

authority, or governmental institution with the power to sue or be sued in its own name, within the National Capital Region.”;

(2) in subsection (b)(1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, and any other governmental agency or authority”; and

(3) in subsection (d), by striking “or employees” each place that term appears and inserting “, employees, or agents”.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. BROWNBAC, and Mr. AKAKA):

S. 1246. A bill to establish and maintain a wildlife global animal information network for surveillance internationally to combat the growing threat of emerging diseases that involve wild animals, such as bird flu, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, today, Senator BROWNBAC, Senator AKAKA, and I are introducing legislation that establishes a wildlife global animal information network for surveillance to enhance preparedness and awareness of emerging infectious diseases.

More than 60 percent of the approximately 1,400 currently known infectious diseases are shared between wildlife and humans. Over the past 30 years we have had many emerging infectious disease outbreaks, including hantavirus, plague, ebola, HIV/AIDS, SARS, and H5N1 influenza. In fact, more than 35 new infectious diseases have emerged in humans since 1980, which means that approximately one new infectious disease in humans has appeared every 8 months. These diseases have resulted in many deaths and billions of dollars in costs.

Millions of wild animals are traded globally and come into contact with humans and dozens of other species, contributing to the introduction of new diseases in humans. There are numerous examples of these spreading viruses that pose significant threats across the globe. For instance, the spreading H5N1 virus, a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) strain, is a significant threat to global human health, the global poultry industry, and the global economy more generally. The emerging infectious disease HIV/AIDS, whose origin has been traced back to the human consumption of African nonhuman primates, has had a devastating impact in the developing world, with over 40 million people worldwide living with HIV/AIDS and 3 million AIDS deaths globally in 2006. Despite the threats that these and future diseases pose, we lack a comprehensive and coordinated approach to monitoring these emerging infectious diseases and the nexus between wildlife, people, and domestic animals.

Our legislation would establish a Wildlife Global Animal Information Network for Surveillance (GAINS). This Wildlife GAINS system would include Federal and State agency part-

ners, multilateral agency partners, conservation organizations with expertise in wildlife monitoring and surveillance, veterinary and medical schools, and other national and international partners. The legislation encourages the establishment of critical public-private partnerships because of the unique strengths and capabilities that NGOs have in developing countries. They will play a key role in assisting developing countries develop much needed surveillance mechanisms and in facilitating the dissemination of critical data to all partners.

USAID has taken a leadership role and already committed \$192 million for avian influenza preparedness and response activities in developing countries affected by the H5N1 virus. Congress must support these efforts establishing a comprehensive worldwide wildlife health surveillance system to detect and track emerging infectious diseases.

Wildlife GAINS would be a comprehensive tool to prevent the outbreak and spread of new diseases that have no treatments or cures. We must prevent and detect the next generation of infectious diseases to prevent the pain and suffering that diseases such as HIV/AIDS and H5N1 have caused millions all over the world.

Mr. AKAKA. President, I rise to join my colleagues, Senators LIEBERMAN and BROWNBAC in introducing legislation establishing a wildlife global animal information network for detection of emerging, highly contagious diseases in non-agricultural animals. This bill is an important part of efforts to prevent and respond to natural or intentional pandemic disease outbreaks in the U.S.

Our legislation focuses on the source of nearly all pandemic disease outbreaks over the last 30 years—zoonotic diseases, or diseases that originate in animals, either agricultural or non-agricultural, and, through mutation, are passed to humans. Avian influenza, West Nile Virus and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) are all zoonotic diseases originating in animals and subsequently transmitted to humans. The prevalence of such diseases underscores the need to link veterinary health and public health arenas. America's infrastructure for pandemic flu preparedness and response should therefore include the ability to monitor zoonotic diseases, creating an early warning and response system which will alert public health officials and animal health experts at the emergence of highly contagious diseases before they are passed to humans.

The global animal information network for surveillance proposed in this bill has its roots in the activities of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to assist countries dealing with the most recent outbreak of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza. In close cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Departments of State, Defense, Ag-

riculture, Homeland Security and the Wildlife Conservation Society, USAID is providing assistance to those countries most hard hit by avian influenza. To date, animal outbreaks have been reported in 55 countries, and 12 countries have had confirmed human cases. A total of 291 humans have been infected, resulting in 172 deaths. This translates into a case fatality rate of roughly 60 percent.

To date, USAID has committed a total of \$192 million for avian influenza assistance activities in these countries for preparedness and response. The goal of its activities is to lower the amount of circulating virus and limiting the opportunity for people to become infected with avian flu.

Despite these efforts, many of which have demonstrated the effectiveness of interventions being used to control the spread of avian flu, this zoonotic disease continues to mutate and as such, persist as a threat, both to animals and to people. The animal surveillance network being proposed in this bill is one critical tool to detect other wildlife-based emergent contagious diseases before they impact humans and agricultural animals.

While detecting and preventing these highly contagious diseases is critical for human health and economic stability, I would like to emphasize that, as the Government Accountability Office (GAO) observed in a 2000 report entitled “West Nile Virus Outbreak: Lessons for Public Health Preparedness”, on the West Nile Virus outbreak in New York City, “Because a bioterrorist event could look like a natural outbreak, bioterrorism preparedness rests in large part on public health preparedness.” Creating early warning tools such as this one can aid efforts to protect the U.S. from natural outbreaks and deliberate bioterrorist attacks. While the network alone does not protect us, it does contribute to the mosaic of homeland security activities designed to protect Americans, and those in other countries most vulnerable to bioterrorist attacks.

It is for this reason that I am pleased to join Senators LIEBERMAN and BROWNBAC in introducing this bill and urge its support.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 173—DESIGNATING AUGUST 11, 2007, AS “NATIONAL MARINA DAY”

Ms. STABENOW submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

S. RES. 173

Whereas the citizens of the United States highly value recreation time and their ability to access 1 of the greatest natural resources of the United States, its waterways;

Whereas, in 1928, the word “marina” was used for the first time by the National Association of Engine and Boat Manufacturers to define a recreational boating facility;

Whereas the United States is home to over 12,000 recreational boating facilities that contribute substantially to their local communities by providing safe, reliable gateways to boating for members of their communities and welcomed guests;

Whereas marinas of the United States also serve as stewards of the environment, actively seeking to protect their surrounding waterways not only for the enjoyment of the current generation, but for generations to come; and

Whereas marinas of the United States also provide their communities and visitors a place where friends and families, united by a passion for the water, can come together for recreation, rest, and relaxation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the marinas of the United States for providing environmentally friendly gateways to boating for the citizens of, and the visitors to the United States; and

(2) designates August 11, 2007, as the sixth annual "National Marina Day" in order—

(A) to honor the marinas of the United States for their many contributions to their local communities; and

(B) to make citizens, policy makers, elected officials, and employees more aware of the overall contributions marinas make to their well-being.

SENATE RESOLUTION 174—HONORING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS IN THE UNITED STATES DURING NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK BEGINNING APRIL 22, 2007

Mr. KERRY (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BAYH, Mr. VITTER, Mr. COLEMAN, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 174

Whereas the 25,800,000 small business concerns in the United States are the driving force behind the Nation's economy, creating more than ¾ of all net new jobs and generating more than 50 percent of the Nation's nonfarm gross domestic product;

Whereas small business concerns are the Nation's innovators, advancing technology and productivity;

Whereas small business concerns represent 97 percent of all exporters and produce 28.6 percent of exported goods;

Whereas Congress established the Small Business Administration in 1953, to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small business concerns in order to preserve free competitive enterprise, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total purchases and contracts or subcontracts for property and services for the Federal Government be placed with small business concerns, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total sales of Government property be made to such small business concerns, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the Nation;

Whereas the Small Business Administration has helped small business concerns access critical lending opportunities, protected small business concerns from excessive Federal regulatory enforcement, played a key role in ensuring full and open competition for Government contracts, and improved the economic environment in which small business concerns compete;

Whereas for over 50 years, the Small Business Administration has helped millions of

entrepreneurs achieve the American dream of owning a small business concern, and has played a key role in fostering economic growth; and

Whereas the President has designated the week beginning April 22, 2007 as "National Small Business Week": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the entrepreneurial spirit of small business concerns in the United States during National Small Business Week, beginning April 22, 2007;

(2) applauds the efforts and achievements of the owners of small business concerns and their employees, whose hard work and commitment to excellence have made them a key part of the Nation's economic vitality;

(3) recognizes the work of the Small Business Administration and its resource partners in providing assistance to entrepreneurs and small business concerns;

(4) strongly urges the President to take steps to ensure that—

(A) the applicable procurement goals for small business concerns, including the goals for small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, HUBZone small business concerns, and small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, are reached by all Federal agencies;

(B) guaranteed loans, including microloans and microloan technical assistance, for start-up and growing small business concerns and venture capital are made available to all qualified small business concerns;

(C) the management assistance programs delivered by resource partners on behalf of the Small Business Administration, such as small business development centers, women's business centers, and the Service Corps of Retired Executives, are provided with the Federal resources necessary to do their jobs; and

(D) reforms to the disaster loan program of the Small Business Administration are implemented as quickly as possible; and

(5) urges that, as was the case in the President's budget for fiscal year 2008, the Small Business Administration continue to be designated as a major agency in the President's budget submitted pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, and that the Administrator of the Small Business Administration have an active role as a member of the President's Cabinet.

SENATE RESOLUTION 175—RECOGNIZING THE 59TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. LOTT, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. VITTER, Mr. KYL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BUNNING, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BAYH, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SMITH, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 175

Whereas, on May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was established as a sovereign and independent country;

Whereas the United States was one of the first countries to recognize the State of Israel, only 11 minutes after the creation of the State;

Whereas Israel has provided Jews from all over the world with an opportunity to reestablish their ancient homeland;

Whereas Israel is home to many religious sites that are sacred to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;

Whereas Israel provided a refuge to Jews who survived the horrors of the Holocaust, which were unprecedented in human history;

Whereas Israel has also provided a refuge to, and has successfully absorbed, more than 800,000 Jewish refugees who fled persecution in neighboring states in the Middle East;

Whereas the people of Israel have established a pluralistic democracy that incorporates the freedoms cherished by the people of the United States, including—

- (1) the freedom of speech;
- (2) the freedom of religion;
- (3) the freedom of association;
- (4) the freedom of the press; and
- (5) government by the consent of the governed;

Whereas Israel continues to serve as a shining model of democratic values by—

- (1) regularly holding free and fair elections;
- (2) promoting the free exchange of ideas; and

(3) vigorously exercising in its parliament, the Knesset, a democratic government that is fully representative of its citizens;

Whereas Israel has bravely defended itself from terrorist and military attacks repeatedly since Israel declared its independence;

Whereas the Government of Israel has successfully worked with the neighboring governments of Egypt and Jordan to establish peaceful bilateral relations;

Whereas, despite the deaths of over 1,000 innocent citizens of Israel at the hands of murderous suicide bombers and other terrorists since 2002, the people of Israel continue to seek peace with their Palestinian neighbors;

Whereas several Israeli soldiers remain hostages of terrorist groups, and were unable to celebrate the Independence Day of Israel with their families and friends;

Whereas successive leaders of Israel have sought peace in the Middle East;

Whereas the United States and Israel enjoy a strategic partnership based on shared democratic values, friendship, and respect;

Whereas the people of the United States share an affinity with the people of Israel and view Israel as a strong and trusted ally;

Whereas Israel has made significant global contributions in the fields of science, medicine, and technology;

Whereas the Independence Day of Israel on the Jewish calendar coincides this year with April 24, 2007; and

Whereas recognition of the numerous achievements of the people and the State of Israel is especially important in 2007 given the grave threats issued by, and the clear intentions of, the Government of Iran: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the independence of the State of Israel as a significant event for providing refuge and a national homeland for the Jewish people;

(2) strongly supports efforts to bring peace to the Middle East;

(3) commends the bipartisan commitment of all Presidents and Congresses of the United States since 1948 that supported Israel and worked for the security and well-being of Israel;

(4) congratulates the United States and Israel for strengthening their bilateral relations during 2006 in the fields of defense, diplomacy, and homeland security, and encourages both countries to continue their cooperation in resolving mutual challenges; and