

including delivery of essential services, on an equitable basis; and

(R) Ensuring that Iraq's political authorities are not undermining or making false accusations against members of the ISF.

(2) The President shall submit reports to Congress on how the sovereign Government of Iraq is, or is not, achieving progress towards accomplishing the aforementioned benchmarks, and shall advise the Congress on how that assessment requires, or does not require, changes to the strategy announced on January 10, 2007.

(b) REPORTS REQUIRED.—

(1) The President shall submit an initial report, in classified and unclassified format, to the Congress, not later than July 15, 2007, assessing the status of each of the specific benchmarks established above, and declaring, in his judgment, whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

(2) The President, having consulted with the Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq, the United States Ambassador to Iraq, and the Commander of U.S. Central Command, will prepare the report and submit the report to Congress.

(3) If the President's assessment of any of the specific benchmarks established above is unsatisfactory, the President shall include in that report a description of such revisions to the political, economic, regional, and military components of the strategy, as announced by the President on January 10, 2007. In addition, the President shall include in the report, the advisability of implementing such aspects of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, as he deems appropriate.

(4) The President shall submit a second report to the Congress, not later than September 15, 2007, following the same procedures and criteria, outlined above.

(5) The reporting requirement detailed in Section 1227 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 is waived from the date of the enactment of this Act through the period ending 15 September, 2007.

(c) TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESS.—

(1) Prior to the submission of the President's second report on September 15, 2007, and at a time to be agreed upon by the leadership of the Congress and the Administration, the United States Ambassador to Iraq and the Commander, Multi-National Forces Iraq will be made available to testify in open and closed sessions before the relevant committees of the Congress.

SEC. 3. LIMITATIONS ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

(a) LIMITATION.—No funds appropriated or otherwise made available for the "Economic Support Fund" and available for Iraq may be obligated or expended unless and until the President of the United States certifies in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(1) above and makes a further certification in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(4) above that Iraq is making progress on each of the benchmarks set forth in Section 2 above.

(b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The President may waive the requirements of this section if he submits to Congress a written certification setting forth a detailed justification for the waiver, which shall include a detailed report describing the actions being taken by the United States to bring the Iraqi government into compliance with the benchmarks set forth in Section 2 above. The certification shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 4. REDEPLOYMENT OF U.S. FORCES FROM IRAQ.

(a) The President of the United States, in respecting the sovereign rights of the nation

of Iraq, shall direct the orderly redeployment of elements of U.S. forces from Iraq, if the components of the Iraqi government, acting in strict accordance with their respective powers given by the Iraqi Constitution, reach a consensus as recited in a resolution, directing a redeployment of U.S. forces.

SEC. 5. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS.

(a) Assessment by the Comptroller General.

(1) Not later than September 1, 2007, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress an independent report setting forth—

(A) the status of the achievement of the benchmarks specified in Section 2 above; and

(B) the Comptroller General's assessment whether or not each such benchmark has been met.

(b) Assessment of the Capabilities of Iraqi Security Forces.

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense, \$750,000,000, that the Department, in turn, will commission an independent, private-sector entity, which operates as a 501(c)(3), with recognized credentials and expertise in military affairs, to prepare an independent report assessing the following:

(A) The readiness of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to assume responsibility for maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying international terrorists a safe haven, and bringing greater security to Iraq's 18 provinces in the next 12-18 months, and bringing an end to sectarian violence to achieve national reconciliation.

(B) The training, equipping, command, control and intelligence capabilities, and logistics capacity of the ISF.

(C) The likelihood that, given the ISF's record of preparedness to date, following years of training and equipping by U.S. forces, the continued support of U.S. troops will contribute to the readiness of the ISF to fulfill the missions outlined in subparagraph (A).

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the enactment of this Act, the designated private sector entity shall provide an unclassified report, with a classified annex, containing its findings, to the House and Senate Committees on Armed Services, Appropriations, Foreign Relations/International Relations, and Intelligence.

SA 1135. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. BOND)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ SENSE OF THE SENATE ON FUNDING FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The President is the commander in chief of the United States Armed Forces.

(2) The United States Armed Forces are currently engaged in military operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom on behalf of the national security interests of the United States.

(3) The funds previously appropriated to continue military operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom are depleted.

(4) The President requested more than 100 days ago supplemental appropriations to continue funding for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

(5) Congress has not passed a supplemental appropriations bill to continue funding for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in a manner that the commander in chief believes gives the United States Armed Forces and the Iraqi people the best chance to succeed at establishing a safe, stable, and sustainable democracy in Iraq.

(6) A supplemental appropriations request to fund ongoing combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom should remain focused on the war effort by providing the resources necessary for United States troops abroad and in the United States.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that Congress should send legislation to the President providing appropriations for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in a manner that the President can sign into law by not later than May 28, 2007.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, May 17, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct an oversight hearing on law enforcement in Indian Country.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224-2251.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship will hold a hearing entitled "Minority Entrepreneurship: Assessing the Effectiveness of SBA's Programs for the Minority Business Community," on Tuesday, May 22, 2007, at 10 a.m. in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Energy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 22, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on S. 645, a bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to provide an alternate sulfur dioxide removal measurement for certain coal gasification project goals; S. 838, a bill to authorize funding joint ventures between United States and Israeli businesses and academic persons; S. 1089, a bill to amend the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act to follow the Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation projects to hire employees more efficiently, and for other purposes; S. 1203, a bill to enhance the management of electricity programs at

the Department of Energy; H.R. 85, a bill to provide for the establishment of centers to encourage demonstration and commercial application of advanced energy methods and technologies; and H.R. 1126, a bill to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to Amanda_Kelly@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Jonathan Epstein at (202) 224-4971 or Amanda Kelly at (202) 224-6836.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 10 a.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on Short-Term Energy Outlook Summer 2007: Oil and Gasoline.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 10 a.m. in Room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Agenda: Hearing on “Green Buildings: Benefits to Health, the Environment, and the Bottom Line.”

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 10 a.m. for a hearing titled “Equal Representation in Congress: Providing Voting Rights to the District of Columbia.”

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on “Preserving Prosecutorial Independence: Is the Department of Justice Politicizing the Hiring and Firing of U.S. Attorneys?—Part IV” on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 10 a.m. in Dirksen Senate Office Building room 226.

Witness List: James B. Comey, Former Deputy Attorney General, United States Department of Justice.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the following bills: S. 553, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Eightmile River in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; S. 800, to establish the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area in the State of New York; S. 916, to modify the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument, to establish the Minidoka National Historic Site, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land and improvements of the Gooding Division of the Minidoka Project, Idaho; S. 1057, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the New River in the States of North Carolina and Virginia as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; S. 1209, to provide for the continued administration of Santa Rosa Island, Channel Islands National Park, in accordance with the laws (including regulations) and policies of the National Park Service; S. 1281, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain rivers and streams of the headwaters of the Snake River System as additions to the National Wild and Scenic River System; H.R. 161, to adjust the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument to include the Nidoto Nai Yoni Memorial in Bainbridge Island, Washington; H.R. 247, to designate a Forest Service trail at Waldo Lake in the Willamette National Forest in the State of Oregon as a national recreation trail in honor of Jim Weaver, a former Member of the House of Representatives; and H.R. 376, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of including the battlefields and related sites of the First and Second Battles of Newtonia, Missouri, during the Civil War as part of Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield or designating the battlefields and related sites as a separate unit of the National Park System.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RETIREMENT AND AGING

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions’ Subcommittee on Retirement and Aging, be authorized to hold a hearing on Alzheimer’s disease during the session of the Senate on Tues-

day, May 15, 2007 at 10 a.m. in room 628 of the Senate Dirksen Office building.

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

STATEMENTS IN TRIBUTE TO SENATOR STEVENS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the tribute to Senator STEVENS in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD be printed as a Senate document and that Senators be permitted to submit statements for inclusion in the RECORD until June 1 of this year.

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

DESIGNATING MAY 14, 2007, THROUGH MAY 18, 2007, AS “NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WEEK”

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 202.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 202) designating the period beginning on May 14, 2007, and ending on May 18, 2007, as “National Health Information Technology Week.”

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 on the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 202) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 202

Whereas the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society has worked collaboratively with more than 48 stakeholder organizations for more than 45 years to transform health care with improved uses of information technology and management systems;

Whereas the Center for Information Technology Leadership estimated that the implementation of national standards for interoperability and the exchange of health information would save the United States approximately \$77,000,000,000 in expenses relating to health care each year;

Whereas the RAND Corporation estimated that, if the health care system of the United States implemented the use of computerized medical records, the system could save the United States more than \$81,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas health care information technology has been shown to improve the quality and safety of the delivery of health care in the United States;

Whereas health care information technology and management systems have been recognized as essential tools for improving the quality and cost efficiency of the health care system;

Whereas the President and Secretary of Health and Human Services have made a