

By Mr. FRIST (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. Res. 168. A resolution expressing gratitude and sincere respect for Jesse R. Nichols; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. ENSIGN):

S. Res. 169. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to free trade negotiations that could adversely impact consumers of sugar in the United States as well as United States agriculture and the broader economy of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FRIST (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BOND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. BURNS, Mr. BURR, Mr. BYRD, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COLEMAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. DODD, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. REED, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SMITH, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SPECTER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. TALENT, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 170. A resolution relative to the death of J. James Exon, former United States Senator for the State of Nebraska; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 37

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) were added as cosponsors of S. 37, a bill to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 2 years.

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. 37, *supra*.

S. 52

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 52, a bill to direct the Secretary of

the Interior to convey a parcel of real property to Beaver County, Utah.

S. 54

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 54, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to update the feasibility and suitability studies of four national historic trails, and for other purposes.

S. 58

At the request of Mr. INOUE, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) were added as cosponsors of S. 58, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit former members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces are entitled to travel on such aircraft.

S. 65

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 65, a bill to amend the age restrictions for pilots.

S. 217

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 217, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to preserve the essential air service program.

S. 223

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 223, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to repeal any weakening of overtime protections and to avoid future loss of overtime protections due to inflation.

S. 331

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 331, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for an assured adequate level of funding for veterans health care.

S. 392

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 392, a bill to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of Congress, collectively, to the Tuskegee Airmen in recognition of their unique military record, which inspired revolutionary reform in the Armed Forces.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 407, a bill to restore health care coverage to retired members of the uniformed services, and for other purposes.

S. 408

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the names of the Senator from Maryland

(Ms. MIKULSKI) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 408, a bill to provide for programs and activities with respect to the prevention of underage drinking.

S. 419

At the request of Mr. KYL, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 419, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the treatment of qualified restaurant property as 15-year property for purposes of the depreciation deduction.

S. 484

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 484, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums.

S. 558

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 558, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain additional retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special compensation and to eliminate the phase-in period under current law with respect to such concurrent receipt.

S. 604

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 604, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to authorize expansion of medicare coverage of medical nutrition therapy services.

S. 611

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 611, a bill to establish a Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services and a Federal Interagency Committee on emergency Medical Services Advisory Council, and for other purposes.

S. 621

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 621, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the 15-year recovery period for the depreciation of certain leasehold improvements.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 623, a bill to direct the Secretary of Interior to convey certain land held in

trust for the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah to the City of Richfield, Utah, and for other purposes.

S. 627

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM) were added as cosponsors of S. 627, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the research credit, to increase the rates of the alternative incremental credit, and to provide an alternative simplified credit for qualified research expenses.

S. 705

At the request of Mr. SARBANES, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 705, a bill to establish the Interagency Council on Meeting the Housing and Service Needs of Seniors, and for other purposes.

S. 768

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 768, a bill to provide for comprehensive identity theft prevention.

S. 776

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 776, a bill to designate certain functions performed at flight service stations of the Federal Aviation Administration as inherently governmental functions, and for other purposes.

S. 828

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 828, a bill to enhance and further research into paralysis and to improve rehabilitation and the quality of life for persons living with paralysis and other physical disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 875

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 875, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to increase participation in section 401(k) plans through automatic contribution trusts, and for other purposes.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 911, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for reimbursement of certified midwife services and to provide for more equitable reimbursement rates for certified nurse-midwife services.

S. 962

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from North Da-

kota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 962, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit to holders of qualified bonds issued to finance certain energy projects, and for other purposes.

S. 971

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 971, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage and accelerate the nationwide production, retail sale, and consumer use of new motor vehicles that are powered by fuel cell technology, hybrid technology, battery electric technology, alternative fuels, or other advanced motor vehicle technologies, and for other purposes.

S. 1049

At the request of Mr. FRIST, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. TALENT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1049, a bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to provide grants to promote innovative outreach and enrollment under the Medicaid and State children's health insurance programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1064

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1064, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve stroke prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.

S. 1086

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1086, a bill to improve the national program to register and monitor individuals who commit crimes against children or sex offenses.

S. 1112

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1112, a bill to make permanent the enhanced educational savings provisions for qualified tuition programs enacted as part of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001.

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1112, *supra*.

S. 1120

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1120, a bill to reduce hunger in the United States by half by 2010, and for other purposes.

S. 1159

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1159, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the subpart F exemption for active financing.

S. 1179

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1179, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure that benefits under part D of such title have no impact on benefits under other Federal programs.

S. 1180

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1180, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reauthorize various programs servicing the needs of homeless veterans for fiscal years 2007 through 2011, and for other purposes.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to ensure an open and deliberate process in Congress by providing that any future legislation to establish a new exemption to section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act) be stated explicitly within the text of the bill.

S. 1191

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1191, a bill to establish a grant program to provide innovative transportation options to veterans in remote rural areas.

S. 1197

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1197, a bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

S. 1200

At the request of Mr. BUNNING, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1200, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the depreciation recovery period for certain roof systems.

S. 1210

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1210, a bill to enhance the national security of the United States by providing for the research, development, demonstration, administrative support, and market mechanisms for widespread deployment and commercialization of biobased fuels and biobased products, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 18

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 18, a joint resolution approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.

S. CON. RES. 39

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 39, a concurrent resolution to express the sense of Congress on the Purple Heart.

S. RES. 39

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 39, a resolution apologizing to the victims of lynching and the descendants of those victims for the failure of the Senate to enact anti-lynching legislation.

At the request of Mr. BUNNING, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 39, *supra*.

At the request of Mr. MARTINEZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 39, *supra*.

At the request of Mr. BURNS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 39, *supra*.

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFEE) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 39, *supra*.

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 39, *supra*.

S. RES. 86

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 86, a resolution designating August 16, 2005, as "National Airborne Day".

S. RES. 154

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 154, a resolution designating October 21, 2005 as "National Mammography Day".

S. RES. 155

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 155, a resolution designating the week of November 6 through November 12, 2005, as "National Veterans Awareness Week" to emphasize the need to develop educational programs regarding the contributions of veterans to the country.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 1225. A bill to expand access to affordable health care and to strengthen the health care safety net and make health care services more available in rural and underserved areas; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with my colleague from Louisiana, Senator LANDRIEU, in introducing the Access to Affordable Health Care Act, a comprehensive, seven-point plan that builds on the strengths of our current public programs and private health care system to make quality, affordable health care available to millions more Americans.

One of my top priorities in the Senate has been to expand access to affordable health care for all Americans. There are still far too many Americans without health insurance or with woefully inadequate coverage. As many as 45 million Americans—almost 16 percent of our population—are uninsured, and millions more are underinsured.

Health care coverage matters. The simple fact is that people with health insurance are healthier than those who are uninsured. People without health insurance are less likely to seek care when they need it, and to forgo services such as periodic check ups and preventive services. As a consequence, they are more likely to be hospitalized or require costly medical attention for conditions that could have been prevented or treated at a curable stage. Not only does this put the health of these individuals at greater risk, but it also puts additional pressure on our hospitals and emergency rooms, many of them already financially challenged.

Compared with people who have health coverage, uninsured adults are four times, and uninsured children five times, more likely to use the emergency rooms. The costs of care for these individuals are often absorbed by providers and passed on to the covered population through increased fees and insurance premiums.

Maine is in the midst of a growing health insurance crisis, with insurance premiums rising at alarming rates. Whether I am talking to a self-employed fisherman, a displaced worker, the owner of a struggling small business, or the human resource manager of a large company, the soaring costs of health insurance is a common concern.

Maine's employers are currently facing premium increases of as much as 20 percent a year. These premiums have been particularly burdensome for small businesses, the backbone of the Maine economy. Many small business owners are caught in a cost-squeeze: they know that if they pass on the premium increases to their employees, more of them will decline coverage. Yet these small businesses simply cannot afford to absorb double-digit increases in their health insurance premiums year after year.

The problem of rising costs is even more acute for individuals and families who must purchase health insurance on their own. Monthly health insurance premiums in Maine often exceed a family's mortgage payment. It is no wonder that as many as 150,000 Mainers are uninsured. Clearly, we must do more to make our health care system more efficient and health insurance more available and affordable.

The Access to Affordable Health Care Act, which we are introducing today, is a seven-point plan that combines a variety of public and private approaches to make quality health care coverage more affordable and available. The legislation's seven goals are:

No. 1. To expand access to affordable health care for small businesses;

No. 2. To make health insurance more affordable for individuals and families purchasing coverage on their own;

No. 3. To strengthen the health care safety net for those without coverage;

No. 4. To expand access to care in rural and under-served areas;

No. 5. To increase access to affordable long-term care;

No. 6. To promote healthier lifestyles;

And No. 7, to provide more equitable Medicare payments to Maine providers to reduce the Medicare shortfall, which has forced hospitals, physicians and other providers to shift costs onto other payers in the form of higher charges, which, in turn drives up health care premiums.

Let me discuss each of these seven points in more detail.

First, our legislation will help small employers cope with rising health care costs.

Since most Americans get their health insurance through the workplace, it is a common assumption that people without health insurance are unemployed. The fact is, however, that most uninsured Americans are members of families with at least one full-time worker. As many as 82 percent of Americans who do not have health insurance are in a family with a worker.

Uninsured working Americans are most often employees of small businesses. In fact, some 60 percent of uninsured workers are employed by small firms. Smaller firms generally face higher costs for health insurance than larger firms, which makes them less likely to offer coverage. Small businesses want to provide health insurance for their employees, but the cost of often just too high.

The legislation we are introducing today will help small employers cope with rising costs by providing new tax credits for small businesses to help make health insurance more affordable. It will encourage those small businesses that do not currently offer health insurance to do so and will help employers that do offer insurance to continue coverage for their employees even in the face of rising costs.

Our legislation will also help increase the clout of small businesses in