

AKAKA) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 82, a resolution designating August 16, 2007 as "National Airborne Day".

S. RES. 203

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 203, a resolution calling on the Government of the People's Republic of China to use its unique influence and economic leverage to stop genocide and violence in Darfur, Sudan.

S. RES. 206

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 206, a resolution to provide for a budget point of order against legislation that increases income taxes on taxpayers, including hardworking middle-income families, entrepreneurs, and college students.

AMENDMENT NO. 1174

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1174 intended to be proposed to S. 1348, a bill to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 1539. A bill to designate the post office located at 309 East Linn Street, Marshalltown, Iowa, as the "Major Scott Nisely Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill honoring and memorializing a fallen Iowa hero. Scott Nisely had served his country in Iraq just short of a year when, on September 30, 2006, he was killed in combat.

Scott Nisely served his country in many capacities during his lifetime. He devoted his life to his family, church, and country and has positively affected numerous lives. Scott Nisely's military service includes about 25 years with the U.S. Marine Corps, starting as an ROTC student, then 12 years on active duty, almost 9 years in the Marine Corps Reserve during which he achieved the rank of major. Most recently, he took a significant decrease in rank to serve his country once again in the Iowa Army National Guard for about 4 years until he was killed in combat. His public service also includes 12 years with the U.S. Postal Service. In addition, Scott served his community by his participation in the First Baptist Church's music ministry as a drummer. He was a devoted father who walked his daughter down the aisle for her wedding right before his deployment to Iraq. The wedding had

been moved up because Sarah, his daughter, wanted him in her wedding and was worried he wouldn't return home.

In recognition of this devoted family man and public servant, the bill I am introducing with the support of my colleague from Iowa, Senator HARKIN, would name the post office located at 309 East Linn Street in Marshalltown, IA, the Major Scott Nisely Post Office. The idea came from Scott's coworkers at the Marshalltown Post Office and it is indeed a fitting tribute. Representative LATHAM is introducing identical legislation in the House of Representatives today with the support of the other members of Iowa's House delegation. I am pleased to be able to propose this small token of recognition and gratitude for someone who has given so much to his country, and I urge its swift consideration.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, today I join with my senior colleague from Iowa, Senator GRASSLEY, in introducing a bill to name the Marshalltown Post Office in honor of MAJ Scott Nisely, who was killed in action in Iraq on September 30, 2006.

Major Nisely enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1981 and served in Operation Desert Storm. In 1994, he moved to Marshalltown, IA, with his family and worked at the Iowa Veterans Home as well as at the Marshalltown and Des Moines Post Offices. Because of his love for his country and the military, Major Nisely took a demotion to join the Iowa National Guard and was sent to Iraq in 2005.

Major Nisely was a dedicated husband and father, beloved for his sense of humor and positive attitude. Having served in Operation Desert Storm, he was already a respected Marine veteran and a hero to his family and friends. But with our Armed Forces engaged in Iraq, he once again felt compelled to fight for his country. Major Nisely served in two wars, set a sterling example of selfless service to country, and paid the ultimate price while fighting in Iraq. I am proud to join my colleague in naming the post office in Marshalltown the Major Scott Nisely Post Office, in honor of this fallen hero.

By Mrs. DOLE (for herself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. BURR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. ALLARD):

S. 1540. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for the transportation of food for charitable purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, today is the sixth National Hunger Awareness Day—a day to reflect on the fact that in this Nation alone more than 35 million people are experiencing hunger or are at risk for hunger. It is also a day to recognize the tremendous efforts of individuals who graciously give their time and resources to help those in need.

Hunger is far too prevalent, but I think Washington Post columnist

David Broder hit the nail on the head when he wrote: "America has some problems that defy solution. This one does not. It just needs caring people and a caring government, working together." I agree, the battle to end hunger in our country is a campaign that cannot be won in months or even a few years, but it is a victory within reach. And I am motivated to do what I can to make a positive difference in this fight against hunger—both in the United States and beyond our borders.

In America—the land of prosperity and plenty—some people have the misconception that hunger plagues only far-away, undeveloped nations. The reality is that hunger is a silent enemy lurking within 1 in 10 U.S. households. In my home State of North Carolina alone, nearly 1 million of our 8.8 million residents are struggling with food security issues. In recent years, once-thriving North Carolina towns have been economically crippled by the shuttering of textile mills and furniture factories. People have lost their jobs—and sometimes their ability to put food on the table. I know this scenario is not unique to North Carolina, as many American manufacturing jobs have moved overseas. While many folks are finding new employment, these days a steady income doesn't necessarily provide for three square meals a day.

To help struggling families and individuals, our nation is blessed to have many faith-based and other nonprofit service organizations that work to fight hunger. Over the last year, I have toured a number of these organizations in my home State—such as MANNA FoodBank in Asheville, Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina in Charlotte, and Meals on Wheels of Senior Services in Winston-Salem. I also have visited the DC Central Kitchen here in Washington—just a few blocks from the Capitol. At each of these organizations, I am inspired by the dedicated staff and volunteers who have such a passion for helping others.

Another hunger relief organization that I hold in the highest regard is the Society of St. Andrew, which gleans produce from farms and then packages, processes and transports excess food to feed hungry people across the country. When I think of gleaning, I often think of Ruth in the Old Testament. Her story takes place during a famine in Bethlehem, and Ruth gleaned so that her family could eat. In Biblical times, farmers were encouraged to leave crops in their fields for the poor and for travelers. It is a practice we should be utilizing much more extensively today—considering that in this country, 27 percent of all the food produced annually is lost at the retail, consumer, and food service levels. This means we are wasting about 3,044 pounds of good food every second.

The Society of St. Andrew recently passed a milestone—saving and distributing a total of 500 million pounds of food since 1983. This translates into

more than 1.5 billion servings. Already this year, the organization has provided more than 5.5 million pounds of produce. Amazingly, it only costs about 2 cents a serving to glean and deliver this food to those in need. And all of this work is done by the hands of tens of thousands of volunteers and a very small staff. I have gleaned in North Carolina fields with my friends at the Society of St. Andrew, and they are truly a remarkable group.

Like any humanitarian endeavor, the gleaning system works because of cooperative efforts. Private organizations and individuals are doing a great job—but with very limited resources. One of the single largest concerns for gleaners is transportation—how to actually get food to those in need. To help address this problem, I am proud to reintroduce today the Hunger Relief Trucking Tax Credit Act, which would change the Tax Code to give transportation companies tax incentives for volunteering trucks to transfer gleaned food. Specifically, my bill would create a 25-cent tax credit for each mile that food is transported for hunger relief efforts by a donated truck and driver.

This bill would provide a little extra encouragement for trucking companies to donate space in their vehicles to help more food reach more hungry people. I am grateful to my colleagues, Senators LINCOLN, BURR, DURBIN, VITTER and ALLARD, for joining this effort, and I welcome the support of relief organizations like the Society of St. Andrew, the American Trucking Association, and America's Second Harvest.

In addition, Senators LAUTENBERG, LINCOLN, and I plan to soon reintroduce the Food Employment Empowerment and Development Program Act, or the FEED Act. The idea behind this legislation is simple: combine food rescue with job training, thus teaching unemployed and homeless adults the skills needed to work in the food service industry.

With support from the FEED Act, community kitchens will receive much-needed resources to help collect rescued food and provide 2 million meals each year to the hungry. Successful FEED Act-type programs already exist. For example, in Charlotte, NC, the Community Culinary School recruits students from social service agencies, homeless shelters, halfway houses and work release programs. And just around the corner from here, 25 students recently began training in the DC Central Kitchen's 68th culinary job training class. This is a model program, which began in 1990, and it is always a great privilege to visit the kitchen and meet with the individuals who have faced adversity but are now on track for a career in the food service industry.

We also must do more to help America's 12 million hungry children get on the right track. As a result of hunger, these children have higher levels of chronic illness, depression, and behav-

ior problems. This is a travesty that can and must be prevented, and school feeding programs provide a critical means to this end. The National School Lunch Program feeds 30 million children in more than 100,000 schools each day. While reduced price meals are available to students whose family income is below 130 percent of the poverty level, State and local school board members have informed me that many families struggle to even pay this fee. In too many cases, this is creating an insurmountable barrier to participation.

That is why I am a strong supporter of eliminating the reduced price fee for these families and harmonizing the free income guideline with the WIC income guideline, which is 185 percent of poverty. In 2004, we succeeded in having a five-State pilot program authorized, and since then, a number of colleagues have joined me in urging funding for the program. I am very proud that the fiscal year 2008 Senate budget resolution finally includes the funds, and I will continue to push this during the appropriations process—because expanding the free lunch program has great potential to alleviate hunger for millions of children and help them succeed in school.

School feeding programs also offer tremendous opportunity to reach some of the 400 million chronically hungry children across the globe. Earlier this year, Senator DICK DURBIN and I introduced a bill to reauthorize the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. This program was named for my husband Senator Bob Dole and his good friend Senator George McGovern—both of whom remain tremendous advocates for this and other child nutrition initiatives.

As with the U.S. school lunch program, the McGovern-Dole program helps attract children to schools. The nutritious meals provided help keep them alert and focused so they can learn and nourished so they can grow and mature. First authorized in 2002, the program provides for donations of U.S. agricultural products and financial and technical assistance for school food programs and maternal and child nutrition projects in low-income countries that are committed to universal education. In 2005 alone, the McGovern-Dole program distributed 120,000 metric tons of U.S. food commodities, including wheat, wheat flour, corn, rice, dry beans, and vegetable oils, to schools that run feeding programs in the world's poorest countries. In addition to Federal funding, outside donors have provided approximately \$1 billion to complement the McGovern-Dole program, making this initiative a successful public-private partnership.

McGovern-Dole has a proven track record of reducing hunger among school-age children and improving literacy and primary education enrollment in areas where conflict, hunger, poverty and HIV/AIDS are prevalent.

School meals, teacher training, and related support have helped boost school enrollment and academic performance. These positive results are especially true among girls, including those who live where girls are commonly mistreated and marginalized.

Throughout my career in public service, I have seen the faces of hunger so many times. During my time at the American Red Cross, I witnessed hunger and starvation in war-torn Rwanda and famine-stricken Somalia. In Baidoa, I came upon a little boy lying under a sack. I thought he was dead, but as his brother sat him up, I could see that he was severely malnourished. I asked for camel's milk to feed him, and as I raised the cup to his mouth, I put my arm around his back. The feeling of the little bones almost piercing through his flesh is something I will never forget. That is when the horror of starvation becomes real—when you can touch it.

In Deuteronomy 15:7, the Bible tells us, "If there is among you a poor man, one of your brethren, in any of your towns within your land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother."

I implore friends on both sides of the aisle—and the people of this great country—to join in this mission, this grassroots network of compassion that transcends political ideology and provides hope and security not only for those in need today but for future generations. Let us stand and fight as one in this mission to end hunger.

By Mrs. CLINTON:

S. 1542. A bill to establish State infrastructure banks for education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Investing for Tomorrow's Schools Act of 2007, an act that is critical in bringing our Nation's schools into the 21st century. If passed, this legislation would provide States with an economical way to fund school construction. Please allow me to express my thanks to my friend, Senator HARKIN, for joining my efforts in the Senate, as well as to Representative TAUSCHER for his leadership in the House and his introduction of the companion bill.

The American Society of Civil Engineers gave our Nation's school buildings a D in their last report card, with 75 percent of facilities deemed inadequate for education. Yet our children attend these schools every day.

When students attend rundown schools, their well-being and ability to learn is threatened. In 2004, in Washingtonville, NY, the roof over a classroom, in the 44-year-old Taft Elementary, collapsed. Had the collapse occurred just 32 days later, 15 children and 2 teachers could have been seriously injured or even killed.

This past January, New York's Manhasset School District issued a report describing the condition of its

only high school. The 72-year-old building has exceeded its life expectancy, with a roof “beyond the stages of patching and repairing” and in need of replacement. Last school year, part of the ceiling collapsed in one of the stairwells.

Buildings like this one, in use beyond their life expectancy, are dangerous and don't meet the demands of the 21st century. The lack of adequate school buildings hampers today's most promising and innovative efforts to boost student achievement. Many older school buildings are in a dangerous state of disrepair and have seriously outdated facilities. Many do not even have the proper wiring for computer networks. While we work to give students the academic tools they need to compete in the 21st century, we must also upgrade school facilities to give students a learning environment conducive to success. This is why we included a new provision in this legislation creating healthy high-performance schools guidelines to direct schools during renovation and construction in order to create schools that will foster the development of children.

According to the National Education Association, repairs and modernization nationwide will cost \$322 billion. Last year, over \$20 billion was spent nationwide on school construction. At that rate, it will take more than 16 years to modernize school buildings, when today's kindergartners could be graduating from college. Clearly, school construction is costly, but a price cannot be put on the value of our children's education and well-being. We must use innovative methods in providing funding for schools to make these essential renovations.

That is why I am introducing this bill. At the center of this bill is the creation of State infrastructure banks, which would improve financing for school construction. This financing mechanism was pioneered by the Reagan administration, which used it to help local communities fund water treatment and clean water facilities. The Clinton administration also used State infrastructure banks to help States finance transportation projects.

State infrastructure banks have been successful in financing public projects at a low cost to taxpayers. They would offer school districts flexible options of loan and credit enhancement assistance, such as low-interest loans, bond-financing security, loan guarantees, and credit support for financing projects, which result in lower interest rates. State infrastructure banks would not strain the Federal Treasury or the American taxpayer. After initial funding, they would require no ongoing Federal appropriations. As loans are repaid, funds would be replenished, and banks could make new loans available.

Passage of this bill would help provide immediate aid to the neediest schools and help local communities fund affordable construction far into

the future. This modest proposal is one step in the school construction solution. We must continue to move forward in this Congress by creating an academic setting that will prepare our students for the 21st century workplace. I ask my colleagues to join me and Senator HARKIN in supporting this critical piece of legislation.

By Mr. BINGAMAN:

S. 1543. A bill to establish a national geothermal initiative to encourage increased production of energy from geothermal resources, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to be able to introduce the National Geothermal Initiative Act of 2007, along with my cosponsors, Senators REID, MURKOWSKI, STEVENS, SALAZAR, TESTER, and SNOWE. This bipartisan bill establishes a national goal where at least 20 percent of the total electrical energy production in the United States should be from geothermal resources by 2030. Under the National Geothermal Initiative, the national goal will be accomplished by establishing and carrying out new programs for geothermal research, development, demonstration, and commercial application. This act also extends an ongoing study being conducted by the United States Geological Survey to characterize the complete geothermal resource base for use in future geothermal energy development. Finally, the act will provide international market support for geothermal energy development. It is critical with ever increasing energy demands that new energy solutions are continually developed and explored. With continued research, development, demonstration, and deployment of new technologies, geothermal energy holds great promise as a growing renewable energy source.

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

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

S. 1543

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “National Geothermal Initiative Act of 2007”.

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) domestic geothermal resources have the potential to provide vast amounts of clean, renewable, and reliable energy to the United States;

(2) Federal policies and programs are critical to achieving the potential of those resources;

(3) Federal tax policies should be modified to appropriately support the longer lead-times of geothermal facilities and address the high risks of geothermal exploration and development;

(4) sustained and expanded research programs are needed—

(A) to support the goal of increased energy production from geothermal resources; and

(B) to develop the technologies that will enable commercial production of energy from more geothermal resources;

(5) a comprehensive national resource assessment is needed to support policymakers and industry needs;

(6) a national exploration and development technology and information center should be established to support the achievement of increased geothermal energy production; and

(7) implementation and completion of geothermal and other renewable initiatives on public land in the United States is critical, consistent with the principles and requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) and other applicable law.

#### SEC. 3. NATIONAL GOAL.

Congress declares that it shall be a national goal to achieve 20 percent of total electrical energy production in the United States from geothermal resources by not later than 2030.

#### SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) INITIATIVE.—The term “Initiative” means the national geothermal initiative established by section 5(a).

(2) NATIONAL GOAL.—The term “national goal” means the national goal of increased energy production from geothermal resources described in section 3.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Energy.

#### SEC. 5. NATIONAL GEOTHERMAL INITIATIVE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a national geothermal initiative under which the Federal Government shall seek to achieve the national goal.

(b) FEDERAL SUPPORT AND COORDINATION.—In carrying out the Initiative, each Federal agency shall give priority to programs and efforts necessary to support achievement of the national goal to the extent consistent with applicable law.

(c) ENERGY AND INTERIOR GOALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior shall establish and carry out policies and programs—

(A) to characterize the complete geothermal resource base (including engineered geothermal systems) of the United States by not later than 2010;

(B) to sustain an annual growth rate in the use of geothermal power, heat, and heat pump applications of at least 10 percent;

(C) to demonstrate state-of-the-art energy production from the full range of geothermal resources in the United States;

(D) to achieve new power or commercial heat production from geothermal resources in at least 25 States; and

(E) to develop the tools and techniques to construct an engineered geothermal system power plant.

(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 3 years thereafter, the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior shall jointly submit to the appropriate Committees of Congress a report that describes—

(A) the proposed plan to achieve the goals described in paragraph (1); and

(B) a description of the progress during the period covered by the report toward achieving those goals.

(d) GEOTHERMAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, DEMONSTRATION, AND COMMERCIAL APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a program of geothermal research, development, demonstration, outreach and education, and commercial application to support the achievement of the national goal.

(2) REQUIREMENTS OF PROGRAM.—In carrying out the geothermal research program

described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) prioritize funding for the discovery and characterization of geothermal resources;

(B) expand funding for cost-shared drilling;

(C)(i) establish, at a national laboratory or university research center selected by the Secretary, a national geothermal exploration research and information center;

(ii) support development and application of new exploration and development technologies through the center; and

(iii) in cooperation with the Secretary of the Interior, disseminate geological and geophysical data to support geothermal exploration activities through the center.

(D) support cooperative programs with and among States, including with the Great Basin Center for Geothermal Energy, the Intermountain West Geothermal Consortium, and other similar State and regional initiatives, to expand knowledge of the geothermal resource base of the United States and potential applications of that resource base;

(E) improve and advance high-temperature and high-pressure drilling, completion, and instrumentation technologies benefiting geothermal well construction;

(F) demonstrate geothermal applications in settings that, as of the date of enactment of this Act, are noncommercial;

(G) research, develop, and demonstrate engineered geothermal systems techniques for commercial application of the technologies, including advances in—

(i) reservoir stimulation;

(ii) reservoir characterization, monitoring, and modeling;

(iii) stress mapping;

(iv) tracer development;

(v) 3-dimensional tomography; and

(vi) understanding seismic effects of deep drilling and reservoir engineering; and

(H) support the development and application of the full range of geothermal technologies and applications.

(3) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this subsection—

(A) \$75,000,000 for fiscal year 2008;

(B) \$110,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2012; and

(C) for fiscal year 2013 and each fiscal year thereafter through fiscal year 2030, such sums as are necessary.

(e) **GEOTHERMAL ASSESSMENT, EXPLORATION INFORMATION, AND PRIORITY ACTIVITIES.**—

(1) **INTERIOR.**—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary of the Interior—

(A) acting through the Director of the United States Geological Survey, shall, not later than 2010—

(i) conduct and complete a comprehensive nationwide geothermal resource assessment that examines the full range of geothermal resources in the United States; and

(ii) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing the results of the assessment; and

(B) in planning and leasing, shall consider the national goal established under this Act.

(2) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior to carry out this subsection—

(A) \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2008;

(B) \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 to 2012; and

(C) for fiscal year 2013 and each fiscal year thereafter through fiscal year 2030, such sums as are necessary.

#### **SEC. 6. INTERMOUNTAIN WEST GEOTHERMAL CONSORTIUM.**

Section 237 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15874) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013; and

“(2) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2020.”.

#### **SEC. 7. INTERNATIONAL MARKET SUPPORT FOR GEOTHERMAL ENERGY DEVELOPMENT.**

(a) **UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**—The United States Agency for International Development, in coordination with other appropriate Federal and multilateral agencies, shall support international and regional development to promote the use of geothermal resources, including (as appropriate) the African Rift Geothermal Development Facility.

(b) **UNITED STATES TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY.**—The United States Trade and Development Agency shall support the Initiative by—

(1) encouraging participation by United States firms in actions taken to carry out subsection (a); and

(2) providing grants and other financial support for feasibility and resource assessment studies.

(c) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

By Mr. GREGG (for himself and Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 1544. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the quality and efficiency of health care, to provide the public with information on provider and supplier performance, and to enhance the education and awareness of consumers for evaluating health care services through the development and release of reports based on Medicare enrollment, claims, survey, and assessment data; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, the United States spends more on health care as a percentage of GDP than any other industrialized country and costs continue to rise. However, there is significant variation in the quality of health care consumers receive. Are we getting a good deal? The Medicare Quality Enhancement Act, which I have introduced today with Senator CLINTON, seeks to improve U.S. health care by providing qualified private-sector organizations access to Medicare data for the development and release of reports on the quality, cost, efficiency and effectiveness of our health care system.

Consumer groups, employers, insurance companies, labor unions and others have repeatedly requested access to Medicare data to improve the quality of the health care provided to their members, employees and beneficiaries and to help control the ever-rising costs of health care. While there remains legal debate over whether this data can be released, the Medicare Quality Enhancement Act ensures that the data collected by Medicare and paid for by the taxpayer can be utilized by qualified organizations to measure quality and control costs while protecting beneficiary privacy.

The Medicare Quality Enhancement Act of 2007: requires CMS to provide

Medicare enrollment, claims, survey and assessment data to private sector Medicare Quality Reporting Organizations, MQROs, to develop reports to measure health care quality for the public; mandates the protection of beneficiary privacy; empowers consumer groups, providers, employers, insurance plans, labor unions and others to request reports from MQROs; and provides for the public release of all reports.

Attempts are already being made by employers and insurance companies to measure quality. However, with limited amounts of privately held data, their analysis is not broad enough to provide the most accurate results. However, MQROs will have access to Medicare data and be authorized to aggregate both private and public data, providing a significantly more robust assessment of both quality and efficiency while requiring the complete protection of beneficiary health information.

In order for America's health care system to improve, we need to know more and understand the quality of the care we are purchasing. The time has come for the health care community to compete on quality, value and cost, and not be rewarded simply for volume of care provided.

The Medicare Quality Enhancement Act ensures that the public will finally have the tools necessary to make informed health care decisions for themselves and their families.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 1552. A bill to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill that will authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation. This parcel of land is used by GSA for a fleet management center at 2nd and Christensen avenue in downtown Anchorage. The site is approximately 78,000 sq. feet and is surrounded on two sides by Alaska Railroad property. This property was owned by the Alaska Railroad during the period of Federal ownership and was leased to the General Services administration. At the time the railroad was transferred from Federal to State ownership, the parcel of land where the fleet center is located was successfully obtained by GSA for its motor pool function due to its close proximity to downtown Anchorage and other Federal agencies.

This parcel of land is a key transportation component for the redevelopment of Ship Creek. Allowing the Alaska Railroad to get the property back, either through a land exchange or fair market purchase, will allow the Railroad to make additional improvements in the area. GSA has indicated a desire

to move from its present location to a location closer to the military bases in Anchorage as most of their business has become the management of a motor pool for the bases.

As consideration for the property, the administrator shall require the AKRR Corporation to either convey a replacement facility to GSA or pay the fair market value of the property based on the highest and best use as determined by an independent appraisal commissioned by the administrator and paid for by the Alaska Railroad Corporation. All proceeds derived from any payment for the property shall be deposited in the Federal buildings fund.

The GSA supports this legislation to expedite their move from the present location to one that will allow them to better serve the military bases.

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

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

S. 1552

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF GSA FLEET MANAGEMENT CENTER TO ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the requirements of this section, the Administrator of General Services shall convey, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, by quitclaim deed, to the Alaska Railroad Corporation, an entity of the State of Alaska (in this section referred to as the "Corporation"), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the parcel of real property described in subsection (b), known as the GSA Fleet Management Center.

(b) GSA FLEET MANAGEMENT CENTER.—The parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a) is the parcel located at the intersection of 2nd Avenue and Christensen Avenue in Anchorage, Alaska, consisting of approximately 78,000 square feet of land and the improvements thereon.

(c) CONSIDERATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As consideration for the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a), the Administrator shall require the Corporation to—

(A) convey replacement property in accordance with paragraph (2); or

(B) pay the purchase price for the parcel in accordance with paragraph (3).

(2) REPLACEMENT PROPERTY.—If the Administrator requires the Corporation to provide consideration under paragraph (1)(A), the Corporation shall—

(A) convey, and pay the cost of conveying, to the United States, acting by and through the Administrator, fee simple title to real property, including a building, that the Administrator determines to be suitable as a replacement facility for the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a); and

(B) provide such other consideration as the Administrator and the Corporation may agree, including payment of the costs of relocating the occupants vacating the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a).

(3) PURCHASE PRICE.—If the Administrator requires the Corporation to provide consideration under paragraph (1)(B), the Corporation shall pay to the Administrator the fair market value of the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a) based on its highest and

best use as determined by an independent appraisal commissioned by the Administrator and paid for by the Corporation.

(d) APPRAISAL.—In the case of an appraisal under subsection (c)(3)—

(1) the appraisal shall be performed by an appraiser mutually acceptable to the Administrator and the Corporation; and

(2) the assumptions, scope of work, and other terms and conditions related to the appraisal assignment shall be mutually acceptable to the Administrator and the Corporation.

(e) PROCEEDS.—

(1) DEPOSIT.—Any proceeds received under subsection (c) shall be paid into the Federal Buildings Fund established under section 592 of title 40, United States Code.

(2) EXPENDITURE.—Amounts paid into the Federal Buildings Fund under paragraph (1) shall be available to the Administrator upon deposit for expenditure for any lawful purpose consistent with existing authorities granted to the Administrator; except that the Administrator shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate 30 days advance written notice of any expenditure of the proceeds.

(f) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Administrator may require such additional terms and conditions to the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Administrator considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(g) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY AND SURVEY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the parcels to be conveyed under subsections (a) and (c)(2) shall be determined by surveys satisfactory to the Administrator and the Corporation.

## SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

### SENATE RESOLUTION 220—HONORING THE LIFE OF SENATOR CRAIG THOMAS

Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. ENZI, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BOND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. BURR, Mr. BYRD, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COLEMAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DODD, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERRY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. REED, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SMITH, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SPECTER, Ms.

STABENOW, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 220

Whereas Senator Craig Thomas has a long and honorable history of public service, serving in the United States Marine Corps, the Wyoming State Legislature, the United States House of Representatives, and the United States Senate;

Whereas Senator Craig Thomas represented the people of Wyoming with honor and distinction for over 20 years;

Whereas Senator Craig Thomas was first elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1989;

Whereas Senator Craig Thomas was subsequently elected 3 times to the United States Senate by record margins of more than 70 percent; and

Whereas Senator Craig Thomas's life and career were marked by the best of his Western values: hard work, plain speaking, common sense, courage, and integrity: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That—

(1) the United States Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable Craig Thomas, a Senator from the State of Wyoming;

(2) the Senate mourns the loss of one of its most esteemed members, Senator Craig Thomas, and expresses its condolences to the people of Wyoming and to his wife, Susan, and his 4 children;

(3) the Secretary of the Senate shall communicate this resolution to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of Senator Craig Thomas; and

(4) when the Senate adjourns today, it shall stand adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of Senator Craig Thomas.

## AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1282. Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CHAMBLISS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1348, to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1283. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1348, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1284. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1348, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1285. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1348, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1286. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1348, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1287. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1348, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1288. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1348, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1289. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him