

By Mr. ALLEN (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. Res. 501. A resolution commending the University of Virginia Cavaliers men's lacrosse team for winning the 2006 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I National Lacrosse Championship; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. Res. 502. A resolution congratulating all the contestants of the 2006 Scripps National Spelling Bee; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

s. 65

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

s. 185

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. 185, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for the reduction of certain Survivor Benefit Plan annuities by the amount of dependency and indemnity compensation and to modify the effective date for paid-up coverage under the Survivor Benefit Plan.

s. 424

At the request of Mr. BOND, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 424, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for arthritis research and public health, and for other purposes.

s. 713

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 713, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for collegiate housing and infrastructure grants.

s. 811

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ALLEN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. THOMAS), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND),

the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) were added as cosponsors of S. 811, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

s. 843

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. TALENT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to combat autism through research, screening, intervention and education.

s. 1840

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1840, a bill to amend section 340B of the Public Health Service Act to increase the affordability of inpatient drugs for Medicaid and safety net hospitals.

s. 1862

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to establish a joint energy cooperation program within the Department of Energy to fund eligible ventures between United States and Israeli businesses and academic persons in the national interest, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, supra.

s. 2155

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2155, a bill to provide meaningful civil remedies for victims of the sexual exploitation of children.

s. 2302

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2302, a bill to establish the Federal Emergency Management Agency as an independent agency, and for other purposes.

s. 2351

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2351, a bill to provide additional funding for mental health care for veterans, and for other purposes.

s. 2419

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2419, a bill to ensure the proper remembrance of Vietnam veterans and the Vietnam War by providing a deadline for the designation of a visitor center for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

s. 2491

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska

(Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2491, a bill to award a Congressional gold medal to Byron Nelson in recognition of his significant contributions to the game of golf as a player, a teacher, and a commentator.

s. 2548

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2548, a bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to ensure that State and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency.

s. 2566

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 2566, a bill to provide for coordination of proliferation interdiction activities and conventional arms disarmament, and for other purposes.

s. 2592

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2592, a bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to improve the nutrition and health of schoolchildren by updating the definition of "food of minimal nutritional value" to conform to current nutrition science and to protect the Federal investment in the national school lunch and breakfast programs.

s. 2599

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2599, a bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to prohibit the confiscation of firearms during certain national emergencies.

s. 2653

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2653, a bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to make efforts to reduce telephone rates for Armed Forces personnel deployed overseas.

s. 2658

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) were added as cosponsors of S. 2658, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the national defense through empowerment of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the enhancement of the functions of the National Guard Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 2725

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2725, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal Minimum wage and to ensure that increases in the Federal minimum wage keep pace with any pay adjustments for Members of Congress.

S. 2810

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2810, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to eliminate months in 2006 from the calculation of any late enrollment penalty under the Medicare part D prescription drug program and to provide for additional funding for State health insurance counseling program and area agencies on aging, and for other purposes.

S. 2816

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 2816, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an income tax credit for the manufacture of flexible fuel motor vehicles and to extend and increase the income tax credit for alternative fuel refueling property, and for other purposes.

S. 2824

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2824, a bill to reduce the burdens of the implementation of section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.

S. 2999

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2999, a bill to improve protections for children and to hold States accountable for the safe and timely placement of children across State lines, and for other purposes.

S. 3255

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. 3255, a bill to provide student borrowers with basic rights, including the right to timely information about their loans and the right to make fair and reasonable loan payments, and for other purposes.

S. 3275

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3275, a bill to amend title 18, United States code, to provide a national standard in accordance with which nonresidents of a State may carry concealed firearms in the State.

S. 3323

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Jersey

(Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3323, a bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Propylene Glycol Alginates (PGA) be eliminated.

S. 3325

At the request of Mr. BUNNING, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3325, a bill to promote coal-to-liquid fuel activities.

S.J. RES. 1

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 1, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to marriage.

S. CON. RES. 20

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 20, a concurrent resolution expressing the need for enhanced public awareness of traumatic brain injury and support for the designation of a National Brain Injury Awareness Month.

S. RES. 224

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 224, a resolution to express the sense of the Senate supporting the establishment of September as Campus Fire Safety Month, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 462

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 462, a resolution designating June 8, 2006, as the day of a National Vigil for Lost Promise.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CRAIG:

S. 3421. A bill to authorize major medical facility projects and major medical facility leases for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal years 2006 and 2007, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I seek recognition today to introduce legislation to authorize major medical facility projects and major medical facility leases for the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA. Most VA hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and research facilities have ongoing needs for maintenance, repair, and modernization to promote patient and employee safety and provide a higher standard of care for our Nation's veterans. Earlier this month, I held a hearing of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on these needs, at which VA and a service organization representative delivered testimony about what is required in the next phase of addressing the needs of health care facilities for our Nation's veterans. In addition, several committee members and noncommittee colleagues remarked about the signifi-

cance of these projects to their States. It is my belief that this bill will expand VA's ability to provide health care services to this group of deserving Americans. I will take a few moments now to explain the provisions of this legislation.

First, the bill authorizes three major medical facility projects in immediate need of fiscal year 2006 authorization; the restoration of VA's health care infrastructure in the Biloxi and New Orleans areas following Hurricane Katrina, and the cost of land acquisition for replacement of the current Denver VA Medical Center with a new facility at the former Fitzsimons Army Medical Center. The Denver facility was constructed over a half-century ago and many of the core facilities have been deemed to be past or near the end of their useful life.

Second, this legislation reauthorizes 18 major medical facility construction projects that were authorized under Public Law 108-170, but for which it is unlikely that contract awards will be accomplished by September 30, 2006, as required by that law. Therefore, for each of these projects, the draft bill extends the date by which contracts must be awarded, from September 30, 2006, September 20, 2009. These projects were identified and prioritized under the capital asset realignment for enhanced services process. CARES, as it has become known, is a market-based national assessment of infrastructure needs that VA has developed into a schedule for completion. These projects represent the most pressing CARES-identified needs that VA has undertaken in order to improve access-to-care and provide services in areas of recent, current, and projected growth in veterans population, such as Las Vegas and Orlando. To allow a lapse in VA's authority to move forward on these projects would result in tremendous setbacks, and conceivably, additional taxpayer expense.

Third, the legislation authorizes major medical facility leases that did not receive authorization in the current fiscal for outpatient clinics in Baltimore, MD, Marion, IL, and the Dallas, TX, area. In addition, five major medical facility leases fiscal year 2007 are included for outpatient clinics in Austin, TX, Lowell, MA, Grand Rapids, MI, Las Vegas, NV, and Parma, OH.

This legislation represents the administration's request of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Congress, with a significant exception. I have chosen not to authorize the six requested fiscal year 2007 major medical facility construction projects at this time. I want to make it clear to my colleagues that my intent is not to micromanage VA's construction budget or to delay the Department's capital plan. And no one in the Senate is more committed to seeing that we are not diverting important resources away from facilities that are extremely important to our veterans. But as chairman of this committee, my approach