

(e) EXTENSION OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNTS TO ENROLLEES OF MEDICAID MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1903(m)(2)(A) (42 U.S.C. 1396b(m)(2)(A)) is amended—

(A) in clause (xi), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in clause (xii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(xiii) such contract provides that payment for covered outpatient drugs dispensed to individuals eligible for medical assistance who are enrolled with the entity shall be subject to the same rebate agreement entered into under section 1927 as the State is subject to and that the State shall have the option of collecting rebates for the dispensing of such drugs by the entity directly from manufacturers or allowing the entity to collect such rebates from manufacturers in exchange for a reduction in the prepaid payments made to the entity for the enrollment of such individuals.”

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1927(j)(1) (42 U.S.C. 1396r-8(j)(1)) is amended by inserting “other than for purposes of collection of rebates for the dispensing of such drugs in accordance with the provisions of a contract under section 1903(m) that meets the requirements of paragraph (2)(A)(xiii) of that section” before the period.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and apply to rebate agreements entered into or renewed under section 1927 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-8) on or after such date.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Environment and Public Works will hold a hearing on November 2 at 9:30 a.m. to receive testimony on the response to Hurricane Katrina.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a joint hearing has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

The hearing will be held on Wednesday, November 9, 2005, at 9:30 a.m. in Room SD-106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony regarding energy pricing and profits.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send two copies of their testimony the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150.

For further information, please contact Lisa Epifani 202-224-5269 or Shannon Ewan at 202-224-7555.

AUTHORITIES FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on

Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 1, 2005, at 9:30 a.m. in closed session to receive a briefing to provide an update on the progress of the joint improvised explosive devices (IED) Task Force.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Tuesday, November 1, at 10 a.m., on the nominations of Shana Dale, to be Deputy Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Mark Rosenker, to be Member, National Transportation Safety Board, and Kathryn Higgins, to be Member, of the National Transportation Safety Board.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, November 1, 2005, at 2:15 p.m. to hold a Business Meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on “Judicial and Executive Nominations” on Tuesday, November 1, 2005 at 2:30 p.m. in the Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 226.

Witness List:

Panel I: The Honorable Ted Stevens United States Senator, R-AK; and The Honorable Mitch McConnell United States Senator, R-KY.

Panel II: Erick Nicholas Vitaliano to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York; Gregory F. Van Tatenhove to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Joseph Frank Bianco to be United States District Court Judge for the Eastern District of New York; and Timothy Mark Burgess to be United States District Judge for the District of Alaska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on National Parks be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, November 1 at 10 a.m. The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the National Park Service’s draft management policies, including potential impact of the policies on park operations, park resources, interaction with gateway communities, and solicitation and collection of donations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President I ask unanimous consent that Glenn Kaminsky, a legislative fellow in the offices of Senator LIEBERMAN, be granted the privilege of the floor during consideration of S. 1932.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEFICIT REDUCTION OMNIBUS RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2005—Continued

MODIFICATIONS TO AMENDMENT NO. 2352

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Enzi amendment No. 2352 be modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The modifications are as follows:

of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended by this Act) (20 U.S.C. 1087e(c)), the second sentence of such subsection shall be applied by substituting “2.0 percent” for “2.5 percent” with respect to loans for which the first disbursement of principal is made on or after July 1, 2007.

(c) REPEAL OF ORIGINATION FEES.—

(1) AMENDMENTS.—Sections 438(c) and 455(c) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087-1(c), 1087e(c)) are repealed.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on July 1, 2011.

(d) NONAPPLICABILITY OF SUNSET PROVISION.—Section 7959 shall not apply to this section or to the amendments made by this section.

SEC. 7958. AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS.

There are authorized to be appropriated, and there are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$1,660,000,000 to carry out this subtitle, of which—

(1) \$450,000,000 shall be available to carry out section 7952;

(2) \$10,000,000 shall be available to carry out section 7955; and

(3) \$1,200,000,000 shall be available to carry out section 7956.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I have recently received a very powerful and thoughtful letter from the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ELCA, of which I am a member. While my religious faith is central to the values which inform my political decisions, these decisions are never based exclusively on direction I might receive from my religious denomination’s leaders.

Nonetheless, in this instance I believe that this letter, signed by all 66 ELCA bishops, sends the Senate a profoundly important and timely message concerning the budget reconciliation bill currently before this body.

I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD, and I urge all my colleagues to take this message of Christian compassion and values to heart.

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

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, We write to you as religious leaders seeking justice for millions of vulnerable and dispossessed people in our Nation. As Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America we represent diverse regions but speak with one voice about the fundamental responsibility of the government, as an expression of the will of the people, to protect the least of its citizens and provide for the poorest in our society. In this spirit we ask specifically that you oppose any attempt to move forward on the budget reconciliation measures now before Congress.

Cuts to mandatory spending called for in the reconciliation package would decrease valuable assistance to millions of low-income families, children, elderly and people with disabilities. Even as the number of people living in poverty and without insurance has increased dramatically in the past five years, the last few tragic weeks in the Gulf Coast area have put a face, indeed, thousands of new faces, on poverty in the heart of our society. Programs such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) help to keep struggling families together and assist low-income working families in moving to higher economic ground. This is not the time to cut such important programs while using the cuts to pay for tax breaks for those who don't need them.

The Biblical record is clear. The Scriptural witness on which our faith tradition stands speaks dramatically of God's concern for and solidarity with poor and oppressed communities while speaking firmly in opposition to governments whose policies place narrow economic interests driven by greed above the common good. Jesus speaks and acts unequivocally on behalf of those on the margins of society. St. Paul writes forcefully about the importance of community and expands the definition of those we call brothers and sisters in Christ. As Americans open their homes to embrace neighbors from Gulf Coast states, as non-profit and religious organizations provide relief services, we strongly urge you to reflect on your role as a government official in providing for the least in our society and ask that you oppose any attempt to move forward with the budget reconciliation process.

Peace Be With You,

BISHOP MARK S. HANSON,

Presiding Bishop,

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

ALABAMA

Bishop Ronald B. Warren

ALASKA

Bishop Ronald D. Martinson

ARIZONA

Bishop Michael J. Neils

ARKANSAS

Bishop Floyd M. Schoenhals

CALIFORNIA

Bishop Murray D. Finck

Bishop David G. Mullen

Bishop Dean W. Nelson

COLORADO

Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg

CONNECTICUT

Bishop Margaret G. Payne

DELAWARE

Bishop H. Gerard Knoche

FLORIDA

Bishop Edward R. Benoway

GEORGIA

Bishop Ronald B. Warren

HAWAII

Bishop Murray D. Finck
IDAHO
Bishop Martin D. Wells
ILLINOIS

Bishop Warren D. Freiheit
Bishop Paul R. Landahl
Bishop Gary M. Wollersheim

INDIANA

Bishop James R. Stuck
IOWA

Bishop Philip L. Hougen
Bishop Michael A. Last

Bishop Steven L. Ullestad
KANSAS

Bishop Gerald L. Mansholt
KENTUCKY

Bishop James R. Stuck
LOUISIANA

Bishop Paul J. Blom
Bishop Kevin S. Kanouse

MAINE

Bishop Margaret G. Payne
MARYLAND

Bishop Ralph W. Dunkin
Bishop H. Gerard Knoche

Bishop Theodore F. Schneider
MASSACHUSETTS

Bishop Margaret G. Payne
MICHIGAN

Bishop Gary L. Hansen
Interim Bishop Kenneth R. Olsen

Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes
MINNESOTA

Bishop Jon V. Anderson
Bishop Craig E. Johnson

Bishop Peter Rogness
Bishop Peter Strommen

Bishop Harold L. Usgaard
Bishop Rolf P. Wangberg

MISSISSIPPI

Bishop Ronald B. Warren
MISSOURI

Bishop Gerald L. Mansholt
MONTANA

Bishop Richard R. Omland
NEBRASKA

Bishop David L. deFreese
NEVADA

Bishop David G. Mullen
Bishop Michael J. Neils

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Bishop Margaret G. Payne
NEW JERSEY

Bishop E. Roy Riley
NEW MEXICO

Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg
NEW YORK

Bishop Stephen P. Bouman
Bishop Marie C. Jerge

Bishop Margaret G. Payne
NORTH CAROLINA

Bishop Leonard H. Bolick
NORTH DAKOTA

Bishop Duane C. Danielson
Bishop Richard J. Foss

OHIO

Bishop Callon W. Holloway, Jr.
Bishop Marcus C. Lohrmann

Bishop Marcus J. Miller
OKLAHOMA

Bishop Floyd M. Schoenhals
OREGON

Bishop Paul R. Swanson
PENNSYLVANIA

PENNSYLVANIA

Bishop Roy G. Almquist
Bishop Carol S. Hendrix
Bishop Ralph E. Jones
Bishop A. Donald Main
Bishop Donald J. McCoid
Bishop Gregory R. Pile
Bishop David R. Strobel

RHODE ISLAND

Bishop Margaret G. Payne
SOUTH CAROLINA

Bishop David A. Donges
SOUTH DAKOTA

Bishop Andrea F. DeGroot-Nesdahl
TENNESSEE

Bishop Ronald B. Warren
TEXAS

Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg
Bishop Paul J. Blom

Bishop Kevin S. Kanouse
Bishop Ray Tiemann

UTAH

Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg
VERMONT

Bishop Margaret G. Payne
VIRGINIA

Bishop James F. Mauney
Bishop Theodore F. Schneider

WASHINGTON

Bishop William Boerger
Bishop Robert D. Hofstad

Bishop Martin D. Wells
WASHINGTON D.C.

Bishop Theodore F. Schneider
WEST VIRGINIA

Bishop Ralph W. Dunkin
WISCONSIN

WYOMING

Bishop Allan C. Bjornberg
BAHAMAS

Bishop Edward R. Benoway
PUERTO RICO

Bishop Margarita Martinez
U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Bishop Margarita Martinez
SLOVAK ZION SYNOD

Bishop Wilma S. Kucharek
(CT, IL, MI, NJ, NY, OH, PA)

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY H.R. 2744

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2744, the Agriculture appropriations bill. I further ask unanimous consent that there be 2 hours of debate equally divided between the majority and minority and that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on the adoption of the conference report, all without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.