

S. 640

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 640, a bill to amend subchapter III of chapter 83 and chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, to include Federal prosecutors within the definition of a law enforcement officer, and for other purposes.

S. 650

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST) were added as cosponsors of S. 650, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to authorize the Food and Drug Administration to require certain research into drugs used in pediatric patients.

S.J. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. THOMAS), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 4, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.

S. CON. RES. 8

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. CAMPBELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 8, a concurrent resolution designating the second week in May each year as "National Visiting Nurse Association Week."

S. RES. 44

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 44, a resolution designating the week beginning February 2, 2003, as "National School Counseling Week."

S. RES. 52

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 52, a resolution recognizing the social problem of child abuse and neglect, and supporting efforts to enhance public awareness of the problem.

S. RES. 58

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. MILLER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 58, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the President should designate the week beginning June 1, 2003, as "National Citizen Soldier Week."

S. RES. 62

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 62, a resolution calling upon the Organization of American States (OAS) Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations

High Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Union, and human rights activists throughout the world to take certain actions in regard to the human rights situation in Cuba.

AMENDMENT NO. 272

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 272 proposed to S. Con. Res. 23, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Governments for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013.

AMENDMENT NO. 274

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 274 proposed to S. Con. Res. 23, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013.

AMENDMENT NO. 274

At the request of Mr. HOLLINGS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 274 proposed to S. Con. Res. 23, supra.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS—Tuesday, March 18, 2003

By Mr. KENNEDY:

S. 647. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for Department of Defense funding of continuation of health benefits plan coverage for certain Reserves called or ordered to active duty and their dependents, and for other purposes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill to close an unfortunate loophole in health insurance coverage for families of reserve and guard members who are called up for active duty.

As we face the likelihood of war with Iraq, one hundred and fifty thousand members of the National Guard and the Reserves have been mobilized for service. These soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen are standing by their country in a time of national emergency. But unless the Congress takes immediate action, too many of the spouses and children of these brave men and women may find the quality of their health care reduced.

Today's military relies more heavily than ever before on the reserve and guard. Currently, over 150,000 National Guard and reserve soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen have been mobilized. They are spending an average of thirteen times longer on active duty today than compared to a decade ago.

Our men and women in uniform are working and training hard for the serious challenges before them. They are living in the desert, enduring harsh

conditions, and contemplating the horrors of the approaching war. At the same time, they must put their lives on hold, dealing with family crises by phone and email. We must do our best to take care of those they have left at home.

During the Vietnam War, only 20 percent of all Army personnel were married. Today over 50 percent of the active military are married. These numbers are even higher in the guard and reserves. This service places heavy strain on the families who are left behind to worry and cope with the sudden new demands of running a household alone.

For the guard and reservists' families, a recall to active duty brings new bureaucratic challenges. Employers are not required to keep paying the health insurance for reservists while they are deployed. Many guardsmen and reservists may not be able to afford to pay for health care for their families while they are away.

If a guardsman or reservist is activated for more than thirty days, their family is eligible to enroll in the TRICARE program. However, during that first month, the family may not have any health insurance. In addition, if their family doctor does not participate in TRICARE, the family must find a new doctor while coping with all the other demands of the service member's absence. A family with a sick child and a father or mother sent off to war should not have to cope with the added burden of giving up the family doctor they trust.

The bill I am introducing will assure continuity of health insurance coverage for families of reservists and National Guard personnel called to active duty. Under this bill, these families retain the option of private health insurance coverage during the period of active duty, rather than enrolling in TRICARE.

The bill amends the COBRA coverage rules to specify that loss of employment-based coverage due to active-duty allows them to use the COBRA mechanism to retain their health care coverage. The Federal Government will pay the cost of premiums not covered by employers. This assistance will relieve some of the financial burden on families when the service member leaves a more lucrative private sector job to serve in the military. The Federal Government will also pay the cost of continuing family coverage purchased in the individual insurance market, for those who do not have employment-based coverage.

The cost of this modest additional help for the families of our servicemen will be small, since spouses and children who continue to use their private insurance policies will not be using TRICARE medical services that would otherwise be the government's responsibility.

This bill will not change the health care coverage for service members who will continue to receive health care

through the military medical system. Nor will it change the health care coverage for active duty family members who retain TRICARE eligibility and receive health care either through the direct care system or TRICARE network.

When reservists and members of the National Guard are called to active duty in time of international crisis, they are asked to put their lives on the line for their country. The least we can do for them is assure that their families can continue to receive quality health care without interruption during their absence.

I urge my colleagues to move promptly to enact this legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 647

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

SECTION 1. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PAYMENT FOR CONTINUATION OF NON-TRICARE HEALTH BENEFITS COVERAGE FOR CERTAIN MOBILIZED RESERVES.

(a) PAYMENT OF PREMIUMS.—

(1) REQUIREMENT TO PAY PREMIUMS.—Chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1078a the following new section:

“§ 1078b. Continuation of non-TRICARE health benefits plan coverage for certain Reserves called or ordered to active duty and their dependents

“(a) PAYMENT OF PREMIUMS.—The Secretary concerned shall pay the applicable premium to continue in force any qualified health benefits plan coverage for an eligible reserve component member for the benefits coverage continuation period if timely elected by the member in accordance with regulations prescribed under subsection (h).

“(b) ELIGIBLE MEMBER.—A member of a reserve component who is called or ordered to active duty for a period of more than 30 days under a provision of law referred to in section 101(a)(13)(B) of this title is eligible for payment of the applicable premium for continuation of qualified health benefits plan coverage under subsection (a).

“(c) QUALIFIED HEALTH BENEFITS PLAN COVERAGE.—For the purposes of this section, health benefits plan coverage for a member called or ordered to active duty is qualified health benefits plan coverage if—

“(1) the coverage was in force on the date on which the Secretary notified the member that issuance of the call or order was pending or, if no such notification was provided, the date of the call or order; and

“(2) on that date, the coverage applied to the member and dependents of the member.

“(d) APPLICABLE PREMIUM.—The applicable premium payable under this section for continuation of health benefits plan coverage in the case of a member is the amount of the premium payable by the member for the coverage of the member and dependents.

“(e) BENEFITS COVERAGE CONTINUATION PERIOD.—The benefits coverage continuation period under this section for qualified health benefits plan coverage in the case of a member called or ordered to active duty is the period that—

“(1) begins on the date of the call or order; and

“(2) ends on the earlier of the date on which—

“(A) the member's eligibility for transitional health care under section 1145(a) of this title terminates under paragraph (3) of such section;

“(B) the member or the dependents of the member eligible for benefits under the qualified health benefits plan coverage become covered by another health benefits plan that is not TRICARE; or

“(C) the member elects to terminate the continued qualified health benefits plan coverage of the dependents of the member.

“(f) EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF COBRA COVERAGE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

“(1) any period of coverage under a COBRA continuation provision (as defined in section 9832(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) for a member under this section shall be deemed to be equal to the benefits coverage continuation period for such member under this section; and

“(2) with respect to the election of any period of coverage under a COBRA continuation provision (as so defined), rules similar to the rules under section 4980B(f)(5)(C) of such Code shall apply.

“(g) SPECIAL RULE WITH RESPECT TO INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.—With respect to a member of a reserve component described in subsection (b) who was enrolled in individual health insurance coverage (as such term is defined in section 2791(b)(5) of the Public Health Service Act) on the date on which the member was called or ordered to active duty, the health insurance issuer may not—

“(1) decline to offer such coverage to, or deny re-enrollment of, such individual during the benefits coverage continuation period described in subsection (e);

“(2) impose any preexisting condition exclusion (as defined in section 2701(b)(1)(A) of the Public Health Service Act) with respect to the re-enrollment of such member for such coverage during such period; or

“(3) increase the premium rate for re-enrollment of such member under such coverage during such period above the rate that was paid for the coverage prior to the date of such call or order.

“(h) NONDUPLICATION OF BENEFITS.—A dependent of a member who is eligible for benefits under qualified health benefits plan coverage paid on behalf of a member by the Secretary concerned under this section is not eligible for benefits under TRICARE during a period of the coverage for which so paid.

“(i) REVOCABILITY OF ELECTION.—A member who makes an election under subsection (a) may revoke the election. Upon such a revocation, the member's dependents shall become eligible for TRICARE as provided for under this chapter.

“(j) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe regulations for carrying out this section. The regulations shall include such requirements for making an election of payment of applicable premiums as the Secretary considers appropriate.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1078a the following new item:

“1078b. Continuation of non-TRICARE health benefits plan coverage for certain Reserves called or ordered to active duty and their dependents.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—Section 1078b of title 10, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), shall apply with respect to calls or orders of members of reserve components of the Armed Forces to active duty as described in subsection (b) of such section, that are issued by the Secretary of a military department on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself and Mr. DORGAN).

S. 658. A bill to extend the authority for Energy Savings Performance Contracts and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation that will ensure the continuation of a program that has provided a flexible and cost-effective way to reduce the Federal Government's energy bills.

Since the 1970's Federal Government agencies have been required by law or Executive Order to steadily improve the energy efficiency of Federal buildings. For example, the Energy Policy Act of 1992 set a goal of reducing energy use per square foot by 20 percent in FY 2000 compared to FY 1985. Preliminary data from the Department of Energy indicates that agencies exceeded this goal by 2.7 percent and spent \$2.3 billion less for energy in FY 2000 than in FY 1985.

One of the reasons the Federal Government was successful was the availability of an innovative financing method for energy efficiency improvements. In the 1992 Energy Policy Act, Congress created Energy Savings Performance Contracting ESPC, which offered a way to invest in energy savings improvements at no capital cost to the government by leveraging private sector capital.

Under the ESPC authority, private sector companies enter into contracts with Federal agencies to install energy savings equipment and make operational or maintenance changes to improve building efficiency. The companies pay the up-front costs of the energy efficiency improvements and guarantee the agency a fixed amount of cost savings through the life of the contract. The energy service company recoups its investment over time from the energy cost savings. Since 1992, nearly \$1.1 billion in private sector capital has been invested in Federal energy improvement projects under ESPCs resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars in permanent savings to the US taxpayer.

Unfortunately the authority for this successful program expires at the end of September 2003. Congress must act quickly to continue ESPC authority.

Our legislation would extend the authority for the ESPC program permanently. The bill also makes several changes designed to improve and expand the program. It adds “water cost savings” as an allowable measure for Energy Savings Performance Contracting for civilian agencies, as they have been for Department of Defense facilities for several years.

The legislation also addresses the problem of improving energy efficiency in a building that has long since passed its useful life and is in constant need of maintenance and repair. To prevent this waste of funds, the legislation