

EC-5701. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Definition of Federal Election Activity" (11 CFR Part 100) received on February 8, 2005; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-5702. A communication from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to FHA Credit Watch Termination Initiative" (RIN2502-AH60)(FR-4625-F-03) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5703. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Governance, Conflict of Interest, Compensation Disclosure, and Audit Committee Standards" (RIN3052-AC19) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5704. A communication from the Secretary, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Eligibility for Health Care Benefits for Certain Filipino Veterans in the United States" (RIN2900-AM03) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-5705. A communication from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Section 45 Credit Offset" (Revenue Ruling 2006-9) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5706. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Office of Inspector General for the period ending September 30, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5707. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Comprehensive Inventory of U.S. OCS Oil and Natural Gas Resources"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5708. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on Department of Defense assistance provided for essential security and safety for civilian sporting events during calendar year 2005; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5709. A communication from the Director, Regulations and Rulings Division, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Quarterly Excise Tax Filing for Small Alcohol Excise Taxpayers" (RIN1513-AB17)(T.D. TTB-41) received on February 8, 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-5710. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to Executive Order 13346 of July 8, 2004, the annual certification of the effectiveness of the Australia Group; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-5711. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 06-21-06-34); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-5712. A communication from the White House Liaison, Department of Education,

transmitting, pursuant to law, (6) reports relative to vacancy announcements within the Department; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-5713. A communication from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Justification of Budget Estimates for Fiscal Year 2007"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. DORRIGAN, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. 2277. A bill to promote accountability and prevent fraud in Federal contracting; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. LEAHY):

S.J. Res. 29. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of Alan G. Spoon as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. LEAHY):

S.J. Res. 30. A joint resolution providing for the appointment of Phillip Frost as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 345

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 345, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to deliver a meaningful benefit and lower prescription drug prices under the Medicare program.

S. 914

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 914, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a competitive grant program to build capacity in veterinary medical education and expand the workforce of veterinarians engaged in public health practice and biomedical research.

S. 1082

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1082, a bill to restore Second Amendment rights in the District of Columbia.

S. 1272

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1272, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, and title II of the Social Security Act to provide benefits to certain individuals who served in the United States merchant marine (including the Army Transport Service and the Naval Transport Service) during World War II.

S. 1799

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide that the reductions in social security benefits which are required in the case of spouses and surviving spouses who are also receiving certain government pensions shall be equal to the amount by which two-thirds of the total amount of the combined monthly benefit (before reduction) and monthly pension exceeds \$1,200, adjusted for inflation.

S. 1800

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1800, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the new markets tax credit.

S. 1881

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1881, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the Old Mint at San Francisco otherwise known as the "Granite Lady", and for other purposes.

S. 1934

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1934, a bill to reauthorize the grant program of the Department of Justice for reentry of offenders into the community, to establish a task force on Federal programs and activities relating to the reentry of offenders into the community, and for other purposes.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to create a new three-tiered approval system for drugs, biological products, and devices that is responsive to the needs of seriously ill patients, and for other purposes.

S. 2253

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2253, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to offer the 181 Area of the Gulf of Mexico for oil and gas leasing.

S. 2255

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2255, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prohibit removal of covered part D drugs from a prescription drug plan formulary during the plan year once an individual has enrolled in the plan.

S. 2258

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2258, a bill to amend the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 to

increase the membership of the Board of Directors and require that each State in the service area of the Tennessee Valley Authority be represented by at least 1 member.

S. 2273

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2273, a bill to make available funds included in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 program for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 28

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution approving the location of the commemorative work in the District of Columbia honoring former President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

S. CON. RES. 71

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 71, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that States should require candidates for driver's licenses to demonstrate an ability to exercise greatly increased caution when driving in the proximity of a potentially visually impaired individual.

S. RES. 313

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 313, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that a National Methamphetamine Prevention Week should be established to increase awareness of methamphetamine and to educate the public on ways to help prevent the use of that damaging narcotic.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. 2277. A bill to promote accountability and prevent fraud in Federal contracting; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week marks five months since President Bush stood in Jackson Square in New Orleans and promised, "Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will do what it takes, we will stay as long as it takes, to help citizens rebuild their communities and their lives."

America must keep that promise, and we must do so responsibly. So today, I am introducing a proposal to ensure

that from here on out, federal reconstruction dollars needed to rebuild the Katrina-ravaged Gulf Coast—and Iraq—are not awarded to companies with histories of cheating American taxpayers.

My bill, the Reconstruction Accountability and Anti-Fraud Act, will promote accountability and prevent fraud in two of the largest reconstruction projects ever undertaken by the United States.

Under my proposal, firms that have cheated American taxpayers by overcharging, improperly billing or defrauding the government of more than \$10 million over the last five years will be ineligible to compete for reconstruction work in either the Gulf Coast or Iraq.

Katrina is a national tragedy and rebuilding Iraq is a national responsibility, and neither should be an opportunity for profiteering.

Firms that have misused Iraq construction funds should be held accountable—not rewarded with no-bid contracts to rebuild the Gulf Coast.

Sadly, we've already seen examples of just that sort of misuse of taxpayer dollars.

New Orleans were still waist-deep in flood waters when Halliburton and its subsidiary, Kellogg, Brown & Root, were awarded some of the first multi-billion dollar no-bid contracts for Katrina reconstruction work. The companies received those contracts despite repeatedly overcharging the government for work in Iraq.

Listen to these abuses: In 2004, Halliburton was found to have overcharged the Defense Department by \$167 million to import gasoline into Iraq from Kuwait.

A year later, a Pentagon audit revealed another \$108 million in overcharges by KBR, a Halliburton subsidiary, for delivering gasoline to Iraq.

In 2003, KBR overcharged the government \$27.4 million over 9 months for meals at five military bases in Iraq and Kuwait, where they billed the government for an average of 42,000 meals a day but served only 14,000 meals a day.

Last month, former KBR employees testified at a Senate Democratic Policy Committee hearing that water provided by KBR to thousands of U.S. troops in Iraq contained twice as much fecal coliform and other harmful bacteria as untreated water from the Euphrates River.

Yet incredibly, instead of banning Halliburton and KBR from competing from Katrina reconstruction work, the Bush administration awarded these same companies multibillion dollar no-bid contracts for Katrina work.

Not only that, many of the contracting practices blamed for wasteful spending in Iraq—including the "cost-plus" provisions that guarantee profits to contractors no matter how much they charge, or how well or poorly they perform—are being used in the gulf coast.

American taxpayers and the people of the gulf coast can't afford reconstruc-

tion based on the Halliburton business model of waste, fraud, and abuse. We must increase oversight and accountability in Iraq, and we must demand the same accountability here at home.

A growing number of reports demonstrate why this bill is needed.

Since November 2003, Congress has appropriated \$21 billion for Iraq reconstruction and relief. On a bipartisan basis, this Congress has given the President everything he has asked for to support his ambitious plans to rebuild Iraq.

Earlier this week, Stuart Bowen, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, told the Senate Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee that nearly all of that money is either spent or obligated, and what remains, "will not permit completion of all projects that were envisioned."

We know how dangerous Iraq has become, not only for our troops but also for everyone involved in reconstruction. Dangerous conditions there have caused many setbacks and delays, and they have forced USAID, the Department of State, and others to devote increasing amounts of money to security, rather than reconstruction. Security is and will remain a serious problem, but it is by no means the only reason that the United States Government has spent billions of dollars for Iraqi reconstruction—and Iraq still struggles to rebuild.

The reports of the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction fully address the serious security challenges our men and women in Iraq face today, and every day, but they also paint a grim picture of conditions in Iraq, and of poor planning, execution, and oversight of reconstruction efforts by the administration.

Let me be very clear: These failings are not the fault of our troops or of the men and women of USAID, of the Department of State, and other agencies that are risking their lives and working heroically to help the Iraqi people rebuild their shattered nation and create a better future, and they deserve our thanks and respect.

The Special Inspector General found that the CPA—the Coalition Provisional Authority—burned through nearly \$100 million in Development Fund for Iraq money with few records to show for how that money was spent. In many instances, the money simply vanished. That is simply inexcusable.

In the town of Hillah, for example, the Special Inspector General found that the CPA left \$7 million worth of projects uncompleted. The money allocated for these projects is missing.

Thanks to the good work of Special Inspector General Bowen, the American criminal justice system is going to hold at least a few people accountable.

Unfortunately, because of poor recordkeeping, there may be no way now to trace and recover all of the billions of dollars that have disappeared in Iraq.