

Government of the People's Republic of China;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has been duly notified by representatives of the affiliated United States creditors of the demand for repayment of the bonds;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to refuse to repay the bonds held by United States citizens and has officially repudiated the debts; a clear violation of United States law, international law, rules and regulations of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations Charter;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China honored repayment of the bonds held by British citizens while rejecting the claims of United States citizens;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China, its state-owned enterprises, and other entities controlled by the People's Republic of China continue to enjoy open and unfettered access to the United States capital markets, while the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to reject the lawful claims of United States citizens;

Whereas the sales of securities in the United States capital markets issued by Chinese entities, including the Government of the People's Republic of China and its state-owned enterprises, fail to disclose both the existence of the defaulted debt of the Government of the People's Republic of China and the continued evasion of repayment of the bonds, the discriminatory treatment of United States citizens, and the People's Republic of China's repudiation of official debt;

Whereas the wrongful actions of the Government of the People's Republic of China are improperly concealed by the continuing publication of artificial "investment grade" sovereign credit rating classifications assigned to the Chinese government by the 3 primary Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organizations (NRSROs) and this concealment fails to conform to the published definitions of those Organizations;

Whereas the continued publication of artificial "investment grade" sovereign credit rating classifications assigned to the Government of the People's Republic of China provides an incentive to the Chinese government to avoid a negotiated settlement with United States citizens regarding China's default on its sovereign debt obligations;

Whereas the lack of transparency concerning the selective default of the Government of the People's Republic of China poses a material risk to the investing public and threatens the integrity of the United States capital markets; and

Whereas to provide relief to United States bondholders, restore transparency, uphold the rule of law, and affirm the validity of public debt contracts: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the People's Republic of China and its government-owned and controlled enterprises should be required to properly disclose material information concerning the selective default status of these bonds in all prospectuses and filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 4578. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2881, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2008 through 2011, to improve aviation safety and capacity, to provide stable funding for the national aviation system, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 4578. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2881, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2008 through 2011, to improve aviation safety and capacity, to provide stable funding for the national aviation system, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

SEC. 715. OVERFLIGHTS IN GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for purposes of section 3(b)(1) of Public Law 100-91 (16 U.S.C. 1a-1 note), the substantial restoration of the natural quiet and experience of the Grand Canyon National Park (in this section referred to as the "Park") shall be considered to be achieved in the Park if, for at least 75 percent of each day, 50 percent of the Park is free of sound produced by commercial air tour operations that have an allocation to conduct commercial air tours in the Park as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of determining whether substantial restoration of the natural quiet and experience of the Park has been achieved in accordance with subsection (a), the Secretary of the Interior (in this section referred to as the "Secretary") shall use—

(A) the 2-zone system for the Park in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act to assess impacts relating to subsectional restoration of natural quiet at the Park, including—

(i) the thresholds for noticeability and audibility; and

(ii) the distribution of land between the 2 zones; and

(B) noise modeling science that is—

(i) developed for use at the Park;

(ii) validated by reasonable standards for conducting field observations of model results; and

(iii) accepted and validated by the Federal Interagency Committee on Aviation Noise.

(2) **SOUND FROM OTHER SOURCES.**—The Secretary shall not consider sound produced by sources other than commercial air tour operations, including sound emitted by other types of aircraft operations or other noise sources, for purposes of—

(A) making recommendations, developing a final plan, or issuing regulations relating to commercial air tour operations in the Park; or

(B) determining under subsection (a) whether substantial restoration of the natural quiet and experience of the Park has been achieved.

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, May 13, 2008, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to examine the impacts of climate change on the reliability, security, economics

and design of critical energy infrastructure in coastal regions.

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 may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510-6150, or by e-mail to Rosemarie Calabro@energy.senate.gov

For further information, please contact Alicia Jackson at (202) 224-3607 or Rosemarie Calabro at (202) 224-5039.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, April 28, 2008, at 4 p.m. to hold a nomination hearing.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I have a unanimous consent request that Michael Engel, a detailee to the Commerce Committee from the Federal Communications Commission; John Hennigan, a detailee to the Commerce Committee from the FAA; Pamela Friedmann, a detailee to the Commerce Committee from the Transportation Safety Administration; Harl Romine, a detailee to the Commerce Committee from the Coast Guard; and Charlotte Heike, a fellow for the Commerce Committee from the Sea Grant Fellowship, be granted the privilege of the floor on this bill.

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

MAKING TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2829 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2829) to make technical corrections to section 1244 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, which provides special immigrant status for certain Iraqis, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased to join the bipartisan group of Senators on this bill who all recognize our obligation to help those Iraqis who have assisted the United States in Iraq. This legislation will remove obstacles encountered by the Departments of

State and Homeland Security in issuing the 5,000 special visas that Congress authorized in January for those Iraqi citizens.

As part of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress provided 5,000 special immigrant visas for Iraqis who had aided the United States as interpreters in the country. As chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I have supported these efforts. The Departments of State and Homeland Security seem stymied and unable to implement what Congress has provided. In our efforts to remove any impediment to fast implementation and address any excuse for further delays, we seek passage of this bill as well, to cut through bureaucratic stalling and technical requirements.

This administration has been woefully slow in recognizing its responsibilities not only to those Iraqis who have helped us, but to all Iraqis who have been displaced or have fled the violence still plaguing that country. The relative inaction by the administration with respect to those Iraqis whose lives are in grave danger due to their assistance of the United States is especially troubling. Action is needed now. The Judiciary Committee held its first hearing on this humanitarian problem more than 15 months ago. That hearing on the plight of Iraqi refugees was among our first, in January 2007. In the interim, the administration has continued to make promises it cannot, or will not keep with respect to the resettlement of Iraqi refugees in the United States.

The administration's failure to acknowledge the Iraqi refugee crisis is emblematic of its inability to address other serious human rights issues that are much of its own making. The injustice resulting from the administration's interpretation of the material support and terrorism related bars that were enacted following September 11, 2001, continues to deprive legitimate asylum seekers of our protection. The consequences of these laws continue to go unaddressed, despite the fact that Congress has now twice given the Department of Homeland Security the authority to alleviate the situation. While Secretary Chertoff is unwilling to use this authority to provide asylum to those who need our protection, he has repeatedly used the vast authority ceded to him by proponents of the REAL ID Act to waive landmark environmental laws in the course of constructing a border wall between the United States and Mexico.

This month, during the Judiciary Committee's oversight hearing on the Department of Homeland Security, I followed up by asking Secretary Chertoff about his Department's lack of progress on implementing the authority Congress has given to him to remedy the material support and terrorism bars. At that time, I challenged him to fulfill the goal of legislation I authored and Congress enacted to provide relief to individuals such as

Saman Kareem Ahmad, who received a commendation from General Petraeus for his work on behalf of the United States in Iraq and instructs U.S. military personnel in preparation for service in Iraq. Although Mr. Ahmad was granted asylum, his application for a green card was denied because the organization with which he had once served, the Kurdistan Democratic Party, was deemed a "terrorist organization" by DHS. I urged Secretary Chertoff to use the authority he has been given to ensure that individuals like Mr. Ahmad were not denied a place in the United States because of inflexible and expansive readings of the so-called "material support" bar. I hope the administration takes the opportunity Congress has given it to correct this wrongheaded policy and practice. It is long past the time for this administration to take action and acknowledge the severe humanitarian consequences of its policies, whether in Iraq, or at our shores where the persecuted are seeking refuge.

Providing for the safety of our Iraqi allies is only one aspect of an increasingly severe humanitarian crisis in Iraq. Refugees International recently reported that in the vacuum left by the failure of the Iraqi government to address the plight of millions of its internally displaced citizens, various non-state militias are providing assistance to those who are suffering. By the report's account, these militias are finding fertile ground for recruiting among this population, with the Shiite Sadr movement now being the "main service provider" to displaced Iraqis. We have been pressing the administration for some time to acknowledge this crisis and to make increased efforts to assist those Iraqis who have been internally displaced or who have left the country. Now we learn that the dangers associated with the administration's failure to recognize the magnitude of this crisis go beyond the terrible human cost that has resulted and threaten to undermine any efforts to bring positive change to Iraq.

The bill the Senate approves today will be another effort to encourage this administration to fulfill its obligations to those who have sacrificed significantly to assist the United States. It is my hope that this will end the unacceptable delays and provide long overdue relief.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (S. 2829) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2829

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO PROVISION GRANTING SPECIAL IMMIGRANT STATUS FOR CERTAIN IRAQIS.

Section 1244(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "each of the five years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting "fiscal years 2008 through 2012"; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in the subparagraph heading, by striking "ONE THROUGH FOUR" and inserting "2008 THROUGH 2011"; and

(ii) by striking "one through four" and inserting "2008 through 2011"; and

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(I) in the subparagraph heading, by striking "FIVE AND SIX" and inserting "2012 AND 2013";

(II) by striking "the fifth fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting "fiscal year 2012"; and

(III) by striking "the sixth fiscal year beginning after such date" and inserting "fiscal year 2013"; and

(ii) in each of clauses (i) and (ii), by striking "the fifth fiscal year" and inserting "fiscal year 2012".

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY TO CONVERT PETITIONS DURING TRANSITION PERIOD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary of State may convert an approved petition for special immigrant status under section 1059 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note) with respect to which a visa under such section 1059 is not immediately available to an approved petition for special immigrant status under section 1244 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181) notwithstanding any requirement of subsection (a) or (b) of such section 1244 but subject to the numerical limitations applicable under subsection (c) of such section 1244, as amended by this Act.

(b) DURATION.—The authority under subsection (a) shall be available only with respect to petitions filed before October 1, 2008.

HONORING THE PRIME MINISTER OF IRELAND

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 708, S. Con. Res. 74.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 74) honoring the Prime Minister of Ireland, Bertie Ahern, for his service to the people of Ireland and to the world and welcoming the Prime Minister to the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the concurrent resolution be printed in the RECORD.