

on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8439. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's statement on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8440. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's statement on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8441. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's statement on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8442. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's statement on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8443. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's statement on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8444. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's statement on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8445. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's statement on the system of internal controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8446. A communication from the Senior Paralegal for Regulations, Office of Thrift Supervision, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Community Reinvestment Act Regulations" (RIN1550-AB91) received on July 8, 2004; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8447. A communication from the Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Treasury Bulletin and a report entitled "Security of Personal Financial Information"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8448. A communication from the Assistant Director, Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a vacancy, designation of acting officer, and nomination for the position of Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller, Department of Defense, received on July 7, 2004; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-8449. A communication from the Principal Deputy for Personnel and Readiness, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a list of officers authorized to wear the insignia of the next highest grade; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-8450. A communication from the Principal Deputy for Personnel and Readiness, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to female members of the Armed

Forces; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-8451. A communication from the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Naval Warfare Center, Weapons Division Administration at China Lake and Point Mugu, CA; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-8452. A communication from the Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Sulfuric Acid; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL #7364-4) received on July 7, 2004; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LUGAR for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Kenneth Francis Hackett, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term of three years.

*Christine Todd Whitman, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term of three years.

*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. COLEMAN:

S. 2638. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require an annual plan on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BAYH:

S. Res. 403. A resolution encouraging increased involvement in service activities to assist senior citizens; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CORZINE, and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. Con. Res. 123. Concurrent resolution recognizing and honoring the life and legacy of Alexander Hamilton on the bicentennial of his death because of his standing as one of the most influential Founding Fathers of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 977

At the request of Mr. FITZGERALD, the name of the Senator from Pennsyl-

vania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 977, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans provide coverage from treatment of a minor child's congenital or developmental deformity or disorder due to trauma, infection, tumor, or disease.

S. 1392

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1392, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve the nutrition of students served under child nutrition programs.

S. 1411

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1411, a bill to establish a National Housing Trust Fund in the Treasury of the United States to provide for the development of decent, safe, and affordable housing for low-income families, and for other purposes.

S. 1630

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1630, a bill to facilitate nationwide availability of 2-1-1 telephone service for information and referral services, and for other purposes.

S. 1840

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1840, a bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to encourage owners and operators of privately-held farm and ranch land to voluntarily make their land available for access by the public under programs administered by States.

S. 1902

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1902, a bill to establish a National Commission on Digestive Diseases.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve stroke prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.

S. 2176

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2176, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to carry out a program of research and development to advance high-end computing.

S. 2363

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr.

FITZGERALD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2363, a bill to revise and extend the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

S. 2461

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2461, a bill to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2502, a bill to allow seniors to file their Federal income tax on a new Form 1040S.

S. 2542

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2542, a bill to provide for review of determinations on whether schools and local educational agencies made adequate yearly progress for the 2002–2003 school year taking into consideration subsequent regulations and guidance applicable to those determinations, and for other purposes.

S. 2551

At the request of Mr. FRIST, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2551, a bill to reduce and prevent childhood obesity by encouraging schools and school districts to develop and implement local, school-based programs designed to reduce and prevent childhood obesity, promote increased physical activity, and improve nutritional choices.

S. 2560

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2560, a bill to amend chapter 5 of title 17, United States Code, relating to inducement of copyright infringement, and for other purposes.

S. 2600

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2600, a bill to direct the Architect of the Capitol to enter into a contract to revise the statue commemorating women's suffrage located in the rotunda of the United States Capitol to include a likeness of Sojourner Truth.

S. 2603

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2603, a bill to amend section 227 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227) relating to the prohibition on junk fax transmissions.

S. RES. 389

At the request of Mr. CAMPBELL, the names of the Senator from New Mexico

(Mr. DOMENICI) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 389, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to prostate cancer information.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. COLEMAN:

S. 2638. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require an annual plan on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, today I have introduced the Veterans Benefits Outreach Act.

Caring for our veterans is a commitment that supersedes politics. The President and Congress are united in our promise to provide veterans with access to quality care and benefits.

Spending for veterans medical care has doubled since 1993. President Bush's budget for the VA increased by 9 percent in fiscal year 2002, 13 percent in 2003 and another 4 percent in 2004. We in the Senate passed a budget resolution calling for another 5 percent increase next year. We have begun giving veterans concurrent receipt of their disability and retirement benefits, and are working to fix the survivor benefit plan.

But what good are these benefits if people don't know they can apply for them? According to an article that ran on the front page of the St. Paul Pioneer Press today entitled: "Wounded and Forgotten," there are an estimated half a million veterans who are eligible for Federal disability payments but are not receiving them—simply because they don't know that they can.

We need to do a better job of educating veterans about their rights. To this end, my legislation calls for the Veterans Administration to develop a strategy each year to reach out to veterans who are not taking advantage of the programs they're eligible for—to give them a chance to make an informed decision about the benefits America has promised them.

In addition to veterans who are not getting their benefits because they are unaware of them, there are some veterans who know they are eligible but have been turned away because of lost documents. You see, in 1973, the National Personnel Records Center in Missouri caught on fire, destroying thousands of veterans' personnel records.

The law already calls for the VA to give veterans the benefit of the doubt when they are missing documents that had been destroyed in the fire. But it is clear that in practice this is simply not the case. Too many veterans get nothing more than a postcard telling them their case cannot be proven because of the destruction of their records three decades ago.

It is simply unconscionable that these veterans should have to suffer be-

cause their records were ruined while in the custody of the government. To deal with this problem, my legislation also directs the VA to set up an appeals process for those whose applications are rejected because of documents lost in that fire.

My legislation is about going the extra mile to do the right thing. These are not hand-outs, these are not new entitlement programs—these are benefits prescribed under the law for people who have already qualified for them by serving their country. We must do whatever it takes to give America's veterans the benefits we promised them.

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. 2638

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Benefits Outreach Act of 2004".

SEC. 2. ANNUAL PLAN ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.

(a) ANNUAL PLAN REQUIRED.—Subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 523 the following new section:

“§ 523A. Annual plan on outreach activities

“(a) ANNUAL PLAN REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall prepare each year a plan for the outreach activities of the Department for the following year.

“(b) ELEMENTS.—Each annual plan under subsection (a) shall include the following:

“(1) Plans for efforts to identify veterans who are not enrolled or registered with the Department for benefits or services under the programs administered by the Secretary.

“(2) Plans for informing veterans and their dependents of modifications of the benefits and services under the programs administered by the Secretary, including eligibility for medical and nursing care and services.

“(c) COORDINATION IN DEVELOPMENT.—In developing an annual plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:

“(1) Directors or other appropriate officials of organizations recognized by the Secretary under section 5902 of this title.

“(2) Directors or other appropriate officials of State and local education and training programs.

“(3) Representatives of non-governmental organizations that carry out veterans outreach programs.

“(4) Representatives of State and local veterans employment organizations.

“(5) Businesses and professional organizations.

“(6) Other individuals and organizations that assist veterans in adjusting to civilian life.

“(d) INCORPORATION OF ASSESSMENT OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL PLANS.—In developing an annual plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall take into account the lessons learned from the implementation of previous annual plans under such subsection.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 523 the following new item:

“523A. Annual plan on outreach activities.”.