

(2) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee established under section 5135 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) **QUALITY OF COINS.**—Coins minted under this Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) **COMMENCEMENT OF ISSUANCE.**—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this Act beginning January 1, 2007, except that the Secretary may initiate sales of such coins, without issuance, before such date.

(c) **TERMINATION OF MINTING AUTHORITY.**—No coins shall be minted under this Act after December 31, 2007.

SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.

(a) **SALE PRICE.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the coins issued under this Act shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum of the face value of the coins, the surcharge required under section 7(a) for the coins, and the cost of designing and issuing such coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, and marketing).

(b) **BULK SALES.**—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable discount.

(c) **PREPAID ORDERS AT A DISCOUNT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this Act before the issuance of such coins.

(2) **DISCOUNT.**—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

(a) **SURCHARGE REQUIRED.**—All sales shall include a surcharge of \$10 per coin.

(b) **DISTRIBUTION.**—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, and subsection (d), all surcharges which are received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this Act shall be promptly paid by the Secretary to the Secretary of the Interior for the protection, preservation, and interpretation of resources and stories associated with Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, including the following:

(1) Site improvements at Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site.

(2) Development of interpretive and education programs and historic preservation projects.

(3) Establishment of cooperative agreements to preserve or restore the historic character of the Park Street and Daisy L. Gatson Bates Drive corridors adjacent to the site.

(c) **LIMITATION.**—Notwithstanding subsection (a), no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin would result in the number of commemorative coin programs issued during such year to exceed the annual 2 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act). The Secretary of the Treasury may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.

(d) **CREDITABLE FUNDS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of the law and recognizing the unique partnership nature of the Department of Interior and the Little Rock School District at the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site and the significant contributions made by the Little Rock School District to preserve and maintain the historic character of the high school, any non-Federal funds expended by the school district (regardless of the source of the funds) for improvements at the Little Rock Central High School National Historic

Site, to the extent such funds were used for the purposes described in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection (b), shall be deemed to meet the requirement of funds from private sources of section 5134(f)(1)(A)(ii) of title 31, United States Code, with respect to the Secretary of the Interior.

SA 2676. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. SUNUNU) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1047, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of each of the Nation's past Presidents and their spouses, respectively, to improve circulation of the \$1 coin, to create a new bullion coin, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 6, strike lines 6 through 11, and insert the following:

“(B) **CONTINUITY PROVISIONS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall continue to mint and issue \$1 coins which bear any design in effect before the issuance of coins as required under this subsection (including the so-called ‘Sacagawea-design’ \$1 coins).

“(1) **CIRCULATION QUANTITY.**—Beginning January 1, 2007, and ending upon the termination of the program under paragraph (8), the Secretary annually shall mint and issue such ‘Sacagawea-design’ \$1 coins for circulation in quantities of no less than ⅓ of the total \$1 coins minted and issued under this subsection.”

On page 17, lines 6 and 7, strike “transportation and”.

On page 17, line 7, strike “and entities”.

On page 17, line 18, strike “1-year” and insert “2-year”.

On page 17, line 24, strike “prominently”.

On page 23, line 18, strike “\$20” and insert “\$50”.

On page 24, line 2, strike “\$20” and insert “\$50”.

On page 24, line 3, insert “and proof” after “bullion”.

On page 24, line 4, strike “not to exceed 500,000 in any year” and insert “in such quantities, as the Secretary, in the Secretary’s discretion, may prescribe”.

On page 25, line 23, strike “the face value of the coins; and” and insert “the market value of the bullion at the time of sale; and”.

On page 26, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

“(8) **PROTECTIVE COVERING.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Each bullion coin having a metallic content as described in subsection (a)(11) and a design specified in paragraph (2) shall be sold in an inexpensive covering that will protect the coin from damage due to ordinary handling or storage.

“(B) **DESIGN.**—The protective covering required under subparagraph (A) shall be readily distinguishable from any coin packaging that may be used to protect proof coins minted and issued under this subsection.”

AUTHORITIES FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Friday, November 18, 2005, at 10 a.m., on Future of Science.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Finance be authorized to meet in open Executive Session during the session on Friday, November 18, 2005, immediately following a vote on the Senate Floor (tentatively scheduled to occur at 9:30 a.m.), in the President's Room, S-216 of the Capitol, to consider favorably reporting S. 2027, the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

MISPLACED PRIORITIES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as elected representatives of the American people, we have a responsibility to work with each other and to focus on their needs. This is an obligation that Democratic Senators have not taken lightly.

We have spent the last 11 months trying to make a difference for each American citizen. Democrats fought to protect Social Security when those in the majority, the Republicans, tried to destroy it through their risky privatization scheme. Democrats fought for a budget that honors America's values. When Republicans passed a terrible budget, leading religious leaders called it immoral. They called it immoral because of its deep cuts and irresponsible tax breaks. Why did they do that? One only needs to look at the Old Testament or the New Testament to find why.

In the 112th Psalm we are told that: He hath given to the poor; his righteousness will endure forever. In the New Testament, in the Book of Galatians, second chapter, 10th verse: Only that we should remember the poor. That is why leading religious leaders of this country have called the budget an immoral one.

We moved quickly to help Katrina's victims, when that storm exposed the Bush administration's incompetence. It became clear that Republicans were going to sit on their hands. Democrats tried to help families with energy prices, when prices spiked and congressional Republicans only seemed to care about their friends in the oil industry.

We stood for the troops, veterans, and a success story in Iraq, when it became clear that the White House was more interested in launching vicious attacks than providing the leadership America needs.

Democrats know that we are sent here to do a job on behalf of the American people. We understand that together we can do better. Unfortunately, in most all instances, those in the majority have shunned our efforts. Instead of joining us in helping every American, they have blocked our efforts and decided to focus on the narrow interests of a special few. In fact, if you want to see the misplaced priorities of the Republican Party, look no further than the agenda they set for the Senate.

If the Senate could spend over 30 days debating extreme judges and devote days to the tragic affairs of the Schiavo family, Republicans should have been able to find a few days to help millions of Americans with health care, education, and, of course, the skyrocketing cost of gasoline, heating oil, and natural gas.

While some of the work we have done this year is important, more important is the work that we have missed. Consider the latest example: Katrina relief. Democrats introduced a comprehensive Katrina relief package. It was a good package. It was done hours after the storm had passed. The legislation, S. 1637, included proposals to ensure that displaced families received the health care, housing, and financial relief they needed. Republicans talked a good game about helping victims. Yet over 2 months later, you only have to pick up any newspaper to know that tens of thousands of Americans still need housing, health care, and financial help. Democrats have tried to act on these families' behalf, but every time Republicans have found something better to do.

Of course, this is a pattern all too familiar. When Democrats wanted to discuss health care and education, Republicans decided to debate changing Senate rules so they could pack the courts with some extreme nominees. When Democrats wanted to help families struggling with rising oil prices, Republicans gave billions in tax breaks to oil companies that are already making obscene profits. And when Democrats wanted to help the neediest among us, Republicans decided to make deep cuts to programs working families depend on so they could give tax breaks to special interests and the very elite of our country.

America can do better than these misplaced priorities. Whether it is supporting our troops or providing relief for rising health and energy costs, it is time for the Senate to get its priorities straight. The Democratic agenda is one that deals with health care, energy costs, and, in effect, getting our priorities straight.

When we return next session, we should not waste more time putting the needs of the special few ahead of the priorities of the American people. Let's pass fiscally responsible tax relief to help middle-class families being squeezed between declining wages and rising prices. The rich are getting richer; the poor are getting poorer. The middle class is getting squeezed. Let's move forward on issues like energy dependence, real security, and affordable health care. Let's build on the progress we made on Tuesday with our vote on Iraq.

On Tuesday, Democrats and Republicans voted overwhelmingly to express no confidence in the administration's Iraq policy. We must continue to push the President because it is clear that he has no interest in taking the Senate's advice.

Instead of changing course, as the Senate demanded, the White House has decided to reignite the Cheney-Rove smear machine and attack its critics instead. We saw it yesterday with Congressman JACK MURTHA. While I don't agree with the immediate withdrawal plan Congressman MURTHA proposed, this brave man's patriotism and his commitment to defend our country should never be questioned, especially by this White House, as it was.

Congressman MURTHA served valiantly in Vietnam. He is a highly decorated veteran, someone who knows what it is like to bleed in combat, literally. When he speaks, the White House should listen. They could learn something. Let's remember, Congressman MURTHA isn't the only combat veteran calling for a debate about Iraq. In the Senate, Republican Senator CHUCK HAGEL has also said it is our patriotic duty to question what is going on.

The deceiving, distorting, and divisive political attacks must end. We need an open, honest debate about what is happening in Iraq. Next year I hope Republicans will join with us in this debate. It is easy to attack those who don't agree with you. The hard part is leading and giving our troops the strategy for success.

The days and months ahead should be used to do the people's business. We can't change the past, but we can change the future.

Next year we need to focus on the priorities of American families. Together we can do better and give our citizens a government as good and honest as its people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TALENT). The Senator from Kentucky.

A SUCCESSFUL FIRST SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I listened carefully to my good friend, the Democratic leader, give his evaluation of the year that is coming to a conclusion. Let me just suggest that I, not surprisingly, see it somewhat differently. In my couple of decades here in the Senate, this has been quite possibly the most successful first session of a Congress in my time here.

We began the year by passing a much needed class action reform bill that was long overdue to deal with one of the areas of the litigation craze that is bad for American business and bad for our economy. We followed on with the Bankruptcy Reform Act, long in the making, way overdue, to deal with people who have increasingly decided not to accept their responsibilities and pay their debts.

We passed a budget, which is never easy around here, tax cuts, a Central American free-trade agreement, an energy bill, and a highway bill. We confirmed a new Justice to the Supreme Court. We passed a terrorism reinsurance measure and a pension reform bill.

It has been an extraordinarily successful first session of a Congress, and

we have much to be proud of as we go toward the Thanksgiving holiday.

Even though my assessment of our accomplishments here differs dramatically from that of the Democratic leader, let me say to all our colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, we have much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving. We hope everyone will enjoy the holiday, come back refreshed for what we anticipate will be a very brief session the week of December 12.

I also want to say a word about Iraq. It is much in the news these days. The Senate spoke clearly this week that it is not in favor of cutting and running. On a bipartisan basis, the Senate said we will not cut and run in Iraq. That is the message of the votes that we had earlier this week. We intend to stay the course. We are winning in Iraq, and the policy is to win.

How do you measure success in Iraq? You measure it by the election last January which brought into office a temporary democratic government. Everyone remembers the ink-stained index fingers that were held up proudly by the Iraqis as they, at risk to their own lives, went to the polls and elected an interim government.

Last month on October 15—by the way, back in January, there was a 60-percent turnout, the same as our turnout last November and ours was 60 percent, higher than the turnout of 50 percent before that. The Iraqis turned out the same percentages last January as we did here, and I don't think any Americans were afraid they were going to be shot or blown up by a bomb if they went out to vote.

If that were not good enough, in the constitutional election on October 15, 63 percent of Iraqis turned out, and large numbers of Sunnis who had boycotted the election earlier began to participate.

Clearly, Iraq is heading in the right direction. Surveys taken in September indicate Iraqis are far more optimistic about their future than we are about ours in the United States. They are more optimistic about their future than we are ours here. So the Iraqis feel they are on the right path. They are going to finish the job on December 15 when they elect the first permanent democratic government in Iraqi history, a fairly unusual thing in that part of the world, I think we will all agree.

Next year, that permanent democratic government will increasingly be responsible for its own future and the fate of its own citizens as the Iraqi military improves month after month.

So we do, indeed, have much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving. Most of all, we are grateful for our wonderful troops who have done an astonishing job in Iraq. They are proud of their work. They are somewhat perplexed about the perception that they are failing when they all know they are succeeding dramatically. Hopefully, in the new year, we will be able to do a better job of getting out the entire story in