

Whereas, a significant portion of these claims involve World War II and Korean War veterans, and despite determined efforts by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to eliminate this backlog, the backlog continues; and

Whereas, there exists a trained group of individuals known as county veterans service officers located in 37 of the 50 states, representing 700 counties and a workforce of over 2,400 full-time local government employees; and

Whereas, these county veterans service officers were established in 1945 after World War II for the purpose of helping returning veterans reenter civilian life, and have continued to do so for all veterans of all wars since then; and

Whereas, these county veterans service officers are highly trained individuals who have continued to provide assistance to all veterans for over 50 years and are already familiar with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs claim policies and procedures; and

Whereas, for example, in North Carolina county veterans service officers annually assist North Carolina veterans obtain monetary benefits in excess of \$812,000,000 by assisting these veterans in filing over 50,000 claims annually with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

Whereas, this claims processing backlog needs to be urgently reduced while our World War II and Korean War veterans are still with us; and

Whereas, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs could enter into a partnership with state and local governments to utilize these highly trained county veterans service officers to eliminate the present claims processing backlog by expanding the county veterans service officers' roles; and

Whereas, this would be a cost-effective way of reducing the claims processing backlog by eliminating the need for a substantial increase in federal employees; and

Whereas, these county veterans service officers, as represented by the North Carolina Association of County Veterans Service Officers and the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers, have offered to assist the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in exchange for block grants to the various states based upon each state's veterans population to compensate county veterans service officers for their expanded role; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

Section 1. The House of Representatives urges the Congress of the United States and the President to support and enact legislation that would establish a federal/state partnership to use the knowledge and skills of the local county veterans service officers to assist the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in eliminating the veterans claims processing backlog in order that America's veterans can take advantage of the benefits that the United States has authorized for them for their faithful and loyal service to a grateful nation.

Section 2. The Principal Clerk shall transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from North Carolina in the Congress of the United States.

Section 3. This resolution is effective upon adoption.

POM-334. A Resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Alaska relative to the Pledge of Allegiance; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE RESOLVE NO. 2

Whereas this country was founded on religious freedom by founders, many of whom were deeply religious; and

Whereas the First Amendment to the United States Constitution embodies principles intended to guarantee freedom of religion both through the free exercise of religion and by prohibiting the government's establishing a religion; and

Whereas the Pledge of Allegiance was written by Francis Bellamy, a Baptist minister, and was first published in the September 8, 1892, issue of *Youth's Companion*; and

Whereas, in 1954, the United States Congress added the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance; and

Whereas President Eisenhower, in adding these words, said "These words will remind Americans that despite our great physical strength we must remain humble. They will help us to keep constantly in our minds and hearts the spiritual and moral principles which alone give dignity to man, and upon which our way of life is founded."; and

Whereas, for nearly 50 years, the Pledge of Allegiance has included references to the United States flag and the country; this country, has been established as a union, "under God" being dedicated to securing "liberty and justice for all"; and

Whereas, in 1954, the United States Congress believed it was acting constitutionally when it revised the Pledge of Allegiance; and

Whereas the Senate of the 107th United States Congress believes that the Pledge of Allegiance is not an unconstitutional expression of patriotism; and

Whereas patriotic songs, engravings on United States legal tender, engravings on federal buildings, and the Preamble to the Constitution of the State of Alaska also contain general references to "God"; and

Whereas, in accordance with decisions of the United States Supreme Court, public school students cannot be forced to recite the Pledge of Allegiance without violating their First Amendment rights; and

Whereas the Congress expects that the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit will rehear the case of *Newdow v. U.S. Congress*, en banc, and resolves to instruct the Senate Legal Counsel to seek to intervene in the case to defend the constitutionality of the Pledge of Allegiance; be it

Resolved, That the Alaska State Senate concurs with and supports the United States Senate in challenging the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in its decision of *Newdow v. U.S. Congress*, en banc.

POM-355. A Resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Texas relative to bestowing the Congressional Medal of Honor to a citizen of the State of Texas; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1206

Whereas, World War II hero Doris "Dorie" Miller exhibited unparalleled courage during the attack on Pearl Harbor, and this bravery has not received the just honors and recognition it merits; and

Whereas, A native Texan, Dorie was born in Waco in 1919 and enlisted in the United States Navy in 1939; and

Whereas, Dorie's ship, the USS *West Virginia* was among those attacked in the early morning of December 7, 1941; and

Whereas, With little regard for his own personal safety, the 22-year-old Dorie assisted his mortally wounded captain out of the line of fire to shelter; and

Whereas, While struggling back to the bridge amid heavy fire and detonating bombs, Dorie came upon a machine gun whose gunner had been killed; although Dorie had never been trained to use the weapon, he began firing at the Japanese planes with telling effect and continued firing until the crew was ordered to abandon the ship; and

Whereas, For his heroism on board the *West Virginia*, Dorie Miller received the Navy

Cross, the United States Navy's highest honor, from Admiral Chester Nimitz during a ceremony on the flight deck of the USS *Enterprise* at Pearl Harbor on May 27, 1942; Dorie was the first African American to receive the award; and

Whereas, Later assigned to the USS *Liscome Bay* in the Pacific, Dorie was on board on November 24, 1943, when the light aircraft carrier was sunk by a submarine; 272 sailors survived but 646 were lost, and Dorie was officially presumed dead a year and a day after the carrier went down; and

Whereas, Citizens across the State of Texas believe that Dorie Miller should be awarded the highest honor that a member of the United States Armed Forces can receive, the Congressional Medal of Honor; a man of great gallantry, Dorie Miller is entitled to the respect and gratitude of our nation; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 77th Legislature, hereby respectfully request the Congress of the United States of America to bestow on Doris Miller the Congressional Medal of Honor; and, be it further

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REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JEFFORDS, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

H.R. 2595: A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to convey a parcel of land to Chat-ham County, Georgia.

H.R. 4044: To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide assistance to the State of Maryland and the State of Louisiana for implementation of a program to eradicate or control nutria and restore marshland damaged by nutria.

H.R. 4727: A bill to reauthorize the national dam safety program, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. KENNEDY for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Glenn Bernard Anderson, of Arkansas, to be a Member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2002.

*Barbara Gillcrist, of New Mexico, to be a Member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2002.

*Graham Hill, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2002.

*Marco A. Rodriguez, of California, to be a Member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2002.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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. DAYTON (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 3007. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income certain overseas pay of members of the Armed Forces of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. STEVENS):

S. 3008. A bill to amend the Higher Education act of 1965 to expand the loan forgiveness and loan cancellation programs for teachers, to provide loan forgiveness and loan cancellation programs for nurses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WELLSTONE (for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. CARNAHAN, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Mr. BAYH, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. DODD, Mr. REED, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 3009. A bill to provide economic security for America's workers; read the first time.

By Mr. BAYH:

S. 3010. A bill to provide information and advice to pension plan participants to assist them in making decisions regarding the investment of their pension plan assets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BAUCUS:

S. 3011. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish programs to encourage economic growth in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. DODD:

S. 3012. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from income and employment taxes and wage withholding property tax rebates and other benefits provided to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responders; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KYL (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. DOMENICI, and Mr. BINGAMAN):

S. 3013. A bill to amend the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 to extend and modify the reimbursement of State and local funds expended for emergency health services furnished to undocumented aliens; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CAMPBELL:

S. 3014. A bill for the relief of Jesus Raul Apodaca-Madrid and certain of his family members; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

S.J. Res. 45. A joint resolution to authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against Iraq; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself and Mr. NELSON of Nebraska):

S. Con. Res. 148. A concurrent resolution recognizing the significance of bread in American history, culture, and daily diet; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 1226

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1226, a bill to require the display of the POW/MIA flag at the World War II memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

S. 1655

At the request of Mr. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1655, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit certain interstate conduct relating to exotic animals.

S. 2215

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT) 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. 2480

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2480, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to exempt qualified current and former law enforcement officers from state laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed handguns.

S. 2611

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2611, a bill to reauthorize the Museum and Library Services Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2626

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2626, a bill to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products.

S. 2678

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2678, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to transfer all excise taxes imposed on alcohol fuels to the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 2700

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2700, a bill to amend titles II and XVI of the Social Security Act to limit the amount of attorney assessments for representation of claimants and to extend the attorney fee payment system to claims under title XVI of that Act.

S. 2770

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAU-

CUS) was added as a cosponsor 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. 2816

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2816, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve tax equity for military personnel, and for other purposes.

S. 2847

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2847, a bill to assist in the conservation of cranes by supporting and providing, through projects of persons and organizations with expertise in crane conservation, financial resources for the conservation programs of countries the activities of which directly or indirectly affect cranes.

S. 2869

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD) 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. 2897

At the request of Mr. JEFFORDS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2897, a bill to assist in the conservation of marine turtles and the nesting habitats of marine turtles in foreign countries.

S. 2903

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2903, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a guaranteed adequate level of funding for veterans health care.

S. 2906

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. CARNAHAN) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 2936

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2936, a bill to amend chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that certain Federal annuity computations are adjusted by 1 percent relating to periods of receiving disability payments, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 270

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr.