvantage because we are losing highly skilled, seasoned employees.

This is an inequitable and outdated system. It is time to bring retirement equity to all States. The bill Senator AKAKA and I introduce today with Senators INOUYE and MURKOWSKI will do just that. Simply put, this bill will convert Federal employees in our States from the COLA system to the locality pay system. This conversion will not only benefit the Federal employees in these States, it will also save the Government money.

The COLA system requires that a survey be conducted every 3 years to determine an area's COLA. Our bill would eliminate these expensive and time consuming surveys. By changing to a locality pay system, employees will pay taxes on income they now receive tax free. Federal employees in Alaska and Hawaii have filed lawsuits to fight the inequity of the COLA system. With this change, the Government will not have to spend time and resources defending against this litigation.

The Office of Personnel Management supports replacing COLA with locality pay for all of these reasons.

This bill addresses several employee groups with unique circumstances, including postal employees. I am confident we can work closely with the U.S. Postal Service and the postal employee unions to ensure that postal employees in Alaska and Hawaii are protected.

Senator AKAKA and I hope that all groups affected by this change will contact us so that we can ensure this bill takes everyone's concerns into consideration. Senator AKAKA will be holding a hearing on this issue in Hawaii this month. Feedback from that hearing will be vital to improving our bill.

It is important we pass this bill before the end of this Congress to bring equality in retirement to all of our Federal employees. I urge Senators to support this bill.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. KYL, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 3014. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen penalties for child pornography offenses, child sex trafficking offenses, and other sexual offenses committed against children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to discuss with my colleagues an issue that has hit home over the last few years for all Americans, and that issue is crimes against children. We have all heard stories of children, our most innocent population, being victimized and abused by predatory criminals. While it is true we have made great strides passing Federal legislation against criminal predators, more work needs to be done. That is why I am here today to introduce a bill that I entitled the Prevention and

Deterrence of Crimes Against Children Act of 2008. I am pleased to be joined by Senator KYL and Senator VITTER who have cosponsored this bill with me.

This is a very important bill that will protect our children from the vilest forms of abuse and will send a strong signal to criminals that we as a society will not tolerate such behavior and that their predatory actions have real significant consequences.

I wish to take a moment to talk about the murder of a girl from my home State of Iowa, Jetseta Marrie Gage. On March 24, 2005, Jetseta, a 10-year-old girl from Cedar Rapids, IA, went missing from her home. Within 12 hours of her disappearance, Iowa law enforcement agents arrested a registered sex offender, Roger Bentley, for the crime. He had been previously convicted of committing lascivious acts with a minor.

Regrettably, this criminal served just over a year in prison for his previous sex crime conviction. Two days after her disappearance, an AMBER Alert tip led officials to the location of her body. She was found stuffed in a cabinet in an abandoned mobile home. The autopsy revealed she had been sexually assaulted and suffocated with a plastic bag.

I can't help but wonder whether Jetseta would still be alive today had her killer received stricter penalties for his first offense. It breaks everybody's heart to hear about cases such as this, but it is even more demoralizing when you know that it might have been prevented with adequate sentencing.

Last week, I honored two extraordinary law enforcement officers who helped put away another one of Jetseta's abusers: James Bentley. Unbelievably, James Bentley is the brother of Roger Bentley who was responsible for the rape and murder of Jetseta. A year prior to her murder, James Bentley took nude photos of 9-year-old Jetseta and her 13-month-old little sister Leonna.

After the child abuse prosecution of James Bentley stalled in State court due to sixth amendment concerns, U.S. Postal Inspector Troy Raper and Cedar Rapids Police Department Investigator Charity Hansel followed up on child pornography allegations that eventually led to James Bentley's conviction on Federal child pornography charges.

These investigators worked tirelessly to find nine previous victims of James Bentley. Only two of the nine victims testified, but their courage and their accounts of abuse by this man were very powerful. As a result, these testimonies influenced the district court's decision to use higher sentencing guidelines to put him away in Federal prison for 100 years. I am truly thankful for the public service that Inspector Troy Raper and Investigator Charity Hansel have done for Iowa's kids.

In doing our part, we in Congress have not sat idly by. Two years ago we passed into law the Adam Walsh Child Protection Safety Act. This important legislation made great strides in protecting America's children against violent sexual predators. Among its many components, this act standardized the National Sex Offender Registry, eliminated the statute of limitations for sex crimes against children, provided grants for electronic devices used for monitoring sex offenders and, lastly, established more severe criminal punishment for certain crimes committed by sex offenders.

As part of the Adam Walsh Act, we were able to include the Jetseta Gage Assured Punishment for Violent Crimes Against Children amendment. The amendment created mandatory minimum terms of imprisonment for criminals who commit murder, kidnapping, or serious bodily harm against children.

We are on the right path, but I still say this is not enough—not enough punishment for people who commit these despicable crimes. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done on this serious issue.

This bill I am introducing today will help change this by protecting children in four ways. It will increase mandatory minimum sentences, boost penalties for certain crimes against children, control the use of passports by convicted sex offenders, and strengthen the process for removing criminal aliens who commit sex offenses.

The first section of the bill increases the penalties for child pornography offenses and elevates the mandatory minimum punishment for criminals who commit exploitation crimes against children. I know some of my colleagues have concerns about mandatory minimums, especially in the context of drug sentences. I understand that concern, but in light of the Supreme Court's decision in the Booker case, something must be done to ensure that sexual predators receive the type of sentences appropriate for their crimes.

In Booker, the Court held that the Federal Sentencing Guidelines are no longer mandatory, thus Federal judges have unfettered discretion in sentencing. I am very worried judges are not doing their job to protect children. As a matter of fact, Deputy Attorney General Laurence E. Rothenberg testified to the Senate Judiciary Committee last year that since the Booker decision, Federal judges have significantly increased the number of downward departures for those convicted of possession of child pornography.

To counter this trend, my bill establishes the following mandatory minimums for exploitation crimes against children: One, where a crime involves child pornography, the offender will receive 20 years to life; two, where the crime deals with sexual exploitation of a minor by a parent or guardian, the offender will receive no less than 3 years to life.

The second section of the bill increases penalties for child sex trafficking and child prostitution. The penalties for these crimes need to be adjusted to adequately reflect the gravity of these crimes and the damage that they do to children.

The third section of the bill will ensure harsh penalties for criminals convicted of child sex offenses resulting in death, repeated child sex crimes, and forcible rape of children. These crimes involve the most violent types of sex offenders, and justice for these crimes should be dealt out with the strongest available prison sentences.

The final section of the bill has to do with not permitting these sex offenders to travel outside the country. If we know someone is a convicted child molester, we have the responsibility to not allow them travel to Asia or Europe or anywhere to exploit and harm other kids in other lands.

The bill provides for the following: When the sex offender has been convicted of a sex offense, the issuance of passports shall be refused. Secondly, if a passport has already been issued, the use of a passport may be restricted if the passport was used in the furtherance of a sex offense. Lastly, any alien convicted of a sex offense shall be placed immediately in removal proceedings.

The provisions of this bill are designed to protect our children by locking up violent sexual predators. I doubt that the Members of this body, many of whom have young children of their own, will have any objection to ensuring that violators of crimes against children receive tougher penalties for their acts.

It is unfortunate that it took the murder of girls such as Jetseta Gage for a law with severe penalties to be proposed, but I strongly believe a vote for this bill could save the lives of children in the future. We have an obligation as legislators to protect our citizens, including our most vulnerable populations, and we have an obligation as adults to protect our young people. We have a commitment as parents to protect our children and ensure that they are given the opportunity to grow up free from the dangers that violent sex offenders pose. I urge my colleagues to join me and Senator KYL and Senator VITTER in strengthening our laws so that no child becomes a victim of a repeat offender.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. SANDERS):

S.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution limiting the issuance of a letter of offer with respect to a certain proposed sale of defense articles and defense services to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; read the first time.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise to discuss rising energy prices. I remind President Bush, as he leaves for his trip to the Middle East, his ally, Saudi Arabia, holds the key to reducing gasoline prices at home in the short term.

I, along with my colleagues, Senator DORGAN of North Dakota, Senator CASEY of Pennsylvania, Senator KLOBUCHAR of Minnesota, and Senator SANDERS of Vermont plan to submit a Senate resolution that would block all four pending arms deals to Saudi Arabia, which together total $1.4 billion, unless Saudi Arabia shows that our friendship is a two-way street and increases its oil production by 1 million barrels per day above the January 2008 output levels.

Because these weapons have not yet been delivered to Saudi Arabia, Congress still has the power to block these four deals as leverage to get the world's larger oil producer to bring its production back to historical levels, an action that would have the single greatest impact of lowering gas prices in the short term.

I am very proud that we today voted to prevent continued oil going into the SPR as Senator DORGAN, the sponsor and somebody who has pushed this issue a long time and done it well, has noted that will probably reduce prices about a nickel. There is more. It is a good first step, as he would be the first to say, but we can do more.

If Saudi Arabia would increase production by 1 million barrels a day, the price of gasoline would go down 50 cents a gallon almost immediately. It is a short-term fix.

As my colleagues across the aisle and the administration continue to side with big oil, we have no other choice because, right now, it is Big Oil and OPEC that are benefitting and American families are losing. It is unfortunate we are at this point. Eight years of poor stewardship over our Nation's energy policy has left us with alternatives. And my Republican colleagues have blocked every attempt at real energy reform that would help alleviate the rising energy prices in this country.

In the 110th Congress alone, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have blocked four different attempts by Democrats to extend the alternative tax provisions, and not only for a year or two but many.

On June 21 of last year, the extension of energy credits received 57 votes; on December 7, it received 53 votes; on December 13, it received 59 votes; and on February 6, 58 votes.

Each time, Republicans put up roadblocks requiring 60 votes in order to pass the bill. Each time the overwhelming majority of Democrats voted for the bill, the overwhelming majority of Republicans voted against.

President Bush opposed the bills because each would have ended tax breaks for big oil, as if they needed more tax breaks given their record profitability.

Meanwhile, Americans continue to spend more and more on gasoline, as prices at the pump have skyrocketed upward to record heights. Although our President was not aware that gasoline prices were predicted to top $4 a gallon this summer, American households already faced with rising fiscal burdens incurred as a result of the subprime foreclosure crisis and the financial credit crunch are being squeezed further by record-high prices at the pump.

In a sign that high prices will continue unabated, the Department of Energy recently forecasted that gasoline prices would average $3.66 per gallon across the U.S. this summer, 25 percent higher than last summer's average.

So I, along with several of my colleagues, think it is time to get the President's attention and the attention of the leaders of Saudi Arabia. The resolution we have introduced today, which Senator REID will rule to move on to the calendar this afternoon, requires Saudi Arabia to increase their oil production by 1 million barrels a day or jeopardize their $1.4 billion of pending arms deals with the United States.

One of those deals includes the sale of JDAMs, Joint Direct Attack Munitions, which makes conventional bombs into smart bombs that can be aimed through the window of a house. The administration has warned us that Saudi Arabia needs to use these weapons in their fight against terrorism.

But how are they going to use laser-guided bombs to fight terrorists in their midst? Saudi Arabia very much wants these smart bombs. So our resolution sends a strong signal to the administration and to Saudi Arabia that friendship with the United States is a two-way street. If the Saudis want to see their weapons, we need to see an increase in crude oil production within the next 30 days. As we all know, the principal cause underlying the rise in gasoline prices has been a spike in crude oil prices, now over $120 a barrel, a 100–percent increase over the crude price at this point last year. A significant portion of this price rise is due to supply decisions made by OPEC. The largest member of OPEC, Saudi Arabia, controls one-fifth of the world's crude reserves and constitutes more than 10 percent of daily production of crude oil.

In the past, Saudi Arabia has kept crude oil prices high by limiting supply, producing anywhere from 1 to 5 million barrels per day below capacity. Currently, they are producing 2 million barrels a day below capacity. Why? Why right now, when crude prices are at an historic high, are the Saudis continuing to cut back on production? Does it make any sense? It does if you are a member of OPEC. It does if you are ExxonMobil. But it doesn't if you are almost everybody else. With crude oil at the highest price ever, Saudi Arabia and other members of OPEC are making record profits, and Saudi Arabia is not alone. Last month big oil companies announced some of the best profits in recorded history. Exxon made almost $11 billion in profit last quarter. So we know OPEC has no incentive to increase their production right now, since that would decrease their profits. In fact, if Saudi Arabia were to increase its production by 1 million barrels per day, that translates to a reduction of 20 percent to 25 percent in the price of crude oil. Crude oil prices would fall by more than $25 a barrel from the current level of $126. In turn, that would lower the price of gasoline between 13 and 17 percent or by more than 62 cents off the expected summer price, if the Saudis would simply produce the amount of oil they used to produce when they were far more responsible. Yet Saudi Arabia's oil minister said there was no need to increase supplies by even one barrel of oil.

But even as they are saying no, no, no to the United States, they are saying yes, yes, yes to China. They are doubling oil production for China. This is galling. When the President goes to Saudi Arabia and acts as if the Saudi King and the Saudi leadership are our good friends, he ought to look the American family in the eye and say that and say Saudi Arabia is a loyal ally. To most Americans, a well-armed Saudi Arabia is far less important than a reasonable price for gasoline, heating oil, and all other products upon which oil is based.

The Saudis have to understand this is a two-way street. The President has to understand that the one-way street relationship with Saudi Arabia has to end. We provide them weapons. Our troops provide them protection. Then they rake us over the coals when it comes to the price of oil. Just as Saudi Arabia feels a need to protect itself with high-tech, laser-guided missiles, American consumers and our economy need protection from record high oil prices, exacerbated by OPEC's stranglehold on supply. The administration needs to use all of the leverage it has to influence the OPEC cartel to stop manipulating the world's oil supply to its member nations' own wealth advantage. It is time we stop treating a cartel that would be illegal in the United States with kid gloves. That is what our resolution does. It reminds the Saudis there are consequences for keeping oil prices high at a time when American families are hurting. It reminds Saudi Arabia that it can't take American support for granted. They can choose record oil profits or American weapons, but they can't have both.

I would like any Member of this Chamber and President Bush to look the average American family in the eye and say: There is nothing we can do to get Saudi Arabia to be responsible.

There are things we can do; we just refuse to do them. This resolution has us step to the plate. The resolution is not the final answer, of course, to the problem of rising gas prices. That is why I am a proud cosponsor of S. 2991, the Consumer First Energy Act of 2008 that we Democrats will offer on the floor before Memorial Day. That bill addresses underlying causes that are

driving up energy prices and forces big oil to reinvest some of their record-breaking profits into alternative and renewable sources of energy that are both good for the environment, the consumer, and break our dependence on foreign oil.

Our bill will also attack the broader bill's speculation, punish price gouging, and put additional pressure on the OPEC cartel. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it. I am hopeful we can move on this resolution as soon as possible so American consumers no longer have to carry the heavy burden of high energy prices all by themselves.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 561—COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

Mr. ALLARD (for himself, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. HAGEL, and Mr. NELSON of Nebraska) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 561

Whereas, on May 12, 1958, the United States and Canada signed an official agreement creating the bi-national North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and formally acknowledged their mutual commitment to defending their citizens from air attacks;

Whereas 2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and the outstanding efforts of American and Canadian service men and women defending North America;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command is a unique and fully integrated bi-national United States and Canadian command;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command is headquartered at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and administered by the United States Air Force, with 3 subordinate regional centers located at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, and Canadian Forces Base, Winnipeg, Manitoba;

Whereas the mission of the North American Aerospace Defense Command is to ''prevent air attacks against North America, safeguard the sovereign airspaces of the United States and Canada by responding to unknown, unwanted, and unauthorized air activity approaching and operating within those airspaces, and provide aerospace and maritime warning for North America'';

Whereas, through joint support arrangements with other commands, the North American Aerospace Defense Command, including United States Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, detects, validates, and warns of attacks against North America whether by aircraft, missile, or space vehicle;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) joint command center serves as a central collection and coordination site for a worldwide system of sensors designed to provide the commander and the governments of Canada and the United States with an accurate picture of any aerospace threat;

Whereas the commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command provides integrated tactical warning and attack assessments to the governments of the United States and Canada;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command uses a network of satellites, ground-based and airborne radar, fighters and helicopters, and ground-based air defense systems to detect, intercept, and, if necessary, engage any air-breathing threats to North America;

Whereas North American Aerospace Defense Command assists in the detection and monitoring of aircraft suspected of illegal drug trafficking;

Whereas the Alaskan NORAD Region located at Elmendorf Air Force Base is supported by both the Eleventh Air Force and Air National Guard units;

Whereas the May 2006 North American Aerospace Defense Command Agreement renewal added a maritime warning mission to its slate of responsibilities, which entails a shared awareness and understanding of the ongoing activities conducted in United States and Canadian maritime approaches, maritime areas, and inland waterways;

Whereas the horrific events of September 11, 2001, demonstrated the North American Aerospace Defense Command's continued relevance to North American security;

Whereas, since 2001, the Continental NORAD region, which is divided into 2 defense sectors–the Western Defense Sector, with its headquarters located at McChord Air Force Base, Washington, and the Eastern Defense Sector, with its headquarters located at Rome, New York–has been the lead agency for Operation Noble Eagle, an ongoing mission to protect the continental United States from further airborne aggression from inside and outside of America's borders;

Whereas, in the spring of 2003, North American Aerospace Defense Command fighters based at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, intercepted 2 hijacked aircraft that originated in Cuba and escorted them to Key West, Florida;

Whereas the continued service with valor and honor of American and Canadian men and women serving at the North American Aerospace Defense Command is central to North America's ability to confront and successfully defeat threats of the 21st century; and

Whereas the continuation of the long-standing and successful relationship between the United States and Canada through the North American Aerospace Defense Command is paramount to the future security of the people of the United States and Canada: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the contributions made by the North American Aerospace Defense Command to the security of North America; and

(2) commemorates 50 years of excellence and distinctive service to the United States and Canada.

SENATE RESOLUTION 562—HONORING CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS AS THE ORGANIZATION BEGINS ITS 25TH YEAR OF SERVICE TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. DODD, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 562

Whereas Concerns of Police Survivors has showed the highest amount of concern and respect for tens of thousands of family members of officers killed in the line of duty;

Whereas those families bear the most immediate and profound burden of the absences of their loved ones;

Whereas Concerns of Police Survivors is starting its 25th year as a bedrock of strength for the families of the Nation's lost heroes;

Whereas it is essential that the Nation recognize the contributions of Concerns of Police Survivors to those families; and

Whereas National Police Week, observed each year in the week containing May 15, is the most appropriate time to honor Concerns of Police Survivors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and thanks Concerns of Police Survivors for assisting in the rebuilding of the lives of family members of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty across the United States;

(2) honors Concerns of Police Survivors and recognizes the organization as it begins its 25th year of service to the families of the fallen heroes of the Nation;

(3) urges the people of the United States to join with the Senate in thanking Concerns of Police Survivors; and

(4) recognizes with great appreciation the sacrifices made by police families and thanks them for providing essential support to one another.

SENATE RESOLUTION 563—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 13, 2008, AS ''NATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS DAY''

Mr. ALLARD (for himself and Mrs. CLINTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 563

Whereas more than 10,000 children under the age of 15 in the United States are diagnosed with cancer annually;

Whereas every year more than 1,400 children under the age of 15 in the United States lose their lives to cancer;

Whereas childhood cancer is the number one disease killer and the second overall leading cause of death of children in the United States;

Whereas 1 in every 330 children under the age of 20 will develop cancer, and 1 in every 640 adults aged 20 to 39 has a history of cancer;

Whereas the 5-year survival rate for children with cancer has increased from 56 percent in 1974 to 79 percent in 2000, representing significant improvement from previous decades; and

Whereas cancer occurs regularly and randomly and spares no racial or ethnic group, socioeconomic class, or geographic region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Congress—

(1) designates September 13, 2008, as ''National Childhood Cancer Awareness Day'';

(2) requests that the Federal Government, States, localities, and nonprofit organizations observe the day with appropriate programs and activities, with the goal of increasing public knowledge of the risks of cancer; and