

Mr. DOLE. I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to, the bill be deemed read a third time, passed, as amended, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any colloquy and statements relating to the bill be placed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

So the amendment (No. 3463) was agreed to.

So the bill (H.R. 2196), as amended, was passed.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:25 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following resolution (H. Res. 363) that the Honorable CONSTANCE A. MORELLA, a Representative from the State of Maryland, be, and she is hereby, elected Speaker pro tempore during any absence of the Speaker, such authority to continue not later than Tuesday, February 27, 1996.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following measure was read the second time and placed on the calendar:

S. 1561. A bill for the relief of the individuals whose employment at the White House Travel Office was terminated.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SIMPSON (for himself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER) (by request):

S. 1563. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to revise and improve eligibility for medical care and services under that title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

By Mr. CRAIG:

S. 1564. A bill to amend the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956 to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide loan guarantees for water supply, conservation, quality and transmission projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

S. 1566. A bill to supplement the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956 and to supplement the Federal Reclamation laws by providing for Federal cooperation in non-Federal projects and for participation by non-Federal agencies in Federal projects; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HOLLINGS:

S. 1566. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to issue a certificate of documentation with appropriate endorsement for employment in the coastwise trade for the vessel *Marsh Grass Too*; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ROBB:

S. Res. 225. A resolution urging the President to undertake measures to facilitate the immediate withdrawal of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards from Bosnia-Herzegovina; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. INOUE:

S. Con. Res. 41. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the George Washington University is important to the Nation and urging that the importance of the University be recognized and celebrated through regular ceremonies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SIMPSON (for himself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER) (by request):

S. 1563. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to revise and improve eligibility for medical care and services under that title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

VA HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION

• Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I am most pleased to join with the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs in introducing, by request, legislation intended to reform the operation of VA's health care program. This legislation places into statutory language the eligibility reform proposal of the many veterans' service organizations who each year prepare and submit to the Congress the so called independent budget.

The successful operation of the VA health care system has become one of the most pressing issues faced by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Congress. Many observers feel that changing the current priorities for health care is the certain key to resolving the problems faced by both VA and the veterans it serves. The proposal we introduce today is one of at least five different proposals before the Congress and introduction of this legislation should be viewed as neither endorsement nor opposition to this specific proposal. I join in introduction of the legislation in order to put before the Congress both the proposal and the ideas upon which it is based. I plan to chair committee hearings on the issue later this spring. Both the committee's hearings and legislative process will be much improved if we can view this proposal in legislative format.

As a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, one of the organizations that has prepared the proposal, I understand how important this issue is to America's veterans, the Congress, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and to the American people who must fund whatever decision is reached by the Congress.

I thank my fine personal friend from West Virginia for the constructive and active role that he played as chairman

of the Veterans' Committee and continues to play as ranking minority member. He has been most helpful and courteous to me. I always look forward to working with him and the members of the committee as we work together to address the difficult questions we face concerning veterans' health care and the future structure of the Veterans Health Administration. •

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, as the ranking Democrat on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am delighted to join today with the chairman of the committee, Senator SIMPSON, in introducing legislation that would reform eligibility for VA health care. We are doing so at the request of the four veterans service organizations—AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars—that develop the so-called independent budget [IB].

While it was my policy, as chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to introduce legislation proposed by the administration so that my colleagues and others with an interest would have specific bills to which they might direct their attention and comments, I have not done that for entities other than the administration. Senator SIMPSON has followed a similar policy in his two terms as the committee's chairman. However, in this instance, we have agreed to introduce this legislation so that it might be before the committee later in this session when we take up the issue of the reform of the current eligibility criteria for VA health care.

In introducing administration-requested legislation, we always reserved the right to support the provisions of, as well as any amendment to, such by-request legislation. Obviously, that same policy applies to the bill we are introducing today.

While I have been working with representatives of the IB group for many months in an effort to translate the group's narrative description of proposed eligibility reform into legislative language, I have done so without in any way endorsing the result. I intend to wait to support any specific eligibility reform legislation until after the committee has held hearings and the many issues connected with this subject have been explored in some depth and detail. •

By Mr. CRAIG:

S. 1564. A bill to amend the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956 to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide loan guarantees for water supply, conservation, quality and transmission projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

S. 1565. A bill to supplement the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956 and to supplement the Federal Reclamation laws by providing for Federal cooperation in non-Federal projects and for participation by non-Federal

agencies in Federal projects; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SMALL RECLAMATION PROJECTS ACT OF 1956
AMENDMENTS LEGISLATION

• Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I introduce two measures to expand the use and availability of the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956.

The Small Reclamation Projects Act has provided important benefits throughout the reclamation West in the 40 years since it was first established. Over the past several years, there have been various discussions of ways to expand the benefits of the program. These two measures incorporate some of the suggestions that have been made. I want to emphasize that neither of the measures would affect ongoing projects.

One of the measures deals with financing. At the present time, the Secretary is limited to using grants or loans in fulfilling the objectives of the act. This legislation would expand that authority to include the use of loan guarantees as a way of stretching the limited Federal resources. There has been some discussion among those suggesting this approach that the committee should consider expanding the program under the guarantees outside the 17 reclamation States to other States and the territories. While I do not dispute that the advantages of the program could be useful in the territories and other States, I do not want to dilute the program so that is not able to meet the very real needs in the arid West. Therefore, I have not included such an expansion in this legislation. I do agree that it is a subject worth discussing and it should be one of the subjects of our hearings.

The other measure is essentially a rewrite of the existing statute to expand the purposes for which assistance can be received from the Federal Government. Irrigation remains an authorized purpose, but it would no longer be a required component. The purposes would not include the augmentation and management of local water supplies, conservation of water and energy, fish and wildlife conservation, supplemental water for existing supplies, water quality improvements, and flood control. There had been some discussion about the application of interest on any allocable irrigation component, and I would support discussing this in any hearings. For the moment, however, I have limited the application of interest on any loans to those features which are currently reimbursable with interest under reclamation law.

I also believe that we should explore in our hearings exactly how to deal with investments that further particular Federal objectives, such as fish and wildlife enhancement or other features that are normally nonreimbursable.

Mr. President, neither of these measures should be viewed as a final product, and they are not mutually exclusive. Given the timing, I thought it would be useful to have both measures

introduced so that they could be reviewed by the States and water users as well as by the administration and other interested parties with sufficient time to permit Congress to consider the concepts this session. While I am not prepared to announce a schedule of hearings at this time, I do want to indicate to my colleagues that I do intend to have the Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources conduct hearings early this year. •

By Mr. HOLLINGS:

S. 1566. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to issue a certificate of documentation with appropriate endorsement for employment in the coastwise trade for the vessel *Marsh Grass Too*; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

TRADING PRIVILEGES LEGISLATION

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I am introducing a bill today to direct that the vessel *Marsh Grass Too*, hull identification number AUKEV51139K690, be accorded coastwise trading privileges and be issued a certificate of documentation under section 12103 of title 46, U.S. Code.

The *Marsh Grass Too* was recently constructed in Australia and is a catamaran intended for use as a recreational vessel. The vessel is 28 feet in length, capable of accommodating 12 people, and is self-propelled.

The vessel is owned by Marsha Hass of South Carolina. Ms. Hass would like to utilize her vessel in the coastwise trade and fisheries of the United States. However, because the vessel was built in a foreign shipyard, it does not meet the requirements for coastwise license endorsement in the United States. The *Marsh Grass Too* is a catamaran, a vessel U.S. shipbuilders do not normally build. This particular vessel is built of kevlar, a product of DuPont, and would be imported into the United States as a bare hull. All motors, electronics, and accessories will be purchased and installed in the United States. Coastwise documentation is mandatory to enable the owner to use the vessel for its intended purpose.

The owner of the *Marsh Grass Too* is seeking a waiver of the existing law because she wishes to use the vessel for recreational charters. Her desired intentions for the vessel's use will not adversely affect the coastwise trade in U.S. waters. If she is granted this waiver, it is her intention to comply fully with U.S. documentation and safety requirements. The purpose of the legislation I am introducing is to allow the *Marsh Grass Too* to engage in the coastwise trade and the fisheries of the United States.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 295

At the request of Mrs. KASSEBAUM, the names of the Senator from Ala-

bama [Mr. SHELBY] and the Senator from North Carolina [Mr. FAIRCLOTH] were added as cosponsors of S. 295, a bill to permit labor management cooperative efforts that improve America's economic competitiveness to continue to thrive, and for other purposes.

S. 743

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. SPECTER] was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for investment necessary to revitalize communities within the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 837

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from North Carolina [Mr. FAIRCLOTH], the Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], and the Senator from Texas [Mrs. HUTCHISON] were added as cosponsors of S. 837, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of James Madison.

S. 881

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Texas [Mrs. HUTCHISON] was added as a cosponsor of S. 881, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify provisions relating to church pension benefit plans, to modify certain provisions relating to participants in such plans, to reduce the complexity of and to bring workable consistency to the applicable rules, to promote retirement savings and benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 1028

At the request of Mrs. KASSEBAUM, the names of the Senator from Nevada [Mr. BRYAN] and the Senator from Missouri [Mr. BOND] were added as cosponsors of S. 1028, a bill to provide increased access to health care benefits, to provide increased portability of health care benefits, to provide increased security of health care benefits, to increase the purchasing power of individuals and small employers, and for other purposes.

S. 1344

At the request of Mr. HEFLIN, the names of the Senator from South Dakota [Mr. DASCHLE] and the Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY] were added as cosponsors of S. 1344, a bill to repeal the requirement relating to specific statutory authorization for increases in judicial salaries, to provide for automatic annual increases for judicial salaries, and for other purposes.

S. 1434

At the request of Mr. THOMAS, the name of the Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN] was added as a cosponsor of S. 1434, a bill to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to provide for a two-year (biennial) budgeting cycle, and for other purposes.

S. 1505

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from Nebraska [Mr.