

Security benefits and eliminate wasteful spending, such as spending on unnecessary tax loopholes, in order to fully offset the cost of such repeal and avoid forcing taxpayers to pay substantially more interest to foreign creditors.

SA 208. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. ____ . DISABILITY PREFERENCE PROGRAM FOR TAX COLLECTION CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6306 (relating to qualified tax collection contracts) is amended—

(1) by striking “Nothing” in subsection (a) and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (c), nothing”;

(2) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), (e), and (f) as subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g), respectively, and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

“(c) DISABILITY PREFERENCE PROGRAM FOR TAX COLLECTION CONTRACTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide a qualifying disability preference to any program under which any qualified tax collection contract is awarded on or after the effective date of this subsection and shall ensure compliance with the requirements of paragraph (3).

“(2) QUALIFYING DISABILITY PREFERENCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘qualifying disability preference’ means a preference pursuant to which at least 10 percent (in both number and aggregate dollar amount) of the accounts covered by qualified tax collection contracts are awarded to persons satisfying the following criteria:

“(i) Such person employs within the United States at least 50 severely disabled individuals.

“(ii) Such person shall agree as an enforceable condition of its bid for a qualified tax collection contract that within 90 days after the date such contract is awarded, not less than 35 percent of the employees of such person employed in connection with providing services under such contract shall—

“(I) be hired after the date such contract is awarded, and

“(II) be severely disabled individuals.

“(B) DETERMINATION OF SATISFACTION OF CRITERIA.—Within 60 days after the end of the period specified in subparagraph (A)(ii), the Secretary shall determine whether such person has met the 35 percent requirement specified in such subparagraph, and if such requirement has not been met, shall terminate the contract for nonperformance. For purposes of determining whether such 35 percent requirement has been satisfied, severely disabled individuals providing services under such contract shall not include any severely disabled individuals who were counted toward satisfaction of the 50-employee requirement specified in subparagraph (A)(i), unless such person replaced such individuals by hiring additional severely disabled individuals who do not perform services under such contract.

“(3) PROGRAM-WIDE EMPLOYMENT OF SEVERELY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS.—Not less than 15 percent of all individuals hired by all persons to whom tax collection contracts are issued by the Secretary under this section,

to perform work under such tax collection contracts, shall qualify as severely disabled individuals.

“(4) SEVERELY DISABLED INDIVIDUAL.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘severely disabled individual’ means any one of the following:

“(A) Any veteran of the United States Armed Forces with—

“(i) a disability determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to be service-connected, or

“(ii) a disability deemed by statute to be service-connected.

“(B) Any individual who is a disabled beneficiary (as defined in section 1148(k)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–19(k)(2))) or who would be considered to be such a disabled beneficiary but for having income or assets in excess of the income or asset eligibility limits established under title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, respectively.”

(b) REPORT BY GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of private contractors for Internal Revenue Service debt collection. The study required by this paragraph shall be completed in time to be taken into account by Congress before any new contracting is carried out under section 6306 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 in years following 2008.

(2) STUDY OF COMPARABLE EFFORTS.—As part of the study required under paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall—

(A) make every effort to determine the relative effectiveness and efficiency of debt collection contracting by Federal staff compared to private contractors, using a cost calculation for both Federal staff and private contractors which includes all benefits and overhead costs,

(B) compare the cost effectiveness of the contracting approach of the Department of the Treasury to that of the Department of Education’s Office of Student Financial Assistance, and

(C) survey State tax debt collection experiences for lessons that may be applicable to the Internal Revenue Service collection efforts.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any tax collection contract awarded on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that an oversight hearing has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will be held on Thursday, February 1, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine accelerated biofuels diversity, focusing on how home-grown, biologically derived fuels can blend into the Nation’s transportation fuel mix.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send two copies of their testimony to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,

United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150.

For further information, please contact Tara Billingsley at (202) 224-4756 or David Marks at (202) 224-8046.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on the current situation in Iraq on the Administration’s recently announced strategy for continued United States assistance to the Iraqi Government and for an increased United States military presence in Iraq.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., to vote on committee organizational matters for the 110th Congress; immediately following the executive session the committee will meet to conduct a hearing on “Examining the Billing, Marketing, and Disclosure Practices of the Credit Card Industry, and Their Impact on Consumers.”

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on oil and gas resources on the Outer Continental Shelf and areas available for leasing in the Gulf of Mexico.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:15 a.m. to hold a hearing on Iraq.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a hearing on Iraq.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a business meeting to consider changes to the committee rules and a funding resolution for the committee budget for the 110th Congress.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224-2251.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a markup on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 10 a.m. in Dirksen room 226.

Agenda

I. Committee Organization

Committee Rules for the 110th Congress; Subcommittees for the 110th Congress; Funding Resolution for the 110th Congress.

II. Nominations

Lisa Godbey Wood to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Georgia; Philip S. Gutierrez to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California; Valerie L. Baker to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California; Lawrence Joseph O'Neill to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of California; and Gregory Kent Frizzell to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

III. Bills

S. 188, To Revise the Short Title of the Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006, Salazar.

S. 214, To Amend Chapter 35 of Title 28, To Preserve the Independence of U.S. Attorneys, Feinstein.

IV. Resolutions

S. Res. 21, Recognizing the Uncommon Valor of Wesley Autry, Clinton, Schumer.

S. Res. 24, Designating January as "National Stalking Awareness Month", Biden.

S. Res. 29, Expressing the Sense of the Senate Regarding Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Stabenow, Leahy, Kennedy, Biden, Kohl, Feinstein, Feingold, Schumer, Durbin, Cardin, Whitehouse, Specter.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 25, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a hearing.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce and the District of Columbia be authorized to meet on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. for a hearing entitled, "Lost in Translation: A Review of the Federal Government's Efforts to Develop a Foreign Language Strategy."

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

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PHILADELPHIA ACADEMY OF MUSIC

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 43 which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 43) honoring the important contributions to the Nation of the Academy of Music in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on its 150th anniversary.

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

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to support legislation with my distinguished colleague, Senator CASEY, that will honor the 150th Anniversary of the Academy of Music of Philadelphia, PA.

The Academy of Music has served as a venue for the performing arts, ceremonial events, Presidential conventions and historical occasions since its opening in 1857. The Academy is the oldest grand opera house in the United States still used for its original purpose, and was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1963.

The Academy served as the main concert hall for the Philadelphia Orchestra for more than a century. The Orchestra purchased the Academy in 1957, and continues to perform there each year for the Academy's anniversary. Additionally, a host of legendary artists including Maria Callas, Joan Sutherland, George Gershwin, Anna Pavlova, Igor Stravinsky and Luciano Pavarotti have performed at this important venue.

The Academy of Music has also been the site of several significant and historic cultural events. Alexander Graham Bell conducted a demonstration of the telephone in 1877, Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra performed the first ever concert in stereophonic sound there in 1933, and in 1939, the Philadelphia Orchestra recorded the soundtrack to Walt Disney's classic film, *Fantasia*, at the Academy.

The Academy's history extends further than the opulent interior of the main hall and the magnificent performances that have graced its stage.

An elegant restaurant was constructed in the basement in 1857 for opera-goers and arts patrons. During World War II, the restaurant was converted into a canteen that hosted 2.5 million service men and women between the years of 1942 and 1945 who enjoyed performances by Abbott and Costello, Duke Ellington, Lynn Fontanne and Frank Sinatra.

The Academy of Music continues to be the Philadelphia area's primary venue for the performing arts, hosting major Broadway productions, operatic performances and traveling dance and theater companies. It is with great pleasure that Senator CASEY and I present this resolution honoring the Academy of Music's 150th Anniversary, and pay homage to an institution that has played a significant role in Philadelphia's vibrant arts community. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Academy of Music.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent 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. 43) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

(The resolution will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

EXTENDING PROVISIONS OF THOMAS EDISON COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Banking Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 188, and that the Senate then proceed to its consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 188) to provide a new effective date for the applicability of certain provisions of law to Public Law 105-331.

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

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the bill be read the third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, without intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 188) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2007

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 9 a.m.,