

Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Administration of VA Educational Benefits—Centralized Certification" (RIN2900-AL43) received on May 2, 2007; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with amendments:

S. 496. A bill to reauthorize and improve the program authorized by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 (Rept. No. 110-63).

By Mr. KERRY, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 163. A bill to improve the disaster loan program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-64).

By Mr. BINGAMAN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 1321. An original bill to enhance the energy security of the United States by promoting biofuels, energy efficiency, and carbon capture and storage, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-65).

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. DEMINT (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. BURR, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAIG, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. KYL, Mr. LOTT, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1312. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to ensure the right of employees to a secret-ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board; read the first time.

By Mr. FEINGOLD:

S. 1313. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide relief for servicemembers with respect to contracts for cellular phone service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 1314. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 1315. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance life insurance benefits for disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 1316. A bill to establish and clarify that Congress does not authorize persons convicted of dangerous crimes in foreign courts to freely possess firearms in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. OBAMA, Mr.

BAYH, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. PRYOR, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. HAGEL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. REID, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. REED):

S. 1317. A bill to posthumously award a congressional gold medal to Constance Baker Motley; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. SMITH, Mr. BOND, Mr. REED, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARDIN, and Ms. SNOWE):

S. 1318. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an incentive to preserve affordable housing in multifamily housing units which are sold or exchanged; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INOUE (for himself and Mr. AKAKA):

S. 1319. A bill to provide for the conversion of a temporary judgeship for the district of Hawaii to a permanent judgeship; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KYL:

S. 1320. A bill to prohibit the rewarding of suicide bombings, to prohibit terrorist kidnappings and sexual assaults, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BINGAMAN:

S. 1321. An original bill to enhance the energy security of the United States by promoting biofuels, energy efficiency, and carbon capture and storage, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; placed on the calendar.

By Mrs. LINCOLN:

S. 1322. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the operation of employee stock ownership plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. DOLE, and Mr. BUNNING):

S. 1323. A bill to prevent legislative and regulatory functions from being usurped by civil liability actions brought or continued against food manufacturers, marketers, distributors, advertisers, sellers, and trade associations for claims of injury relating to a person's weight gain, obesity, or any health condition associated with weight gain or obesity; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REID (for Mr. OBAMA (for himself and Mr. HARKIN)):

S. 1324. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation fuel sold in the United States; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 189. A resolution to authorize testimony and legal representation in District of Columbia v. Ellen E. Barfield, Eve-Leona Tetaz, Jeffrey A. Leys, and Jerome A. Zawada; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. Res. 190. A resolution expressing the condolences of the Nation to the community of Greensburg, Kansas; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. DODD, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. Con. Res. 33. A concurrent resolution recognizing the benefits and importance of school-based music education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 147

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 147, a bill to empower women in Afghanistan, and for other purposes.

S. 185

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to restore habeas corpus for those detained by the United States.

S. 231

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) were added as cosponsors of S. 231, a bill to authorize the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program at fiscal year 2006 levels through 2012.

S. 242

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 242, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the importation of prescription drugs, and for other purposes.

S. 276

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 276, a bill to strengthen the consequences of the fraudulent use of United States or foreign passports and for other purposes.

S. 309

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 309, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, and for other purposes.

S. 382

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 382, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a State family support grant program to end the practice of parents giving legal custody of their seriously emotionally disturbed children to State agencies for the purpose of obtaining mental health services for those children.

S. 392

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 392, a bill to ensure payment of United States assessments for United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 2005 through 2008 time period.

S. 413

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 413, a bill to amend the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 and the Revised Statutes of the United States to prohibit financial holding companies and national banks from engaging, directly or indirectly, in real estate brokerage or real estate management activities, and for other purposes.

S. 430

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 430, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the national defense through empowerment of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the enhancement of the functions of the National Guard Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 442

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 442, a bill to provide for loan repayment for prosecutors and public defenders.

S. 502

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 502, a bill to repeal the sunset on the reduction of capital gains rates for individuals and on the taxation of dividends of individuals at capital gains rates.

S. 579

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 579, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for the development and operation of research centers regarding environmental factors that may be related to the etiology of breast cancer.

S. 588

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) were added as cosponsors of S. 588, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase the Medicare caps on graduate medical education positions for States with a shortage of residents.

S. 616

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 616, a bill to promote health care coverage parity for individuals participating in legal recreational activities or legal transportation activities.

S. 638

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cospon-

sor of S. 638, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for collegiate housing and infrastructure grants.

S. 648

At the request of Mr. CHAMBLISS, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 648, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to reduce the eligibility age for receipt of non-regular military service retired pay for members of the Ready Reserve in active federal status or on active duty for significant periods.

S. 678

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 678, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure air passengers have access to necessary services while on a grounded air carrier and are not unnecessarily held on a grounded air carrier before or after a flight, and for other purposes.

S. 691

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 691, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the benefits under the Medicare program for beneficiaries with kidney disease, and for other purposes.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide additional authorizations of appropriations for the health centers program under section 330 of such Act.

S. 953

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 953, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure competition in the rail industry, enable rail customers to obtain reliable rail service, and provide those customers with a reasonable process for challenging rate and service disputes.

S. 961

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 961, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to provide benefits to certain individuals who served in the United States merchant marine (including the Army Transport Service and the Naval Transport Service) during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 970

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), were added as cosponsors of S. 970, a bill to impose sanctions on Iran and on other countries for assisting Iran in developing a

nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 971

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 971, a bill to establish the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, to provide funding for the support of fundamental agricultural research of the highest quality, and for other purposes.

S. 1062

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1062, a bill to establish a congressional commemorative medal for organ donors and their families.

S. 1113

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), were added as cosponsors of S. 1113, a bill to facilitate the provision of care and services for members of the Armed Forces for traumatic brain injury, and for other purposes.

S. 1117

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1117, a bill to establish a grant program to provide vision care to children, and for other purposes.

S. 1161

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1161, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to authorize the expansion of medicare coverage of medical nutrition therapy services.

S. 1164

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1164, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve patient access to, and utilization of, the colorectal cancer screening benefit under the Medicare Program.

S. 1233

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1233, a bill to provide and enhance intervention, rehabilitative treatment, and services to veterans with traumatic brain injury, and for other purposes.

S. 1237

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1237, a bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms or the issuance of firearms and explosives licenses to known or suspected dangerous terrorists.

S. 1249

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to require the President to close the Department of Defense detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and for other purposes.

S. 1257

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1257, a bill to provide the District of Columbia a voting seat and the State of Utah an additional seat in the House of Representatives.

S. 1263

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1263, a bill to protect the welfare of consumers by prohibiting price gouging with respect to gasoline and petroleum distillates during natural disasters and abnormal market disruptions, and for other purposes.

S. 1276

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1276, a bill to establish a grant program to facilitate the creation of methamphetamine precursor electronic logbook systems, and for other purposes.

S. 1305

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1305, a bill making emergency war appropriations for American troops overseas, without unnecessary pork barrel spending and without mandating surrender or retreat in Iraq, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 29

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 29, a concurrent resolution encouraging the recognition of the Negro Baseball Leagues and their players on May 20th of each year.

S. RES. 30

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 30, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the need for the United States to address global climate change through the negotiation of fair and effective international commitments.

S. RES. 106

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland

(Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 106, a resolution calling on the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide.

S. RES. 171

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 171, a resolution memorializing fallen firefighters by lowering the United States flag to half-staff on the day of the National Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

AMENDMENT NO. 1009

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1009 intended to be proposed to S. 1082, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to reauthorize and amend the prescription drug user fee provisions, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1043

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1043 intended to be proposed to S. 1082, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to reauthorize and amend the prescription drug user fee provisions, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 1315. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance life insurance benefits for disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I introduce the Disabled Veterans Insurance Improvement Act of 2007.

The purpose of this legislation is to make certain improvements in the insurance programs available to service-connected disabled veterans. It has two main components.

First, this legislation would increase the maximum amount of Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance, VMLI, that a service-connected disabled veteran may purchase from the current maximum of \$90,000 to \$200,000. The VMLI program was established in 1971 and is available to those service-connected disabled veterans who have received specially adapted housing grants from VA. In the event of the veteran's death, the veteran's family is protected because the Department of Veterans Affairs will pay the balance of the mortgage owed up to the maximum amount of insurance purchased.

The need for this increase is obvious in today's housing market where, during February, the median sale price of

a home in the United States was estimated by the Bureau of Census to be \$250,000. My legislation would ensure that this important benefit, which helps secure the financial future of many veterans and their families, keeps pace with changes in the economy.

My bill would also establish a new program of insurance for service-connected disabled veterans that would provide up to a maximum of \$50,000 in level premium term life insurance coverage. This new program would be available to service-connected disabled veterans who are less than 65 years of age at the time of application.

Under the new program, eligible service-connected veterans would be able to purchase, in increments of \$10,000, up to a maximum amount of \$50,000 in insurance. Importantly, unlike existing life insurance programs, the premium rates for this program would be based on the 2001 Commissioners Standard Ordinary Basic Table of Mortality rather than the 1941 mortality table that the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance, S-DVI, program is based upon.

When an insured veteran reaches age 70, two things would occur under this new program of insurance. First, the amount of insurance would be reduced to 20 percent of the amount of insurance in force prior to the veteran's 70th birthday. Second, the veteran would cease making premium payments. This means that during those years where the family's financial obligations would be commensurately higher because of children, mortgages, and the potential impact of any loss of income, the veteran's family would be able to purchase the maximum amount of term life insurance. At age 70, when resources are likely to be most restricted and the need for substantial insurance to take care of a family's needs after the veteran's death have lessened, the veteran would no longer have an obligation to continue to pay any insurance premiums.

My proposal provides that application for this insurance would need to be submitted by an eligible veteran within 2 years from the date on which VA establishes a service-connected disability to exist but not later than 10 years after a veteran's release from active duty. It would further provide that during the first year of the program, any eligible veteran who is presently insured under the S-DVI program could convert that insurance to a policy under this new program.

Both of the proposals contained in the legislation I am introducing today are compatible with the provisions of S. 643, the proposed Disabled Veterans Insurance Act of 2007, which I introduced on February 15 of this year.

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

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