

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-221. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semi-Annual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2006 through September 30, 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-222. A communication from the Secretary for Regulatory Policy and Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Filipino Veterans' Benefits Improvements" (RIN2900-AK65) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-223. A communication from the Director of Regulatory Management, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical: Informed Consent—Extension of Time Period and Modification of Witness Requirement for Signature Consent" (RIN2900-AM19) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-224. A communication from the Director of Regulatory Management, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Transfer of Montgomery GI Bill—Active Duty Entitlement to Dependents" (RIN2900-AM12) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-225. A communication from the Chief of the Immigration Unit, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Board of Immigration Appeals: Composition of Board and Temporary Board Members" (RIN1125-AA57) (EOIR No. 1581) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-226. A communication from the Senior Counsel, United States Marshals Service, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Supplement to Justice Department Procedures and Council on Environmental Quality Regulations to Ensure Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act" (RIN1105-AB13) (USMS 101) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-227. A communication from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the need for existing bankruptcy judgeships; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-228. A communication from the Acting Director, Regulations and Rulings Division, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of the Shawnee Hills Viticultural Area" (RIN1513-AA70) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-229. A communication from the Acting Director, Regulations and Rulings Division, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of the Chehalem Mountains Viticultural Area" (RIN1513-AA57) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-230. A communication from the Junior Past National Treasurer, Navy Wives Clubs of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the latest audit of the organization; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-231. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clarification of Registration Requirements for Individual Practitioners" (RIN1117-AA89) received on December 21, 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-232. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report of the National Institute of Justice for fiscal year 2005; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-233. A communication from the Secretary of the Air Force, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the submission of its report on Defense base closures and realignments; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-234. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the national emergency declared by Executive Order 13222 of August 17, 2001; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-235. A communication from the Deputy Chief Counsel, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Transportation Worker Identification Credential Implementation in the Maritime Sector; Hazardous Materials Endorsement for a Commercial Driver's License" (RIN1652-AA41) received on January 3, 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-236. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Commission's competitive sourcing efforts for fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-237. A communication from the Chief Information Officer and the Chief Privacy Officer, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to activities that affect privacy; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ALLARD (for himself and Mr. SALAZAR):

S. 194. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1300 North Frontage Road West in Vail, Colorado, as the "Gerald R. Ford, Jr. Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. THUNE, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 195. A bill to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish permanent authority for the Secretary of Agriculture to quickly provide disaster relief to agricultural producers that incur crop or livestock losses as a result of damaging weather or related condition in federally declared disaster areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. SALAZAR):

S. 196. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to deny Federal retirement benefits to individuals convicted of certain offenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. REID, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 197. A bill to authorize salary adjustments for justices and judges of the United

States for fiscal year 2007; considered and passed.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 198. A bill to improve authorities to address urgent nonproliferation crises and United States nonproliferation operations; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 199. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Amendments of 1996 to modify the grant program to improve sanitation in rural and Native villages in the State of Alaska; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 200. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation and the United States Geological Survey, to conduct a study on groundwater resources in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. 201. A bill to establish a grant program for individuals still suffering health effects as a result of the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York City and at the Pentagon; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. STEVENS):

S. 202. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain Forest Service land to the city of Coffman Cove, Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 203. A bill to provide equitable treatment for the people of the Village Corporation established for the Native Village of Saxman, Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BINGAMAN:

S. 204. A bill for the relief of Ziad Mohamed Shaban Khweis, Heyam Ziad Khweis, and Juman Ziad Khweis; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STEVENS (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 205. A bill to grant rights-of-way for electric transmission lines over certain Native allotments in the State of Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. Res. 21. A resolution recognizing the uncommon valor of Wesley Autrey of New York, New York; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 1

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1, a bill to provide greater transparency in the legislative process.

S. 2

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2, a bill

to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage.

S. 4

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 4, a bill to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security, and for other purposes.

S. 10

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 10, a bill to reinstate the pay-as-you-go requirement and reduce budget deficits by strengthening budget enforcement and fiscal responsibility.

S. 43

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 43, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to preserve and protect Social Security benefits of American workers and to help ensure greater congressional oversight of the Social Security system by requiring that both Houses of Congress approve a totalization agreement before the agreement, giving foreign workers Social Security benefits, can go into effect.

S. 57

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 57, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain service in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for purposes of benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

S. 65

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 65, a bill to modify the age-60 standard for certain pilots and for other purposes.

S. 85

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 85, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to clarify that territories and Indian tribes are eligible to receive grants for confronting the use of methamphetamine.

S. 87

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 87, a bill to permit the cancellation of certain loans under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

S. 101

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms.

SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 101, a bill to update and reinvigorate universal service provided under the Communications Act of 1934.

S. 119

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) were added as cosponsors of S. 119, a bill to prohibit profiteering and fraud relating to military action, relief, and reconstruction efforts, and for other purposes.

S. 136

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 136, a bill to expand the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium to include the Transportation Technology Center.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 170, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on telephone and other communications services.

S. 190

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 190, a bill to provide a technical correction to the Pension Protection Act of 2006.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS—JANUARY 4, 2007

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 163. A bill to improve the disaster loan program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, as we all know, there was a tremendous amount of criticism of the Federal Government's response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita last year. Things are better now and the region is slowly recovering. But, having just finished the 2006 hurricane season, and with the 2007 season a few months away, we must be sure that if we have another disaster, the Federal Government's response will be better this time around. Disaster response agencies have to be better organized, more efficient, and more responsive in order to avoid the problems, the delays, mismanagement, and the seeming incompetence that occurred in 2005.

Today, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of legislation to improve the disaster response of one agency that had a great deal of problems last year,

the Small Business Administration, SBA. This bill, the "Small Business Disaster Response and Loan Improvements Act" makes major improvements to the SBA's disaster response and provides them with essential tools to ensure that they are more efficient and better prepared for future disasters—big and small. I should also note that this bill is a result of intensive bipartisan work over the past couple of months and was introduced shortly before the 109th Congress adjourned as S. 4097. Unfortunately, there was no action on that bill so it must be reintroduced in the new Congress. I strongly believe though we can secure passage during this Congress as the bill is reflective of the priorities from Senators KERRY and SNOWE, respectively, Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Small Business Committee, as well as Senators LANDRIEU and VITTER. For my part, I have heard loud and clear from our impacted businesses that SBA reforms should be implemented as soon as possible. That is why in September, I sent a letter to the new SBA Administrator Steve Preston, expressing concerns on the lack of progress on SBA disaster reforms, which were included in S. 3778, the FY07 SBA Reauthorization bill reported out of the Senate Small Business Committee. In this letter, I requested his cooperation, along with our committee to pass this important legislation before Congress adjourns at the end of the year. The introduction of this bill today, shows the progress that the committee made since September on this issue. I hope that this spirit of bipartisanship continues into the 110th Congress and that I can continue to work with my colleagues on the Senate Small Business Committee to reform SBA.

This legislation offers new tools to enhance SBA's disaster assistance programs. In every disaster, the SBA Disaster Loan program is a lifeline for businesses and homeowners who want to rebuild their lives after a catastrophe. When Hurricane Katrina hit, our businesses and homeowners had to wait months for loan approvals. I do not know how many businesses we lost because help did not come in time. Because of the scale of this disaster, what these businesses needed was immediate, short-term assistance to hold them over until SBA was ready to process the tens of thousands of loan applications it received.

That is why this legislation provides the SBA Administrator with the ability to set up an expedited disaster assistance business loan program to make short-term, low-interest loans to keep them afloat. These loans will allow businesses to make payroll, begin making repairs, and address other immediate needs while they are awaiting insurance payouts or regular SBA disaster loans. However, I realize that every disaster is different and could range from a disaster on the scale of Hurricane Katrina or 9-11, to an ice storm or drought. This legislation