

Too often, the exceptional work and service that 9-1-1 call centers and workers perform every day across America goes unrecognized.

Before I came to Washington, I served as the chief prosecutor for Hennepin County, Minnesota's largest county, for 8 years. During that time, I saw firsthand the critical contributions 9-1-1 call centers make to public safety on a daily basis—helping to save lives and bring criminals to justice—and gained an unending appreciation for their work.

Today, I wish to thank all 9-1-1 operators for all they do to keep our communities safe—for coordinating the response to each and every emergency, and for doing it all with composure and compassion, and never with complaint.

But today is a special honor for the Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center, now recognized as the Outstanding Call Center of 2007 for its response to the tragic I-35W bridge collapse in August of 2007.

I would like to congratulate and thank director John Dejung, deputy director Heather Hunt, and each of the 77 call center agents involved in the response.

In the minutes and hours following the bridge collapse, the response of Minnesota's fire fighters, police, and other emergency personnel was extraordinary. One of the most enduring images of the response is that of brave young firefighter Shanna Hansen who, with a rope tied around her waist, kept diving down into the depths of the Mississippi to search for any survivors.

What wasn't seen was how the Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center directed the response. Under the most difficult of circumstance, center personnel produced the very best of results and no doubt saved lives. The entire Nation saw Minnesota's finest on display in those first few hours after the collapse, and it was made possible by the 9-1-1 responders we are honoring today and their colleagues in Minneapolis.

So it is with great pride that I congratulate the Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center for this well-deserved award of Outstanding Call Center of 2007.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:21 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 816. An act to provide for the release of certain land from the Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area in the State of Nevada and to grant a right-of-way across the released land for the construction and maintenance of a flood control project.

H.R. 1143. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to lease certain lands in Virgin Islands National Park, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1311. An act to provide for the conveyance of the Alta-Hualapai Site to the Nevada Cancer Institute, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1922. An act to designate the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and the surrounding Federal land in the State of Florida as an Outstanding Natural Area and as a unit of the National Landscape Conservation System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3111. An act to provide for the administration of Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3473. An act to provide for a land exchange with the City of Bountiful, Utah, involving National Forest System land in the Wasatch-Cache National Forest and to further land ownership consolidation in that national forest, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5137. An act to ensure that hunting remains a purpose of the New River Gorge National River.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 816. An act to provide for the release of certain land from the Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area in the State of Nevada and to grant a right-of-way across the released land for the construction and maintenance of a flood control project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1143. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to lease certain lands in Virgin Islands National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1311. An act to provide for the conveyance of the Alta-Hualapai Site to the Nevada Cancer Institute, and for other purposes, to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3111. An act to provide for the administration of Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

H. R. 3473. An act to provide for a land exchange with the City of Bountiful, Utah, involving National Forest System land in the Wasatch-Cache National Forest and to further land ownership consolidation in that national forest, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 5137. An act to ensure that hunting remains a purpose of the New River Gorge National River; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

S. 2712. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to complete at least 700 miles of reinforced fencing along the Southwest border by December 31, 2010, and for other purposes.

S. 2713. A bill to prohibit appropriated funds from being used in contravention of section 642(a) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996.

S. 2716. A bill to authorize the National Guard to provide support for the border control activities of the United States Customs and Border Protection of the Departments of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 2718. A bill to withhold 10 percent of the Federal funding apportioned for highway construction and maintenance from States that issue driver's licenses to individuals without verifying the legal status of such individuals.

S. 2711. A bill to improve the enforcement of laws prohibiting the employment of unauthorized aliens and for other purposes.

S. 2710. A bill to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to use an employer's failure to timely resolve discrepancies with the Social Security Administration after receiving a "no match" notice as evidence that the employer violated section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

S. 2715. A bill to amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the national language of the Government of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2709. A bill to increase the criminal penalties for illegally reentering the United States and for other purposes.

S. 2714. A bill to close the loophole that allowed the 9/11 hijackers to obtain credit cards from United States banks that financed their terrorists activities, to ensure that illegal immigrants cannot obtain credit cards to evade United States immigration laws, and for other purposes.

S. 2719. A bill to provide that Executive Order 13166 shall have no force or effect, and to prohibit the use of funds for certain purposes.

S. 2722. A bill to prohibit aliens who are repeat drunk drivers from obtaining legal status or immigration benefits.

S. 2720. A bill to withhold Federal financial assistance from each country that denies or unreasonably delays the acceptance of nationals of such country who have been ordered removed from the United States and to prohibit the issuance of visas to nationals of such country.

S. 2717. A bill to provide for enhanced Federal enforcement of, and State and local assistance in the enforcement of, the immigration laws of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2721. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to prescribe the binding oath or affirmation of renunciation and allegiance required to be naturalized as a citizen of the United States, to encourage and support the efforts of prospective citizens of the United States to become citizens, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5299. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Methoxyfenozide; Pesticide Tolerances and Time-Limited Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL

No. 8352-2) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5300. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Acetic Acid; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 8350-8) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5301. A communication from the Chairman, Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, its semiannual report relative to monetary policy; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5302. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to funds provided for Federal-aid highway and safety construction programs; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5303. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Critical Skills Retention Bonus program for military personnel; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5304. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, South Coast Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 8530-7) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5305. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio" (FRL No. 8533-8) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5306. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Iowa" (FRL No. 8535-9) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5307. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Redesignation of 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Areas to Attainment and Approval of the Areas' Maintenance Plans and 2002 Base-Year Inventories; Correction" (FRL No. 8536-6) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5308. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Redesignation of the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment and Approval of the Area's Maintenance Plan and 2002 Base Year Inventory" (FRL No. 8536-5) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5309. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; VOC and NOx RACT Determinations for Merck and Co., Inc." (FRL No. 8536-4) received on

February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5310. A communication from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Delegated Authority to Order Use of Procedures for Access to Certain Sensitive Unclassified Information" (RIN3150-AI32) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5311. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fuel Cell Motor Vehicle Credit" (Notice 2008-33) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5312. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Voluntary Closing Agreement Program for Issuers of Tax-Exempt Bonds and Tax Credit Bonds" (Notice 2008-31) received on February 27, 2008; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5313. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Import Administration, Foreign-Trade Zones Board, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Board's activities for fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5314. A communication from the Director, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Mine Rescue Teams" (RIN1219-AB53) received on February 28, 2008; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-5315. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Community Services Block Grant Act Discretionary Activities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-5316. A communication from the White House Liaison, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the designation of an acting officer for the position of Assistant Attorney General, received on February 27, 2008; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-5317. A communication from the Director, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Report of Citizenship and Immigration Services for fiscal year 2007; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON MARCH 4, 2008

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. INOUE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment:

S. 1675. A bill to implement the recommendations of the Federal Communications Commission report to the Congress regarding low-power FM service (Rept. No. 110-271).

By Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments and an amendment to the title:

H.R. 1469. A bill to establish the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation under the authorities of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (Rept. No. 110-272).

By Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

H.R. 2798. A bill to reauthorize the programs of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-273).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. BINGAMAN for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. *J. Gregory Copeland, of Texas, to be General Counsel of the Department of Energy.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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 Mrs. DOLE:

S. 2703. A bill to reduce the reporting and certification burdens for certain financial institutions of sections 302 and 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2704. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of services of qualified respiratory therapists performed under the general supervision of a physician; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. REED, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. DOLE, and Mr. INOUE):

S. 2705. A bill to authorize programs to increase the number of nurses within the Armed Forces through assistance for service as nurse faculty or education as nurses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. DORGAN:

S. 2706. A bill to impose a limitation on lifetime aggregate limits imposed by health plans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. WEBB):

S. 2707. A bill to amend the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 to provide for the continuing authorization of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2708. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to attract and retain trained health care professionals and direct care workers dedicated to providing quality care to the growing population of older Americans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SESSIONS:

S. 2709. A bill to increase the criminal penalties for illegally reentering the United States and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. SESSIONS:

S. 2710. A bill to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to use an employer's