

S. 1695. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a pathway for the licensure of biosimilar biological products, to promote innovation in the life sciences, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 1696. A bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. SUNUNU (for himself, Mr. GREGG, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 1697. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for residential biomass fuel property expenditures; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COLEMAN:

S. 1698. A bill to provide that no funds appropriated or otherwise made available by any Act for contributions for international organizations may be made available to support the United Nations Human Rights Council; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 1699. A bill to amend the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding school library media specialists, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS:

S. 1700. A bill to support the establishment of an international regime for the assured supply of nuclear fuel for peaceful means and to authorize voluntary contributions to the International Atomic Energy Agency to support the establishment of an international nuclear fuel bank; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ISAKSON:

S. Res. 255. A resolution recognizing and supporting the long distance runs that will take place in the People's Republic of China in 2007 and the United States in 2008 to promote friendship between the peoples of China and the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BIDEN (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. Res. 256. A resolution designating June 2007 as "National Aphasia Awareness Month" and supporting efforts to increase awareness of aphasia; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. Res. 257. A resolution congratulating the University of California at Los Angeles for becoming the first university to win 100 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I team titles; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 67

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 67, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit former members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and

to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces are entitled to travel on such aircraft.

S. 156

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 156, a bill to make the moratorium on Internet access taxes and multiple and discriminatory taxes on electronic commerce permanent.

S. 185

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

S. 335

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 335, a bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from using private debt collection companies, and for other purposes.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation.

S. 450

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 450, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the medical care outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 469

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions.

S. 545

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 545, a bill to improve consumer access to passenger vehicle loss data held by insurers.

S. 793

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) were added as cosponsors of S. 793, a bill to provide for the expansion and improvement of traumatic brain injury programs.

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 793, *supra*.

S. 805

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 805, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to assist countries in sub-Saharan Africa in the effort to achieve internationally recognized goals in the treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other major diseases and the reduction of maternal and child mortality by improving human health care capacity and improving retention of medical health professionals in sub-Saharan Africa, and for other purposes.

S. 860

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 860, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to permit States the option to provide Medicaid coverage for low-income individuals infected with HIV.

S. 903

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 903, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Muhammad Yunus, in recognition of his contributions to the fight against global poverty.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 911, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to advance medical research and treatments into pediatric cancers, ensure patients and families have access to the current treatments and information regarding pediatric cancers, establish a population-based national childhood cancer database, and promote public awareness of pediatric cancers.

S. 932

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 932, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to authorize physical therapists to evaluate and treat Medicare beneficiaries without a requirement for a physician referral, and for other purposes.

S. 935

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 935, a bill to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 961

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 961, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to provide benefits to certain individuals who served in the United States merchant

marine (including the Army Transport Service and the Naval Transport Service) during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 968

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 968, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide increased assistance for the prevention, treatment, and control of tuberculosis, and for other purposes.

S. 970

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 970, a bill to impose sanctions on Iran and on other countries for assisting Iran in developing a nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 999

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) 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. 1096

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. BUNNING) were added as cosponsors of S. 1096, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide certain housing benefits to disabled members of the Armed Forces, to expand certain benefits for disabled veterans with severe burns, and for other purposes.

S. 1166

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1166, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income certain zone compensation of civilian employees of the United States.

S. 1175

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1175, a bill to end the use of child soldiers in hostilities around the world, and for other purposes.

S. 1190

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1190, a bill to promote the deployment and adoption of telecommunications services and information technologies, and for other purposes.

S. 1219

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1219, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide taxpayer protection and assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 1310

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms.

SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1310, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of increased payments for ground ambulance services under the Medicare program.

S. 1349

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1349, a bill to ensure that the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs provide to members of the Armed Forces and veterans with traumatic brain injury the services that best meet their individual needs, and for other purposes.

S. 1415

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1415, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Social Security Act to improve screening and treatment of cancers, provide for survivorship services, and for other purposes.

S. 1430

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1430, a bill to authorize State and local governments to direct divestiture from, and prevent investment in, companies with investments of \$20,000,000 or more in Iran's energy sector, and for other purposes.

S. 1457

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1457, a bill to provide for the protection of mail delivery on certain postal routes, and for other purposes.

S. 1509

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1509, a bill to improve United States hurricane forecasting, monitoring, and warning capabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 1593

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor 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. 1603

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1603, a bill to authorize Congress to award a gold medal to Jerry Lewis, in recognition of his outstanding service to the Nation.

S. 1606

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT) were added

as cosponsors of 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.

S. 1607

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1607, a bill to provide for identification of misaligned currency, require action to correct the misalignment, and for other purposes.

S. 1661

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1661, a bill to communicate United States travel policies and improve marketing and other activities designed to increase travel in the United States from abroad.

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1661, *supra*.

S. 1675

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1675, a bill to implement the recommendations of the Federal Communications Commission report to the Congress regarding low-power FM service.

S. CON. RES. 39

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 39, a concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of a world day of remembrance for road crash victims.

S. RES. 203

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 224

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 224, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

S. RES. 252

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 252, a resolution recognizing the increasingly mutually beneficial relationship between the United States of America and the Republic of Indonesia.

AMENDMENT NO. 1886

At the request of Mrs. DOLE, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr.

GRASSLEY) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) were added as co-sponsors of amendment No. 1886 intended to be proposed to S. 1639, a bill to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself,

Mr. ENZI, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. HATCH, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. GREGG, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BURR, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 1693. A bill to enhance the adoption of a nationwide interoperable health information technology system and to improve the quality and reduce the costs of health care in the United States; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is long past time for the Nation's health care industry to adopt modern information technology. Such technology has revolutionized a wide array of American industries, and it holds the same promise for the health care industry. It has a clear capacity to increase efficiency and reduce costs at a time when the industry is being plagued by the alarming rise in health costs.

Staggering inefficiencies imbedded in our health care system prevent patients across the country from receiving the type of care they deserve. Forty percent of Americans have been victims of preventable medical errors, and as many as 100,000 patients die each year from such errors. In a Nation which already spends more on health care than any other country, a modest investment in health IT is a small price to pay for a safer and less costly health care system.

Some health facilities with resources at their disposal have already invested in IT systems with great success. Meanwhile, the most vulnerable institutions lag further and further behind in the adoption of necessary technology. It now costs a physician's office about \$40,000 to implement a new IT system. Providers with financial need deserve access to information technology to close the health IT gap, so that patients across the country have access to quality health care.

The Senate unanimously approved the Wired for Health Care Quality Act in the last Congress. Today, Senator ENZI, Senator HATCH, Senator CLINTON, and I are reintroducing that bill, and we urge its swift passage. By setting national standards for health information technology and by offering funds for IT investment, the legislation will help providers overcome both the technical and the financial barriers to adopting and implementing health IT systems.

Recognizing the financial challenges of such investments, our bill establishes several Federal funding mechanisms to encourage the adoption of this technology. The legislation authorizes Federal grants for providers in need

and funds low interest loans in order to ease the burden on health care professionals who invest in new systems for electronic medical records and other purposes. Since the ability of physicians to share information is essential to ensuring effective treatment and eliminating wasteful spending, our bill also provides financial assistance to establish regional and local health IT networks.

Rapid exchange of information is essential to ensuring that providers have complete patient information, but the adoption of such technology must be accompanied by strong patient privacy protection. Our bill specifies that the American Health Information Community will be a body to make recommendations to the Secretary of Health and Human Services on patient privacy, information security, and appropriate uses of the technology. In addition, the bill ensures that free-standing health information databases are subject to the same privacy rules as other health care entities and requires grant recipients to implement strong privacy protections themselves.

To encourage the implementation of modern health information systems across the Nation, the legislation codifies the role of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology in the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate and expedite the adoption of health IT by Federal agencies. In addition, the bill establishes a public-private partnership, the Partnership for Health Care Improvement, to streamline the nationwide implementation of health information systems by establishing standards for interoperability that must be adopted by grant recipients and Federal contractors.

Estimates indicate that the widespread adoption of electronic health records could save up to 30 percent in annual health spending, or more than \$600 billion a year. Since 45 million Americans are uninsured, we can't delay the nationwide adoption of health IT systems any longer. Interoperability standards will eliminate inefficiencies caused by lack of uniform technology. Increased funding will reduce the widening health IT gap, making the advances of the information age available to all health facilities. The savings generated by these initiatives have the potential to give all Americans access to the Nation's state-of-the-art health care industry.

I especially commend the work of my colleagues Senator ENZI, Senator CLINTON, and Senator HATCH in developing this needed legislation, and I look forward to its enactment as soon as possible.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about my commitment to improve the quality and reduce the cost of health care in this Nation.

Some of the most serious challenges facing health care today, medical errors, inconsistent quality, and rising costs, can be addressed through the ef-

fective application of available health information technology linking all elements of the health care system. Information sharing networks have the potential to enable decision support anywhere at any time, thus improving the quality of health care and reducing costs.

But what does this mean for patients? Well, first of all, the widespread use of health IT would allow medical data to move with people as they move. When someone goes to the doctor's office, he or she won't have to take the clipboard and write down everything they can remember about themselves. Better use of health IT also would cut down on medical errors with prescriptions, instead of trying to decipher the doctor's handwriting, a pharmacist could access the prescription information electronically.

The widespread use of health IT could also save lives. If someone is traveling and gets in a car wreck or gets hurt in some other way, the emergency room doctor would be able to find out everything he or she needs to know to make the right treatment decisions. If someone falls into a coma and can't tell a doctor or nurse about their medications, being able to access an electronic medical record could prevent dangerous drug reactions.

Beyond saving lives and saving time, more effective use of health IT also could save us a lot of money. A Rand study suggested that health IT has the potential to save the health care system \$162 billion a year. In order for these savings to be realized, we must create an infrastructure for interoperability. The bill I am introducing today is the first step toward building that infrastructure.

Last Congress, the Senate unanimously passed the Wired for Health Care Quality Act, which I wrote with Senator KENNEDY. We have worked with Senator HATCH and Senator CLINTON and are introducing an updated bill today. We plan to bring this revised bill before our committee this Wednesday.

This legislation addresses one of the primary barriers to widespread adoption of interoperable health IT, which is the lack of agreed-upon standards, common implementation guides, and a certification process. The bill directs the Secretary to establish and chair the public-private American Health Information Collaborative, which is composed of representatives of the public and private sectors. The greatest improvements in quality of health care and cost savings will be realized when all elements of the health care system are electronically connected and speak a common technical language; that is, they are interoperable.

In order to address the health information technology "adoption gap" in the U.S., the bill authorizes three grant programs that will carefully target financial support to health care providers and consortia for the purpose