

Res. 330, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the President should communicate to the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries ('OPEC') cartel and non-OPEC countries that participate in the cartel of crude oil producing countries the position of the United States in favor of increasing world crude oil supplies so as to achieve stable crude oil prices.

S. RES. 331

At the request of Mr. FITZGERALD, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 331, a resolution designating June 2004 as "National Safety Month".

AMENDMENT NO. 2941

At the request of Mr. THOMAS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2941 intended to be proposed to S. 1637, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to comply with the World Trade Organization rulings on the FSC/ETI benefit in a manner that preserves jobs and production activities in the United States, to reform and simplify the international taxation rules of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. INOUE, Mr. GREGG, Mr. GRAHAM of Florida, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. TALENT, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. 2324. A bill to extend the deadline on the use of technology standards for the passports of visa waiver participants; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is a privilege to join Senator CHAMBLISS and the other cosponsors on this important bipartisan bill to prevent serious problems for both border security and our travel and tourism industries.

These provisions, called the Visa Waiver Program Compliance Amendments of 2004, will extend for 2 additional years the October 26 deadline in current law for countries participating in the Visa Waiver Program to begin issuing biometric passports.

It has become increasingly clear in recent months that this extension is essential. Strengthening the security of the Nation's borders is a critical part of the ongoing effort to prevent future terrorist attacks. A key part of meeting our security needs is the use of technology to screen out potential terrorists. We enacted specific legislation 2 years ago to authorize the development and implementation of biometric identification methods for visas and other immigration documents, in order to produce better screening of foreign nationals traveling to the United States, and provide front-line agencies with better intelligence for their decisions on applications for admission.

Good technology is essential in fulfilling this mission. So are hiring additional personnel, retaining experienced workers, providing adequate training, and developing effective ways to facilitate coordination and information-sharing among Federal agencies. These measures all enhance our security and create protections against potential terrorist attacks.

If we do not extend the biometric passport requirement for countries in the Visa Waiver Program, we will lose the real value of that particular protection. The current deadline has turned out to be impractical, because it forces countries to meet it, even if they are not ready to do so. The biometric passport process has been plagued with legitimate problems of global interoperability, privacy, chip durability, and production and procurement delays. The deadline was not realistic even from the start, and it is now clear that countries are unable to meet it.

As an official from the Department of Homeland Security testified at a recent Judiciary Committee hearing, "If we force people to rapidly try to meet the deadline, we are going to get inferior technology that is going to be much more difficult for us to make useful at the ports of entry."

If we do that, our borders won't be safe. Inferior technology was not what was intended when Congress passed the Border Security Act.

In addition to the danger to border security, the current deadline will have a harsh economic impact. If countries miss the deadline, all their tourists and business travelers will have to obtain visas. The State Department estimates that over 5 million visas will need to be issued in the first year. Department officials believe that even with additional staffing for granting visas, they could process only about 10 percent of the additional workload.

The resulting delays in granting visas would obviously prevent large numbers of legitimate travelers from coming to the United States and produce chaos in the Visa Waiver Program. The Department of Commerce estimates that "the elimination of the program would cost the United States economy \$28 billion in tourism-related exports over the next five years, result in a loss of 475,000 jobs, and completely erode the travel-trade surplus."

We all agree that we need to screen out terrorists, but we need to do so in ways that will not increase our border security problems instead of solving them. I urge my colleagues to support this needed legislation. It is not a setback for the war on terrorism to wage it more realistically.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce, along with Senator KENNEDY, a bill to extend the biometric deadline that is currently set for October 26, 2004 in accordance with the Enhanced Border Security Act. Our bill will extend the deadline to November 30, 2006 in an overall effort to improve our homeland security.

The biometric passport requirement applies to the 27 visa-waiver countries. Millions of these foreign citizens travel to the United States each year for tourism or business and currently these citizens are not required to obtain a visa to enter the United States. All other countries must obtain a visa which includes an interview and background check at the overseas consulate.

There are a number of significant reasons for extending the deadline. I have heard from many businesses very concerned about the adverse impact of the current deadline on travel and tourism to the United States and negative effect on our economy as a result. I have heard from the State Department and Department of Homeland Security about the lack of manpower to conduct interviews and issue visas to over 5 million new entrants per year. But the strongest reason to move the deadline is that it is in our best interests for homeland security.

This bill will allow visa-waiver countries to implement the most effective biometric technology to deter terrorists from entering the United States. Although the United States is not required by law to meet the same standards, today we are still a ways off from implementing biometric features in our passports. Passage of this bill will encourage our allies in the war on terror to continue in their cooperation with us and our security efforts both at home and abroad. In conjunction with extending the deadline, the US VISIT entry-exit system will apply to all visa-waiver country entrants. Under US VISIT, these foreign visitors will undergo the same security measures, including fingerprinting, which other visitors must meet.

A couple of weeks ago I held a hearing in my Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee on the topic of border security. Several Senators asked questions concerning the biometric deadline, and Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Stewart Verdery made the case. Secretary Verdery said: "We have gone to Congress and asked for this extension, and we believe that within 2 years those countries will be able to meet the deadline. The technology will be more mature. It will make sense to have it in place at that time. . . . If we force people to rapidly try to meet the deadline, we are going to get inferior technology that is going to be much more difficult for us to make useful at the ports of entry."

Since September 11, the administration has taken significant and effective steps to strengthen our homeland security. The entry-exit system, US VISIT, is up-and-running and now collecting information on aliens traveling to the U.S. through air and sea ports. The Department of Homeland Security has the SEVIS foreign student tracking system in place and doing its job.

The President has created the Terrorist Screening Center to improve information-sharing and coordinate our

efforts. The extension of the biometric deadline is another step in the right direction as we fight the war on terror.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 341—TO URGE THE RESOLUTION OF CLAIMS RELATED TO THE CONFISCATION OF CERTAIN PROPERTY BY THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. ENSIGN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 341

Whereas the Government of the Italian Republic confiscated the property of Mr. Pier Talenti, a citizen of the United States, and has failed to compensate Mr. Talenti for that property;

Whereas the Government of Italy has an obligation under the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation, signed at Rome February 2, 1948 (63 Stat. 2255) between the United States and the Italian Republic to provide compensation to Mr. Talenti for the confiscated property;

Whereas the failure of the Government of Italy to compensate Mr. Talenti runs counter to such Government's treaty obligations and to accepted international standards;

Whereas section 1611 of H.R. 1757, 105th Congress, as passed by the Senate on June 17, 1997, expressed the sense of Congress that the "Italian Republic must honor its Treaty obligations with regard to the confiscated property of Mr. Pier Talenti by negotiating a prompt resolution of Mr. Talenti's case, and that the Department of State should continue to press the Italian government to resolve Mr. Talenti's claim.";

Whereas the Government of Italy has not responded to Diplomatic Note 674 issued in 1996, urging such Government to negotiate a settlement with Mr. Talenti; and

Whereas Mr. Talenti has exhausted all legal remedies available to him under the Italian judicial system and has not received "just and effective compensation" for the confiscated property from the Government of Italy as required under the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Government of Italy should—

(A) fulfill the requirements of the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation signed at Rome February 2, 1948 (63 Stat. 2255) between the United States and the Italian Republic with respect to the property of Mr. Pier Talenti that was confiscated by such Government; and

(B) make reasonable efforts to effect a prompt resolution of Mr. Talenti's claims under such Treaty; and

(2) the Secretary of State should—

(A) continue to press the Government of Italy to resolve Mr. Talenti's claims; and

(B) take any further measures, including all appropriate diplomatic initiatives, that the Secretary determines could assist Mr. Talenti in receiving such compensation from the Government of Italy.

SENATE RESOLUTION 342—DESIGNATING APRIL 30, 2004, AS "DÍA DE LOS NIÑOS: CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS", AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. CRAPO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 342

Whereas many nations throughout the world, and especially within the Western hemisphere, celebrate "Día de los Niños" on the 30th of April, in recognition and celebration of their country's future—their children;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States;

Whereas children are the center of American families;

Whereas children should be nurtured and invested in to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the American spirit;

Whereas Hispanics in the United States, the youngest and fastest growing ethnic community in the Nation, continue the tradition of honoring their children on this day, and wish to share this custom with the rest of the Nation;

Whereas 1 in 4 Americans is projected to be of Hispanic descent by the year 2050, and as of 2003, approximately 12,300,000 Hispanic children live in the United States;

Whereas traditional Hispanic family life centers largely on children;

Whereas the primary teachers of family values, morality, and culture are parents and family members, and we rely on children to pass on these family values, morals, and culture to future generations;

Whereas more than 500,000 children drop out of school each year, and Hispanic dropout rates are unacceptably high;

Whereas the importance of literacy and education are most often communicated to children through family members;

Whereas families should be encouraged to engage in family and community activities that include extended and elderly family members and encourage children to explore, develop confidence, and pursue their dreams;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children of the United States will help affirm for the people of the United States the significance of family, education, and community;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity for children to reflect on their future, to articulate their dreams and aspirations, and to find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute, serving as a voice for children, has worked with cities throughout the country to declare April 30 as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans"—a day to bring together Hispanics and other communities nationwide to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the children of a nation are the responsibility of all its people, and people should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children to society—their curiosity, laughter, faith, energy, spirit, hopes, and dreams: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2004, as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans"; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the United States to

observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including—

(A) activities that center around children, and are free or minimal in cost so as to encourage and facilitate the participation of all our people;

(B) activities that are positive and uplifting and that help children express their hopes and dreams;

(C) activities that provide opportunities for children of all backgrounds to learn about one another's cultures and to share ideas;

(D) activities that include all members of the family, and especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote greater communication among the generations within a family, enabling children to appreciate and benefit from the experiences and wisdom of their elderly family members;

(E) activities that provide opportunities for families within a community to get acquainted; and

(F) activities that provide children with the support they need to develop skills and confidence, and to find the inner strength—the will and fire of the human spirit—to make their dreams come true.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise to submit a resolution designating the 30th day of April 2004 as Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans.

Nations throughout the world, especially within Latin America, celebrate Día de los Niños on the 30th of April, in recognition and celebration of their country's future—their children. Many Americans Hispanic families continue the tradition of honoring their children on this special day by celebrating Día de los Niños in their homes.

We have no greater resource than our children and the designation of a day to honor them will help affirm their importance to the future of our country. This special recognition of children will also affirm to the people of the United States the significance of family, education, and community.

This resolution calls on the American people to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and states across the Nation to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

I urge you to join me in supporting America's youth by supporting this resolution designating April 30, 2004 Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Wednesday, April 21, 2004, at 10 a.m. in Room 106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a business meeting on S. 344, a bill expressing the policy of the United States regarding the United States' Relationship with Native Hawaiians and to provide a process for the recognition by the United States of the Native Hawaiian governing entity, and for other purposes; and S. 1721, a bill to amend the Indian Land Consolidation Act to improve provisions relating to probate of trust and restricted land,