

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
MARCH 7, 2008

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

H.R. 1195. A bill to amend the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users to make technical corrections, and for other purposes.

By Mr. CONRAD, from the Committee on the Budget, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 70. An original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2009 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 and 2010 through 2013.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1638. A bill to adjust the salaries of Federal justices and judges, and for other purposes.

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. AKAKA:

S. 2737. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to grant jurisdiction to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to review compliance of the schedule of ratings for disabilities under section 1151 of that title with statutory requirements applicable to entitlement to disability compensation under chapter 11 of that title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COBURN:

S. 2738. A bill to identify and remove criminal aliens incarcerated in correctional facilities in the United States and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. BINGAMAN:

S. 2739. A bill to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior, the Forest Service, and the Department of Energy, to implement further the Act approving the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, to amend the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003, and for other purposes; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND
SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Ms. SNOWE):

S. Res. 477. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of designating March 2008 as National Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SMITH (for himself and Mr. KERRY):

S. Res. 478. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of "World Water Day"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 22

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) 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. 82

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 82, a bill to reaffirm the authority of the Comptroller General to audit and evaluate the programs, activities, and financial transactions of the intelligence community, and for other purposes.

S. 661

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 661, a bill to establish kinship navigator programs, to establish guardianship assistance payments for children, and for other purposes.

S. 819

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 819, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand tax-free distributions from individual retirement accounts for charitable purposes.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor 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. 1010

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1010, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage guaranteed lifetime income payments from annuities and similar payments of life insurance proceeds at dates later than death by excluding from income a portion of such payments.

S. 1175

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) 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. 1275

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1275, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for a screening and treatment program for prostate

cancer in the same manner as is provided for breast and cervical cancer.

S. 1464

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 1464, a bill to establish a Global Service Fellowship Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1675

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) 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. 1681

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1681, a bill to provide for a paid family and medical leave insurance program, and for other purposes.

S. 1760

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1760, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the Healthy Start Initiative.

S. 1926

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1926, a bill to establish the National Infrastructure Bank to provide funding for qualified infrastructure projects, and for other purposes.

S. 1951

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1951, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure that individuals eligible for medical assistance under the Medicaid program continue to have access to prescription drugs, and for other purposes.

S. 2064

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2064, a bill to fund comprehensive programs to ensure an adequate supply of nurses.

S. 2181

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2181, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect Medicare beneficiaries' access to home health services under the Medicare program.

S. 2209

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2209, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives to improve America's research competitiveness, and for other purposes.

S. 2291

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

VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2291, a bill to enhance citizen access to Government information and services by establishing plain language as the standard style of Government documents issued to the public, and for other purposes.

S. 2314

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2314, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make geothermal heat pump systems eligible for the energy credit and the residential energy efficient property credit, and for other purposes.

S. 2369

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2369, a bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide that certain tax planning inventions are not patentable, and for other purposes.

S. 2420

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2420, a bill to encourage the donation of excess food to nonprofit organizations that provide assistance to food-insecure people in the United States in contracts entered into by executive agencies for the provision, service, or sale of food.

S. 2433

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2433, a bill to require the President to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to further the United States foreign policy objective of promoting the reduction of global poverty, the elimination of extreme global poverty, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal of reducing by one-half the proportion of people worldwide, between 1990 and 2015, who live on less than \$1 per day.

S. 2452

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2452, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to provide protection to consumers with respect to certain high-cost loans, and for other purposes.

S. 2533

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2533, a bill to enact a safe, fair, and responsible state secrets privilege Act.

S. 2609

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2609, a bill to establish a Global Service Fellowship Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2632

At the request of Mr. BOND, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr.

ENSIGN) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2632, a bill to ensure that the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act is applied retroactively.

S. 2666

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2666, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage investment in affordable housing, and for other purposes.

S. 2684

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2684, a bill to reform the housing choice voucher program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937.

S. 2688

At the request of Mr. INUYE, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2688, a bill to improve the protections afforded under Federal law to consumers from contaminated seafood by directing the Secretary of Commerce to establish a program, in coordination with other appropriate Federal agencies, to strengthen activities for ensuring that seafood sold or offered for sale to the public in or affecting interstate commerce is fit for human consumption.

S. 2705

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 2712

At the request of Mr. DEMINT, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of 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. 2716

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) were added as cosponsors of 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 Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 2718

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of 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. 2720

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of 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. RES. 390

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 390, a resolution designating March 11, 2008, as National Funeral Director and Mortician Recognition Day.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 2737. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to grant jurisdiction to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to review compliance of the schedule of ratings for disabilities under section 1151 of that title with statutory requirements applicable to entitlement to disability compensation under chapter 11 of that title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I introduce the proposed Veterans' Rating Schedule Review Act. This legislation would remove a barrier to legal redress faced by veterans who believe that a provision of the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities—the Rating Schedule—does not comply with a law passed by Congress. The amount of compensation veterans with service-connected conditions receive is based on a disability rating, which VA assigns to these conditions. VA uses its rating schedule to determine which rating to assign to a veteran's particular condition. Under current law, the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims has jurisdiction to consider only Constitutional challenges to the rating schedule. When legislation was passed providing for judicial review, review of the rating schedule was specifically prohibited as part of a final compromise.

This legislation would expand the jurisdiction of the court to include cases where a provision of the rating schedule or the absence of a rating for a condition mandated by statute is challenged. Under the proposed change, aspects of the VA rating schedule that appear to violate requirements of law set forth in chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, would be subject to the court's jurisdiction.

I expect VA to comply with all laws passed by Congress in developing and revising the rating schedule. However, justice to our Nation's veterans requires a forum in which the rating