

S. 1972: A bill to amend the charter of the AMVETS organization.

S. 2127: A bill for the relief of the Pottawatomi Nation in Canada for settlement of certain claims against the United States.

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2896: A bill to enhance the operation of the AMBER Alert communications network in order to facilitate the recovery of abducted children, to provide for enhanced notification on highways of alerts and information on such children, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. 2903. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a guaranteed adequate level of funding for veterans health care; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WELLSTONE:

S. 2904. A bill to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to provide emergency protection for retiree health benefits; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ALLARD:

S. 2905. A bill to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the elimination of the 60-month limit and an increase in the income limitation on the student loan interest deduction; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BINGAMAN:

S. 2906. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish a program to make allocations to States for projects to expand 2-lane highways in rural areas to 4-lane highways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SARBANES, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CORZINE, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2907. A bill to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 900 Brentwood Road, NE, in Washington, D.C., as the "Joseph Curseen, Jr. and Thomas Morris, Jr. Processing and Distribution Center"; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. KOHL, Mr. REID, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. TORRICELLI, and Mr. JEFFORDS):

S. 2908. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to establish at least one Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team in each State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SMITH of Oregon:

S. 2909. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses and to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to such deduction and the extension of the exclusion for employer-provided educational assistance; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SANTORUM:

S. 2910. A bill to amend the Constitution Heritage Act of 1988 to provide for the operation of the National Constitution Center; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HUTCHINSON (for himself, Mr. GREGG, Mr. KYL, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. MURKOWSKI, Mr. ALLARD, and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 2911. A bill to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the modifications to education individual retirement accounts; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. WELLSTONE, and Mr. REED):

S. 2912. A bill to provide for educational opportunities for all students in State public school systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. HUTCHINSON, and Mr. FITZGERALD):

S. Res. 322. A resolution designating November 2002, as "National Epilepsy Awareness Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DASCHLE (for himself and Mr. LOTT):

S. Res. 323. A resolution to authorize testimony and representation in Senator Mitch McConnell, et. al. v. Federal Election Commission, et al., and consolidation cases; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 486

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 486, a bill to reduce the risk that innocent persons may be executed, and for other purposes.

S. 572

At the request of Mr. CHAFEE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 572, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to extend modifications to DSH allotments provided under the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Benefits Improvement and Protection Act of 2000.

S. 654

At the request of Mr. TORRICELLI, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAUX) was added as a cosponsor of S. 654, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to restore, increase, and make permanent the exclusion from gross income for amounts received under qualified group legal services plans.

S. 859

At the request of Mr. THOMAS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 859, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a mental health community education program, and for other purposes.

S. 917

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFEE) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were

added as cosponsors of S. 917, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income amounts received on account of claims based on certain unlawful discrimination and to allow income averaging for backpay and frontpay awards received on account of such claims, and for other purposes.

S. 995

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 995, a bill to amend chapter 23 of title 5, United States Code, to clarify the disclosures of information protected from prohibited personnel practices, require a statement in non-disclosure policies, forms, and agreements that such policies, forms and agreements conform with certain disclosure protections, provide certain authority for the Special Counsel, and for other purposes.

S. 1224

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1224, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the availability of medicare cost contracts for 10 years.

S. 1619

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1619, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of substitute adult day care services under the medicare program.

S. 1818

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1818, a bill to ensure that a Federal employee who takes leave without pay in order to perform service as a member of the uniformed services or member of the National Guard shall continue to receive pay and allowances such individual is receiving for such service, will be no less than the basic pay such individual would then be receiving if no interruption in employment had occurred.

S. 1990

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 1990, a bill to establish a public education awareness program relating to emergency contraception.

S. 2215

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2215, a bill to halt Syrian support for terrorism, end its occupation of Lebanon, stop its development of weapons of mass destruction, cease its illegal importation of Iraqi oil, and by so doing hold Syria accountable for its role in the Middle East, and for other purposes.

S. 2239

At the request of Mr. SARBANES, the name of the Senator from Wyoming

(Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2239, a bill to amend the National Housing Act to simplify the downpayment requirements for FHA mortgage insurance for single family homebuyers.

S. 2246

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2246, a bill to improve access to printed instructional materials used by blind or other persons with print disabilities in elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

S. 2490

At the request of Mr. TORRICELLI, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG) were added as cosponsors of S. 2490, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure the quality of, and access to, skilled nursing facility services under the medicare program.

S. 2513

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2513, a bill to assess the extent of the backlog in DNA analysis of rape kit samples, and to improve investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases with DNA evidence.

S. 2528

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ALLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2528, a bill to establish a National Drought Council within the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to improve national drought preparedness, mitigation, and response efforts, and for other purposes.

S. 2572

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2572, a bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to establish provisions with respect to religious accommodation in employment, and for other purposes.

S. 2577

At the request of Mr. FITZGERALD, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2577, a bill to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the exclusion from Federal income tax for restitution received by victims of the Nazi Regime.

S. 2614

At the request of Mr. CORZINE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2614, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the work hours and increase the supervision of resident physicians to ensure the safety of patients and resident physicians themselves.

S. 2615

At the request of Mr. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Arkansas

(Mr. HUTCHINSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2615, a bill to amend title XVII of the Social Security Act to provide for improvements in access to services in rural hospitals and critical access hospitals.

S. 2667

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2667, a bill to amend the Peace Corps Act to promote global acceptance of the principles of international peace and nonviolent coexistence among peoples of diverse cultures and systems of government, and for other purposes.

S. 2742

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2742, a bill to establish new nonimmigrant classes for border commuter students.

S. 2758

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2758, a bill entitled "The Child Care and Development Block Grant Amendments Act".

S. 2760

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2760, a bill to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to conduct a study and make recommendations regarding the accounting treatment of stock options for purposes of the Federal securities laws.

S. 2770

At the request of Mr. DODD, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2770, a bill to amend the Federal Law Enforcement Pay Reform Act of 1990 to adjust the percentage differentials payable to Federal law enforcement officers in certain high-cost areas.

S. 2803

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2803, a bill to amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Producers Inspection Act, and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for improved public health and food safety through enhanced enforcement, and for other purposes.

S. 2841

At the request of Mr. CORZINE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2841, a bill to adjust the indexing of multifamily mortgage limits, and for other purposes.

S. 2848

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2848, a bill to amend title XVIII of the

Social Security Act to provide for a clarification of the definition of homebound for purposes of determining eligibility for home health services under the medicare program.

S. 2860

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2860, a bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to modify the rules for redistribution and extended availability of fiscal year 2000 and subsequent fiscal year allotments under the State children's health insurance program, and for other purposes.

S. 2869

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2869, a bill to facilitate the ability of certain spectrum auction winners to pursue alternative measures required in the public interest to meet the needs of wireless telecommunications consumers.

S. 2869

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2869, supra.

S. 2896

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2896, a bill to enhance the operation of the AMBER Alert communications network in order to facilitate the recovery of abducted children, to provide for enhanced notification on highways of alerts and information on such children, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 270

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 270, a resolution designating the week of October 13, 2002, through October 19, 2002, as "National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Week".

S. CON. RES. 113

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 113, a concurrent resolution recognizing and supporting the efforts of the State of New York to develop the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, New York, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 135

At the request of Mr. NICKLES, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 135, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding housing affordability and urging fair and expeditious review by international trade tribunals to ensure a competitive North American market for softwood lumber.

AMENDMENT NO. 4480

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, his name was added as a cosponsor of

amendment No. 4480 proposed to H.R. 5093, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 4481

At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. HOLLINGS), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAUX) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 4481 proposed to H.R. 5093, a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 4481

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4481 proposed to H.R. 5093, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 4481

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4481 proposed to H.R. 5093, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 4486

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4486 proposed to H.R. 5005, a bill to establish the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 4486

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4486 proposed to H.R. 5005, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 4491

At the request of Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. THOMAS) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. THURMOND) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 4491 proposed to H.R. 5005, a bill to establish the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 4491

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4491 proposed to H.R. 5005, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 4491

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4491 proposed to H.R. 5005, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 4491

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4491 proposed to H.R. 5005, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 4492

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4492 proposed to H.R. 5005, a bill to establish the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 4492

At the request of Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. THOMAS) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. THURMOND) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 4492 proposed to H.R. 5005, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 4492

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4492 proposed to H.R. 5005, supra.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. 2903. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a guaranteed adequate level of funding for veterans health care; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Veterans Health Care Funding Guarantee Act.

I am introducing the legislation because I believe the VA health care system is on the brink of crisis. While the number of veterans in the United States has decreased over the years, the number of veterans utilizing the VA health care system has increased exponentially. This is due in large part to the availability of Community-Based Outpatient Clinics and the prescription drug benefits available through the VA. The VA estimates that it will see an additional 1.2 million patients over the next fiscal year. This would bring the number of veterans served through the VA up to 4.9 million, a 31 percent increase in one year.

While the VA has become the health care system of choice for many veterans, the system is simply not equipped to handle this kind of patient influx at the current funding level. According to the VA, 300,000 veterans are waiting for appointments, half of them will end up waiting six months or more. I know this to be the case in my own State. In Sioux Falls, veterans are currently being given appointment dates for November of 2003. Furthermore, recent articles in the Aberdeen American News and the Argus Leader reported that the VA has been instructed not to recruit veterans into the health care system any more because of lack of resources.

This is despite the fact that for the past several years Congress has provided funding for veterans health care in excess of the VA's request. Two years ago, I helped fight for a \$1.4 billion increase in veterans health care funding over the Administration's initial request. Last year, we succeeded in adding an additional \$1.1 billion. During Senate consideration of the Fiscal Year 2002 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill, I was pleased to work with my fellow members of the Appropriations Committee to ensure that

\$417 million in additional funding for veterans health care was included in the bill. Given the current problems within the VA health care system, I was disappointed that President refused to spend \$275 million of the emergency funding that was earmarked for veterans health care. According to the Independent Budget, which is prepared by the Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Administration's Fiscal Year 2003 request for VA health care is \$1.7 billion less than what is needed to fully fund our veterans' health care needs.

We need a new approach to veterans health care. The Veterans Health Care Funding Guarantee Act that I am introducing today would change the way in which the VA health care system is funded by moving it from discretionary to mandatory spending. The bill would establish a base-line funding year and calculate the average cost of a veteran using the VA health care system. The bill would then provide funding for the total number of veterans who participate in the VA health care system. That would be indexed annually for inflation.

In my opinion, the men and women who put their lives on the line in defense of this Nation should not be told that they need to wait up to a year before someone can assess their medical needs. I believe that the Veterans Health Care Funding Guarantee Act is an important starting point to begin a discussion about maintaining our commitments to our Nation's veterans. It is my hope that my colleagues will join me in examining new ways to provide our veterans with the high-quality health care they deserve.

By Mr. ALLARD:

S. 2905. A bill to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the elimination of the 60-month limit and an increase in the income limitation on the student loan interest deduction; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, today I introduce legislation that will repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to student loan interest deduction. My bill will make permanent the provisions that are set to expire under current law on December 31, 2010. The affected provisions include the elimination of the 60-month limit on deductibility of interest paid on a qualified education loan and clarify that voluntary payments of interests are deductible, as well as the adjustment to the phase out range for eligibility for loan interest deduction up to \$50,000 through \$65,000 for single taxpayers and \$100,000 to \$130,000 for joint returns.

Making these provisions permanent will be good for taxpayers because borrowers will benefit from added tax relief when they voluntarily pay back