

Finally, I thank the chairman of the Commerce Committee once again. When our negotiations with the House threatened to dissolve, he stood firm on the need for a bipartisan NASA bill this year. I speak for all of the conferees when I congratulate him for putting together this bill. While it is not perfect, I support H.R. 1654 and hope that the Senate will adopt the conference report.

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I rise in support of the conference report on H.R. 1654, the NASA Authorization bill. First, I thank Chairman MCCAIN and the other Senate conferees. We have come to a bi-partisan agreement after many months of conference and now we have the opportunity to pass a NASA Authorization bill for the first time since fiscal year 1993.

As you know, NASA is one of the agencies of government that captures the spirit of the American people. Who can fail to be awed by the liftoff of a Space Shuttle, a walk in space, or the discovery of water on Mars? Because NASA is such a treasure, it is important that we in Congress exercise our duty to oversee and authorize its programs.

And that is just what this conference report does. H.R. 1654 would authorize funding for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration at the appropriated level of \$13.6 billion in FY 2000. It provides \$14.2 billion in FY 2001 and \$14.6 billion in FY 2002, slightly more than the President's requested level.

The bill fully funds the Space Shuttle program, the International Space Station, and the Space Launch Initiative. It provides authorizations above the requested levels for the Space Grant College program, the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, EPSCoR, and NASA's research into aircraft noise reduction and cleaner, more energy-efficient aircraft engine technology—research that can improve the quality of life of Americans who live near airports.

When we were nearing the finish line with this bill, the Administration contacted us about several key concerns they had with the bill. We have resolved their concerns, and now I would like to run through these issues: our interaction with International Space Station partners, commercialization of the Space Station, Trans-Hab, Shuttle Safety, and Triana.

International partners and the space station: We successfully altered House-proposed language which was overly punitive. The provision contained in H.R. 1654 encourages NASA to provide for equitable use of the Space Station by seeking reduction in utilization rights (like crew allocation) for International Partners that willfully violate any of their commitments to the program.

Space station commercialization: The conferees agreed to leave in place the Space Station Commercial Development program and did not agree to

the House's proposal to eliminate the program. We did, however, shorten the period of time for which the program is authorized from 2004 to 2002. The program will be up for reauthorization at the same time that NASA itself is due for reauthorization.

Trans-hab: NASA has considered replacing the "hard" habitation module for the Space Station with an inflatable "Trans-Hab." The House had sought to prohibit NASA from using its funds to develop an inflatable habitation module. The conference agreement clarifies that NASA is permitted to lease or use a commercially-developed Trans-Hab. It is my understanding that NASA is currently evaluating a very serious commercial proposal for an inflatable space structure capable of accommodating humans in space, and this language should allow them to participate in such an agreement.

Shuttle safety: The Administration was concerned that the Senate-passed cost cap on the International Space Station and Shuttle flights to assemble the Station might send the wrong message about Shuttle and Station crew safety. That concern sent up a red flag to the conferees—no cost limitation proposed in this legislation should make NASA hesitate for one moment in launching the Shuttle if a life was at stake. No one wants to jeopardize the life and safety of the crew of the Space Station. We inserted language to ensure that the cap would not apply to costs incurred to ensure or enhance the safety or reliability of the Space Shuttle and another provision to allow the Administrator to use monies provided beyond the cap to improve safety or to launch a shuttle to protect the Station and its crew.

Triana: Finally, the House agreed to take out its provision to terminate the Triana program. Triana will be the world's first Earth-observing mission to L1, the gravitational mid-point between the sun and the Earth. From this vantage point, the satellite has a continuous view of the Sun-lit portion of the Earth. Over 90 percent of the instrument development has already taken place, and we've already spent about \$40 million.

NASA highlighted several legislative provisions which they feel would be beneficial, yet are not included in the bill. While I would not support all of those provisions, I am disappointed we could not include some of the provisions that represent their greatest needs in this Conference Report.

I would also like to highlight a few of H.R. 1654's other major provisions. The Conference Report imposes a \$25.0 billion cost cap for International Space Station development and a \$17.7 billion cost cap for Space Shuttle launch costs in connection with Station assembly. The cap would not apply to operations, research, or crew return activities after the Station is complete. An additional contingency fund of \$5 billion for Station development and \$3.5 billion

for Space Shuttle is authorized to provide flexibility in case of an emergency or other unusual circumstance.

As you know, I am a strong supporter of the International Space Station Program. The Space Shuttle *Discovery* is currently on the 100th Space Shuttle mission, putting cargo and other items in place so that the Station is ready to be occupied by its permanent crew next month.

The cap on Station development in the bill does not seek to alter or impede that program in any way. It merely seeks to limit the development costs so we stick to the plan and put a fully-operational Space Station on orbit in a timely manner.

The bill also directs NASA, after Congressional review of their plan, to establish a non-governmental organization (NGO) to manage Space Station research and commercial activities upon completion of the Station. I understand that some members are concerned about this provision. I will simply note: (1) NASA is already in the process of evaluating and establishing an NGO to manage station research; and (2) our bill allows Congress nearly 4 months to react to NASA's proposal before it can be implemented. If we don't like what they come back with, we can tell them not to do it.

H.R. 1654 represents the culmination of several years of hard work, and it is a good piece of legislation. I don't like every provision in the bill, but it represents a fine compromise—and one it looked like we might never reach. Again, I would like to thank Chairman MCCAIN and Senator FRIST for their hard work and to thank our staffs, in particular Floyd DesChamps, Elizabeth Prostic, and Jean Toal Eisen.

I urge the swift adoption of the conference report.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the conference report be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the report be printed in the RECORD.

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

CORRECTING THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 1654

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that H. Con. Res. 409, a concurrent resolution, which corrects the enrollment of H.R. 1654 be agreed to and the motion to reconsider with laid upon the table.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 409) was agreed to.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM AMENDMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Governmental Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2842, and

the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2842) to amend chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, concerning the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, to enable the Federal Government to enroll an employee and his or her family in the FEHB Program when a State court orders the employee to provide health insurance coverage for a child of the employee but the employee fails to provide the coverage.

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

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

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

The bill (H.R. 2842) was read the third time and passed.

TO COMPLETE THE ORDERLY WITHDRAWAL OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION FROM THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS, ALASKA

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Commerce Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3417 and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3417) to complete the orderly withdrawal of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration from the civil administration of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 4320

(Purpose: To reauthorize the Coastal Zone Management Act and the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act, and for other purposes.)

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. LOTT] for Ms. SNOWE, for herself and Mr. KERRY, proposes an amendment numbered 4320.

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Amendments Submitted.")

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

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

The amendment (No. 4320) was agreed to.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise to support H.R. 3417, the Pribilof Islands Transition Act with the amendment I have offered. This bill, as amended, contains a number of ocean, coastal, and fisheries related titles that will result in major conservation gains for our nation's marine resources at a time when we are placing enormous demands on them. The bill not only attempts to provide additional environmental protections through a number of state and local programs, but also tools for better management.

Title I of this bill is the Pribilof Islands Transition Act. The Alaskan Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea were a former reserve for harvesting fur seals. The Commerce Department, acting through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), has been involved in municipal and social services on the islands since 1910. In 1983, NOAA tried to remove themselves from administering these programs. However, despite the \$20 million in funds the Pribilof Islands received to replace future annual Federal appropriations, the Pribilof Islanders claim that the terms of the transition process were not met and the withdrawal failed.

This title authorizes \$28 million over five years to again attempt to achieve the orderly withdrawal of NOAA from the civil administration of the Pribilof Islands. Additionally, it authorizes \$10 million a year for five years for NOAA to complete its environmental cleanup and landfill closure obligations prior to the final transfer of federal property to the six local entities. The Pribilof Islands have historically been a very expensive program to the American taxpayers. Congress expects that this title will provide a final termination of NOAA's municipal and social service responsibilities on the islands and a distinct end to federal taxpayer funding of those services.

Title II of this bill is the Coastal Zone Management Act of 2000, which refines and reauthorizes funding for the nation's coastal zone management program. This is the same language that was passed by unanimous consent in the Senate on September 28, 2000. Not only is this federal-state partnership important to my home state of Maine, but it is also a significant management tool for coastal states throughout the country. Despite the fact that the coastal zone only comprises 10 percent of the contiguous U.S. land area, it is home to more than 53 percent of the U.S. population, and more than 3,600 people relocate there annually. Not only is it an important economic region, but the coastal zone is also critical ecologically.

We are currently facing a very serious problem in the coastal zone in the form of non-point source pollution. This type of runoff pollution is degrading the condition of our coastal rivers, wetlands, and marine environments. Compromising the environmental integrity of the coastal zone can in turn

have a large impact on the regions' economic viability in a number of sectors, including tourism and fishing. The Coastal Zone Management Act of 2000 addresses this issue by encouraging and funding states to implement local solutions to their non-point source pollution problems. We have not created any new mandates or programs addressing non-point source pollution. Rather, the Coastal Community program can be used at the states' discretion if they want to create and implement local community-based solutions to problems, which would include non-point source pollution control strategies and measures.

This title greatly increases authorization levels for the coastal zone management program, allowing states to better address their coastal management plan goals. While we have achieved many successes through the CZMA, the states have made it clear that they can do more and that they can raise additional funds to match the increased federal funding. Therefore, we have authorized a total of \$136.5 million for fiscal year 2001 and increased authorization levels by \$5.5 million a year through fiscal year 2004. This total authorization includes an increase for the National Estuarine Research and Reserve System (NERRS) to \$12 million in fiscal year 2001, with an additional \$1 million increase each year through fiscal year 2004.

Mr. President, Title III of the bill deals with the management of several Atlantic coast fisheries. Subtitle A reauthorizes the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act (ASBCA). The ASBCA was originally passed to help coordinate and improve interstate management of Atlantic striped bass, an important commercial and recreational fish. Because striped bass migrate along the eastern seaboard, it is imperative that management measures be coordinated among the various states. The rebuilding of striped bass populations is considered one of our fisheries management success stories and it is critical that we continue these efforts. This subtitle authorizes \$1.25 million a year for fiscal years 2001 through 2003 to carry out the provisions of the act and another \$250,000 to conduct a population study on the Atlantic striped bass.

Subtitle B, the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Act of 2000, will reauthorize the highly successful interstate program that manages coastal fisheries that cross jurisdictional boundaries along the east coast. The states have proven that joint management of these resources is far more effective than a piecemeal approach by individual states. In an effort to further increase the effectiveness of interstate management, the states have initiated the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program. This joint data collection and analysis program is intended to meet the need for improved fishery statistics for management purposes. It is a comprehensive effort to address all