(Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2136, a bill to address the treatment of primary mortgages in bankruptcy, and for other purposes.

S. 2140

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2140, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Francis Collins, in recognition of his outstanding contributions and leadership in the fields of medicine and genetics.

S. 2220

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2220, a bill to amend the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963 to authorize certain appropriations.

S. 2246

At the request of Mr. COLEMAN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2246, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to extend eligibility for Federal TRIO programs to members of the reserve components serving on active duty in support of contingency operations.

S. 2250

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2250, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modernize payments for ambulatory surgical centers under the Medicare Program.

S. 2257

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2257, a bill to impose sanctions on officials of the State Peace and Development Council in Burma, to amend the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 to prohibit the importation of gemstones and hardwoods from Burma, to promote a coordinated international effort to restore civilian democratic rule to Burma, and for other purposes.

S. 2317

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2317, a bill to amend titles 17 and 18, United States Code, and the Trademark Act of 1946 to strengthen and harmonize the protection of intellectual property, and for other purposes.

S. 2320

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2320, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide continued entitlement to coverage for immunosuppressive drugs furnished to beneficiaries under the Medicare Program that have received a kidney transplant and whose entitlement to coverage would otherwise expire, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 241

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 241, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should reaffirm the commitments of the United States to the 2001 Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health and to pursuing trade policies that promote access to affordable medicines.

S. RES. 358

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 358, a resolution expressing the importance of friendship and cooperation between the United States and Turkey.

S. RES. 366

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 366, a resolution designating November 2007 as ''National Methamphetamine Awareness Month'', to increase awareness of methamphetamine abuse.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 368, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that, at the 20th Regular Meeting of the International Commission on the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the United States should pursue a moratorium on the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery to ensure control of the fishery and further facilitate recovery of the stock, pursue strengthened conservation and management measures to facilitate the recovery of the Atlantic bluefin tuna, and seek a review of compliance by all Nations with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas' conservation and management recommendation for Atlantic bluefin tuna and other species, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3501

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3501 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3501 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 3508

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3508 proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3522

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3522 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3541

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3541 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3543

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3543 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Mr. COBURN):

S. 2324. A bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) to enhance the Offices of the Inspectors General, to create a Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I am pleased today to join my colleagues Senators COLLINS, LIEBERMAN and COBURN in introducing the Inspector General Reform Act of 2007. This bill represents a strong bipartisan effort to strengthen the independence and integrity of our nation's Inspectors General, who represent one of our strongest tools in combating waste, fraud and abuse throughout our government.

When I first came to the Senate this January, I made it one of my top priorities to become actively involved in oversight and accountability in Congress and in the Federal Government. I was thrilled to have been given an appointment to the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, which is ably run by Chairman LIEBERMAN. I was proud to have been able to cosponsor S. 680, the bill authored by Senator COLLINS which included not only extensive reforms of Government contracting practices, but also included many provisions geared towards improving the Inspector General system. I must thank Senator COLLINS especially for working with me on

the Inspector General legislation, which incorporates not only many of her reform ideas, but also those introduced in the House by Representatives JIM COOPER of Tennessee in H.R. 928, which has passed that chamber by an overwhelming vote of 404 to 11.

My 8 years as State Auditor in Missouri has given me tremendous respect for auditors and investigators working to make sure Government is spending our taxpayer dollars wisely. While many people are aware of the great work done by the legislative branch's Government Accountability Office, very few people realize that there are Inspectors General in many of our most important agencies. These IGs report both to the Executive and Legislative branch, and work in the trenches in the agency, constantly ferreting out cases of fraud, waste, abuse, and other mismanagement. Their unique role, resting inside the very agency they are charged with auditing and investigating, often creates unavoidable tensions.

The goal of the first Inspector General Act, passed 30 years ago next year, was to create a system that would allow the IG to rest harmoniously in the agency but allow them to provide oversight of an agency's actions and duties free from interference.

For the most part, this system has worked. But we can do better to assure that Inspectors General are free of intimidation or inappropriate influence by the agencies they oversee. Recent news reports have noted that the CIA Inspector General, John Helgerson, is being investigated by his own agency, even though there is no apparent legal authority for such an investigation to take place. The Administrator for the General Services Administration has been openly critical of the GSA IG, and has tried to cut the responsibilities and the budget of that office. The State Department IG has answered charges that he has failed to investigate allegations of contracting fraud in Iraq and Afghanistan with the claim that he has not been provided enough money by his agency to do such an investigation.

Obviously, some changes are needed and our IG reform bill attempts to make them. For example, IGs currently request their budgets through their agencies and then the agency heads determine if that request is appropriate before sending their budgets to the White House and then on to Congress. No one in Congress has the ability to see how much an IG office truly needs to adequately fulfill its oversight duties. Our bill requires that IGs can attach comments to the agency's official budget request if he or she believes the funding the agency requested for its IG is not enough to do the job.

As more Executive agencies move to a pay for performance compensation system, bonuses given by the agency have become a bigger part of the total compensation for employees. Having the agency that you audit decide how much of a bonus you will receive is an obvious, unacceptable conflict of interest for Inspectors General. Many IGs refuse to take a bonus, and those who do accept them have myriad reasons for doing so. However, this practice will be forbidden under the new law. Given the negative impact on the compensation for Inspector General and the need to attract and retain the best and the brightest, the pay of presidentially appointed Inspectors General will be raised one level. For the other Executive IGs, their agencies will be directed to pay them the same or more than the total compensation received by other senior level employees. This system will end the possibility of an agency head trying to entice an IG to go easy on them, or to punish an IG who refuses to do so.

This bill also gives the IGs more security from the fear of losing one's job for the simple reason they are too good. Before any IG can be removed, the congressional committees of jurisdiction must be notified, in writing, of the intent to remove the IG, and the reasons for doing so. This notice must be received at least 30 days before the scheduled removal. Bringing transparency to this process should guarantee that no IG will be removed for the wrong reason.

I want to make sure that the good work of the IGs is readily accessible to the people who pay for it, the taxpayer. I was shocked to realize that many IGs did not post their reports on the web. At least one IG shop didn't even have a website. In this day and age the public, and Congress, should have timely and easy access to all the public reports produced by Inspectors General. This bill requires all reports which are open to the public to be posted on the web within three working days of their release. It also requires all IG shops to provide, on their websites, a method for anonymously reporting waste, fraud or abuse.

Finally, this bill codifies a council for the IGs to have as a resource. This council, which exists now only pursuant to Executive order, would provide a structure for IGs to pool their resources when it would effectively help them perform their mission, such as providing Government-wide training for investigators and auditors. It will also include an Integrity Committee that will investigate allegations made against Inspectors General and certain staff members. Congress would receive periodic reports from this committee on the number of investigations they have undertaken, the results of those investigations, and any action by the agency taken in response to the findings of the committee.

I want to make clear that I am one of the biggest fans of the current cadre of Inspectors General, with very few exceptions. I want to make sure these dedicated public servants are able to perform their duties free from interference. I am very proud to be part of the effort to make sure this happens, and again thank my colleagues Senators COLLINS, LIEBERMAN and COBURN for their hard work and dedication to this issue.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Inspector General Reform Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS OF INSPECTORS GENERAL.

Section 8G(c) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end ''Each Inspector General shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, management analysis, public administration, or investigations.''.

SEC. 3. REMOVAL OF INSPECTORS GENERAL.

(a) ESTABLISHMENTS.—Section 3(b) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking the second sentence and inserting ''If an Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within an establishment, the President shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress, not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer.''.

(b) DESIGNATED FEDERAL ENTITIES.—Section 8G(e) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking ''shall promptly communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of the Congress'' and inserting ''shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress, not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer''.

(c) LEGISLATIVE AGENCIES.—

(1) LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.—Section 1307(c)(2) of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2006 (2 U.S.C. 185(c)(2)) is amended by striking the second sentence and inserting ''If the Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within the Library of Congress, the Librarian of Congress shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress, not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer.''.

(2) CAPITOL POLICE.—Section 1004(b) of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2006 (2 U.S.C. 1909(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) REMOVAL.—The Inspector General may be removed or transferred from office before the expiration of his term only by the unanimous vote of all of the voting members of the Capitol Police Board. If an Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within the Capitol Police, the Capitol Police Board shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives, and the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer.''.

(3) GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.—Section 3902(b)(2) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by striking the second sentence and

inserting ''If the Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within the Government Printing Office, the Public Printer shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress, not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer.''.

SEC. 4. PAY OF INSPECTORS GENERAL.

(a) INSPECTORS GENERAL AT LEVEL III OF EXECUTIVE SCHEDULE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) The annual rate of basic pay for an Inspector General (as defined under section 11(3)) shall be the rate payable for level III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code, plus 3 percent.''.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to each of the following positions:

(A) Inspector General, Department of Education.

(B) Inspector General, Department of Energy.

(C) Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services.

(D) Inspector General, Department of Agriculture.

(E) Inspector General, Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(F) Inspector General, Department of Labor.

(G) Inspector General, Department of Transportation.

(H) Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs.

(I) Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security.

(J) Inspector General, Department of Defense.

(K) Inspector General, Department of State.

(L) Inspector General, Department of Commerce.

(M) Inspector General, Department of the Interior.

(N) Inspector General, Department of Justice.

(O) Inspector General, Department of the Treasury.

(P) Inspector General, Agency for International Development.

(Q) Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency.

(R) Inspector General, Export-Import Bank.

(S) Inspector General, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(T) Inspector General, General Services Administration.

(U) Inspector General, National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(V) Inspector General, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

(W) Inspector General, Office of Personnel Management.

(X) Inspector General, Railroad Retirement Board.

(Y) Inspector General, Small Business Administration.

(Z) Inspector General, Tennessee Valley Authority.

(AA) Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

(BB) Inspector General, Resolution Trust Corporation.

(CC) Inspector General, Central Intelligence Agency.

(DD) Inspector General, Social Security Administration.

(EE) Inspector General, United States Postal Service.

(3) ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 194(b) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12651e(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (3).

(b) INSPECTORS GENERAL OF DESIGNATED FEDERAL ENTITIES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Inspector General of each designated Federal entity (as those terms are defined under section 8G of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)) shall, for pay and all other purposes, be classified at a grade, level, or rank designation, as the case may be, at or above those of a majority of the senior level executives of that designated Federal entity (such as a General Counsel, Chief Information Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Human Capital Officer, or Chief Acquisition Officer). The pay of an Inspector General of a designated Federal entity (as those terms are defined under section 8G of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)) shall be not less than the average total compensation of the senior level executives of that designated Federal entity.

(c) SAVINGS PROVISION FOR NEWLY APPOINTED INSPECTORS GENERAL.—The provisions of section 3392 of title 5, United States Code, other than the terms ''performance awards'' and ''awarding of ranks'' in subsection (c)(1) of such section, shall apply to career appointees of the Senior Executive Service who are appointed to the position of Inspector General.

(d) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section shall have the effect of reducing the rate of pay of any individual serving on the date of enactment of this section as an Inspector General of—

(1) an establishment as defined under section 11(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.);

(2) a designated Federal entity as defined under section 8G(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.);

(3) a legislative agency; or

(4) any other entity of the Government.

SEC. 5. PROHIBITION OF CASH BONUS OR AWARDS.

Section 3 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) (as amended by section 4 of this Act) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) An Inspector General (as defined under section 8G(a)(6) or 11(3)) may not receive any cash award or cash bonus, including any cash award under chapter 45 of title 5, United States Code.''.

SEC. 6. SEPARATE COUNSEL TO SUPPORT INSPECTORS GENERAL.

(a) COUNSELS TO INSPECTORS GENERAL OF ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 3 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) (as amended by sections 4 and 5 of this Act) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) Each Inspector General shall, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations governing the civil service, obtain legal advice from a counsel either reporting directly to the Inspector General or another Inspector General.''.

(b) COUNSELS TO INSPECTORS GENERAL OF DESIGNATED FEDERAL ENTITIES.—Section 8G(g) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) Each Inspector General shall, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations governing appointments within the designated Federal entity, appoint a Counsel to the Inspector General who shall report to the Inspector General or obtain the services of a counsel appointed by and directly reporting to another Inspector General or the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency on a reimbursable basis.''.

SEC. 7. ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNCIL OF THE INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by redesignating sections 11 and 12 as sections 12 and 13, respectively, and by inserting after section 10 the following:

''SEC. 11. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND MISSION.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established as an independent entity within the executive branch the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (in this section referred to as the 'Council').

''(2) MISSION.—The mission of the Council shall be to—

''(A) address integrity, economy, and effectiveness issues that transcend individual Government agencies; and

''(B) increase the professionalism and effectiveness of personnel by developing policies, standards, and approaches to aid in the establishment of a well-trained and highly skilled workforce in the offices of the Inspectors General.

''(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Council shall consist of the following members:

''(A) All Inspectors General whose offices are established under—

''(i) section 2; or

''(ii) section 8G.

''(B) The Inspectors General of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Central Intelligence Agency.

''(C) The Controller of the Office of Federal Financial Management.

''(D) A senior level official of the Federal Bureau of Investigation designated by the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

''(E) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

''(F) The Special Counsel of the Office of Special Counsel.

''(G) The Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

''(H) The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget.

''(I) The Office of Inspectors General of the Library of Congress, Capitol Police, and the Government Printing Office.

''(J) Any other members designated by the President.

''(2) CHAIRPERSON AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON.—

''(A) EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON.—The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall be the Executive Chairperson of the Council.

''(B) CHAIRPERSON.—The Council shall elect 1 of the Inspectors General referred to in paragraph (1)(A) or (B) to act as Chairperson of the Council. The term of office of the Chairperson shall be 2 years.

''(3) FUNCTIONS OF CHAIRPERSON AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON.—

''(A) EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON.—The Executive Chairperson shall—

''(i) preside over meetings of the Council;

''(ii) provide to the heads of agencies and entities represented on the Council summary reports of the activities of the Council; and

''(iii) provide to the Council such information relating to the agencies and entities represented on the Council as assists the Council in performing its functions.

''(B) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson shall—

''(i) convene meetings of the Council—

''(I) at least 6 times each year;

''(II) monthly to the extent possible; and

''(III) more frequently at the discretion of the Chairperson;

''(ii) exercise the functions and duties of the Council under subsection (c);

''(iii) appoint a Vice Chairperson to assist in carrying out the functions of the Council and act in the absence of the Chairperson, from a category of Inspectors General described in subparagraph (A)(i), (A)(ii), or (B) of paragraph (1), other than the category from which the Chairperson was elected;

''(iv) make such payments from funds otherwise available to the Council as may be necessary to carry out the functions of the Council;

''(v) select, appoint, and employ personnel as needed to carry out the functions of the Council subject to the availability of appropriations and the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title, relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates;

''(vi) to the extent and in such amounts as may be provided in advance by appropriations Acts, enter into contracts and other arrangements with public agencies and private persons to carry out the functions and duties of the Council;

''(vii) establish, in consultation with the members of the Council, such committees as determined by the Chairperson to be necessary and appropriate for the efficient conduct of Council functions; and

''(viii) prepare and transmit a report annually on behalf of the Council to the President on the activities of the Council.

''(c) FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF COUNCIL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Council shall—

''(A) continually identify, review, and discuss areas of weakness and vulnerability in Federal programs and operations with respect to fraud, waste, and abuse;

''(B) develop plans for coordinated, governmentwide activities that address these problems and promote economy and efficiency in Federal programs and operations, including interagency and interentity audit, investigation, inspection, and evaluation programs and projects to deal efficiently and effectively with those problems concerning fraud and waste that exceed the capability or jurisdiction of an individual agency or entity;

''(C) develop policies that will aid in the maintenance of a corps of well-trained and highly skilled Office of Inspector General personnel;

''(D) maintain an Internet website and other electronic systems for the benefit of all Inspectors General, as the Council determines are necessary or desirable;

''(E) maintain 1 or more academies as the Council considers desirable for the professional training of auditors, investigators, inspectors, evaluators, and other personnel of the various offices of Inspector General;

''(F) submit recommendations of 3 individuals to the appropriate appointing authority for any appointment to an office of Inspector General described under subsection (b)(1)(A) or (B);

''(G) make such reports to Congress as the Chairperson determines are necessary or appropriate; and

''(H) perform other duties within the authority and jurisdiction of the Council, as appropriate.

''(2) ADHERENCE AND PARTICIPATION BY MEMBERS.—To the extent permitted under law, and to the extent not inconsistent with standards established by the Comptroller General of the United States for audits of Federal establishments, organizations, programs, activities, and functions, each member of the Council shall adhere to professional standards developed by the Council and participate in the plans, programs, and projects of the Council, as appropriate.

''(3) ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES.—

''(A) INTERAGENCY FUNDING.—Notwithstanding section 1532 of title 31, United States Code, or any other provision of law prohibiting the interagency funding of activities described under subclause (I) or (II) of clause (i), in the performance of the responsibilities, authorities, and duties of the Council—

''(i) the Executive Chairperson may authorize the use of interagency funding for—

''(I) Governmentwide training of employees of the Offices of the Inspectors General;

''(II) the functions of the Integrity Committee of the Council; and

''(III) any other authorized purpose determined by the Council; and

''(ii) upon the authorization of the Executive Chairperson, any department, agency, or entity of the United States Government shall fund or participate in the funding of such activities.

''(B) SUPERSEDING PROVISIONS.—No provision of law enacted after the date of enactment of this subsection shall be construed to limit or supersede the authority under paragraph (1), unless such provision makes specific reference to the authority in that paragraph.

''(4) EXISTING AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The establishment and operation of the Council shall not affect—

''(A) the role of the Department of Justice in law enforcement and litigation;

''(B) the authority or responsibilities of any Government agency or entity; and

''(C) the authority or responsibilities of individual members of the Council.

''(d) INTEGRITY COMMITTEE.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Council shall have an Integrity Committee, which shall receive, review, and refer for investigation allegations of wrongdoing that are made against Inspectors General and certain staff members of the various Offices of Inspector General.

''(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Integrity Committee shall consist of the following members:

''(A) The official of the Federal Bureau of Investigation serving on the Council, who shall serve as Chairperson of the Integrity Committee.

''(B) Three or more Inspectors General described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (b)(1) appointed by the Chairperson of the Council, representing both establishments and designated Federal entities (as that term is defined in section 8G(a)).

''(C) The Special Counsel of the Office of Special Counsel.

''(D) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

''(3) LEGAL ADVISOR.—The Chief of the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice, or his designee, shall serve as a legal advisor to the Integrity Committee.

''(4) REFERRAL OF ALLEGATIONS.—

''(A) REQUIREMENT.—An Inspector General shall refer to the Integrity Committee any allegation of wrongdoing against a staff member of the office of that Inspector General, if—

''(i) review of the substance of the allegation cannot be assigned to an agency of the executive branch with appropriate jurisdiction over the matter; and

''(ii) the Inspector General determines that—

''(I) an objective internal investigation of the allegation is not feasible; or

''(II) an internal investigation of the allegation may appear not to be objective.

''(B) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph the term 'staff member' means—

''(i) any employee of an Office of Inspector General who reports directly to an Inspector General; or

''(ii) who is designated by an Inspector General under subparagraph (C).

''(C) DESIGNATION OF STAFF MEMBERS.—Each Inspector General shall annually submit to the Chairperson of the Integrity Committee a designation of positions whose holders are staff members for purposes of subparagraph (B).

''(5) REVIEW OF ALLEGATIONS.—The Integrity Committee shall—

''(A) review all allegations of wrongdoing the Integrity Committee receives against an Inspector General, or against an employee of an Office of Inspector General;

''(B) refer any allegation of wrongdoing to the agency of the executive branch with appropriate jurisdiction over the matter; and

''(C) refer to the Chairperson of the Integrity Committee any allegation of wrongdoing determined by the Integrity Committee to be potentially meritorious that cannot be referred to an agency under subparagraph (B).

''(6) AUTHORITY TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS.—

''(A) REQUIREMENT.—The Chairperson of the Integrity Committee shall cause a thorough and timely investigation of each allegation referred under paragraph (5)(C) to be conducted in accordance with this paragraph.

''(B) RESOURCES.—At the request of the Chairperson of the Integrity Committee, the head of each agency or entity represented on the Council—

''(i) may provide resources necessary to the Integrity Committee; and

''(ii) may detail employees from that agency or entity to the Integrity Committee, subject to the control and direction of the Chairperson, to conduct an investigation under this subsection.

''(7) PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATIONS.—

''(A) STANDARDS APPLICABLE.—Investigations initiated under this subsection shall be conducted in accordance with the most current Quality Standards for Investigations issued by the Council or by its predecessors (the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency and the Executive Council on Integrity and Efficiency).

''(B) ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—

''(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Integrity Committee, in conjunction with the Chairperson of the Council, shall establish additional policies and procedures necessary to ensure fairness and consistency in—

''(I) determining whether to initiate an investigation;

''(II) conducting investigations;

''(III) reporting the results of an investigation; and

''(IV) providing the person who is the subject of an investigation with an opportunity to respond to any Integrity Committee report.

''(ii) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Council shall submit a copy of the policies and procedures established under clause (i) to the congressional committees of jurisdiction.

''(C) REPORTS.—

''(i) POTENTIALLY MERITORIOUS ALLEGATIONS.—For allegations referred to under paragraph (5)(C), the Chairperson of the Integrity Committee shall make a report containing the results of the investigation of the Chairperson and shall provide such report to members of the Integrity Committee.

''(ii) ALLEGATIONS OF WRONGDOING.—For allegations referred to under paragraph (5)(B), the head of an agency shall make a report containing the results of the investigation and shall provide such report to members of the Integrity Committee.

''(8) ASSESSMENT AND FINAL DISPOSITION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to any report received under paragraph (7)(C), the Integrity Committee shall—

''(i) assess the report;

''(ii) forward the report, with the recommendations of the Integrity Committee, including those on disciplinary action, within 180 days (to the maximum extent practicable) after the completion of the investigation, to the Executive Chairperson of the Council and to the President (in the case of a report relating to an Inspector General of an establishment or any employee of that Inspector General) or the head of a designated Federal entity (in the case of a report relating to an Inspector General of such an entity or any employee of that Inspector General) for resolution; and

''(iii) submit to the congressional committees of jurisdiction an executive summary of such report and recommendations within 30 days after the submission of such report to the Executive Chairperson under clause (ii).

''(B) DISPOSITION.—The Executive Chairperson of the Council shall report to the Integrity Committee the final disposition of the matter, including what action was taken by the President or agency head.

''(9) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Council shall submit to Congress and the President by December 31 of each year a report on the activities of the Integrity Committee during the preceding fiscal year, which shall include the following:

''(A) The number of allegations received.

''(B) The number of allegations referred to other agencies, including the number of allegations referred for criminal investigation.

''(C) The number of allegations referred to the Chairperson of the Integrity Committee for investigation.

''(D) The number of allegations closed without referral.

''(E) The date each allegation was received and the date each allegation was finally disposed of.

''(F) In the case of allegations referred to the Chairperson of the Integrity Committee, a summary of the status of the investigation of the allegations and, in the case of investigations completed during the preceding fiscal year, a summary of the findings of the investigations.

''(G) Other matters that the Council considers appropriate.

''(10) REQUESTS FOR MORE INFORMATION.—With respect to paragraphs (8) and (9), the Council shall provide more detailed information about specific allegations upon request from any of the following:

''(A) The chairperson or ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

''(B) The chairperson or ranking member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

''(C) The chairperson or ranking member of the congressional committees of jurisdiction.

''(11) NO RIGHT OR BENEFIT.—This subsection is not intended to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a person against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.''.

(b) EXISTING EXECUTIVE ORDERS.—Executive Order 12805, dated May 11, 1992, and Executive Order 12993, dated March 21, 1996, shall have no force or effect.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) INSPECTOR GENERAL ACT OF 1978.—The Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(A) in sections 2(1), 4(b)(2), and 8G(a)(1)(A) by striking ''section 11(2)'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 12(2)''; and

(B) in section 8G(a), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''section 11'' and inserting ''section 12''.

(2) SEPARATE APPROPRIATIONS ACCOUNT.—Section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the first paragraph (33) and inserting the following:

''(33) a separate appropriation account for appropriations for the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and, included in that account, a separate statement of the aggregate amount of appropriations requested for each academy maintained by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.''.

SEC. 8. SUBMISSION OF BUDGET REQUESTS TO CONGRESS.

Section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f)(1) For each fiscal year, an Inspector General shall transmit a budget estimate and request to the head of the agency, board, or commission to which the Inspector General reports. The budget request shall specify the aggregate amount of funds requested for such fiscal year for the operations of that Inspector General and shall specify the amount requested for all training requirements, including a certification from the Inspector General that the amount requested satisfies all training requirements for the Inspector General's office for that fiscal year, and any resources necessary to support the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. Resources necessary to support the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency shall be specifically identified and justified in the budget request.

''(2) In transmitting a proposed budget to the President for approval, the head of each agency, board or commission shall include—

''(A) an aggregate request for the Inspector General;

''(B) amounts for Inspector General training;

''(C) amounts for support of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency; and

''(D) any comments of the affected Inspector General with respect to the proposal.

''(3) The President shall include in each budget of the United States Government submitted to Congress—

''(A) a separate statement of the budget estimate prepared in accordance with paragraph (1);

''(B) the amount requested by the President for each Inspector General;

''(C) training of Inspectors General;

''(D) support for the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency; and

''(E) any comments of the affected Inspector General with respect to the proposal, including whether the budget request submitted by the head of the establishment would substantially inhibit the Inspector General from performing the duties of the office.''.

SEC. 9. SUBPOENA POWER.

Section 6(a)(4) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''in any medium (including electronically stored information, as well as any tangible thing)'' after ''other data''; and

(2) by striking ''subpena'' and inserting ''subpoena''.

SEC. 10. PROGRAM FRAUD CIVIL REMEDIES ACT.

Section 3801(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by adding ''and'' after the semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(E) a designated Federal entity (as such term is defined under section 8G(a)(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978).''.

SEC. 11. LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY FOR DESIGNATED FEDERAL ENTITIES.

Section 6(e) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking ''appointed under section 3''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(9) In this subsection the term 'Inspector General' means an Inspector General appointed under section 3 or an Inspector General appointed under section 8G.''.

SEC. 12. APPLICATION OF SEMIANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO INSPECTION REPORTS AND EVALUATION REPORTS.

Section 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in each of subsections (a)(6), (a)(8), (a)(9), (b)(2), and (b)(3)—

(A) by inserting '', inspection reports, and evaluation reports'' after ''audit reports'' the first place it appears; and

(B) by striking ''audit'' the second place it appears; and

(2) in subsection (a)(10) by inserting '', inspection reports, and evaluation reports'' after ''audit reports''.

SEC. 13. INFORMATION ON WEBSITES OF OFFICES OF INSPECTORS GENERAL.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section the term ''agency'' means a Federal agency as defined under section 11(5) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(b) DIRECT LINKS TO INSPECTORS GENERAL OFFICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall establish and maintain on the homepage of the website of that agency, a direct link to the website of the Office of the Inspector General of that agency.

(2) ACCESSIBILITY.—The direct link under paragraph (1) shall be obvious and facilitate accessibility to the website of the Office of the Inspector General.

(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR INSPECTORS GENERAL WEBSITES.—

(1) POSTING OF REPORTS AND AUDITS.—The Inspector General of each agency shall—

(A) in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Privacy Act), not later than 3 working days after any report or audit (or portion of any report or audit), that is subject to release under section 552 of that title (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), is made publicly available, post that report or audit (or portion of that report or audit) on the website of the Office of the Inspector General; and

(B) ensure that any posted report or audit (or portion of that report or audit) described under subparagraph (A)—

(i) is easily accessible from a direct link on the homepage of the website of the Office of the Inspector General;

(ii) includes a summary of the findings of the Inspector General; and

(iii) is in a format that—

(I) is searchable and downloadable; and

(II) facilitates printing by individuals of the public accessing the website.

(2) REPORTING OF FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of each agency shall establish and maintain a direct link on the homepage of the website of the Office of the Inspector General for individuals to report fraud, waste, and abuse. Individuals reporting fraud, waste, or abuse using the direct link established under this paragraph shall not be required to provide personally identifying information relating to that individual.

(B) ANONYMITY.—The Inspector General of each agency shall not disclose the identity of any individual making a report under this

paragraph without the consent of the individual unless the Inspector General determines that such a disclosure is unavoidable during the course of the investigation.

(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the head of each agency and the Inspector General of each agency shall implement this section.

SEC. 14. INVESTIGATIONS OF DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE PERSONNEL.

(a) AMENDMENT TO REQUIREMENT RELATING TO CERTAIN REFERRALS.—Section 8E(b) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking paragraph (3).

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 8E of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is further amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking ''and paragraph (3)'' in paragraph (2);

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (3); and

(C) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (4) and in that paragraph by striking ''(4)'' and inserting ''(3)''; and

(2) in subsection (d), by striking '', except with respect to allegations described in subsection (b)(3),''.

SEC. 15. OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6(d) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended to read as follows:

''(d)(1)(A) For purposes of applying the provisions of law identified in subparagraph (B)—

''(i) each Office of Inspector General shall be considered to be a separate agency; and

''(ii) the Inspector General who is the head of an office referred to in clause (i) shall, with respect to such office, have the functions, powers, and duties of an agency head or appointing authority under such provisions.

''(B) This paragraph applies with respect to the following provisions of title 5, United States Code:

''(i) Subchapter II of chapter 35.

''(ii) Sections 8335(b), 8336, 8344, 8414, 8468, and 8425(b).

''(iii) All provisions relating to the Senior Executive Service (as determined by the Office of Personnel Management), subject to paragraph (2).

''(2) For purposes of applying section 4507(b) of title 5, United States Code, paragraph (1)(A)(ii) shall be applied by substituting 'the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (established by section 11 of the Inspector General Act) shall' for 'the Inspector General who is the head of an office referred to in clause (i) shall, with respect to such office,'.''.

(b) AUTHORITY OF TREASURY INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR TAX ADMINISTRATION TO PROTECT INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE EMPLOYEES.—Section 8D(k)(1)(C) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking ''and the providing of physical security''.

SEC. 16. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 360 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Government Accountability Office shall submit a report examining the adequacy of mechanisms to ensure accountability of the Offices of Inspector General to—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall examine—

(A) the practices, policies, and procedures of the Integrity Committee of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (and its predecessor committee); and

(B) the practices, policies, and procedures of the Offices of Inspector General with respect to complaints by and about employees of any Office of Inspector General that are not within the jurisdiction of the Integrity Committee.

(b) PAY OF INSPECTORS GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Government Accountability Office shall submit a report to the congressional committees of jurisdiction on the implementation of section 4.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President. I am pleased to join my colleagues, Senators MCCASKILL, LIEBERMAN, and COBURN, in introducing the Inspector General Reform Act of 2007, a bipartisan measure that will help detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse in government operations.

This legislation is an important companion to S. 680, the Accountability in Government Contracting Act of 2007, which the Senate passed last night by unanimous consent. Indeed, many of the reforms in this bill were included in S. 680 in February, when I first introduced that legislation along with Senators LIEBERMAN, COLEMAN, CARPER, and MCCASKILL. At our Committee's markup of S. 680, I recommended that the provisions governing Inspectors General be removed from that bill so that we could work together to improve the effectiveness of our Nation's Inspectors General in a separate legislative vehicle. The legislation we introduce today reflects that collaboration and continues our Committee's strong, bipartisan efforts to improve the effectiveness of Government.

Inspectors General are vital partners in Congress's effort to identify inefficient, ineffective, and improper Government programs. By leveraging the expertise and independence of Inspectors General and their staffs, Congress has been able to identify, and take action to stop, wasteful spending.

Examples of the IGs' invaluable work could be cited in depressingly large numbers, but let me note two efforts that I found particularly striking. In a 6-month period following the Hurricane Katrina disaster, the Department of Homeland Security's IG produced 29 reports that included alarming discoveries, including that 63 percent of the DHS purchase-card transactions made during the response had no documentation of goods or services actually being received. The DHS IG investigations helped produce 243 convictions for fraud or related offenses and aided in recovery of millions of taxpayer dollars.

As you will recall, the impressive work of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction led to Congress's extending SIGIR's work in that country. The SIGIR reported, among other things, that more than $9 billion in Iraqi oil revenues disbursed in 2004 could not be accounted for, that hundreds of contracts had problems, and that many projects to restore Iraq's water and electric services would not be completed. The SIGIR's work is estimated to yield taxpayers $25 of benefit for every dollar of cost.

The investigations and reports of IGs throughout the government help Congress shape legislation and oversight activities—improving Government performance, providing important transparency into programs, and giving Americans better value for their tax dollar.

Unfortunately, the past year has produced troubling instances in which the independence of Inspectors General has been challenged within their respective departments. We have also heard allegations of misconduct by some Inspectors General. These alarming examples of pressure and impropriety cannot be tolerated, and the legislation we introduce today is an important first step in clarifying congressional expectations concerning the independence, funding, training, and accountability of the Federal Government's Inspectors General.

The Inspector General Reform Act of 2007 would improve the independence and effectiveness of Inspectors General and contribute to better relations among the IGs, the agencies they serve, and the Congress. These improvements will also help to insulate and protect Inspectors General from inappropriate efforts to hinder their investigations.

First and foremost, the legislation provides a clear manifestation of how Congress believes IGs should be chosen. It amends the Inspector General Act of 1978 to explicitly require appointments on the basis of ability and integrity, not political affiliation.

Additional enhancements included in the bill are a mandatory requirement to notify Congress 30 days before the removal of an IG, helping to prevent politically motivated attempts to terminate effective IGs.

A separate budget line for Inspectors General that includes their overall budget and training needs, helping to ensure that these offices are properly funded to perform their important mission.

A pay increase for IGs and a prohibition on cash bonuses or awards. Most IGs already refuse to accept bonuses to avoid an appearance of conflict, with the result that many deputies earn more than the IGs. This provision will improve an IG's influence and independence within an agency while avoiding the appearance of improper influence that bonuses can create.

Authorization for the Government-wide IG Council on Integrity and Efficiency that will ensure appropriate investigations of misconduct or malfeasance by IGs. And finally,

Clarification that the IGs' subpoena authority extends to electronic documents.

The oversight experience of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and many reviews by the Government Accountability Office have confirmed the vital importance of the Inspector General function

in our system of Government. By addressing identified shortcomings and further insulating IGs from inappropriate influence, the legislation we introduce today will make a critical function of Government even more effective. I urge my colleagues to support its prompt consideration and passage.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I am proud to join my colleagues Senators MCCASKILL, COLLINS, and COBURN today in introducing the Inspector General Reform Act of 2007. This bipartisan bill reflects the broad Congressional support for the outstanding work of our Inspectors General and our desire to ensure that these important and unique government officials are given the tools and the accountability to perform at their very best.

It has been almost 30 years since Congress, as part of its post-Watergate reforms, passed the Inspectors General Act of 1978 that created an office of Inspector General in 12 major departments and agencies to hold those agencies accountable to the public interest and report back both to the agency heads and Congress on their findings. The law was amended in 1988 to add an Inspector General to almost all Executive agencies and departments.

The experiment has been a great success, hailed as a sort of consumer protector for the taxpayer deep within each agency. According to the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, last year alone IG audits resulted in $9.9 billion in potential savings and another $6.8 billion in savings when the results of civil and criminal investigations are added in.

Some of the IGs' work lands on the front page—exposing major shortcomings in government practices and official conduct. Most of it unfolds more quietly, but is just as critical in helping Federal agencies establish effective and efficient programs that make the most of the taxpayers' hard earned dollars.

Over the years, we have become aware of several instances where the independence of Inspectors General appears to be threatened. It is vital that Congress reiterate its strong support for the internal oversight IGs can provide and ensure they have the independence they need to carry out this vital, but often unpopular work.

Unfortunately, we are also aware of instances in which the watchdog needs watching—that is, situations where the Inspector General has behaved improperly or failed to provide vigorous oversight.

This legislation attempts to address both problems.

It includes an array of measures designed to strengthen the independence of the Inspectors General, such as requiring the administration to notify Congress 30 days before attempting to remove or transfer an IG. This would give us time to consider whether the administration was improperly seeking to displace an Inspector General for political reasons because the IG was, in effect, doing his or her job too well. It requires that all IGs be chosen on the basis of qualifications, without regard to political affiliation.

The legislation would codify and strengthen the existing IG councils, creating a unitary council that can provide greater support for IGs throughout the Government.

The bill would provide greater transparency of IG budget needs, including funds for training and council activities, to help ensure the IG offices have the resources they need for their investigations.

Most IGs would also receive a pay raise, to reflect the importance of the work they do and their proper stature within an agency. Currently, some IGs earn less than other senior officials in their agency and sometimes even less than some of their subordinates. However, we also prohibit bonuses for IGs, to remove a potential avenue for improper influence by the agency head.

Our bill also enhances IG accountability by strengthening the Integrity Committee that handles allegations against Inspectors General and their senior staff, and facilitating greater oversight of Integrity Committee by Congress.

The bill also ensures that the Inspector General of the Justice Department will have the authority, shared by other IGs, to investigate misconduct of any Departmental employee.

The House has already voted overwhelmingly in support of legislation addressing many of these same issues. It is time for the Senate to follow suit. I urge my colleagues to support this worthy and common sense piece of legislation.

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

S. 2331. A bill to exclude from gross income payments from the Hokie Spirit Memorial Fund to the victims of the tragic event, loss of life and limb, at Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today I introduce legislation that will, I hope, help provide some measure of assistance to those family members who lost loved ones and to those who suffered wounds as a consequence of the horrific shootings that took place on April 16, 2007, on the campus of Virginia Tech. I am pleased to have my colleague from Virginia, Senator WEBB, as a cosponsor of this legislation.

In the aftermath of that tragic day, where 32 lives of promise were forever cut short, over 20,000 individuals and groups across the country demonstrated their support for the victims and their families with generous financial donations that totaled approximately $7.5 million. Virginia Tech established the Hokie Spirit Memorial Fund within the Virginia Tech Foundation to accept these charitable contributions. The Hokie Spirit Fund distribution plan offers families of the 32 individuals who lost their lives a choice of receiving proceeds from the Fund or dividing those proceeds between a cash payment and a scholarship in the victim's name. Injured victims are also eligible for Fund proceeds. On October 30, 2007, the University officially distributed these funds to the 79 families and individuals in accordance with the protocols established. While no amount of money can truly compensate for the loss of life or limb, these payments provide both the families of the deceased and the injured survivors with some financial resources to help, in some modest way.

Unfortunately, Federal law is not clear as to whether these payments are subject to Federal taxation. In my view, not only does precedent indicate that these types of payments should be free of Federal income tax, common sense concurs. Accordingly, the legislation that Senator WEBB and I introduce today makes it clear that any payments by Virginia Tech from the Hokie Spirit Fund in conjunction with the April 16, 2007, shooting at Virginia Tech should not be taxable for Federal purposes.

It is my hope that the Congress will expeditiously pass this important legislation. I ask for unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2331

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXCLUSION FROM INCOME FOR PAYMENTS FROM THE HOKIE SPIRIT MEMORIAL FUND.

For purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, gross income shall not include any amount received from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, out of amounts transferred from the Hokie Spirit Memorial Fund established by the Virginia Tech Foundation, an organization organized and operated as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as a payment in connection with the tragic event, loss of life and limb, on April 16, 2007, at such university.

By Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mr. LOTT, Mr. OBAMA, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. KERRY, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BIDEN, and Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 2332. A bill to promote transparency in the adoption of new media ownership rules by the Federal Communications Commission, and to establish an independent panel to make recommendations on how to increase the representation of women and minorities in broadcast media ownership; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Media Ownership Act of 2007, along with Senators LOTT, OBAMA, SNOWE, KERRY, NELSON of Florida, CANTWELL, and FEINSTEIN. We seek with this bill to halt the Federal Communications Commission's, FCC, fast

march toward easing media ownership rules.

The FCC has taken a series of destructive actions in the past two decades that, I believe, have undermined the public interest. Now they appear prepared to do it again. The FCC is working to have a rewrite of media ownership rules completed just next month. Now this seems like a massive rush to me and a big mistake. How will the public interest be served by attempting to rush through a plan to relax ownership rules?

We don't need more concentration of ownership in radio and television stations and a green light for cross ownership between newspapers, radio and television stations. Further consolidation of media ownership at all is an affront to common sense. But even if we disagree with the rules the FCC issues, and even if we think the FCC should break up the big media companies rather than allow them to consolidate, the FCC must go through an honest and thorough process. They must study the questions that affect a decision of whether to adjust ownership limits. They have not done this. They have not put the final rules out for comment for a meaningful amount of time, they have not given the necessary consideration to the issue of localism, and they do not know enough about the impact of consolidation on localism or female and minority ownership.

The Media Ownership Act of 2007 ensures that the FCC allow enough time for comment on the actual rule changes. It requires that the FCC put out the final rules proposed by the Commission for 90 days of comment.

The bill also requires that the FCC complete a separate proceeding on the promotion of local programming and content by broadcasters and newspapers. In 2003, Chairman Powell set up a task force to promote localism in broadcasting and they began some hearings and took in comments. Chairman Martin has wrapped those comments into this ownership proceeding and is finishing the last localism hearing as part of this rushed schedule. The bill requires that they must publish a final rule in a separate proceeding and allow 90 days of comment. This must be completed prior to the vote on ownership.

The bill requires that the FCC establish an Independent Panel on Ownership by Women and Minorities. The FCC must collect and provide this panel with data on the specific gender and ethnic makeup of media owners. The panel shall issue recommendations and the FCC must act on these recommendations prior to a vote on media ownership.

The last time the FCC tried to do rush to consolidate media ownership, the United States Senate voted to block it. On September 16, 2003, the Senate voted 55–40 to support a ''resolution of disapproval'' of the FCC's previous decision to allow further concentration. If we have to do this again we will. A number of us have sent numerous letters to the FCC stating what needs to be done prior to a vote on media ownership limits and yet the Chairman is on track to move this proceeding to a vote. The FCC is clearly not listening and legislation is now necessary.

This is again a bipartisan effort to stop the FCC from destroying the local interests that we have always felt must be a part of broadcasting.

It is time to ensure that we first protect localism and diversity, which the FCC appears to have long forgotten. Only then can we really review the rules of media ownership in a thorough process to see if it is actually in the public interest to reverse any of those rules, or if greater public interest protections are necessary.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be placed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2332

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Media Ownership Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. MEDIA OWNERSHIP REFORMS.

Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-104; 110 Stat. 110) is amended by—

(1) redesignating subsection (i) as subsection (l); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following:

''(i) NOTICE AND PUBLIC COMMENT REQUIREMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In modifying, revising, or amending any of its regulations related to broadcast ownership, including any ownership rule or limitation set forth under sections 73.3555, 73.658(g), or 76.501 of its regulations (47 C.F.R. 73.3555, 73.658(g), 76.501), the Commission shall—

''(A) not later than 90 days prior to any vote by the Commission on the adoption of such modification, revision, or amendment publish such prospective modification, revision, or amendment in the Federal Register;

''(B) after such publication provide the public at least 60 days on which to comment on the prospective modification, revision, or amendment; and

''(C) upon the expiration of the 60-day comment period described under paragraph (2), have not less than 30 days in which to reply to any such comments.

''(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The notice and public requirements under paragraph (1) shall apply to any attempt by the Commission to modify, revise, or amend its regulations related to broadcast and newspaper ownership made after October 1, 2007.

''(B) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—If the Commission fails to comply with the notice and public requirements under paragraph (1) with respect to any modification, revision, or amendment to which such requirements apply, then such modification, revision, or amendment shall be vitiated and shall be of no force and effect.

''(j) PROMOTION OF LOCAL CONTENT IN MEDIA.—Before voting on any change in the broadcast and newspaper ownership rules, the Commission shall initiate, conduct, and complete a separate rulemaking proceeding to promote the broadcast of local programming and content by broadcasters, including radio and television broadcast stations, and newspapers. Before issuing a final rule, the Commission shall—

''(1) conduct a study to determine the overall impact of television station duopolies and newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership on the quantity and quality of local news, public affairs, local news media jobs, and local cultural programming at the market level;

''(2) publish a proposed final rule in the Federal Register not later than 90 days prior to any vote by the Commission on the adoption of the rule;

''(3) after such publication provide the public at least 60 days on which to comment on the prospective rule; and

''(4) upon the expiration of the 60-day comment period described in paragraph (3), have not less than 30 days in which to reply to any such comments.

''(k) INDEPENDENT PANEL ON WOMEN AND MINORITY OWNERSHIP OF BROADCAST MEDIA.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Commission shall establish and convene an independent panel on women and minority ownership of broadcast media to make recommendations to the Commission for specific Commission rules to increase the representation of women and minorities in the ownership of broadcast media.

''(2) CENSUS.—The Commission shall—

''(A) conduct a full and accurate census of the race and gender of individuals holding a controlling interest in broadcast station licensee;

''(B) provide the results of the census to the panel for its consideration before it makes any recommendation to the Commission; and

''(C) study the impact of media market concentration on the representation of women and minorities in the ownership of broadcast media based on the data in the census and report the results of that study to the panel for its consideration before it makes any recommendation to the Commission.

''(3) CONSIDERATION OF PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Commission shall act on the panel's recommendations before voting on any changes to its broadcast and newspaper ownership rules.''.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 371—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE ISSUANCE OF STATE DRIVER'S LICENSES AND OTHER GOVERNMENT-ISSUED PHOTO IDENTIFICATION TO ILLEGAL ALIENS

Mr. COLEMAN (for himself, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. LOTT, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BURR, Mr. BOND, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. COBURN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GREGG, Mr. ALLARD, and Mr. CORKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 371

Whereas some States issue State driver's licenses to aliens who are unlawfully present in the United States;

Whereas by providing official government-issued identification to individuals who are in the United States illegally, States and