

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. DODD, from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, without amendment:

S. 1610. An original bill to ensure national security while promoting foreign investment and the creation and maintenance of jobs, to reform the process by which such investments are examined for any effect they may have on national security, to establish the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-80).

S. 1611. An original bill to make technical corrections to SAFETEA-LU and other related laws relating to transit (Rept. No. 110-81).

S. 1612. An original bill to amend the penalty provisions in the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-82).

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. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. ENSIGN, and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. 1603. A bill to authorize Congress to award a gold medal to Jerry Lewis, in recognition of his outstanding service to the Nation; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SMITH):

S. 1604. A bill to increase the number of well-educated nurses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. SMITH, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Ms. SNOWE, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. DORGAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. ENZI, and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 1605. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect and preserve access of Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas to health care providers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BYRD, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. OBAMA, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. REED, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. BROWN, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. TESTER, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. BAYH, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. WEBB, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 1606. A bill to provide for the establishment of a comprehensive policy on the care and management of wounded warriors in order to facilitate and enhance their care, rehabilitation, physical evaluation, transition from care by the Department of Defense to care by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and transition from military service to civilian life, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 1607. A bill to provide for identification of misaligned currency, require action to

correct the misalignment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 1608. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain land in Clark County, Nevada, for use by the Nevada National Guard; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. INOUYE (for himself and Mr. STEVENS) (by request):

S. 1609. A bill to provide the necessary authority to the Secretary of Commerce for the establishment and implementation of a regulatory system for offshore aquaculture in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DODD:

S. 1610. An original bill to ensure national security while promoting foreign investment and the creation and maintenance of jobs, to reform the process by which such investments are examined for any effect they may have on national security, to establish the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. DODD:

S. 1611. An original bill to make technical corrections to SAFETEA-LU and other related laws relating to transit; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. DODD:

S. 1612. An original bill to amend the penalty provisions in the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. CHAMBLISS):

S. 1613. A bill to require the Director of National Intelligence to submit to Congress an unclassified report on energy security and for other purposes; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 1614. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to strengthen penalties for unlawful child labor; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 1615. A bill to provide loans and grants for fire sprinkler retrofitting in nursing facilities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CARPER, Mr. LUGAR, and Mr. OBAMA):

S. 1616. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to promote and assure the quality of biodiesel fuel, and for other purposes; 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. McCONNELL:

S. Res. 233. A resolution making Minority party appointments for the Select Committee on Ethics for the 110th Congress; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. DODD):

S. Res. 234. A resolution designating June 15, 2007, as "National Huntington's Disease Awareness Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 22

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 22, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a program of educational assistance for members of the Armed Forces who serve in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, and for other purposes.

S. 65

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 65, a bill to modify the age-60 standard for certain pilots and for other purposes.

S. 116

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 116, a bill to authorize resources to provide students with opportunities for summer learning through summer learning grants.

S. 117

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 117, a bill to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to improve benefits and services for members of the Armed Forces, veterans of the Global War on Terrorism, and other veterans, to require reports on the effects of the Global War on Terrorism, and for other purposes.

S. 185

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

S. 206

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 206, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 329

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 329, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage for cardiac rehabilitation and pulmonary rehabilitation services.

S. 382

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor 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. 430

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New York

(Mrs. CLINTON) 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 Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 442, a bill to provide for loan repayment for prosecutors and public defenders.

S. 543

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 543, a bill to improve Medicare beneficiary access by extending the 60 percent compliance threshold used to determine whether a hospital or unit of a hospital is an inpatient rehabilitation facility under the Medicare program.

S. 755

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 755, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide diabetes screening tests under the Medicaid program for adult enrollees with diabetes risk factors, to ensure that States offer a comprehensive package of benefits under that program for individuals with diabetes, and for other purposes.

S. 790

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 790, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to permit the simplified summer food programs to be carried out in all States and by all service institutions.

S. 799

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 799, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide individuals with disabilities and older Americans with equal access to community-based attendant services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 807

At the request of Mr. MARTINEZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 807, a bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 to provide that manure shall not be considered to be a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

S. 829

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 829, a bill to reauthorize the HOPE VI program for revitalization of severely distressed public housing, and for other purposes.

S. 887

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 887, a bill to restore import and entry agricultural inspection functions to the Department of Agriculture.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) 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. 912

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 912, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the incentives for the construction and renovation of public schools.

S. 970

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor 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. 999

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 999, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve stroke prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.

S. 1042

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1042, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to make the provision of technical services for medical imaging examinations and radiation therapy treatments safer, more accurate, and less costly.

S. 1060

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1060, a bill to reauthorize the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning and implementation, and for other purposes.

S. 1066

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1066, a bill to require the Secretary of Education to revise regulations regarding student loan repayment deferment with respect to borrowers who are in postgraduate medical or dental internship, residency, or fellowship programs.

S. 1099

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr.

VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1099, a bill to amend chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, to make individuals employed by the Roosevelt Campobello International Park Commission eligible to obtain Federal health insurance.

S. 1125

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1125, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives to encourage investment in the expansion of freight rail infrastructure capacity and to enhance modal tax equity.

S. 1146

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1146, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve health care for veterans who live in rural areas, and for other purposes.

S. 1173

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1173, a bill to protect, consistent with Roe v. Wade, a woman's freedom to choose to bear a child or terminate a pregnancy, and for other purposes.

S. 1205

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1205, a bill to require a pilot program on assisting veterans service organizations and other veterans groups in developing and promoting peer support programs that facilitate community reintegration of veterans returning from active duty, and for other purposes.

S. 1223

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1223, a bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to support efforts by local or regional television or radio broadcasters to provide essential public information programming in the event of a major disaster, and for other purposes.

S. 1260

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1260, a bill to protect information relating to consumers, to require notice of security breaches, and for other purposes.

S. 1335

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1335, a bill to amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the official language of the Government of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1337

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey

(Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1337, a bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to provide for equal coverage of mental health services under the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

S. 1375

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1375, a bill to ensure that new mothers and their families are educated about postpartum depression, screened for symptoms, and provided with essential services, and to increase research at the National Institutes of Health on postpartum depression.

S. 1382

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1382, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide the establishment of an Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Registry.

S. 1416

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1416, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for mortgage insurance premiums.

S. 1426

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1426, a bill to amend the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 to reauthorize the market access program, and for other purposes.

S. 1437

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1437, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the semicentennial of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

S. 1459

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1459, a bill to strengthen the Nation's research efforts to identify the causes and cure of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, expand psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis data collection, study access to and quality of care for people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, and for other purposes.

S. 1469

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1469, a bill to require the closure of the Department of Defense detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and for other purposes.

S. 1500

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) were added

as cosponsors of S. 1500, a bill to support democracy and human rights in Zimbabwe, and for other purposes.

S. 1514

At the request of Mr. DODD, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1514, a bill to revise and extend provisions under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act.

S. 1551

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1551, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to making progress toward the goal of eliminating tuberculosis, and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to establish certain duties for pharmacies to ensure provision of Food and Drug Administration-approved contraception, and for other purposes.

S. 1577

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1577, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to require screening, including national criminal history background checks, of direct patient access employees of skilled nursing facilities, nursing facilities, and other long-term care facilities and providers, and to provide for nationwide expansion of the pilot program for national and State background checks on direct patient access employees of long-term care facilities or providers.

S. 1593

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) were added as cosponsors of S. 1593, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief and protections to military personnel, and for other purposes.

S. 1597

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1597, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

S. RES. 215

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 215, a resolution designating September 25, 2007, as "National First Responder Appreciation Day".

AMENDMENT NO. 1503

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1503 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6, a bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1505

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1505 proposed to H.R. 6, a bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1508

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1508 proposed to H.R. 6, a bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1510

At the request of Mr. LOTT, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1510 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6, a bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1514

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1514 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6, a bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1518

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1518 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6, a bill

to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1523

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1523 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6, a bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1524

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1524 intended to be proposed to H.R. 6, a bill to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SMITH):

S. 1604. A bill to Increase the number of well-educated nurses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce the Nursing Education and Quality of Health Care Act of 2007. This legislation is essential for addressing our current and future nursing shortages.

I have been hearing from nurses and health care providers from every part of New York that we are facing an impending nursing crisis and their stories echo what nurses across the Nation tell me.

By 2014, the Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts that there will be over 1 million job openings for registered nurses. In New York alone, we will need to produce over 80,000 new RNs to meet these projections. One of our greatest needs will be in rural areas where the pool of nurses is small and the loss of just one nurse from the workforce can have a profound impact on the health of the community.

I can proudly say we have made good progress in New York on one front. In 2006, 30 percent more registered nurses graduated than in 2004. I believe that we can credit this increase to the Nurse Reinvestment Act that was signed into law in 2002. Through this bipartisan legislation, we were able to make great strides in strengthening our Nation's nursing workforce.

The Nurse Reinvestment Act included a number of critical initiatives including one from the bipartisan bill I introduced with Senator SMITH to retain nurses who are already in the profession by encouraging hospitals to become magnet hospitals. Hospitals that have achieved magnet status report lower mortality rates, higher patient satisfaction, greater cost-efficiency, and patients experiencing shorter stays in hospitals and intensive care units underlining the importance of nursing in our health care system.

I am here today because nurses are still facing an urgent situation that requires our action. Even though we are making progress in graduating more nurses, in 2006 over 32,323 qualified applicants were turned away from nursing schools in the United States. In New York, it is estimated that nearly 3,000 nursing school applicants were denied entry. Put simply, we don't have the capacity in our nursing schools to train qualified potential students.

Not only are we facing a nursing shortage, we are setting ourselves up for a potential nursing crisis if we don't address the impending faculty shortage that will occur as baby boomer nurse faculty reach retirement age, leaving fewer and fewer faculty to teach the next generation of nurses.

We need to pave the way and recruit more people into the nursing profession. This shortage impacts not only nurses, but also patients since we know that the quality of care they receive is directly related to nurses.

The Nursing Education and Quality of Health Care Act supports recruitment, education, and training to help alleviate the nursing shortage in New York and in the rest of the Nation. This act will establish distance learning opportunities for people in rural communities who wish to pursue the nursing profession without leaving their home town. This legislation will also provide tuition assistance and loan forgiveness for those who choose to practice in rural communities.

To increase the number of nurses in the workforce we need to expand the nursing faculty so that thousands of qualified students are not turned away from the profession. This legislation will fund programs that enhance recruitment of faculty and allow for the expansion of nursing education programs by funding distance learning innovation, and by expanding the recruitment and training of community-based faculty for classroom and clinical education.

We also need nurses to participate and collaborate in patient-safety ini-

tiatives for the well-being of patients. The Nursing Education and Quality of Health Care Act will take the lead by supporting projects that integrate patient safety practices into nursing education programs and enhance the leadership of nurses in improving patients' outcomes within their health care settings.

We will all rely on nurses sometime in our life, and we need to make sure that this essential member of the health care team will always be present at our bedsides.

I am pleased to introduce legislation that supports nurses and that is supported by nursing organizations like the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the American Nurses Association, the American Organization of Nurse Executives, the Brooklyn Nursing Partnership, and the New York State Area Health Education Center System. Nurses are critical to the successful operation of our hospitals and the quality of care patients receive and we must do everything we can to address the nursing shortage and make nursing an attractive and rewarding profession.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleague, Senator CLINTON, in introducing this important piece of legislation to help alleviate the nursing shortage in our Nation. This legislation will work to ensure that our nursing schools have increased capacity and the tools necessary to properly train nurses to enter into the workforce.

As many of my colleagues know, the shortage of nurses is a current and ever increasing problem in our Nation. As baby boomers age and demands for health care continue to increase, we will further see a shortage of nurses, which is not sustainable for the health needs of our Nation. While the number of graduates from nursing programs is increasing, we are still facing ongoing critical shortages and we must do better.

Incredibly, while we have an ever-increasing demand for nurses, we are also seeing our schools of nursing turn away scores of students each year who are viable candidates due to lack of capacity and lack of teaching staff. In fact, in my home State of Oregon, for each student position available in nursing programs, there are six applicants. This forces many young men and women who want to enter this field of work to give up on pursuing a nursing career. This is one of many reasons that we currently have 118,000 vacant positions for nurses nationwide, this translates to a national vacancy rate of 8.5 percent.

Our entire Nation is on an aging trajectory in all areas, and the nursing workforce is no exception. In Oregon, nearly half of our nurses are age 50 or older, and the proportion of nurses over the age of 50 has doubled in the last 20 years. We also know that according to a survey in 2006, 55 percent of surveyed