

Joe has spent his career bringing real meaning to the American dream. As president of the Massachusetts Building Trades Council, AFL-CIO, and executive vice president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, Joe advocates for the rights of more than 75,000 construction trades men and women throughout the Commonwealth.

Joe has fought for, and defended, the right to collective bargaining and the empowerment that it has brought to working families throughout our history.

Joe helped write competitive bid laws for public construction projects, helped to pass the OSHA 10-hour law which requires all construction workers on public projects to undergo safety training, and helped to pass a law strengthening wage enforcement.

Throughout his years in public service, Joe has negotiated dozens of agreements to guarantee fair, competitive wages, a reasonable work week, and safe working conditions on billions of dollars of construction projects throughout the Commonwealth.

I am most fortunate to have had his support, friendship, and counsel throughout many campaigns and many years in office here in Massachusetts.

An exemplary community leader, Joe has worked tirelessly to uphold the rights of thousands of Massachusetts workers who entrusted him with this office. Massachusetts is grateful for the service he has provided. Countless families in Massachusetts are living better, safer lives because of Joe Dart and his commitment to organized labor.

On behalf of workers throughout our State, I am proud to honor him for his selfless dedication to countless works across the Commonwealth.●

RECOGNIZING DR. LEN PETERS

● Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a great contributor to the State of Washington and to the national science and education communities. Dr. Len Peters recently stepped down as the Director of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, WA. Fortunately, Dr. Peters has agreed to remain in Richland, working for Battelle Memorial Institute to help promote and build education and community projects.

PNNL, a DOE national laboratory, experienced tremendous growth during Dr. Peters' tenure. The lab added 330 new members to its world-class staff, enabling the facility to better serve the Nation in the areas of renewable energy, national security, and environmental research. Dr. Peters led the staff in enhancing relationships with a number of research universities in the region, continuing his commitment to quality public-private relationships in the interest of furthering math and science education.

Dr. Peters came to PNNL in 2003, after serving as the vice provost for research at Virginia Polytechnic Insti-

tute and State University. Prior to guiding Virginia Tech's ambitious research portfolio, he served as acting vice president for research and graduate studies at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Peters spent nearly 20 years in the classroom, educating our next generation of scientists. He is a distinguished scholar and a leader in the field of atmospheric chemistry.

In his new role at Battelle, Dr. Peters will continue to serve Washington State through community outreach programs. His work to expand higher education opportunities in the Tri-Cities, as well as his leadership on the Hanford Reach Interpretive Center Board are examples of his strong commitment to building a better community, region and State.

I thank Dr. Len Peters for his guidance and commitment to PNNL over the past 3½ years. For the people of Washington State and the entire Pacific Northwest region, I thank Dr. Peters for his continued service to our community and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:01 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 137. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen prohibitions against animal fighting, and for other purposes.

H.R. 580. An act to amend chapter 35 of title 28, United States Code, to provide for a 120-day limit to the term of a United States attorney appointed on an interim basis by the Attorney General, and for other purposes.

H.R. 753. An act to redesignate the Federal building located at 167 North Main Street in Memphis, Tennessee, as the "Clifford Davis and Odell Horton Federal Building".

H.R. 802. An act to amend the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships to implement MARPOL Annex VI.

H.R. 1019. An act to designate the United States customhouse building located at 31 Gonzalez Clemente Avenue in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the "Rafael Martinez Nadal United States Customhouse Building".

H.R. 1138. An act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 306 East Main Street in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, as the "J. Herbert W. Small Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

H.R. 1195. An act to amend the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users to make technical corrections, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1468. An act to ensure that, for each small business participating in the 8(a) business development program that was affected by Hurricane Katrina of 2005, the period in which it can participate is extended by 18 months.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S.494. An act to endorse further enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and to facilitate the timely ad-

mission of new members to NATO, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 238. An act to repeal a prohibition on the use of certain funds for tunneling in certain areas with respect to the Los Angeles to San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project, California; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 1019. An act to designate the United States customhouse building located at 31 Gonzalez Clemente Avenue in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the "Rafael Martinez Nadal United States Customhouse Building"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 1138. An act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 306 East Main Street in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, as the "J. Herbert W. Small Federal Building and United States Courthouse"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 1195. An act to amend the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users to make technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 1468. An act to ensure that, for each small business participating in the 8(a) business development program that was affected by Hurricane Katrina of 2005, the period in which it can participate is extended by 18 months; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 137. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen prohibitions against animal fighting, and for other purposes.

H.R. 580. An act to amend chapter 35 of title 28, United States Code, to provide for a 120-day limit to the term of a United States attorney appointed on an interim basis by the Attorney General, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

S. 997. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for human embryonic stem cell research.

S. 1001. A bill to restore Second Amendment rights in the District of Columbia.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-49. A resolution adopted by the California State Lands Commission urging the Senate to pass Senate Resolution 151; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Whereas, U.S. Senators Boxer and Feinstein have introduced S. 151 to prohibit new oil and gas leasing in federal waters off California; and

Whereas, California's 1,100 mile coastline, with its beautiful beaches, wild cliffs, abundant fish stocks and fragile environment is a national treasure and a valuable state resource, which is at the heart of a tourist industry that generates nearly five billion dollars in state and local taxes each year; and is the heart of the state's \$43 billion ocean economy; and

Whereas, the citizens of California have long opposed new oil and gas drilling off their coastline and support protecting the fragile and valuable coastal environment over development of the relatively small amounts of oil and gas offshore California; and

Whereas, California initiated protection of its coast from oil and gas development when the California Legislature in 1955 and 1963, prohibited oil and gas leasing in the State waters off Monterey and Santa Cruz counties and portions of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Humboldt, and Mendocino Counties; and

Whereas, the California State Lands Commission has not issued any offshore oil and gas lease for new areas since the 1969 spill from a well in Federal waters off Santa Barbara that released over three million gallons of crude oil, coating Santa Barbara County's ocean beaches; and

Whereas, the California Legislature continued the State's efforts to restrict oil and development in its own waters by enacting the California Coastal Sanctuary Act in 1994, which codified the Commission's earlier administrative prohibition of new offshore leases and created a statutory statewide coastal sanctuary that prohibits future oil and gas leasing in all State coastal waters, from Mexico to the Oregon border, in perpetuity; and

Whereas, the U.S. Congress has protected California coastline from expanded offshore drilling for more than twenty years, renewing this protection in the form of a legislative moratorium contained in the annual appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior; and

Whereas, the need for new oil development can be reduced by improving automobile fuel efficiency and energy efficiency, utilizing and further researching renewable energy and alternative fuels, and fully funding energy conservation and efficiency programs, including solar and renewables, weatherization, and other initiatives; thus increasing energy independence and reducing the reliance on foreign oil; and

Whereas, in spite of the steady opposition to new oil and gas leasing off California, various proposals have been made in the last five years to end the federal moratorium or to take steps, such as oil and gas inventories, that are intended to lead to new leasing; and

Whereas, the Commission has adopted six resolutions since 2001 supporting the existing moratorium on new federal leases and opposing the new initiatives to open the California coast to new oil and gas development and leases; and

Whereas, S. 151, recently introduced by Senator's Boxer and Feinstein would permanently ban new oil and gas leasing in federal waters, consistent with the state's own prohibition of new leasing in state waters; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the California State Lands Commission, That it supports S. 151 and the prohibition it proposes for new oil and gas leases in federal waters off California and urges Congress to adopt this measure; and be it further

Resolved, That the Congress of the United States and the Federal government be encouraged to explore options to increase energy independence and reduce reliance on

foreign oil, such as incentives to improve energy efficiency, requirements to improve automobile fuel efficiency, provide funding for research into renewable energy and alternative fuels, and fully funding energy conservation and efficiency; and be it further

Resolved, That the Commission's Executive Officer transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Governor of California, to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, to the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, to the Chairs and Ranking Minority Members of the House Committee on Natural Resources, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

POM-50. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Michigan urging Congress to enact the Great Lakes Asian Carp Barrier Act; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 17

Whereas, two species of Asian carp are on the verge of invading the Great Lakes. Silver carp and bighead carp have advanced up the Mississippi River since their escape from southern fish farms in the early 1980s, and now have been identified within miles of Lake Michigan in the Illinois River near Chicago; and

Whereas, Asian carp pose a significant risk to the ecology and economy of the Great Lakes region. Asian carp can grow as large as 100 pounds and are voracious feeders. They compete with native fish for food and degrade water quality by disturbing sediments. They could become a dominant species in the Great Lakes, threatening a \$4.5 billion commercial and recreational fishery. Silver carp can also jump up to 10 feet out of the water when disturbed, posing a risk to recreational boaters; and

Whereas, Asian carp are the latest in a long line of exotic species to threaten the Great Lakes. Over 180 exotic species have invaded the Great Lakes since European settlement. The most harmful exotic species, zebra mussels and sea lampreys, have cost an estimated \$100 million per year to control during the 1990s. Scientists project that Asian carp could have a similar impact on the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, the only thing preventing the movement of Asian carp into the Great Lakes is a temporary electrical barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal operated by the United States Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, the Army Corps and the state of Illinois are constructing a permanent electrical barrier to replace the temporary barrier; and

Whereas, to date, over \$12 million has been spent on construction and operation of the electrical barriers. To help match federal funding, the state of Michigan has contributed nearly \$70,000 toward the completion of the permanent electrical barrier; and

Whereas, current funding is insufficient to complete construction of the permanent barrier and only finances operation of the temporary barrier through the first half of fiscal year 2007. In addition, there is no funding to renovate the temporary barrier as a permanent backup to the new barrier; and

Whereas, The Great Lakes Asian Carp Barrier Act (H.R. 553 and S. 336) would provide funds to upgrade the current barrier and complete construction of the permanent barrier; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to enact the Great Lakes Asian Carp Barrier Act (H.R. 553 and S. 336) to protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-51. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the State of Kentucky urging Congress to repeal the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 45

Whereas, the intent of Congress in the enactment of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) was to protect the Social Security program and eliminate perceived abuses in the payment of dual benefits to certain beneficiaries; and

Whereas, the GPO and WEP, have resulted in devastating, unintended consequences for hundreds of thousands of teachers and other public employees nationwide; and

Whereas, the GPO affects teachers and other public employees in Kentucky and other states who are participants in public retirement systems but who do not participate in the Social Security retirement program; and

Whereas, under the GPO, a teacher who receives benefits under the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System will suffer at least a two-thirds reductions in the Social Security survivor benefits the teacher would otherwise receive from a spouse's private-sector earnings; and

Whereas, teachers in fifteen states, including Kentucky, do not participate in the Social Security program; and

Whereas, the WEP reduces the Social Security benefits of a teacher or other public employee who has participated and received earnings sufficient to qualify for Social Security retirement benefits as well as the benefits procured under the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System or other public retirement system; and

Whereas, the GPO and WEP unfairly target public employees, especially our highly valued teachers who sacrifice lucrative earnings in the private sector to educate our children; and

Whereas, Kentucky has a significant teacher shortage and loses more than 2000 teachers annually to retirement and must actively recruit new teachers to meet growing enrollment demands; and

Whereas, a federal proposal to repeal both the GPO and WEP, the Social Security Fairness Act of 2007, has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate and clearly indicates an awareness and acknowledgment of the devastating impact of these provisions on teachers and other public employees; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. The House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Kentucky urges the Congress of the United States to enact the Social Security Fairness Act of 2007 or similar legislation to repeal the GPO and WEP provisions of the Social Security law.

Section 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit copies of this Resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States to the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Majority Floor Leader of the U.S. Senate, and

to each Senator and Representative from the Commonwealth of Kentucky in the Congress of the United States.

POM-52. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Michigan urging the President and Congress to appropriate additional funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 33

Whereas, Home heating is a fundamental necessity in northern climate states during the months from October through March, However, low-income households in Michigan and across the nation struggle to pay for this basic necessity. High energy bills in winter force many low-income households into difficult situations, such as forgoing medicine or food in order to pay energy bills or putting themselves in danger by using stoves and portable heaters to provide warmth; and

Whereas, In the early 1980s, Congress recognized the need for heating and other home energy assistance when it enacted legislation to create the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The LIHEAP program has become a crucial safety net for low-income households and families across the nation, especially in northern climate states. LIHEAP assistance has helped millions of families keep their homes at safe and healthy temperatures; and

Whereas, Last year Congress appropriated a record level \$3.2 billion in LIHEAP funding. In spite of this, only a fraction of eligible low income households received assistance. According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, last winter only 15 percent of 38 million eligible low-income households actually received assistance from the LIHEAP program; and

Whereas, This year, with the adoption of a September 29th, continuing resolution, Congress has appropriated only \$1.98 billion for LIHEAP. The President's proposed FY 2008 budget calls for funding to be reduced further to \$1.78 billion. Under these funding proposals, it is estimated that Michigan will receive as much as \$47 million dollars less than last year. This will surely mean that state energy assistance programs will be forced to shut down programs and turn needy people away. Last year, even with the record level funding, only 35 percent of eligible low-income households in Michigan received LIHEAP assistance; and

Whereas, such inadequate LIHEAP funding could be disastrous for Michigan. The state is struggling through one of the nation's worst economic situations. Currently, nearly one third of Michigan households are at or below 60 percent of the state's median income, and the unemployment rate, which is already much higher than the national average, keeps growing. Clearly, such tough economic times coupled with a cold, harsh winter, and high heating fuel prices, make LIHEAP funding vital for the state of Michigan; now, therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives. That we urge the President and the Congress of the United States to immediately increase funding for LIHEAP to at least last year's level of \$3.2 billion; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-53. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the

State of Michigan urging Congress to enact the Employee Free Choice Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 21

Whereas, In 1935, the United States established, by law, that workers must be free to form unions. The freedom to form or join a union is internationally recognized as a fundamental human right; and

Whereas, Union membership provides workers better wages and benefits, and protection from discrimination and unsafe workplaces. Unions benefit communities by strengthening tax bases, promoting equal treatment, and enhancing civic participation; and

Whereas, Even though on paper America's workers have the freedom to choose for themselves whether to have a union, in reality, workers across the nation are routinely denied that right. More than 40 million United States workers say they would join a union now if they had the opportunity; and

Whereas, When the right of workers to form a union is violated, wages fall, race and gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination increases, and job safety standards disappear; and

Whereas, Many thousands of workers in our country are routinely threatened, coerced, or fired each year because they try to form a union. Most violations of workers' freedom to choose a union occur behind closed doors, and each year millions of dollars are spent to frustrate workers' efforts to form unions; and

Whereas, A worker's fundamental right to choose a union is a public issue that requires a public policy solution, including legislative remedies; and

Whereas, The Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800) has been introduced in the United States Congress in order to restore workers' freedom to join a union; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to enact the Employee Free Choice Act, which would authorize the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union as the bargaining representative when a majority of employees voluntarily sign authorizations designating that union to represent them; provide for first contract mediation and, arbitration; and establish meaningful penalties for violations of a worker's freedom to choose a union; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-54. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Legislature of the State of Michigan urging the President and Congress to increase funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and to facilitate the establishment of programs that provide information about responsible energy use; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 10

Whereas, Each winter, public and private programs offering help to low-income families trying to heat their homes usually find their budgets stretched thin; and

Whereas, Fortunately, there is a federally funded program that provides energy assistance to low-income households. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federal block grant program that provides billions of dollars annually to help low-income households pay energy bills. LIHEAP funds have averted numerous trage-

dies by enabling needy families to keep their homes at healthy and safe temperatures during the bitter cold months of winter; and

Whereas, Utility companies, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations often make information available to low-income families to help reduce their heating bills. Such information often recognizes the need for reducing home energy costs through the use of conservation technologies and flexible bill payment practices designed to help empower low-income consumers to pay their utility bills on a discounted basis; and

Whereas, Coordinated and efficient consumer education programs of federal, state, and local agencies could help consumers take responsibility for their winter heating bills. Educational programming on things such as how to set proper temperatures in the home, the use of programmable thermostats, tips on household budgeting, how to weatherize a home, and energy efficiency training could better prepare low-income households with the skills needed to control their winter heating costs; and

Whereas, The President's proposed budget for next year would reduce the percentage of eligible needy families that receive LIHEAP assistance. The President is requesting only \$1.782 billion for LIHEAP in FY 2008. This is far less than the \$5.1 billion that is authorized for the program under the U.S. Energy Policy Act of 2005 and a dramatic 44 percent reduction from FY 2006 funding levels. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors' Association (NEADA), the President's proposed cut to LIHEAP would force states to eliminate energy assistance to more than a million households; and

Whereas, The President's proposal would hit Michigan particularly hard. No other northern climate state is suffering through such tough economic times. Michigan finished last year with one of the nation's worst unemployment rates, second only to Mississippi. Since 2003, the unemployment rate in Michigan has exceeded the national rate by an ever-widening margin. As the number of unemployed persons in the state grows, so, too, does the number of households seeking energy assistance. In spite of this, under the President's proposal, it is estimated that the state would receive nearly \$50 million less than it did last year. Clearly, we should educate customers on how to use energy wisely and we should adequately fund the LIHEAP program to ensure that low-income families in Michigan and across the nation receive the help they need during the bitter cold months of winter; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we memorialize the President and the Congress of the United States, particularly the Michigan congressional delegation and the chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, to do all they can to provide additional funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and facilitate the establishment of programs that provide information on responsible energy use; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. INOUE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 39. A bill to establish a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the