

(A) implements improvements to the Medicare or Medicaid programs under titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act, respectively, or the State Children's Health Insurance program under title XXI of such Act; and

(B) does not result in reduced benefits for chronic care for Medicare beneficiaries who choose a Medicare Advantage plan under part C of such title XVIII; and

(2) is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974,

the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget may revise allocations of new budget authority and outlays, the revenue aggregates, and other appropriate measures to reflect such legislation, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2009, or over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2008 through 2013 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2008 through 2018.

SA 4282. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 70, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 52, line 23, insert “(including the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement)” after “trade agreements”.

SA 4283. Mr. HATCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 70, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the bill, insert the following:

SEC. 308. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE DIVERSION OF FUNDS SET ASIDE FOR USPTO.

It is the sense of the Senate that none of the funds recommended by this resolution, or appropriated or otherwise made available under any other Act, to the United States Patent and Trademark Office shall be diverted, redirected, transferred, or used for any other purpose than for which such funds were intended.

SA 4284. Mr. BROWNBACK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 70, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 25, line 16, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 25, line 17, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 25, line 20, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 25, line 21, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 25, line 24, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.

On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.

On page 26, line 3, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.
 On page 26, line 4, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.
 On page 26, line 7, increase the amount by \$4,000,000.
 On page 26, line 8, increase the amount by \$4,000,000.
 On page 27, line 16, decrease the amount by \$3,000,000.
 On page 27, line 17, decrease the amount by \$3,000,000.
 On page 27, line 20, decrease the amount by \$6,000,000.
 On page 27, line 21, decrease the amount by \$6,000,000.
 On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by \$8,000,000.
 On page 27, line 25, decrease the amount by \$8,000,000.
 On page 28, line 3, decrease the amount by \$8,000,000.
 On page 28, line 4, decrease the amount by \$8,000,000.
 On page 28, line 7, decrease the amount by \$4,000,000.
 On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by \$4,000,000.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will be held on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to consider S. 2593, a bill to establish a program at the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior to carry out collaborative ecological restoration treatments for priority forest landscapes on public land, and for other purposes.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by e-mail to rachel_pasterнак@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Rachel Pasternack at (202) 224-0883 or Scott Miller at (202) 224-5488.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2008, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of HUD and Its Fiscal Year 2009 Budget.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 1:30 p.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing.

At this hearing, the subcommittee will examine whether the Gross Domestic Product, GDP, constitutes an accurate reflection of economic growth and social well-being, which factors are included in and excluded from the calculation of the GDP, and how national policy and decisionmaking are impacted by emphasis placed on the GDP.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate to conduct a hearing on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. At this hearing, the Committee will hear testimony regarding Hardrock Mining: Issues Relating to Abandoned Mine Lands and Uranium Mining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to hear testimony on “Alternatives to the Current Federal Estate Tax System.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 10:15 a.m. to hold a business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 10 a.m., to hear testimony on “In Person Voter Fraud: Myth and Trigger for Disenfranchisement?”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 9:30 a.m., in closed session to receive a briefing on the current readiness of the Armed Forces.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 2:30 p.m., in open session to receive testimony on military installation, environmental, and base closure programs in review of the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2009 and the Future Years Defense Program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2008, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 12, 2008 from 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. in Dirksen 562 for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME AND DRUGS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, to conduct a hearing entitled “Generation Rx: The Abuse of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs” on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 2 p.m. in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Witness list

Len Paulozzi, M.D., Medical Epidemiologist, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Atlanta, GA; Nora Volkow, M.D., Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Washington, DC; Steve Pasierb, President and CEO, The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, New York, NY; Derek Clark, Director, Clinton Substance Abuse Council, Clinton, IA; and Misty Fetko, RN, Parent of Carl Hennon, New Albany, OH.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on

Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 2 p.m. in open session to receive testimony on technologies to combat weapons of mass destruction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, FEDERAL SERVICES, AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs’ Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, “Agencies in Peril: Are We Doing Enough to Protect Federal IT and Secure Sensitive Information?”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 2 p.m., in open session to receive testimony on strategic lift programs in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2009 and the future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 10 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on strategic forces programs in review of the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2009 and the Future Years Defense Program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jack Wells, a fellow on my staff, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the debate on the budget resolution.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2008

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10:15 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, March 13; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired,

the leader time be reserved for their use later in the day, and that there be a moment of silence to honor the 5 years of service and sacrifice of our troops and their families for the war in Iraq and also to remember those who are serving our Nation in Afghanistan and throughout the world; that following the moment of silence, the Senate resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 70, the concurrent resolution on the budget, under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, tomorrow, following the moment of silence, the Senate will resume consideration of the budget resolution. Senators should be prepared to begin the so-called vote-arama as early as 11 a.m. tomorrow. Rollcall votes are expected to occur throughout the day.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CASEY. I now ask unanimous consent that morning business be closed, the Senate resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 70, and that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators GRASSLEY and BARRASSO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009—Continued

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise for two purposes: one, to speak about an amendment that will come up tomorrow dealing with the alternative minimum tax and, on a second point, to speak against an amendment that will be offered tomorrow on the H-1B program. First, I will discuss the amendments I intend to pursue on the budget resolution.

The first is similar to the amendment I offered in committee markup. Unfortunately, the committee did not adopt the amendment. The amendment is very straightforward. The amendment would exempt from the pay-go requirements an extension of relief from the alternative minimum tax. I want to explain the term pay-go. It means if you are going to offer something that has less income coming in from taxes, you have to offset it someplace else. Pay-go is a rule that applies to both taxes as well as expenditures. It is pay as you go.

I want to make sure this doesn't apply to the AMT because, quite frankly, it is silly to talk about offsetting revenue from middle-class Americans from whom it was never intended to be collected in the first place. And the alternative minimum tax, if we don't do something about it, has that negative impact. As everyone knows, if we do