

route to the vicinity of Wonder Lake and spur the appropriate development of visitor facilities in the Wonder Lake area; and be it further

Resolved, That the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the Governor and the state's executive branch agencies to be aggressive in their resolve to support the consensus of Alaska opinion in supporting the creation of a new northern railroad access into Denali National Park and Preserve, as represented by resolutions of endorsement from the city councils of North Pole, Fairbanks, Nenana, and Seward, the Assembly of the Municipality of Anchorage, and the Assemblies of the Denali, Fairbanks North Star, and Matanuska-Susitna Boroughs, to enhance the Mt. McKinley experience for visitors and the creation of a rail connection between the Wonder Lake area and the Alaska Railroad; and be it further

Resolved, That appropriate state agencies should work with the National Park and interested government officials and representatives of the private sector to investigate the potential of establishing a new northern railroad route into the Wonder Lake area of Denali National Park and Preserve, for the appropriate development of facilities in this area that would serve the needs of park visitors.

POM-276. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 75

Whereas, the municipalities of the state of Louisiana provide essential services to their citizens; and

Whereas, municipalities rely on their pool of citizens to find suitable employees to perform these essential functions; and

Whereas, a commercial driver's license is required even though the employees of small municipalities operate municipal vehicles solely on city streets while performing the functions of the municipality; and

Whereas, it is too onerous a demand to require employees of small municipalities who drive solely on city streets, as opposed to state and federal highways, to maintain a commercial driver's license; Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to exempt from the commercial driver's license requirement employees of municipalities with a population of five thousand or less who operate municipal vehicles solely on city streets; be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-277. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 80

Whereas, the historic gulfward boundary of the state of Louisiana extends a distance into the Gulf of Mexico three marine leagues from the coast; and

Whereas, three leagues is approximately 10.35 miles; and

Whereas, after much litigation, Texas holds title to a three-league gulfward boundary; and

Whereas, as a result of holding title to such three-league gulfward boundary, the Texas public school fund has received literally billions of dollars from leases, rentals, and royalties on such property, and numer-

ous oil and gas wells have been discovered on such property; and

Whereas, Mississippi has also sought a similar gulfward boundary; and

Whereas, the gulfward boundary of the state of Louisiana should be at least equal to that of Texas and Mississippi, therefore, be it

Resolved That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to extend the coastal boundary in Louisiana to be at least equal to that of Texas and Mississippi, be it further

Resolved That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-278. A resolution adopted by the Judicial Conference of the United States relative to a cost-of-living salary adjustment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES SUBMITTED DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the authority of the Order of the Senate of October 9, 1997, the following reports of committees were submitted on October 15, 1997:

By Mr. JEFFORDS, from the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1186. A bill to provide for education and training, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 109).

By Mr. JEFFORDS, from the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, without amendment:

S. 1046. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the National Science Foundation, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110).

By Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 439. A bill to provide for Alaska State jurisdiction over small hydroelectric projects, to address voluntary licensing of hydroelectric projects on fresh waters in the State of Hawaii, to provide an exemption for a portion of a hydroelectric project located in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 111).

By Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 846. A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to remove the jurisdiction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to license projects on fresh waters in the State of Hawaii (Rept. No. 112).

By Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 1092. A bill to provide for a transfer of land interests in order to facilitate surface transportation between the cities of Cold Bay, Alaska, and King Cove, Alaska, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a committee was submitted:

By Mr. HELMS, from the Committee on Foreign Relations: International Telecommunications Union Constitution and Convention (Exec. Rept. 105-3)

TEXT OF THE COMMITTEE-RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION OF ADVICE AND CONSENT

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein), That the Senate advise

and consent to the ratification of the Constitution and Convention of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), with Annexes, signed at Geneva on December 22, 1992, and Amendments to the Constitution and Convention, signed at Kyoto on October 14, 1994, together with Declarations and Reservations by the United States contained in the Final Acts (Treaty Doc. 104-34), subject to declarations and reservations Nos. 68, 73 and 82 of the 1992 Final Acts; declarations and reservations Nos. 84, 92, 97, and 98 of the 1994 Final Acts; and the understandings of subsection (a), the declarations of subsection (b), and the proviso of subsection (c).

(a) UNDERSTANDINGS.—The Senate's advice and consent is subject to the following two understandings, which shall be included in the instrument of ratification, and shall be binding on the President:

(1) BROADCASTS TO CUBA.—The United States of America, noting the Statement (No. 40) entered by the delegation of Cuba during the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union, in Kyoto Japan, affirms its rights to broadcast to Cuba on appropriate frequencies free of jamming or other wrongful interference and reserves its rights to address existing interference and any future interference, by Cuba with United States broadcasting. Furthermore, the United States of America notes that its presence in Guantanamo is by virtue of an international agreement presently in force; the United States of America reserves the right to meet its radio communication requirements there as heretofore.

(2) GEOSTATIONARY-SATELLITE ORBITS.—The United States understands that the reference in Article 44 of the Constitution to the "geographical situation of particular countries" does not imply a recognition of claim to any preferential rights to the geostationary-satellite orbit.

(b) DECLARATIONS.—The Senate's advice and consent is subject to the following two declarations, which shall be binding on the President:

(1) ASSESSED PAYMENTS TO THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION.—Payments by the United States to the International Telecommunication Union shall be limited to assessed contributions, appropriated by Congress. This provision does not apply to United States payments voluntarily made for a specific purpose other than the payment of assessed contributions. The United States shall seek to amend Article 33(3) of the ITU Convention to eliminate the ITU's authority to impose interest payments on ITU members.

(2) TREATY INTERPRETATION.—The Senate affirms the applicability to all treaties of the constitutionally based principles of treaty interpretation set forth in Condition (1) of the resolution of ratification of the INF Treaty, approved by the Senate on May 27, 1988, and Condition (8) of the resolution of ratification of the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, approved by the Senate on May 14, 1997.

(c) PROVISIO.—The Senate's resolution of ratification is subject to the following proviso, which shall be binding on the President:

(1) SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION.—Nothing in the Treaty requires or authorizes legislation or other action by the United States of America that is prohibited by the Constitution of the United States as interpreted by the United States.

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. BINGAMAN:

S. 1295. A bill to provide for dropout prevention; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

By Mr. COCHRAN:

S. 1296. A bill to reform the laws relating to Postal Service finances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. COVERDELL:

S. 1297. A bill to redesignate Washington National Airport as "Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SHELBY:

S. 1298. A bill to designate a Federal building located in Florence, Alabama, as the "Justice John McKinley Federal Building"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BINGAMAN:

S. 1295. A bill to provide for dropout prevention; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

THE NATIONAL DROPOUT PREVENTION ACT OF 1997

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the National Dropout Prevention Act. I will talk just a bit about the issue and talk about the problem that I am trying to address and that this act is intending to address. It is a problem, I think, all Senators should join me in trying to resolve and I believe will join me in trying to resolve.

We have a serious problem on our hands that is a threat to the youth of America. The problem is that far too many of our kids are dropping out of high school before they graduate. Some, even, are dropping out of middle school before they proceed on to high school.

Each fall, starting about a month ago, students begin dropping out of school and they drop out in very, very large numbers. Nationwide, nearly half a million kids leave school each year. That is, leaving school not by graduating but leaving school early and deciding not to stay in school and graduate. That is 2,700 dropouts for each school day. Studies show that our children are dropping out at a younger and younger age.

Who are these kids who are dropping out of school? The charts that I have here make the case fairly well. They are largely from low-income and middle-income families, and as a percent they are largely minority. The numbers are disturbing across the board, but they are particularly alarming for Hispanic students.

First, on the income level. If you look at this chart, the top line shows the period from 1975 to 1995, a 20-year period. On the left-hand side we show the dropout rates for grades 10-12, ages 15-24, by family income. What this means is that among students from low-income families at times it has been as high as 17 percent that have

dropped out in a particular year. In middle-income families, it is closer to 6 to 8 percent, and in high-income families it is substantially lower than that. When you break it down not just by income level but by ethnic background, you can see that the problem is concentrated and particularly alarming for Hispanic students who are dropping out at a rate more than double that of non-Hispanic students. Also, black students drop out at a rate about 50 percent higher than the rate for white students.

You can see from this chart the point I am making here, the top line, the red line, represents the percentage of Hispanic students dropping out. This is called status dropout rates for persons 16-24, and you can see somewhere between 30 and 35 percent of Spanish students nationwide drop out rather than compete high school. It is a very serious problem, particularly in that group, and of course that is a great concern in my State where a very large percent of the student population is Hispanic.

Why are they dropping out? With all the emphasis on self-reliance these days it is tempting to ask what is wrong with kids that so many of them are leaving school. When you actually sit down and talk to these young people, as I have done across New Mexico, you soon learn that it is not the kids that are failing the schools as much as it is the schools that are failing our young people. Ask groups of high school students why they and their friends are leaving school and you will hear the same answers again and again. Some of them are bored with the dumbed-down lessons that they don't see as having any relevance to their own lives. They are lost in giant school buildings with endless corridors and teachers who have very little time to give them or to use in encouraging them to succeed in their school work. They are trapped in an educational system that does not meet the individual needs of individual students.

With all the focus on education these days you would think this issue would be getting substantial attention but, in fact, it is not getting any real attention. It has been 8 years since President Bush and the Nation's Governors established as a national goal that we would graduate 90 percent of high school seniors by the year 2000. Obviously, we are much closer to the year 2000, but we are nowhere near the goal of graduating 90 percent of our students before they drop out of school.

Now, let's talk a little about the bill we are introducing, this National Dropout Prevention Act of 1997. This is the only comprehensive effort that we have seen, that we have come up with, or that we are aware of anyone coming up with, that will prevent students from dropping out of school and take this issue head on.

Let me outline the proposal very briefly. First, two basic points. The reasons that kids drop out of school

cut across racial and ethnic lines. The solutions we are proposing are aimed at helping all at-risk students make it through high school. Second, the emphasis here is on preventing students from dropping out of school by reforming the schools that they are in rather than trying to help students later after they have made the decision to leave school.

But what I am proposing in this bill sets out to achieve four basic goals:

First, to focus greater national attention on the problem and to coordinate our Federal efforts to deal with the issue.

Second, to provide more resources to help communities to fight back at this problem.

Third, to enable school districts to try effective prevention strategies that have been shown to work.

Fourth, to enlist the States where most of the resources are and most of the policy is related to education in the effort to keep more kids in school.

The bill directs the President to appoint a dropout czar within the Department of Education who would coordinate efforts at the national level, would streamline programs, would recommend changes and, most importantly, could be held accountable for progress on dropout prevention. This czar would make sure that existing Federal programs such as the Upward Bound Program and vocational education do their level best to help at-risk kids to complete high school.

Second and third, this bill creates a new \$100 million grant program to reach the 1,000 schools across the country with the highest dropout rates. With these funds, schools would be able to try proven strategies that have been shown to work—strategies like breaking larger schools down into smaller learning communities so that kids can have regular and closer contact with the adults in the school, particularly with their teachers, and can have challenging and relevant work to do.

Finally, because States are so much a part of our educational system, we would ask them to place a greater emphasis on dropout prevention as well. We have asked in this bill that instead of awarding education dollars based on how many students are enrolled in school 40 days into the year, as my State does and as many States do, the States change their laws so that they monitor enrollment levels throughout the school year. Because gathering accurate data is the first step toward fixing the problem, we also ask that States keep track of who is leaving school.

Let me show you a chart. This chart takes the 23 States that presently collect data on the number of students dropping out of school and it ranks them. It shows that, according to the statistics we have, as a percentage dropout rate, New Mexico—and this is on an annual basis—ranks third in the country. Each Senator can look at this list and determine very quickly, first,