

1996-97. H.R. 3864 will allow GAO to make the best use of limited resources by modifying or terminating a number of activities and reporting requirements that are no longer central to their mission.

For example, section 102(d) of H.R. 3864 will eliminate a requirement placed on GAO by the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, also known as Gramm-Rudman. Gramm-Rudman currently requires GAO to report whether the final sequestration order from the Office of Management and Budget complies with the law. GAO has issued their report every year, even though in the 10 years since Gramm-Rudman has been enacted large-scale sequestrations have only been a concern in two of those years. H.R. 3864 would make this report contingent upon request of the Budget Committees, who no doubt would request such a report if the situation warranted.

Although section 102(d) is clearly within the jurisdiction of the Budget Committee, I will not object because the Budget Committee supports the change that is being made. I congratulate the chairman and ranking member of the Governmental Affairs Committee for producing a bill that will encourage efficiency in GAO operations and urge that the bill do pass.

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

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

The bill (H.R. 3864) was deemed read the third time and passed.

PROVIDING FOR EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Energy Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3910 with regard to drought relief for Corpus Christi and, further, that the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
A bill (H.R. 3910) to provide emergency drought relief to the city of Corpus Christi, Texas, and the Canadian River Municipal Water Authority, Texas, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be deemed read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 3910) was deemed read the third time and passed.

Mr. LOTT. Finally, I believe, Mr. President—not finally, others are coming. Agreements are wonderful. We keep reaching them right up to the end here.

AUTHORIZING PERIOD OF STAY FOR CERTAIN NURSES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2197, which was introduced earlier today by Senators FAIRCLOTH and MOSELEY-BRAUN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2197) to extend the authorized period of stay within the United States for certain nurses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 5432

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, Senators HATCH and KENNEDY have an amendment at the desk. I ask for its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. LOTT], for Mr. HATCH, for himself and Mr. KENNEDY, proposes an amendment numbered 5432.

The amendment is as follows:

Add at the end of the bill the following:

SEC. 2. TECHNICAL CORRECTION.

Effective on September 30, 1996, subtitle A of title III of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 is amended—

(1) in section 306(c)(1), by striking “to all final” and all that follows through “Act and” and inserting “as provided under section 309, except that”;

(2) in section 309(c)(1), by striking “as of” and inserting “before”; and

(3) in section 309(c)(4), by striking “described in paragraph (1)”.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered and agreed to.

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

The amendment (No. 5432) was agreed to.

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

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

The bill (S. 2197), as amended, was deemed read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 2197

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZED PERIOD OF STAY FOR CERTAIN NURSES.

(a) ALIENS WHO PREVIOUSLY ENTERED THE UNITED STATES PURSUANT TO AN H-1A VISA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the authorized period of stay in the United States of any nonimmigrant described in paragraph (2) is hereby extended through September 30, 1997.

(2) NONIMMIGRANT DESCRIBED.—A nonimmigrant described in this paragraph is a nonimmigrant—

(A) who entered the United States as a nonimmigrant described in section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act;

(B) who was within the United States on or after September 1, 1995, and who is within the United States on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(C) whose period of authorized stay has expired or would expire before September 30, 1997 but for the provisions of this section.

(3) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to extend the validity of any visa issued to a nonimmigrant described in section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act or to authorize the re-entry of any person outside the United States on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) CHANGE OF EMPLOYMENT.—A nonimmigrant whose authorized period of stay is extended by operation of this section shall not be eligible to change employers in accordance with section 214.2(h)(2)(i)(D) of title 8, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act).

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall issue regulations to carry out the provisions of this section.

(d) INTERIM TREATMENT.—A nonimmigrant whose authorized period of stay is extended by operation of this section, and the spouse and child of such nonimmigrant, shall be considered as having continued to maintain lawful status as a nonimmigrant through September 30, 1997.

SEC. 2. TECHNICAL CORRECTION.

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(1) in section 306(c)(1), by striking “to all final” and all that follows through “Act and” and inserting “as provided under section 309, except that”;

(2) in section 309(c)(1), by striking “as of” and inserting “before”; and

(3) in section 309(c)(4), by striking “described in paragraph (1)”.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, today the Senate passed a bill which I cosponsored with my colleague from Illinois, Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN. It is designed to address a serious problem facing health care providers and patients in rural and inner city areas. Specifically, the legislation provides a 1-year visa extension for foreign nurses under the expired H-1A Program. It is supported by the American Nurses Association, the American Hospital Association, the American Health Care Association, and the American Business Council for Fair Immigration Reform.

In 1989, Congress passed the Immigrant Nursing Relief Act which created the H-1A Visa Program to address a nationwide nursing shortage which existed at that time. The H-1A Visa Program expired in September 1995. As a result, many rural and inner city hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care facilities will lose the valuable services of foreign nurses who enable

these facilities to meet the health care needs of their communities.

While the shortage has subsided in most parts of the country, shortages continue in many rural and inner city areas. Foreign educated nurses holding H-1A visas fill an important void which continues to exist in certain areas. Without their professional services, the quality of patient care would dramatically decrease. In addition, I have heard from many rural health care providers in North Carolina who informed me that, without the services of foreign nurses, they would be unable to meet Federal and State staffing requirements.

While a long-term solution to this particular nursing shortage problem has not been developed, a short-term solution is needed to address the existing realities in rural and inner city areas. The legislation which passed the Senate today is a carefully crafted short-term compromise. It affects only those H-1A nurses who are currently residing in the United States and extends their length of stay until September 30, 1997. Importantly, this legislation does not allow additional foreign nurses to enter the United States under the expired H-1A Visa Program, nor does it change any of the current requirements for an H-1B visa.

This legislation was introduced and passed by unanimous consent today. Thus, there was no committee action and no legislative history relating to the bill. As the author of the legislation, I wish to clarify section 1(b) governing "Change of Employment." It is my intention that a change in an employer's ownership does not constitute a prohibited change of employment for a nonimmigrant affected by this act. For example, if an employer changes its name as a result of a merger or acquisition, I intend that the nonimmigrant be eligible to continue employment for the new owner. In such circumstances, it is my intention that this legislation permits the Immigration and Naturalization Service to process an I-129 petition to reflect this technical change. The same rules should apply to circumstances in which a nonimmigrant changes work locations with the same employer.

Finally, I wish to thank Senator SIMON for his assistance in passing this legislation. It has been a privilege to work with him to address a serious problem confronting both Illinois and North Carolina. In particular, I am glad to have had this opportunity to work with him one last time before he retires at the end of this Congress. I congratulate him on a distinguished career and wish him well in the future.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 74

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Senate Concurrent Resolution 74 submitted earlier by Senator BROWN correcting the enrollment of the FAA authorization conference report; further, I ask that the resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. Regrettably, Mr. President, I am compelled to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

RELIEF OF NGUYEN QUY AN

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to consideration of H.R. 1087, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
A bill (H.R. 1087) for the relief of Nguyen Quy An.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be deemed read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill appear at the appropriate point in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 1087) was deemed read a third time, and passed.

PRESIDENTIAL AND EXECUTIVE OFFICE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 636, H.R. 3452.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3452) to make certain laws applicable to the Executive Office of the President, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

THE WHITE HOUSE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, the Senate today will pass a bill to eliminate

an unfortunate double standard that has remained in the application of our civil rights and labor laws.

James Madison wrote that an effective control against oppressive measures from the Federal Government on the people is that Government leaders "can make no law which will not have its full operation on themselves and their friends, as well as the great mass of the society."

Last year, this Congress—under Republican leadership—passed the Congressional Accountability Act, requiring the Congress to live under the laws it passes—and oftentimes imposes—on the rest of the Nation. The White House, however, has remained exempt from these laws. After prodding from this Congress, the White House now agrees that this double standard should no longer exist, and our negotiations this week have led to final passage of the White House Accountability Act.

For many years I supported the Congressional Accountability Act, and was glad to see this important legislation become law. For me, this was an issue of fundamental fairness. Congress should live under the laws it passes, and the White House should be no exception. H.R. 3452 will allow all lawmakers—on Capitol Hill and in the Office of the President—to learn firsthand which laws work, and perhaps more often than not, which laws are overly intrusive and burdensome.

I think America's labor leaders will agree with me when I say that employees of the White House should be protected by the same laws that the President approves for the rest of the country. Employees should have the same rights and protections regardless of where they work—whether the individual labors in the private sector, the Congress, and yes, even in the White House.

The White House Accountability Act applies to all workers at the White House except those appointed by the President with Senate confirmation, those appointed to advisory committees, and members of a uniformed service. This legislation requires the White House to enforce 11 civil rights and labor laws for its workers as a matter of law, not just a matter of policy. These standards include the Civil Rights Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, OSHA, and the Fair Labor Standards Act.

This is a bipartisan bill that passed the House of Representatives last week on a vote of 410-5. The White House asked for some modifications to the House legislation, and while I did not agree with all of their requests, we have reached an accommodation that will—for the first time in our history—give White House employees protection under the law. I also am encouraged that we were able to persuade the White House to accept a provision ensuring that White House employees will not lose their jobs if they take time off under the Family and Medical