

Anbar province, specifically for the purpose of combating an insurgency, including elements associated with the Al Qaeda movement, and denying terrorists a safe haven;

(3) the Senate believes a failed state in Iraq would present a threat to regional and world peace, and the long-term security interests of the United States are best served by an Iraq that can sustain, govern, and defend itself, and serve as an ally in the war against extremists;

(4) the Congress should not take any action that will endanger United States military forces in the field, including the elimination or reduction of funds for troops in the field, as such an action with respect to funding would undermine their safety or harm their effectiveness in pursuing their assigned missions;

(5) the primary objective of the overall U.S. strategy in Iraq should be to encourage Iraqi leaders to make political compromises that will foster reconciliation and strengthen the unity government, ultimately leading to improvements in the security situation;

(6) the military part of this strategy should focus on maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying international terrorists a safe haven, conducting counterterrorism operations, promoting regional stability, supporting Iraqi efforts to bring greater security to Baghdad, and training and equipping Iraqi forces to take full responsibility for their own security;

(7) United States military operations should, as much as possible, be confined to these goals, and should charge the Iraqi military with the primary mission of combating sectarian violence;

(8) the military Rules of Engagement for this plan should reflect this delineation of responsibilities, and the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should clarify the command and control arrangements in Baghdad;

(9) the United States Government should transfer to the Iraqi military, in an expeditious manner, such equipment as is necessary;

(10) the United States Government should engage selected nations in the Middle East to develop a regional, internationally sponsored peace-and-reconciliation process for Iraq;

(11) the Administration should provide regular updates to the Congress, produced by the Commander of United States Central Command and his subordinate commanders, about the progress or lack of progress the Iraqis are making toward this end.

(12) our overall military, diplomatic and economic strategy should not be regarded as an "open-ended" or unconditional commitment, but rather as a new strategy that hereafter should be conditioned upon the Iraqi government's meeting benchmarks that must be delineated in writing and agreed to by the Iraqi Prime Minister. Such benchmarks should include, but not be limited to, the deployment of that number of additional Iraqi security forces as specified in the plan in Baghdad, ensuring equitable distribution of the resources of the Government of Iraq without regard to the sect or ethnicity of recipients, enacting and implementing legislation to ensure that the oil resources of Iraq benefit Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs, Kurds, and other Iraqi citizens in an equitable manner, and the authority of Iraqi commanders to make tactical and operational decisions without political intervention;

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry be authorized to conduct a hearing during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007 at 9:45 AM in 328A, Senate Russell Office Building. The purpose of this committee hearing will be to discuss "The Role of Federal Food Assistance Programs in Family Economic Security and Nutrition".

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 10 a.m., in closed session to receive a briefing regarding the Iraq "SURGE" Plan.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DURBIN. 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 31, 2007, at 10 a.m., to conduct a vote on the Committee Budget Resolution, rules of procedure, and subcommittee organization for the 110th Congress; immediately following the executive session, the committee will meet in open session to conduct a hearing on "The Treasury Department's Report to Congress on International Economic and Exchange Rate Policy (IEERP) and the U.S.-China Strategic Economic Dialogue."

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a business meeting and hearing during the sessions of the Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 2:30 p.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the business meeting is to adopt the budget resolution for the Committee for the 110th Congress. The purpose of the hearing is to promote travel to America, and to examine related economic and security concerns.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to hold a Business Meeting during the session of the

Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 11:30 a.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the Business Meeting is to consider pending calendar business.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 10 a.m. in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to organize for the 110th Congress. The Committee will also consider favorably reporting the following nominations: Michael J. Astrue, to be Commissioner of Social Security, Social Security Administration; Dean A. Pinkert, to be Member of the United States International Trade Commission; and Irving A. Williamson, to be Member of the United States International Trade Commission.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 9:15 a.m. to hold a hearing on Iraq.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007 at 10 a.m. SD-430.

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

COMMITTEE THE JUDICIARY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on "Examining the Iraq Study Group's Recommendations for Improvements to Iraq's Police and Criminal Justice System" for Wednesday, January 31, 2007 at 10 a.m. in Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 226.

Witnesses

The Honorable Lee H. Hamilton, Former Member of Congress, Director, The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Co-Chair, Iraq Study Group Washington, DC.

The Honorable Edwin Meese III, Former U.S. Attorney General, Ronald Reagan Chair in Public Policy, The Heritage Foundation, Member Iraq Study Group Washington, DC.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on "US-

VISIT Challenges and Strategies for Securing the U.S. Border" for Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. in Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 226.

Witnesses

Panel I. The Honorable Richard Barth, Ph.D., Assistant Secretary, Office of Policy Development, Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

Robert A. Mocny, Acting Director, US-VISIT, Department of Homeland Security Washington, DC.

Panel II. Richard Stana, Director, Homeland Security and Justice, Government Accountability Office, Washington, DC.

Phillip J. Bond, President and CEO, Information Technology Association of America, Arlington, VA.

C. Stewart Verdery, Jr., President, Monument Policy Group, Washington, DC.

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

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct its organizational meeting for the 110th Congress.

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

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate for a hearing entitled "Assessing Federal Small Business Assistance Programs for Veterans and Reservists," on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, beginning at 10 a.m. in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

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

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Joint Economic Committee be authorized to conduct a hearing in room 106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, Wednesday, January 31, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet Wednesday, January 31, 2007 from 10:30 a.m.–12 p.m. in Dirksen 562 for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support be authorized to meet

during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 31, 2007, at 2:30 p.m., to continue to receive testimony on abusive practices in Department of Defense contracting for services and inter-agency contracting.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for Stanford Swinton, Anne Freeman, Lynda Simmons, Bess Ullman, Ann Thomas, and Eric Slack of my staff to be given privileges of the floor during the deliberation of H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if I could now move to the more mundane, I ask unanimous consent that at 11:45 tomorrow, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 8 through 10; that there be 10 minutes for debate on the nominations equally divided between Senators LEAHY and SPECTER or their designees; that at the conclusion of the yielding back of time, the Senate vote on nomination No. 8, Lawrence Joseph O'Neill to be a U.S. district judge; that following that vote, the Senate vote on nomination No. 9, Valerie Baker, to be a U.S. district judge; that following that vote, the Senate vote on nomination No. 10, Gregory Frizzell, to be a U.S. district judge; that there be 2 minutes for debate between the votes; that the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that the Senate then return to legislative session, and that all time consumed in executive session, including the votes, count toward cloture on H.R. 2.

I would say, before the Chair rules on this unanimous consent request, how much we can count on staff. One number was missing, and I am just here trying to figure out what to do without staff, and as usual, they come through.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader quickly got to the correction. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 61.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 61) designating January 2007 as "National Mentoring Month."

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 61) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 61

Whereas mentoring is a long-standing tradition with modern applications in which an adult provides guidance, support, and encouragement to help with a young person's social, emotional, and cognitive development;

Whereas research provides strong evidence that mentoring can promote positive outcomes for young people, such as an increased sense of industry and competency, a boost in academic performance and self-esteem, and improved social and communications skills;

Whereas studies of mentoring further show that a quality mentoring relationship successfully reduces the incidence of risky behaviors, delinquency, absenteeism, and academic failure;

Whereas mentoring is a frequently used term and a well-accepted practice in many sectors of our society;

Whereas thanks to the remarkable creativity, vigor, and resourcefulness of the thousands of mentoring programs and millions of volunteer mentors in communities throughout the Nation, quality mentoring has grown dramatically in the past 15 years, and there are now 3,000,000 young people in the United States who are being mentored;

Whereas in spite of the strides made in the mentoring field, the Nation has a serious "mentoring gap," with nearly 15,000,000 young people currently in need of mentors;

Whereas a recent study confirmed that one of the most critical challenges that mentoring programs face is recruiting enough mentors to help close the mentoring gap;

Whereas the designation of January 2007 as National Mentoring Month will help call attention to the critical role mentors play in helping young people realize their potential;

Whereas the month-long celebration of mentoring will encourage more organizations across the Nation, including schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations and faith institutions, foundations, and individuals to become engaged in mentoring;

Whereas National Mentoring Month will, most importantly, build awareness of mentoring and encourage more individuals to become mentors, helping close the Nation's mentoring gap; and

Whereas the President has issued a proclamation declaring January 2007 to be National Mentoring Month and calling on the people of the United States to recognize the importance of mentoring, to look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities, and to observe the month with appropriate activities and programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of January 2007 as "National Mentoring Month";

(2) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of caring adults who are already serving as mentors and encourages more adults to volunteer as mentors; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe the month with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of, and volunteer involvement with, youth mentoring.