

Both amendments call for the President to submit a quarterly report on our progress in Iraq. While Congress already receives a number of reports and Members and committees in both bodies receive briefings from civilian and military leaders, this report from the President would become the most comprehensive report on the situation in Iraq.

These are the three important differences between the two amendments.

No. 1 the reporting timeline—section c. The Warner-Frist amendment calls for the first report 90 days after the enactment of the Act. Ninety days allows the President sufficient time to assemble this very wide-ranging report. A report of this scope will require close consultation with all departments and agencies of the Federal Government; American diplomats in Iraq and in the region; United States allied and partnered nations; and our military leaders here and in the theater of operations.

The Levin amendment would allow for just 30 days of coordination and consultation before submitting the initial report. I believe that is insufficient time to produce a report as comprehensive as this.

No. 2 is section c. The Levin-Reid amendment calls for a completely unclassified report. The Warner-Frist amendment directs that the report be unclassified to the extent possible. This is an important distinction. Some information on international negotiations and agreements, and plans for Iraq's domestic security will be an integral part of the development of Iraqi security forces, this may be too sensitive to be presented in an unclassified forum. The Warner-Frist amendment allows the President to produce a classified annex if the President and his advisors believe it is necessary.

No. 3 is a campaign plan with estimated dates for phased withdrawal—section c(7). The Levin-Reid amendment asks for a campaign plan with estimated dates for the phased withdrawal of U.S. forces to be published in the unclassified report. I believe that any program for the withdrawal of American combat forces must be conditions-based, and linked to specific, responsible benchmarks not just dates on a calendar, per se. While I agree that we must continue to make it clear to the Iraqis that a program for withdrawal is a common goal, any announcement of immediate withdrawal or even speculation of withdrawal before a secure and democratic Iraq is in place is simply not prudent.

I am concerned that the release of a timeline such as that in the last paragraph of the Levin-Reid amendment now that announces our withdrawal plans, even with estimated dates, could promote speculation and send an erroneous message to our troops, the Iraqi people, our coalition partners, and the terrorists.

I urge you to vote for Warner-Frist amendment and that we follow Levin

and Reid, rather than an entire new amendment to show how much we do agree on and that this is an effort to seek partisanship.

We are down to two differences: the word "indefinite," which to me precludes the chance—could be construed as we would not leave a very small unit there to facilitate the logistic transfer, the need to bring up to a level of acceptability the armaments the Iraqis have; and the continuation of some security work as well as training. But I will not belabor the point. I was very specific in the careful choice of words substituted for "indefinite."

The last paragraph—every Senator has to decide for himself or herself the clear meaning of the English language and whether that cannot be construed by many to invoke the thought of a timetable.

I say to my good friend, we have had a very good debate tonight. How fortunate we are that our distinguished colleague, a long-time member of the committee, the Senator from Connecticut, joined us.

I think we have done a good service to our colleagues who, in a very brief period tomorrow, will be required to focus on this and cast their votes accordingly.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I hope we have performed that service. I know we all tried in good faith to do it. I am perfectly content, as the Senator from Virginia is, that our colleagues read that last paragraph, read the paragraph before that making reference three times to schedules, read the entire resolution we have written, and then determine as to which is the better message to send to the Iraqis.

I am perfectly content to leave it rest there.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I think the matter now is that the Senate should go off the bill and I will proceed to do morning business.

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, I thank Chairman WARNER and ranking Member LEVIN for their leadership in bringing the fiscal year 2006 Defense authorization bill, S. 1042, to the floor and shepherding it through to final passage after months of unfortunate delays.

Due to procedural limitations associated with the managers' amendment which included my amendments, it was impossible to have original cosponsors added. The following Senators are cosponsoring certain of my amendments:

Senators CHAFEE and DEWINE would like to cosponsor my amendment to provide for mental health counselors under TRICARE, S.A. 2456; Senators NELSON of Florida, TALENT, ROBERTS and HARKIN would like to cosponsor my amendment to require a report on predatory lending directed at members of the Armed Forces and their dependents, S.A. 2468.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. I ask unanimous consent there be a period for morning busi-

ness with Senators to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On November, 7, 2005, in New York City, NY, Kyle Spidle was attacked near the Monster Bar where he worked. The attack began when two men began yelling from a vehicle at Mr. Spidle about the way he was walking down the street. When Mr. Spidle yelled back the pair of men got out of the car and begin to beat him. According to police, the pair hurled homophobic epithets at Mr. Spidle as they beat him.

I believe that our Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, in all circumstances, from threats to them at home. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a major step forward in achieving that goal. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MONTANA'S BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

• Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Bryant Elementary School, Chief Joseph Elementary School, and Huntley Project Elementary School. Montana is proud and I am honored to recognize these three schools identified as blue ribbon schools under No Child Left Behind.

As the spouse of a schoolteacher, I understand the many difficulties our schools face. Each and every day, parents send their children off to school to be educated, cared for, and disciplined. These three Montana schools have received this important award, and were honored last week at the Department of Education. I thank the staff, teachers, and parents for their hard work to make such success possible. The Blue Ribbon Award is no small achievement—students from these schools are in the top 10 percent of students across the State. I am honored to acknowledge them for their work.

Principals Howard Corey, Rick Knisely, and Russell Van Hook all understand the importance an education can have on the life of a child, as well as the significant role parents and the community play in the development of these future leaders. They should be

commended for their leadership and vision which produced such meaningful results.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the students at each of these institutions. While the adults have provided the foundation for a positive and educational classroom experience, ultimately the students decide to succeed for themselves, meeting and exceeding the high standards set for them. I am confident that we are raising the next generation of successful Americans to be productive and educated members of society. I am especially proud of the progress that these Montana students have made, and I urge them to keep up the good work. I am proud of each and every one of you. To the students, educators, and parents, thanks for all the good work you do. ●

HONORING MAYOR JOHN O.
COTANT

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President: I would like to pay special tribute today to a remarkable man who has dedicated the past 36 years of his life to the citizens of Chubbuck, ID. Mayor John O. Cotant entered the Chubbuck mayoral race the night before the elections in 1969. He won and has been mayor ever since. Through his dedication to youth and community improvement, Chubbuck has become the thriving town of 10,000 it is today. Under his exemplary leadership, Chubbuck increased the number of city parks from 1 to 14. He initiated the construction of a monument to veterans of our wars and his love of sports inspired him to promote a thriving youth sports program for the city. He brought critical infrastructure improvements to the community, to position Chubbuck for the vibrant growth it is experiencing today. John and his wife of 59 years, Alice, are the proud parents of 3, grandparents of 13 and great-grandparents of 19 children. He has been very involved in his church, serving as Bishop, the ecclesiastical teacher, of his LDS church congregation. At a robust 81, he says that he is going to pursue his personal interests of genealogy and a collection of city memorabilia, and make a point of not volunteering for anything controversial. I must say I understand the sentiment. Local public servants like John are the lifeblood of our civic community and our daily lives in rural towns not just in Idaho, but across the Nation. As a mayor of a smaller city, you are on duty and under the spotlight 24 hours a day. It is quite a testament to John's character, energy and spirit that he has served for so many years. I congratulate him on three and a half decades of community commitment service and wish him and Alice the very best in the next exciting chapter of their life together. ●

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and

were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-212. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California relative to the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" military policy; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 11

Whereas, Since the 1994 codification into law by the United States Congress, and by the signature of the President, the policy now known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue, Don't Harass" (National Defense Authorization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-160)) has led to the discharge of a great number of lesbian and gay service members, thus ending their careers and burdening them with a lifelong stigma; and

Whereas, The capacity of the Armed Forces of the United States to carry out its missions, like the Global War on Terror, is hindered when competent and qualified individuals are involuntarily discharged from those forces; and

Whereas, The Armed Forces of the United States have been forced to retain Reserve and National Guard service members on active duty past standard deployment lengths in order to carry out its missions during the Global War on Terror; and

Whereas, The ability of the Armed Forces to recruit and retain the best and brightest Americans is hindered by excluding a section of the population solely because of sexual orientation; and

Whereas, Lesbian and gay service members have served honorably throughout United States history and continue to serve with distinction on active duty in the Global War on Terror, including in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq; and

Whereas, These men and women have achieved military honors, decorations, and promotions to the highest ranks of their respective services for their valor and service to the people of the United States; and

Whereas, America's allies in the war on terror, like the United Kingdom, Australia, and Israel, all allow lesbian and gay service members to serve openly; and

Whereas, The Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, and other federal departments handling national security allow their lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender personnel to serve openly; and

Whereas, A February 2005 Government Accountability Office report shows that more than 9,488 service members have been discharged under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, including at least 757 service members in "critical occupations," such as counterintelligence experts, at a cost to taxpayers of more than \$190 million; and

Whereas, The Department of Defense reported that 209 language specialists have been discharged from the military under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, including 54 Arabic and 9 Farsi translators, vitally important positions to intelligence gathering and in critical shortage; and

Whereas, Evidence from a study conducted by the Center for the Study Of Sexual Minorities in the Military suggests that the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy increases gay troops' stress levels, lowers their morale, impairs their ability to form trusting bonds with their peers, restricts their access to medical care, psychological services and religious consultations, and limits their ability to advance professionally and their willingness to join and remain in the services; and

Whereas, Every Department of Defense authorized study has shown that there is no

correlation between sexual orientation and unit cohesion in the Armed Forces; and

Whereas, The majority of American citizens support keeping trained and skilled openly gay and lesbian service members in the military; and

Whereas, The United States military's readiness to protect and defend our nation is severely compromised because of the discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that is arbitrarily enforced by commanders whose personal beliefs may influence their disciplinary actions; and

Whereas, Discharges under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" are historically fewer when troop strength is low, as in times of war, which denotes the tacit recognition by the military that lesbian and gay service members are fit and capable of military service, thereby further illustrating the arbitrary enforcement of this policy; and

Whereas, California has 26 military bases which are home to tens of thousands of military personnel and their families, and, according to a 2004 Urban Institute study, an estimated 137,000 lesbian and gay veterans live in California; and

Whereas, The Legislature and courts of the State of California have extended protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity that affirm the equality under the law of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender citizens in order to prevent invidious discrimination; and

Whereas, In 2004 the California Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, legislation that protects nonfederally recognized personnel in the California State Military from the threat of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"; and

Whereas, Military readiness is enhanced when every qualified, capable American, regardless of sexual orientation, is welcomed into our Armed Forces and has their talents utilized in the best interest of our national security; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully urge the President and the Congress of the United States to adopt the Military Readiness Enhancement Act of 2005 (H.R. 1059) to end the discriminatory federal policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to each Senator and Representative in the Congress of the United States, and to the presiding officer of each house of each state legislature of the several states.

POM-213. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Legislature of the State of Michigan relative to expressing opposition to the study and construction of an international border crossing in the Downriver area; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 57

Whereas, The Detroit-Windsor and Port Huron-Sarnia border crossings of Southeast Michigan/Southwest Ontario are the busiest international crossings in North America, representing nearly 50 percent of the traffic volume crossing the United States/Canadian border. In 2000, American trade with Ontario reached \$243 billion, which is larger than the total U.S. trade with Japan; and

Whereas, More than 75,000 vehicles use the Southeast Michigan/Southwest Ontario border crossings each day. Traffic at the Michigan and Canadian ports of entry has grown 44 percent from 19.7 million vehicles in 1990 to 28.4 million vehicles in 2000. Truck traffic at these ports has more than doubled from 2.5 million vehicles in 1990 to 5.1 million in 2000.