

Fisher, to be an Assistant Attorney General; and Regina B. Schofield, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 12, 2005, for a committee hearing titled "An Open Discussion: Planning, Providing and Paying for Veterans' Long Term Care." The hearing will take place in room 418 of the Russell Senate Office Building at 10 a.m.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 12, 2005, at 2:30 p.m., to hold a business meeting.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet today, Thursday, May 12, 2005, from 3 to 5 p.m., in Hart 216 for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and International Security be authorized to meet on Thursday, May 12, 2005, at 10:30 a.m., for a hearing entitled "Examining USAID's Anti-Malaria Policies."

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the privilege of the floor be granted to Emily Meeker, Rob Grayson, Waylon Mathern, and Jorlie Cruz for the remainder of the consideration of S. 732.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar No. 59. I further ask unanimous consent that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and the President

be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

John Paul Woodley, Jr., of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army.

NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED AND PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Agriculture Committee be discharged from further consideration of the nominations of Thomas Dorr, PN 68 and PN 69, and that the nominations be placed on the calendar, and finally that the Senate then return to legislative session.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

NATIONAL DRUG COURT MONTH

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 136, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 136) designating the month of May 2005 as "National Drug Court Month."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to, en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 136) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 136

Whereas drug courts provide the focus and leadership for community-wide, antidrug systems, bringing together public safety professionals and other community partners in the fight against drug abuse and criminality;

Whereas the results of more than 100 program evaluations and at least 3 experimental studies have yielded definitive evidence that drug courts increase treatment retention and reduce substance abuse and crime among drug-involved adult offenders;

Whereas the judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation professionals, law enforcement and community supervision personnel, researchers and educators, national and community leaders, and others dedicated to the

movement have had a profound impact within their communities; and

Whereas the drug court movement has grown from the 12 original drug courts in 1994 to 1,621 operational drug courts as of December 2004: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of May 2005 as "National Drug Court Month"; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States and interested groups to observe the month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

NATIONAL CHILD CARE WORTHY WAGE DAY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 137, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 137) designating May 1, 2005, as "National Child Care Worthy Wage Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to the consideration of the resolution.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I rise today, along with Senators LAUTENBERG, BINGAMAN, DODD, DURBIN, FEINGOLD, INOUE, KERRY, BOXER and KENNEDY, to speak about a resolution supporting National Child Care Worthy Wage Day. It is my hope that it will bring attention to early childhood education and the importance of attracting and retaining qualified childcare workers.

Every day, approximately 13 million children are cared for outside the home so that their parents can work. This figure includes 6 million of our Nation's infants and toddlers. Children begin to learn at birth, and the quality of care they receive will affect them for the rest of their lives. Early childcare affects language development, math skills, social behavior, and general readiness for school. Experienced childcare workers can identify children who have development or emotional problems and provide the care they need to take on life's challenges. Through the creative use of play, structured activities and individual attention, childcare workers help young children learn about the world around them and how to interact with others. They also teach the skills children will need to be ready to read and to learn when they go to school.

Unfortunately, despite the importance of their work, the committed individuals who nurture and teach our Nation's young children are undervalued. The average salary of a childcare worker is just under \$18,000 annually. In 1998, the middle 50 percent of child care workers and preschool teachers earned between \$5.82 and \$8.13 an hour, according to the Department of Labor. The lowest 10 percent of childcare workers were paid an hourly rate of \$5.49 or less. Only one third of our Nation's childcare workers have health insurance and even fewer have

pension plans. This grossly inadequate level of wages and benefits for childcare staff has led to difficulties in attracting and retaining quality caretakers and educators. As a result, the turnover rate for childcare providers is 30 percent a year. This high turnover rate interrupts consistent and stable relationships that children need to have with their caregivers.

If we want our children cared for by qualified providers with higher degrees and more training, we will have to make sure they are adequately compensated. Otherwise, we will continue to lose early childhood educators with BA degrees to kindergarten and first grade, losing some of our best teachers of young children from the early years of learning.

In order to bring attention to childcare workers, I am sponsoring a resolution that would designate May as National Child Care Worthy Wage Day. On May 1 each year, childcare providers and other early childhood professionals nationwide conduct public awareness and education efforts highlighting the importance of good early childhood education.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in recognizing the importance of the work and professionalism that childcare workers provide and the need to increase their compensation accordingly. The Nation's childcare workforce, the families who depend on them, and the children they care for, deserve our support.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to, en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 137) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 137

Whereas approximately 14,000,000 children are in out-of-home care during part or all of the day so that their parents may work;

Whereas the turnover rate of early-childhood educators is approximately 30 percent per year because low wages and a lack of benefits make it difficult to retain high-quality educators;

Whereas research has demonstrated that young children require caring relationships and a consistent presence in their lives for their positive development;

Whereas the compensation of early-childhood educators should be commensurate with the important job of helping the young children of the United States develop the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual skills they need to be ready for school; and

Whereas resources may be reallocated to improve the compensation of early-childhood educators to ensure that quality care and education are accessible for all families;

Whereas the Center for the Child Care Workforce and other early childhood education organizations recognize May 1st as

National Child Care Worthy wage Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 1, 2005, as “National Child Care Worthy Wage Day”; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to observe National Child Care Worthy Wage Day by—

(A) honoring early-childhood educators and programs in their communities; and

(B) working together to resolve the early-childhood educator compensation crisis.

NATIONAL DAY OF THE AMERICAN COWBOY

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 138, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 138) designating July 23, 2005, as National Day of the American Cowboy.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 138) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 138

Whereas pioneering men and women, recognized as cowboys, helped establish the American West;

Whereas that cowboy spirit continues to infuse this country with its solid character, sound family values, and good common sense;

Whereas the cowboy embodies honesty, integrity, courage, compassion, respect, a strong work ethic, and patriotism;

Whereas the cowboy loves, lives off of, and depends on the land and its creatures, and is an excellent steward, protecting and enhancing the environment;

Whereas the cowboy continues to play a significant role in America's culture and economy;

Whereas approximately 800,000 ranchers are conducting business in all 50 of these United States and are contributing to the economic well being of nearly every county in the Nation;

Whereas rodeo is the sixth most-watched sport in America;

Whereas membership in rodeo and other organizations surrounding the livelihood of a cowboy transcends race and gender and spans every generation;

Whereas the cowboy is an American icon;

Whereas to recognize the American cowboy is to acknowledge America's ongoing commitment to an esteemed and enduring code of conduct; and

Whereas the ongoing contributions made by cowboys to their communities should be recognized and encouraged: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates July 23, 2005, as “National Day of the American Cowboy”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR WITHDRAWAL OF RUSSIAN TROOPS FROM GEORGIA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 139 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 139) expressing support for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, on April 9, 1991, the Republic of Georgia declared its independence from the Soviet Union. Later that December, it was formally recognized by the international community as a sovereign and independent nation.

Throughout the Cold War, the Soviet Union stationed troops and maintained military bases in many of the republics and countries along its border. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, most of these forces withdrew to Russia and former Soviet military bases were closed.

Today, however, more than a decade after obtaining its independence, Georgia has not been able to rid itself of the Russian military presence. Several years ago, Russia pledged to withdraw its military personnel and close its military bases in Georgia. However, Russia has failed to fulfill its commitments. More than 3,000 Russian troops are still present in Georgia.

It is time for these forces to leave. I urge Russia's leaders to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, to fulfill its obligations, and work with Georgia's leaders to end its military presence there.

In November 2003, the people of Georgia demonstrated their desire to free themselves of the bonds of foreign domination.

They peacefully protested fraudulent elections and succeeded in installing a government committed to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The Rose Revolution was a triumph for freedom and has truly been an inspiration to us all.

Georgia's President Mikheil Saakashvili and the Government and people of Georgia have exhibited steadfast determination in their efforts to regain their sovereignty and protect their new democracy.

The United States should continue to support the Georgian people as they work to strengthen their democratic institutions and end Russia's military presence.

I applaud President Bush for his recent visit to the Georgia Republic. And I wholeheartedly support his commitment to the spread of freedom and democracy in the states of the former Soviet Union.

President Saakashvili and the people of Georgia deserve deep admiration for their extraordinary accomplishment. I